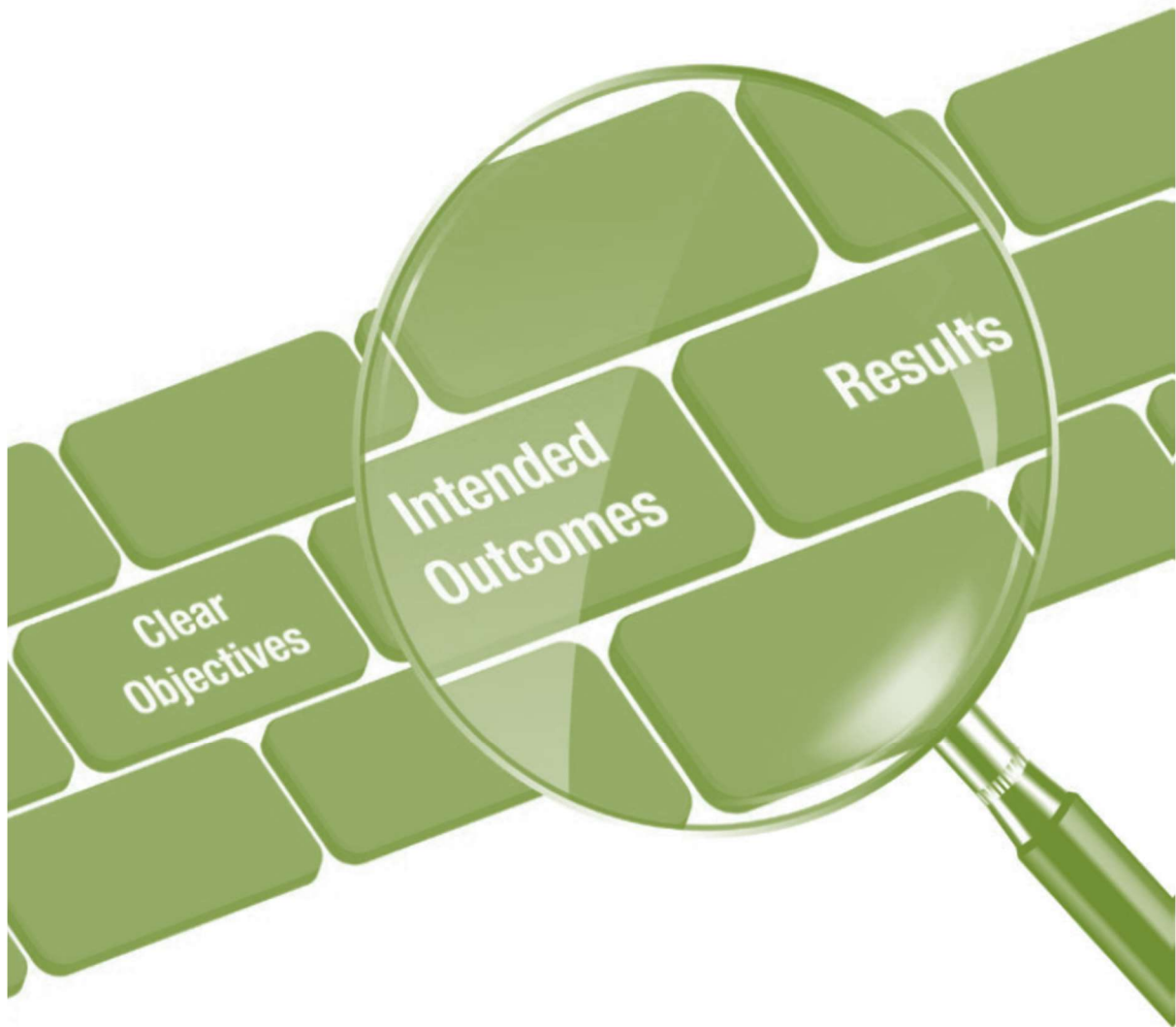


Annual Review of Performance

2020/21



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Introduction - The Annual Review of Performance 2020/21

The Council's Corporate Plan 2018/22 *Delivering a Successful and Sustainable Swansea* describes the council's vision for Swansea, our 5 key priorities (Well-being Objectives and Improvement Objectives) and our organisation values and principles that will underpin the delivery of our priorities and overall strategy.

This discharges our duties under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 to set Well-being Objectives and Improvement Objectives.

Our Well-being Objectives show the Council's contribution to Wales' 7 national goals¹ described within the Well-Being of Future Generations Act (the 'Act') and describes how we will maximise this contribution to the national goals and to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Swansea by working in line with the sustainability principles set out within the Act.

The Corporate Plan sets out the steps being undertaken to meet our Well-being Objectives and contribute to the seven national well-being goals outlined in the Act.

The Plan also sets out how we are maximising our contribution to our well-being objectives and national goals through the way in which we work, which is in line with sustainable principles as follows:

- Looking ahead to the medium and long-term challenges.
- Preventing problems from occurring or from getting worse.
- Ensuring our objectives do not contradict each other and compliment those of other public bodies.
- Working in partnership with others.
- Involving local people.

Our ambitions and commitments to residents – our Well-being Objectives 2018/22

In order to meet these challenges, we prioritised six Well-being Objectives in 2018/22. These were:

- ***Safeguarding people from harm*** – so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- ***Improving Education & Skills*** – so that every child and young person in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- ***Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure*** – so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.
- ***Tackling Poverty*** – so that every person in Swansea can achieve his or her potential.
- ***Transformation & Future Council development*** – so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.
- ***Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity*** - so that we maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and benefit health and well-being.

¹ The National Goals are: A Prosperous Wales; A Resilient Wales; A Healthier Wales; A More Equal Wales; A Wales of More Cohesive Communities; A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language; A Globally Responsible Wales.

This Annual Review of Performance 2020/21 (the 'Review') is the Council's report on its progress undertaking the steps to meet its Well-being Objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan. In doing so, the Review seeks to describe how the Council has worked in line with the sustainable development principles in order to maximise its contribution to the national goals.

Section 6 Biodiversity Duty

The information detailed under the *Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity* Objective in this report will be used as the basis for the Council's Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Report to Welsh Government.

How can you get involved?

You can get involved and have your say. <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/haveyoursay>. You can also get involved through the Council's Scrutiny Boards and panels, which are open to the public: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny>. You can contact the Council at any time by: Email to improvement@swansea.gov.uk Telephone 01792 637570.

Part 1 – Reports on progress in 2020/21 undertaking the steps to meet the Council's Well-being Objectives

This part of the Review represents a report on the progress the Council has made undertaking the steps it set out in its Corporate Plan 2018/22 to work towards meeting each Well-being Objective.

For each Well-being Objective, the Review sets out the following headings:

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective.
2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.
3. What success will look like.
4. Making progress towards the steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.
5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.
6. Lessons learnt and areas for development.

Part 1 also contains case-studies to better show the impact the steps are having. Overall, the reports show that the Council has made progress undertaking the steps to meet its Well-being Objectives whilst areas for development and lessons learnt are set out at the end of each report.

Impact from the COVID-19 Pandemic

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has brought huge challenges and changes to the Council, its services and workforce. The Council has never undertaken such change in such a short timescale and in such challenging circumstances. A number of non-essential services were suspended during 2020/21 in order to redeploy resources to areas where they were most needed.

This inevitably has had a significant impact on the usual areas of performance across the council and that is why targets for performance indicators were not set for 2020/21. This should also be considered when comparing performance to previous years.

2020/21 and 2021/22 have been an unprecedented years and the Council's response to the pandemic, whilst not necessarily reflected in the established performance indicators, has been extraordinary and much of it is described within this report.

In summary, since March 2020 the Council has transformed the way it works to manage the impact of the pandemic. Thousands of staff were successfully mobilised to work remotely and/or from home within a matter of weeks. This took a massive effort from our ICT team to provide the necessary changes enabling staff and councillors to have full network links at their preferred location.

Other changes include:

- Supporting the Welsh Government's Shielding Programme by setting a new call centre and providing daily support to thousands of vulnerable people.
- Focusing social services care on the most vulnerable, re-opening a care home and supporting the private care sector.
- Overseeing the planning and construction of the Bay Field Hospital on Fabian Way.
- Remodelling schools into care settings for key workers' children.
- Providing meals to care settings and delivering free school meals.
- Providing food banks across the city and county.
- Providing financial support in excess of £100 million to thousands of businesses.
- Setting up a Track, Trace and Protect function and providing community testing centres.
- Preparing for mass vaccination in our communities.

Performance for 2020/21 should therefore be considered within this wider context and achievements noted.

Safeguarding people from harm

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective

- We are committed to ensuring that citizens live their lives free from harm and exploitation.
- Safeguarding vulnerable people needs to be seen as everybody's business within every service within the Council, by all elected Members and by those who do work on behalf of the Council.
- We want children to be safe from harm and to stay with their families or be supported in family settings where it is safe for them to do so.
- We want to ensure all vulnerable adults are safeguarded from harm and able to live to their maximum potential.
- We want to tackle domestic abuse and ensure that victims are fully supported.
- We want people to age well and be able to live as independently and as safely as possible in their own homes.

2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.

- Continue to ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place to protect those at risk from significant harm and exploitation.
- Continue to ensure that safeguarding is 'everyone's business' across the Council, within schools, with partners, and through West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board, to ensure we collaborate and intervene on wider, emerging issues, such as County Lines, Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking, Bullying in Schools, Hate Crimes, and the PREVENT strategy.
- Continue to ensure that Adult and Child & Family Services are robust and effective in meeting the statutory requirements laid on the Authority as set out in the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 to improve well-being outcomes for vulnerable adults in Swansea.
- Continue to target a Safe Looked After Children (LAC) strategy by implementing Child and Family service improvements, and through the Corporate Parenting Strategy to improve outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.
- Through a Getting It Right for Every Child programme, we will implement a new whole system, integrated approach to focus early help and prevention services to improve well-being for children and young people, and support to families.
- Continue to involve children in getting their voice heard, and Adults and Carers about the services they receive, by improving our model of social work practice that focusses on a person's strengths and assets, what matters to them, what their families and friends can do to help, and by coproducing plans to achieve better outcomes.
- Work with partners to raise awareness around domestic abuse and put in place effective and timely interventions and support.
- Address social isolation and enhance quality of life of older people, within supportive communities by extending local area coordination and the range of support and preventative opportunities.
- Supporting our most vulnerable adults to remain safe and independent at home, by implementing the Adult Service model and rebalancing our service offer to focus on prevention, reablement, and recovery, including Community and Residential Reablement services, a new model of delivering domiciliary care and implementing the 'Hospital to Home' model.
- Improve the well-being outcomes of young carers and care leavers, through a range of interventions, including Information, advice and improved access to support services.
- As a Dementia Friendly City, Charter for Older People, and through the Ageing Well strategy, we will support Swansea citizens who are affected to feel valued, to contribute and participate in mainstream society, and to remain safely in their own homes

3. What success will look like.

Citizens live their lives free from harm and exploitation. There are effective and robust arrangements ensure the safeguarding the most vulnerable people is seen as everybody's business. Children are supported to be safe from harm, and, where possible within supportive families close to home. All vulnerable adults are safeguarded from harm and able to live to their maximum potential. Tackling and preventing domestic abuse whilst ensuring that victims are fully supported. People are supported to age well and be able to live as independently and as safely as possible in their own homes.

4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.

Safeguarding.

- Safeguarding remains as our top corporate priority, at the heart of how Council services are prioritised. The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown requirements resulted in Adult Services and Child and Family Services successfully implementing a number of emergency measures to meet the care and support needs of the most vulnerable people in our communities; in line with local corporate, regional direction, national guidance and statutory requirements.

Understanding and awareness of safeguarding

- "Safeguarding is seen as 'everyone's business' and our entire workforce has a duty to report any concerns they may come across affecting vulnerable adults or children. Swansea's Corporate Safeguarding policy and approach addresses a wider range of issues and potential safety concerns. Such concerns include domestic violence, financial abuse, street homelessness, bullying in schools, hate crimes, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, County Lines, and radicalisation. By applying the updated Corporate Safeguarding Policy, we can ensure that the Council continues to strengthen all areas of safeguarding with a new work programme, which is overseen by the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services and Cabinet Member.

Contextual safeguarding

- The lives of hundreds of young people are being made safer, thanks to the Contextual Safeguarding pilot led by our service but involving a whole range of partners. Swansea Council are working with Bedford University on Contextual Safeguarding Risk to improve our child exploitation work and practice in the area of risks to children outside of the family (such as criminal or sexual exploitation). The Covid-19 lockdown has not stopped the project from pressing ahead with preventing exploitation and disrupting criminal networks and behaviour within the context in which the harm occurs.
- A contextual approach to safeguarding requires us to look beyond the family to assess neighbourhood and peer group factors in considering risks to children and young people. Swansea's Contextual Missing Exploitation Trafficking multi-agency forum (CMET) tackles referrals, which can potentially impact on hundreds of young people. Youth workers have been doing vital outreach harnessing their skills to identify contextual risks and potential solutions.

Case Study: Youth Homeless Development Officers (YHDO) advocated for the needs of young people on the beach front, they were worried that the strategy of dispersing young people from the

beach front when intoxicated was risky due to them moving towards the town centre where they were less visible and more at risk. These views were fed into a strategic meeting where there was a plan developed which considered the views of young people and ensured they had a safe space to spend time. At a later date the YDHO's were able to undertake harm reduction work with peers groups on the beach front ensuring they were safe and had safe routes home therefore reducing the risk of harm.

Example of Outcomes:

YHDO's came into contact with a 22 year old male sleeping homeless on the streets who informed he was at risk of violence from other people that were street homeless. The YHDO's were able to contact on call emergency housing support to get the young man an appointment the following day. They visited McDonalds who offered the young man free food and the YHDO's spent some time talking to him about support services that could help. They also raised awareness of the young man to street link for support for him on the street.

Hate Crime Awareness

- The prevention and reduction of Hate Crime and Community Tension Monitoring is one the five strategic priorities identified in our Safer Swansea Strategy 2018-21. In line with Welsh Government's National Strategy on tackling Hate Crime, 'WG Tackling Hate Crimes & Incidents – A Framework for Action' the Safer Swansea Strategy 2018-21 aims to prevent Hate Crime, support victims and improve a multi-agency responses to the problem.
- A snapshot of recorded Hate Crime in Swansea between for 12 months up until April 2021 revealed that there were 339 incidents recorded in Swansea. Almost 70% of all recorded incidents were classified as 'racial' and just over 10% were related to disability and a further 10% were related to sexual orientation. A Community Cohesion (Brexit) survey (2020) conducted with local residents in Swansea revealed that 13% of respondents had been the Victim of a Hate Crime, but only 43% reported it. Our Hate Crime Stakeholder Action Plan continues to be managed and monitored through the Hate Crime Stakeholder Group and the Safer Swansea Partnership Steering Group.
- The Council continued to support Hate Crime awareness week in October 2020 and signed up to Victim Support's Charter. The Charter sets out in detail the rights of victims, and the commitments of organisations such as the Council in tackling Hate Crime, providing support and information for victims, and raising awareness of Hate Crime. The Charter marks the Council's commitment to ensuring that all staff and volunteers comply with the Charter's promises whenever they come into contact with those affected by Hate Crime and work to build strong and inclusive communities

Radicalisation (PREVENT Strategy)

- Our PREVENT strategy and interventions programme target support to vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremism. This is managed through a multi-agency (channel) partnership made up of organisations that have a legislative duty under the Counter Terrorism Act 2015.

Statutory requirements - Social Services and Well-being Act 2014.

- Social Services has faced some major challenges this year, none more so than the Covid-19 pandemic. In the face of these challenges, our remarkable social work and the wider social care

workforce in Swansea have shown great resilience, commitment and humanity to support our most vulnerable citizens during these extraordinarily difficult of times. All workers, whether employed by the Council, in the independent and third sectors, all the unpaid carers, volunteers and other members of the community who help coproduce our services have made a vital contribution to meeting the care and support needs within communities. The Director of Social Services' Annual Report sets out the detail, activities, stories of achievement and outcomes within our improvement journey this year.

Safe LAC (Looked After Children) reduction

- Work around the safe looked after children reduction strategy has continued with Swansea's looked after children population reducing slightly. Child and Family Services Improvement Programme underpins the Council's Recovery Plan and our Safe LAC reduction strategy. Developments this year includes:
 - Implementing a number of emergency measures in response to Covid-19 Pandemic.
 - Early Help hub launched in April 2020.
 - What Matters to young people- coproducing service improvements (BAYS+, Transition and Youth Justice).
 - Workforce Strategy and Staff Well-being re-aligned in January 2021.
 - Implementation of new care management system WCCIS in April.

Corporate Parenting

- As corporate parents all councillors have a collective responsibility to ensure that looked after children and care leavers can have the outcomes every good parent would want for their children. This means ensuring they are safe and providing opportunities to help them achieve their potential. Corporate parents have responsibility for the child's education, training and employment, health, welfare, leisure, housing and cultural opportunities.
- Our Corporate Parenting Board and Care Experienced Children and Young People (CYP) have jointly mapped out what the key areas of a best life are, the main areas for development for each area, and who is best placed to be accountable for improving services around those themes, with a view to planning future improvements.

Case Study: InfoNation / BAYS 16+

As a result of a service review in September 2020, Bays+ have developed a clear vision statement, principles and values. The service has worked hard to develop a new model of service design which will be in line with what matters to young people.

This work includes:

- The refurbishment of the Info-Nation building to make it young person friendly and create space for group work to take place with young people post the pandemic
- Development of the 16+ Panel which looks at improving transitions of young people at the age of 16 into adulthood. This includes a number of multi-agency partners as well as Adult Services looking at young people's plans to ensure they are getting the right support early on. Staff report that the panel works well.
- Reviewing the 'When I'm Ready' service for children. This has resulted in a number of positive recommendations to help improve the quality of the service. The work involved focus groups with carers and young people and staff which helped inform how the service needs to be designed going forward

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

- Swansea Council is working with partners to realign and improve the accessibility of a whole system of prevention and early services to target negative impacts of child poverty, domestic violence, child mental health and family issues. The aim of systemic improvement is to help build stronger, more sustainable networks and communities to better support children and families, and by promoting wellbeing, and employment opportunities; all helping to mitigate the Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).

Voice and Rights of the Child

- Child and Family Services are implementing a quality assurance framework that articulates the high standards of service delivery we expect in all work with children and young people to build-in assurance relating to providing the right service at the right time. Being able to 'see' children regularly, undertake direct work, provide intensive support to those most vulnerable children, young people and families and promote contact between care experienced children and their families, given the social restrictions has been a real challenge during the pandemic. We still expect to achieve our ambition to prevent escalation of needs and to reduce the needs for formal social work intervention in family life. Social workers are making effective use of virtual platforms, undertaking face-to-face contact using a risk based approach and having in place clear guidance on essential home visits.
- We are working closely with partners in police, education and health to monitor each child's progress, to ensure children are being seen, with their progress reviewed. We can demonstrate high levels of participation and co-production in the broad range of social work activities, such as mappings, danger statements, statutory visits, safety plans and reviews.

Safeguarding practice

- Our approach to Safeguarding and keeping people safe is reflected in Safeguarding our most vulnerable people being the council's number one priority. We have strong leadership in place to drive forward both a regional and corporate approach. Safe, professional care and support planning underpins our social services.
- Our approach to social work practice development is one of helping people to achieve their own personal wellbeing outcomes. This is set out in practice handbooks and through our overarching practice models of Signs of Safety (Child and Family Services) and Collaborative Communication (Adult Services).
- Last year we undertook a full review of safeguarding arrangements; setting out proposals for a new dedicated safeguarding team, which were to be incorporated into the restructure of Adult Services. This work resulted in the creation of new standalone Safeguarding team and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) teams.
- The Common Access Point (CAP) for Health and Social Care was available throughout the recent COVID-19 crisis to ensure that vulnerable adults and their carers were able to access to the right support at the right time by the right person.
- Through a Collaborative Communication framework, Adult Services are changing the conversation that we have with people about what matters to them in having a good life and to help achieve their personal wellbeing outcomes.

Regional Partnership – Safeguarding

- Swansea Council is working to ensure there is effective regional safeguarding board arrangements, established for the new West Glamorgan region, to replace the Western Bay boards. The Board will have a clear business plan setting out objectives and shared accountability across a range of partners, with targeted campaigns, promoting preventative approaches, performance reporting and learning lessons from practice reviews.

Domestic Abuse

- Following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic hit, there were frequent reports in the media of heightened domestic abuse rates; however this was not reflected in number of police reports or referrals into specialist services. Domestic abuse helplines were seeing record numbers of contacts but this was not reflected locally and there were concerns that victims of domestic abuse were 'staying put', or fears that the 'stay at home' messaging would prevent them from leaving.
- In response to this, we prioritised awareness raising campaigns with a strong message that help was available and we developed multimedia campaigns linking to national campaigns and signposting to local support services. We also ensured that large-scale posters were on display in supermarket car parks and other public areas. Our Specialist Lead has worked with Microsoft to develop the first domestic abuse 'Chatbot' in Wales, which allowed professionals and members of the public to access round the clock information, advice and details of local support services in an interactive, anonymous way.
- We also secured funding to provide IT equipment and Smart phones to families affected by domestic abuse and additional target hardening equipment to reinforce the safety of the homes of high risk domestic abuse victims. We work closely with the Welsh Government, the Police and Crime Commissioner's office and other partners to identify funding opportunities and alternative ways to increase resilience of projects, including training wider staff to assist and opportunities to increase resource.
- This year we have re-structured our early help offer in Swansea, which includes representation from South Wales Police as part of the Early Action Together programme and representatives from Health and Education. The aim of our early help offer is to ensure that children and young people are able to access the right support at the right time, from the right service to prevent escalation of need.
- We have continued to offer Domestic Abuse training to our staff. More than 1,000 members of staff have completed our training on Domestic Abuse awareness training and we have developed a new draft Special Leave policy for staff who have suffered from Domestic Abuse.

Case Study: Domestic abuse support in place 24/7

Support remains in place 24/7 in Swansea for people experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Swansea Council's developed a hi-tech chatbot to provide advice and signposting to get help as part of its domestic abuse services. It supplements the work of staff at the council's Domestic Abuse Hub who have continued to provide safety advice and emotional support to those who need it throughout the coronavirus crisis. As part of the council's 'You Are Not Alone'

campaign, launched to support people at risk of Domestic Abuse through the pandemic, the chatbot is live on the service's website at: www.swansea.gov.uk/YouAreNotAlone

It's a way of ensuring that people at risk of domestic abuse have access 24/7 to information and the reassurance that they are not alone and help is available, especially during the COVID-19 firebreak. The bot ask the user a series of questions to help direct them to the most appropriate support. Users remain anonymous and the service is completely confidential.

Cllr Louise Gibbard, Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Supporting Communities, said:

"Throughout the pandemic we have recognised that not every home is a safe place and we have worked to support people experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse. “.

"Our Domestic Abuse Hub and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors are as committed as ever to providing support and guidance to households where domestic abuse is an issue, and we are working closely with our specialist Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence partners to ensure a coordinated approach across Swansea and to allow our citizens the best opportunity to access the support they need at such a difficult time. But we know that for some people, reaching out is not that easy.

"The chatbot is another way to offer an interactive and efficient service to those who are worried about their own situation or have concerns for someone else.

"It allows us to reassure victims and families that there is support available. We can signpost to local or national support services and advice lines which are continuing to operate despite current restrictions, provide information and guidance on what constitutes abuse and the signs and symptoms, and importantly provide concise and accurate advice on safety planning, which has the potential to save lives."

Prevention & Wellbeing

- Our expectation is that each citizens' voice is heard by the Council, and listened to; people can speak for themselves and that they have control over any decisions that are made. That our most vulnerable people who need help to do the things that matter most to them, to promote their independence, and that carers can access support they need for their wellbeing. Additional information is always available to improve well-being including public health information, resources to support being at home, e.g. learning, play, and a specific section on access to services that specifically supported children and young people to have their voices heard in Swansea.
- Children have the right to reliable information under the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It is important, as early as possible in our processes to provide as much up to date information about services and resource as we can to adults, children and young people. This can help people decide what to access, have an improved understanding of how services have changed, as a result of Covid-19, and to see details of how to access services, if they are needed either directly or via Information, autonomy and access to services.
- Our multi agency approach to Information, Advice and Assistance whether accessed directly, via Early Help or at the social services front door is set out for citizen's on the Council's public website, and through DEWIS Cymru.

Case Study: Child and Family Early Help Hubs launched in April 2020

Early Help Hubs were implemented in an interim format from 1st April 2020. This is an initial format to enable us to strengthen capacity. There are now five co-located, multi-agency hubs, making use of the Signs of Wellbeing framework. The offer involves a multi-agency 'what matters' conversations at the front-door.

Also incorporates:

- Integrated Safeguarding Hub
- Access to YOS Services that help improve behaviours and prevent family breakdown
- Use of multi-agency panels to support preventative approach to contextual risks

There are partnership links to support joined up working and better step-down arrangements. The services is trialling the use and development of electronic 'auto-bot' responses to support queries around domestic abuse. Overall demand at social services social services front door (IIAA) is reduced as demand is re-directed to Early Help Hubs.

Equal Access to services

- Over the last 12 months we have continued to work with children and young people and adults to improve our services and shape the local, national and regional offer.
 - Working regionally, Children and Young People have picked issues around LGBTQ+ and equality to be the focus of our work moving towards National Safeguarding week in November.
 - After successful involvement in Social Worker, Principal Officer and Head of Service recruitment, young people in receipt of a service are being invited to further shape the recruitment and selection process of Children's Service staff.
 - Coproduction underpins all commissioning work in Adult Services.
 - Increase the coverage of Local Area Coordinators across the whole city, within the Our Neighbourhood approach.

Case Study: Local Area Coordination

We now have an established Local Area Coordination (LAC) team which has been expanded further in the last 12 months to a total of 22 members of staff to ensure full coverage across the whole city and county.

The Local Area Coordinators endorse our preventative approach, which recognises and cultivates the many strengths in communities and individuals. People are supported both before and at our front door with the offer of early help which can delay or prevent the need for statutory services.

The team have continued to work closely with third sector colleagues and the joint working across LAC and Neighbourhood Development officers (SCVS), as well as access to the wider resources across the Third Sector, has increased during the pandemic period.

For more information: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/localareacoordination>

This local approach has also been supported by both the Regional Rapid Discharge model and the Transformation programme – Our Neighbourhood Approach (ONA). Funding available through both programmes from Welsh Government has enabled the expansion of resources and further development of the model.

An evaluation of the work of Local Area Coordination is being carried out during 2021, building on the initial evaluation from 2016 to critically examine the evidence-base of characteristics, activities and outcomes of Area Coordination in Swansea and measure its effectiveness. The team has also compiled a range of stories, which are reflections on outcomes achieved with individuals involving work with a range of other organisations.

Carers and young carers

- Swansea Youth Justice Service (SYJS) was formed as a result of the disaggregation of Western Bay Youth Justice Service (WBYJS). A Joint Inspection in 2018 highlighted many challenges that needed addressing from the old regional arrangements; the new local service has been working hard on improvements.
- Swansea Youth Justice Service focuses on improving the quality of service to children and young people concentrating on developing robust assessments, quality assurance processes and reviewing interventions. A part time CAMHS nurse is in post to provide children and young people with appropriate mental health services and a pathway for more help when required. Speech and Language Service is expected to be added this year.
- The Regional Carers Partnership Board, with support locally from the People Policy Development Committee, has recently developed the first Regional Carers Strategy, with a clear vision, mission, values and targets for how to support unpaid carers in West Glamorgan over the next five years. Though co-production of this strategy has been made difficult by the current pandemic situation, a new Carers Liaison Forum in West Glamorgan has been established and one of the first challenges for this new forum will be working with Young Carers to refresh this strategy with their voices and insight.
- Swansea YMCA Young Carers Service is now a strategic partner of the Council, and offers a range of support services to young carers and in promoting their rights:
 - Young Carers & Family support (56 open cases in Jan 2021).
 - Group sessions (Trips and Activities).
 - School Programme – to help identify young carers.
 - Young Carers I.D Card Scheme- Swansea are early adopters of national scheme.
 - Cwmtawe Cluster- ensuring GP Practice has up to date information on young carers and services available and training GPs practice staff.
 - Aged Qualification – entry level to Level 2 understanding needs.

Ageing Well

- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the Ageing Well Forum was re-focused into an on-line Ageing Well Information Network. The aim of the Network was to provide information and a continued opportunity for engagement. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way in which we engaged with Older People, we have continued to support the engagement of Older People through a regional engagement panel with the Older People's Commissioner, our Local Area Co-ordination service, our Lifelong Learning service, our Call Centre Hub (a point of contact for community responses through COVID-19), our Electronic Library service and our Home Delivery services.
- This year we have also re-established the Aging Well Steering Group and appointed an Older Person's Partnership and Involvement Officer to ensure that we have effective and inclusive participation mechanisms in place to enable the participation and engagement of citizens aged 50+ yrs. Both the Aging Well Steering Group and the Older Person's Participation and Involvement Officer will have a key role to play in shaping our Aging Society Strategy in line with the recommendations within the Older Person's Commissioners "Leave No-one Behind" report (2021).

Dementia Friendly City

- Our Dementia Friendly Generations project had the vision to develop a “Dementia Friendly Generation” and to raise awareness of dementia across Swansea. Dementia Champions have been trained to provide information sessions to teaching staff, pupils, care home/service staff and residents/service users.

Charter for Older People

- A plan on a page (mirroring the Children’s Rights Scheme) has been developed for citizens 50+ and aligns to the Right Way principled approach that is being embedded nationally and noted in the Welsh Government draft strategy for an “Ageing Society”. Alignment to the National process means opportunity to provide clear guidance, and tangible benchmarks for Council departments to embed a whole council approach and evidence outcomes relating to the eight domains of the “Age Friendly City” criteria.
- In November 2020, the PSB met with the Older Person’s Commissioner for Wales and formally committed to work towards “Age Friendly City” status in Swansea. We are continuing to work closely with the Older Person’s Commissioner’s Office and CADR at Swansea University to ensure meaningful mechanisms for engagement of citizens 50+ within the "Live Well, Age Well Forum". Similar to work on engagement with Children and Young People, we have reflected upon our learning from engagement during the pandemic and refined the focus of our work on partnerships, rights-based policy and involvement of stakeholders.

Covid-19

- The following summarises some of the other work undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic to safeguard the citizens of Swansea; more information in the pages that follow:
 - Transformed a former Swansea Bay motor factory into a high-tech Bay Field Hospital ready for hundreds of beds in just over a month.
 - Supported thousands of people who had been shielding as a result of the pandemic through a dedicated helpline and services, including food collection and delivery, free food boxes; prescription collection and delivery and help to get online and befriending.
 - Brought the former Parkway care home in Sketty back into commission to create additional residential social care beds and ease pressure on the NHS as a result of the coronavirus crisis.
 - By January 2021, delivered around 19 million items of personal protection equipment to staff working in social care and schools.
 - Administered and issued grants and payments on behalf of Welsh Government to support people who had to self-isolate because they had Covid-19 or had been in contact with someone who tested positive.
 - Trained and re-directed staff from their normal duties or externally recruited and trained-up new staff as part of the Test, Trace Protect service provided with Swansea Bay University Health Board.

5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.

- *A prosperous Wales* – the local and regional health and social care market contributes significantly to the local and regional economy, with a skilled, professionalised workforce needed to meet growing demand.
- *A Resilient Wales* – we are supporting adults with a range of disabilities and needs to become more independent by promoting access to well-being, learning and work experience opportunities, including support to manage coastal, wildlife and environmental habitats, see case study examples
- *A Healthier Wales* – by working together health and social care services have responded to challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic to safeguard people from harm, improving their physical, emotional and mental health and well-being, and by supporting people to maintain independence and quality of life throughout their life course.
- *A more Equal Wales* – ensuring equal access to health and social care through information, advice and assistance and building on strengths of families and assets within communities to plan their own care and support and to reach their full potential, increasingly by preventing the need for statutory services.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – through supportive and mutually responsible communities working together to safeguard our most people, with Council employees, elected Members and people in our communities feeling confident about identifying and reporting their safeguarding concerns in respect of children and adults.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Working with partners through the Ageing Well Strategy to deliver the active offer and apply our learning to improving social care, and through intergeneration working, including through the medium of Welsh.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – the Council's safeguarding arrangements are informed by the Council's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and human rights of all citizens

6. Lessons learnt and areas for development

- The past year has placed great demands on our social care workforce and we need to ensure that the right steps are taken to enhance the continued wellbeing of our staff their professional development and to ensure we can recruit trained, high quality workers into the future.
- Safeguarding and protecting our most vulnerable citizens whilst ensuring their own voice is at the centre of our work remains a priority. Within a sustainable model of social care, we have to target our efforts are to where there is significant risk of harm and abuse and that we are working in a timely way, with the vulnerable person at the centre.
- Whilst Swansea is engaged in work on a regional strategic approach to support the wellbeing needs of carers and young carers, this needs to translate into a clear approach locally to make a difference in the lives of individuals.
- Managing the impact of COVID-19 and looking forwards with the help of the Council's Recovery plan will be a key focus for the remainder of 2021/22 and going into 2022/23, as we carry on with transformation programmes to modernise social care services, towards achieve a more preventative, sustainable approach.

Improving Education and Skills

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective.

- We want Swansea to be one of the best places in the world for children and young people to grow up.
- We want every child and young person in Swansea to achieve, to be healthy, to be resilient and to be safe.
- We want children and young people to attend school regularly because they are more likely to achieve the skills and qualifications that they need to go on into further education, higher education, employment or training.
- We want children and young people to obtain qualifications and skills that are suited to the economic needs of the future and to be able to contribute positively as active local citizens.
- We want to prevent children from becoming disengaged from learning.
- As corporate parents of Looked After Children, we want our Looked After Children to succeed in school and to have opportunities for further education, higher education, employment or training.
- We acknowledge that a child or young person with additional learning needs requires timely and effective support to allow them to reach their full potential.
- We want our children and young people to be aware of their global rights and responsibilities so that they can be active and responsible citizens, fulfil their potential and make a difference to their communities.
- We want our children and young people to have good Welsh language skills.

2. The longer term challenges this well-being objective will help address.

- We want to provide our young people with the skills and opportunities arising from the City Deal, ensuring they have success in the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), digital skills such as computer coding. We also want young people to develop creative and cultural careers and to receive the best quality advice and guidance for future occupations.

3. The steps we said we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.

- Continue to support and challenge schools to improve attendance and pupil performance, with a focus on improving literacy (in English and Welsh), numeracy and digital competency for all children of all ages, including those who are looked after (LAC), have additional learning needs or are educated other than at school (EOTAS).
- Meet demand for Welsh-medium education and promote the use of Welsh in schools and socially through the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
- Continue to involve children and young people in their education and community through Schools Councils and Big Conversation engagement events. By continuing to encourage schools to become UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools as part of our commitment to the UNCRC, develop young citizens to respect rights, understand responsibilities and to be globally aware and responsible citizens.
- Ensure our vulnerable children are not disadvantaged by poverty or other factors that limit or restrict them in achieving and attaining standards and wellbeing in education.
- Transform the schools' estate to meet demand and respond to the developments set out within the local development plan (LDP) whilst ensuring community benefits from contracts. We will, by using our school building and maintenance programme, reduce our carbon footprint.

- Align our education system and continue to develop and enhance partnerships to ensure we create the right people with the right skills to supply the new economies and meet the challenge of the Swansea Bay City Deal. We will encourage schools to support each other.
- Raise vocational aspirations and skill levels in the workplace, contributing to the development of ambitious, skilled young people and adults by providing apprenticeships.
- Develop independent learning skills for lifelong learning to reflect the changing nature of work and to support well-being, creativity and reduce social isolation.

4. What success will look like.

- Pupils, including vulnerable pupils, attend school regularly and have good literacy, numeracy, and educational success. We will continue to increase the number of Welsh medium places available. Pupils are made aware of their rights, their pupil voice contributes to education priorities and they have opportunities to learn about the value of the environment and working with nature. Outside of school, more young people take up apprenticeships in the Council/ wider community and that lifelong learning continues to be promoted.

5. Making progress towards the steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.

Attendance and pupil performance

- The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on education and learning and we are still in the early stages of recovery. Prior to the end of the summer term in 2021, groups of pupils and staff in schools were still being required to self-isolate, impacting on attainment, attendance and well-being. During 2020-21 schools were under unprecedented pressure to respond to the pandemic in a many different ways including the provision of emergency childcare for key workers, distributing food parcels/support for children on free school meals, ensuring the continuity of learning at school and at home through on-line and blended learning and keeping in touch with learners and their parents/carers with a particular focus and close monitoring of vulnerable children. The disruption to learning caused by the pandemic was such that key stage 4 examinations were replaced by centre assessed grades and the collection and collation of teacher assessment results for the earlier key stages was also cancelled in 2020 (and will also be cancelled for 2021). The collection of attendance data by Welsh Government was also cancelled in 2020 and will also not be collected for 2021.
- Despite the significant disruption to education and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, we have continued to support schools, learners and their families. During the three lockdown, schools have received good quality advice and guidance on all types of blended learning approaches. Schools have improved their synchronous lessons offer, particularly at secondary level. As a result, there is a good foundation for adopting similar approaches in future lockdowns or on a sustainable footing. A blended approach has been in place for the majority of the spring term with the majority of learners accessing a remote offer but on site provision for children of critical workers and vulnerable children. In some schools the offer has extended to include virtual parents evenings thus enhancing the partnership approach to learning from home. Although our immediate priority has been to ensure that examination year groups have suitable opportunities for grade determination, supportive networks are in place to keep curriculum reform central to recovery, especially on the themes of well-being, digital competence and employability.
- Some groups of learners have experienced greater challenges than others during the Covid-19 pandemic including; vulnerable learners, early years, examination year groups, learners in Welsh

medium, learners from families where English is an additional language, transition learners (Years 6 and 7) and learners living in areas of relatively high deprivation. During the Covid-19 pandemic we identified around 3,000 vulnerable learners in our schools in Swansea. Learners were identified as vulnerable for many reasons and therefore we refined the criteria to ensure that we were looking at the children where there was risk of harm during the lockdown period. Our immediate priority was to keep learners safe by closely monitoring those most at risk of harm. This included the monitoring of vulnerable children with a shared criteria of understanding vulnerability used between Education and Child and Family Services. Both Education and Child and Family have a Single Point of Contact in relation to vulnerable children accessing on site provision and we have held regular joint meetings between Education and Child and Family to focus on Covid-19 specific developments in relation to vulnerability and mental health. We have also used data on school contacts to target support and provide interventions, whilst schools have continued to receive support on control measures for Covid-19.

- We have promoted the well-being of learners through roll out of the Thrive programme (70% take up by schools) and are planning the mobilisation of online counselling service (Kooth) and piloting CAMHS well-being officers in the Cefn Hengoed and Olchfa catchment areas. Further work is currently underway to coordinate services and develop cluster meetings that align Education, Child and Family services and CAMHS. We have undertaken a significant review of our Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision and restructured our workforce as we plan implement the new arrangements. Our Additional Learning Needs strategy is gaining traction and future provision of ALN is being underpinned by workforce development and awareness raising events about the expectations of ALN reform. Work is ongoing in relation to increasing the number of places at specialist schools.
- Swansea PRU, Maes Derw, provides education for some of Swansea's most vulnerable children and young people. During the reporting period, the PRU not only faced the challenges of dealing with the pandemic but also of moving from four separate centres to a new, purpose built centre which was still very much a building site at the beginning of the academic year. Despite this, the PRU remained open for all pupils continuously throughout the period of school closures. Maes Derw offered wellbeing check-ins, remote and face to face learning and a steady communication and stability for the children and young people attending. In addition, staff in Maes Derw developed a new curriculum incorporating learning and wellbeing objectives which has included a high quality, enriched curriculum and included experiences to enhance wellbeing.
- Alongside these enriching activities teaching and support worker teams have engaged learners in examination year groups to ensure that as many of them as possible have been entered for their planned qualifications. Using daily phone calls, regular home visits, on-going work with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies such as Social Services and the Looked After Children Team, support for transport and clothing and a choice of learning venues, including at home if needed.

Welsh-medium education and use of Welsh in schools

- The Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills champions Welsh Language Standards at a Political level. The Cabinet Member for Supporting Communities also supports the Welsh Language Standards through the lens of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act. We are currently in the process of drafting our first 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. This will be consulted upon in autumn 2021 with the plan going live in September 2022.

- There are 10 Welsh medium primary schools feeding into the two secondary schools – Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe. As at April 2021, there were 32611 full time equivalent (FTE) pupils (excluding nursery) in all Swansea schools. The number of students attending Welsh medium education in Swansea schools (from Primary Reception to Year 13) was 4687 (14.4 % of all children and young people). The number and proportion of children and young people attending Welsh medium provision has remained fairly static and unchanged over the last three years.
- In GCSE Welsh First Language, 88.0% in 2021 of students attained grades A*- C, and numbers entering this subject have increased steadily in the nine years up to 2021. In the GCSE Welsh Second Language (full course), over 74.8% in 2021 attained grades A*- C and numbers entering the subject have increased in the eight years since 2012 from 239 entries to 1736 entries in 2021. The increase in entries is due partly to the withdrawal of the short course option in this subject, with all entries being full course from 2019. Performance in Welsh is also strong in key stages 2 and 3, but no data was collected in 2020 due to the pandemic.
- In 2022 plans are underway to see more Welsh-medium places being created with the opening of the new and enhanced accommodation and facilities for YGG Tan y lan and YGG Tirdeunaw. This will be followed by additional classroom space at YGG Bryn y Môr and YGG Y Login Fach. To complement this provision we are also delivering enhanced provision at both our Welsh-medium Comprehensive Schools Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic the Local Authority has continued to support pupils' Welsh language development by creating blended learning resources for latecomers in Welsh-medium schools. Welsh specialist teachers have engaged with schools this term to support the learning of Welsh through face-to-face teaching where possible. In addition, they are continuing to develop resources for the Swansea Virtual School to develop Welsh language skills as well as translating a range of resources and lessons for schools. They have supported teachers in English and Welsh-medium schools with planning and developing digital bilingual resources, lessons and weekly challenges. These resources have also been uploaded to the Swansea Virtual School to offer parents support to help their child learn.

Children and Young People's Rights Scheme

- It has not been possible during the Covid-19 pandemic to engage in face to face groups with Children and Young People through mechanisms like the Big Conversation. Since 2014, the Big Conversation has offered opportunities for nearly 10,000 children and young people aged 5 - 25years to engage in accessible and meaningful opportunities to be heard. The pandemic meant that thought had to be given on how and where we engage with children and young people, in this new and unprecedented time of working. Reflecting upon the learning from engagement during the pandemic, a review and repurpose of the team with remit for the co-ordination of the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme was undertaken. A refined focus on partnership, rights-based policy and involvement of stakeholders was established and a Children and Young People's Partnership & Involvement Officer was recruited.
- This year we drafted a Children and Young People's Rights Scheme (2021-2023), incorporating National Principles for a Rights Based Approach to Children, which takes account of previous consultation work with children, young people and practitioners. Consultation on the revised Scheme is planned to take place in May 2021. The plan on a page Children's Rights Scheme has been developed and aligns to the Right Way principled approach that is being embedded

nationally. Alignment to the National process means opportunity to provide clear guidance and tangible benchmarks for Council departments to embed a whole council approach and evidence outcomes.

- On the 20th of November 2020 (Universal Children's Day) we re-launched Swansea's Children's Rights Network. The Network comprises of over 80 organisations and aims to facilitate a whole authority approach to embedding children's rights in County work, split into two elements; involvement and policy. The involvement strand focused on supporting structures to enable children & young people (0-25years) to have their voice heard on issues that affect their lives, both locally & nationally and the policy strand focused on supporting the development and implementation of Swansea's Children and Young People's Rights Scheme and progressing actions within its action plan. An education working group has also been established to explore the most effective approaches to teaching and incorporating rights into the curriculum in Swansea. Work has included exploration of a Right of the Month approach, developing responses to Coronavirus and Me, and establishing a plan to support Challenge Advisors to incorporate the UNCRC in their thinking when developing new curricula with local schools.

Case study: Coronavirus and Me

On 13 May 2020, the Children's Commissioner for Wales launched the 'Coronavirus and Me' consultation to find out about the experiences of children and young people in Wales. 2,205 children and young people completed the survey in Swansea, the second-highest total in Wales. This equates to roughly 5.7% of the targeted age range of 3 to 18-year-olds. The information was shared with schools, and school leaders used the information to inform their planning as they prepared for the return of pupils in the CICUP sessions. The Coronavirus and Me report was circulated and shared with the membership of Swansea's Children's Rights Network – a Network of over 120 organisations, projects, services and individuals working with children, young people and families in Swansea. Links to the reports were also shared for children and young people via our #dillydragonswansea social media accounts and associated social media accounts including through Best Start Swansea and Swansea Play Service social media platforms.

What difference has this made?

Headteachers and officers found the report and the summary informed their actions in the summer term in ensuring effective transition from primary to secondary school. For example, 75% of Year 6 respondents said they wanted to return to their primary school to say goodbye. As a result, primary Headteachers prioritised this year group. Actions are also being taken to tailor the Council's approach to listening to children and young people in respect of lessons learned from Covid and the Coronavirus and Me survey:

- In response to survey feedback and engagement work with children, young people and practitioners, a Right of the Month approach is to be trialled as a council wide mechanism for engaging children and young people in matters that affect them. Resources and consultations will focus on a particular right and resources circulated through social media, the Children's Rights Network and to individual schools for use.
- A mapping exercise will be undertaken in all schools to 1) check the correct details of all lead staff for pupil voice and/or children's rights, and 2) understand the current status of pupil voice work (and needs) within individual schools.

Vulnerable children

- During the Covid-19 pandemic we identified around 3,000 vulnerable learners in our schools and worked closely with Child and Family Services to identify and closely monitor and support those most at risk. Schools deployed a number of measures to check in with vulnerable children and provided the opportunity to vulnerable and disadvantaged children to go into school and catch up. Future plans for the new academic year will include a period of transition and checks in relation to basic literacy and numeracy before moving forward with the curriculum, whilst also focusing on well-being. We have been holding regular joint meetings between Education and Child and Family Services to review referral data and identify patterns and trends to target support in relation to vulnerable children and are developing whole school approaches to supporting emotional health and well-being via the Thrive programme.
- During the first lockdown, a digital divide emerged between pupils who could access online learning remotely and those who could not. To maintain the continuity of learning for pupils without access to digital devices, many schools initially deployed paper-pack resources, which could not be a long-term solution on its own. Welsh Government provided funding to Local Authorities for additional digital equipment for schools. To date, we have invested more than £5m through our infrastructure project, which includes both devices and connectivity. In May 2021 we had delivered a total of 8,000 devices to our schools in Swansea, with a further 2,000 being prepared for distribution and are awaiting the delivery of a further 2,000 devices. We are continually monitoring the situation and are aware that there are still some children who are sharing equipment. However we are confident that all families/households that require connectivity or a device have been offered one. A recent parental survey indicated that the main issue is the need to share devices with the family at home and that around 2,000 children and young people are sharing equipment. Schools have worked hard to support families where there have been technical issues, such as how to support their children to access work through different platforms. Further, to mitigate the sharing-a-device problem, many schools have opted to deliver in asynchronous ways – recorded lessons and work sent through a virtual learning environment – which allows pupils to engage with learning at a time convenient to the home.

Case Study: Cameo – Ensuring that learners are not digitally disadvantaged during the pandemic

During May 2020, the Local Authority surveyed all schools to establish the demand for ICT equipment to enable pupils to access online distance learning. It was estimated that up to 3,000 devices and 1,800 connectivity units were required to support pupils learning at home. As a result, officers devised a 5-phase plan to target groups of learners according to their need.

The roll-out began with pupils from Year 6, Year 10 and Year 12 as well as all those with a statement of special educational needs, looked after children, children of asylum seekers, learners with English as an additional language and learners from the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Along with this initial roll-out of equipment, the Local Authority produced guidance on distance learning and internet safety for families, as well as an acceptable use policy for schools on the lending of equipment to families. This initiative helped to ensure that most pupils had access to at least one device to continue learning during the lockdown period.

Transforming the schools estate

- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to invest in the modernisation of our schools programme through the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme. The Band B

programme (£149.4m) is almost three times the size of the Band A programme (£51.5m) and despite the challenges of Covid-19 our total spend to date (delivered or committed) totals £54.8m with further detailed business case development for a further £52.5m, representing 73% of the total programme. A total of 89 + schools have benefitted from capital maintenance under Band A (between 2012-19) and a total of 69+ schools will have benefitted from capital maintenance under Band B (between 2019-22).

- During September 2020, a new build primary school was opened in Gorseinon, replacing two former split sites. Although construction was delayed by 5 weeks as a result of the pandemic it was delivered within the approved budget and also provided wider community benefits such as a new playground, MUGA 2G and a car park. A new build bespoke PRU was also opened in February 2021. Although the Covid-19 pandemic delayed progress by 20 weeks, it was delivered with the approved budget and wider community benefits included an external canopy and landscaped gardens at Dylan Thomas school, new windows for Cockett Memorial Hall and the refurbishment of Gors Community centre. During 2020-21, construction has also started on two new build Welsh medium primary schools; YGG Tan-y-lan and YGG Tirdeunaw. Work on new build extension and remodelling to maximize energy efficiency was also undertaken at Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr and at Bishopston Comprehensive school during 2020. The development of business cases is also under way for YG Bryntawe, Gowerton school, special schools and options are being developed for the remainder of the programme. Work to reduce the size of infant classes is ongoing and work has been undertaken to remodel sites at Penyrheol Primary school, Hendrefoilan Primary school, Seaview Primary school, YGG Bryniago, YGG Login Fach, and YGG Bryn-y-Mor.

Employability Skills

- The purpose of the Swansea's Skill Partnership/ Partneriaeth Sgiliau Abertawe (PSA) is to provide an effective strategic education partnership to ensure that the skills and qualifications that children and young people attain, meet the longer term aspirations of the city, including those that will arise from the Swansea Bay City Deal. Despite Covid-19, the Partnership which consists of senior representatives from a range of organisations across the area - and has continued to meet. Good progress has been made, particularly in relation to digital learning, linking closely to the City Deal project. The development of the digital platform 'My Choice' has enabled Year 11s to access advice and guidance for vocational learning in a range of different places including 6th Forms, Colleges and work based learning; as well as learners being able see what is happening in Swansea, possible future opportunities and links to other websites. The platform has also been beneficial for schools when looking to gain impartial advice and guidance about careers and employment.
- One of the key strengths of the Partnership is the focus on vocational education and experience, having members from organisations with close links to the business community such as Colleges and having representation from outside of Swansea like Neath Port Talbot Colleges to the benefit of learners. Swansea's Skill Partnership/ Partneriaeth Sgiliau Abertawe (PSA) has a representative from the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership where business employers' views are represented and PSA group members also sit on the board, chaired by TATA steel. We are currently linked with Admiral through a sub-group to explore how we build digital capacity; we are currently in discussion with other local businesses about participation in our Partnership and how they can support our vocational offer.

Apprenticeships

- Between April 2017 and March 2021, we have created over 120 apprentice opportunities across a range of Council departments. In addition, we have continued to secure a range of economic and social benefits through our procurement process. For example, between April 2017 and March 2021 our Beyond Bricks and Mortar policy created over 13,200 training weeks and by the end of 2020-21, our Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) programme had created 1,645 weeks of targeted recruitment and training.
- We have also continued to work with partners to provide apprenticeships and opportunities for young people through the Apprenticeship Academy. The 'Build me' programme with the Pupil Referral Unit in Cockett and the new Primary School at Parc y Werin in Gorseinon offers 2 days a week training opportunities in construction activities, including a supervised visit and discussion about different roles and skills required on site.

Lifelong learning

- Our Life Long Learning Team continued the delivery of its programmes during the pandemic by switching to on-line delivery and supporting access to the courses. During 2020-21, just over 1500 learners participated in 56 courses. Just over 170 learners participated in accredited Learning for Life, Essential Skills and Family Learning. The service also offered a number of free absolute beginners' digital courses through the Learn My Way programme to 181 learners on IT courses for beginners during 2020/21. The service loaned 25 laptops, 17 mifis, one mifi booster and 17 iPads to participants who did not have access to the appropriate equipment or access to the Internet for learning. Lifelong Learning staff were also offered training to improve their own digital skills and how to provide ongoing digital and blended learning training. The Lifelong Learning service also introduced daily digital support sessions for individuals during lockdown and provided individually tailored support to just under 100 people.

6. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national wellbeing goals.

- *A prosperous Wales* – Responding to the City Deal by ensuring young people have success in STEM subjects and digital skills, such as computer coding.
- *A Resilient Wales* – Supporting the emotional health and well-being of children and young people through a whole school Thrive programme..
- *A Healthier Wales* – Continuing to involve children in their education through Pupil Voice, Schools Councils and Big Conversation events. Topics have included mindfulness in schools, bullying, homelessness and healthy relationships. Public Health Wales' healthy schools initiative sees a high level of engagement in Swansea schools to promote nutrition, physical activity, relationships, awareness of substance misuse, emotional health and wellbeing, safety, hygiene and the environment.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Ensuring that children are not disadvantaged by poverty or other limiting factors when achieving and attaining standards and well-being in education.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Transforming the schools estate to meet demand and to respond to the developments set out within the local development plan (LDP)
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Meeting demand for Welsh-medium education and promoting the use of Welsh in schools through the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

- *A globally responsible Wales* – Teaching young citizens to respect rights, understand responsibilities and be globally aware by continuing to support schools to become UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools as part of the Council's commitment to the UNCRC.

7. Lessons learnt and areas for development

- The Council has made significant progress meeting its well-being objective but lessons have been learnt and there are areas for further development.

Attendance and performance

- As we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, we will work to promote the well-being of both learners, develop blended learning opportunities, embed support for vulnerable children and young people, build upon our relationship with Child and Family Services to safeguard learners and focus on providing high quality teaching.

Involving children and young people

- As we begin to recover from Covid-19, we will also listen to voices of children and young people in terms of identifying the issues and the concerns which matter to them in relation to their emotional health and well-being and learning opportunities and outcomes.

Additional Learning Needs

- We will continue to implement our Transformation programme in relation to ALN with all key stakeholders and the wider workforce to ensure that the aspirations of the ALN reform are realised.

Swansea's Skill Partnership/ Partneriaeth Sgiliau Abertawe (PSA)

- We will endeavour to work with our partners in the region and in other sector, particularly with the business community to build upon and enhance our offer in vocational education and experience.

Transforming our **Economy & Infrastructure**

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective

- We want to raise economic performance and create wealth and employment opportunities to improve the economic wellbeing of Swansea's citizens
- The biggest ever investment for south west Wales has been secured following the approval of the ground-breaking Swansea Bay City Deal on 20th March 2017.
- The City Deal is worth £1.3 billion deal and will transform the economic landscape of the area, boost the local economy by £1.8 billion, and generate almost 10,000 new jobs over the next 15 years.
- In Swansea, 100,000 square feet of flexible and affordable new office space will be constructed on Kingsway in the city centre for tech businesses as part of a digital village that will benefit from world-class digital infrastructure.
- The City Deal will lead to a 215,000 square foot box village development on the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's under-construction Waterfront Innovation Quarter in SA1 providing affordable space for start-up firms.
- The City Deal will also support the digitalisation of the 3,500 indoor arena planned for the city centre's Swansea Central development site, as well as the development of a digital square to include digital screens and digital artworks..
- The City Deal will further drive the physical regeneration of the city centre in line with our revised City Centre Strategic Framework – in particular, property development and enhancement and associated transport improvements, delivering enabling infrastructure to support regeneration.
- We want to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the City Deal and regeneration of the city centre by creating employment and training opportunities for unemployed and economically inactive people through community benefit clauses in contracts and delivering employability support services in partnership with other council services and external partners.
- We want a planning policy framework that supports growth and regeneration and ensures that communities have sufficient good quality housing at sustainable locations to meet community needs and support sustainable economic growth.
- We want to take advantage of untapped growth potential to generate sustainable energy, protect the environment and boost the economy, including continuing to lobby the government to approve the Tidal Lagoon.
- We want to take advantage of Swansea's natural, cultural and built assets and infrastructure to develop the economy while protecting the environment and improving well-being.

2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.

- Take advantage of the opportunities presented by the City Deal and continue the regeneration of the city centre and work with partners to implement the City Deal to invest in digital infrastructure and support investment, innovation, growth, jobs, skills and productivity.
- Promote and enhance a diverse and sustainable local economy. For example, work collaboratively through the Regeneration Swansea Partnership to progress Swansea's economic regeneration agenda including delivery of the Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme, and through the implementation of the local development plan (LDP) that supports the regeneration of Swansea and promotes sustainable communities.
- Create employment & training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in contracts.

- Improve, expand and diversify leisure, cultural and heritage facilities and infrastructure to help boost the economy, promote tourism, improve well-being, promote community cohesion and provide economic benefits.
- Work with partners to secure leisure and cultural facilities such as an international sport village and centre of sporting excellence; the Gondola & Luge project; complete the riverside corridor works; and oversee the management and development of the City Centre evening and night-time economy, including the retention of the Purple Flag, to ensure Swansea is a safe, clean and welcoming place to work and visit.
- Build on the legacy of Swansea's bid to be UK City of Culture by active participation in Culture 21 Pilot programme and delivering the nine commitments for Culture in Sustainable Cities.
- On completion of the successful transfer of Leisure facilities to the Council's new delivery partner, develop a long-term sustainability strategy for 'in house' services across the portfolio including Libraries, Theatres, Galleries and Museums.
- Progress strategic housing and mixed development sites to meet housing need and provide employment.
- Protect and promote the health, wellbeing, safety and consumer interests of people living in or visiting Swansea by working with others to maintain public safety across the range of regulatory services such as pollution, scams and unfair trading, public health and housing issues, etc.
- Deliver the Energy Strategy to reduce costs, provide cheaper energy and reduce our carbon footprint such as work with others to provide sustainable and low carbon transport and infrastructure providing improved and cheaper connectivity and mobility and associated economic benefits at reduced environmental cost and improved air quality.
- Manage and protect Swansea's green spaces, coastline and parks for recreation and play, to promote health and well-being, improved bathing water quality and maintain Blue Flag status at Swansea's beaches to encourage tourism, protect the environment and support well-being.

3. What success will look like.

- Swansea has an economy that utilises natural, sporting and cultural assets. Through the City Deal, the investment in digital infrastructure and the regeneration of Swansea and the City Centre, the economy provides more of the right jobs, growth, skills, training and productivity whilst housing need is met and social, cultural and environmental well-being is supported.

4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.

Covid-19

- The Covid-19 Pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on both the UK and Swansea's economy. The Council's Economic Recovery Plan was developed as a working document to complement the wider Recovery Plan for Swansea. The first version was presented in March 2021 as a response and positive way forward, which has been built upon since. This focused on key aims of raising confidence, supporting Businesses, championing local food, supporting Tourism, developing skills & employability and a sustainable economic recovery; this is in line with the 'Transforming our economy and infrastructure' objective.
- The major strategic projects such as the Copr Bay phases 1 and 2, 71-72 The Kingsway, the regeneration of the Hafod Copperworks and the restoration of the Palace theatre have progressed at pace despite the pandemic. They are visible signs of confidence in the City, raising the profile of Swansea as a business location and destination fuelling the Recovery.

- The most striking example of how Swansea Council refocused its efforts during the pandemic was to support the NHS by building a field hospital in just 8 weeks. Swansea Council used its development expertise to lease a site work with contractors Kier and TRJ to transform a former factory and film studios into a 11,000sq m hospital starting the build from scratch by creating a new box within the shell of the building and completely fitting it out with new electricity, heating, ventilation, water supplies, flooring, ceilings and all the other basic requirements.

City Deal

- Work on the Swansea Bay City Deal's Swansea City and Waterfront Digital District project has continued at pace. The £135m Swansea Central Phase One transformation scheme - now branded Copr Bay, includes new parkland, around a 1,000 parking spaces, 50 affordable homes and commercial units. A striking new landmark bridge based on a design by artist Marc Rees has been put into place. The origami cut out style design is based on Swan abstracts and the gold coloured materials reflect Swansea's copper industry heritage. This will be covered in energy-efficient, programmable LEDs illuminating the bridge in different hues.
- Construction on the 3,500 capacity Digital Arena and car park is well advanced and on target for completion. The scheme has been able to progress throughout the Covid pandemic in accordance with government guidance and site based risk assessments. The Ambassador Theatre Group have been appointed to run the indoor arena once operational. A digital square featuring digital artworks and ultra-fast internet connection speeds will also be developed outside the arena. The Cairn Group have been identified as the preferred bidder for a planned four-star 150 room hotel adjacent to the Arena site.

Case Study: Swansea skyline changing as arena steel structures rise

New parts of the Swansea skyline are emerging as the steel skeletons of the city's new indoor arena and allied buildings go up. The steel frame work is being undertaken in innovative ways by the experts putting it up - to ensure they comply with all coronavirus guidelines. Council leader Rob Stewart said "I thank the workers there - including many from South Wales and the steel frame specialists themselves - for making progress whilst working to latest guidelines. They are keeping this significant scheme safe and advancing well at this difficult time."

Tim Wood, Buckingham Group Contracting's project director on site, said "South Wales firms on site right now include Evan Pritchard groundwork specialists, Premier Groundworks Solutions, concrete specialist Thames Valley Construction, Bond Demolition, Rowecord Scaffolding, Site Electrical Services, Procomm Temporary Accommodation, Proctor Fencing, Quantum Geotechnic and Thrive Women's Aid Cleaning Services. Hundreds of Welsh businesses have attended meet-the-buyer events in recent months as Buckingham Group Contracting worked hard to embrace regional specialists. "It's good to see firms from Wales and elsewhere benefiting from the investment".

The iconic bridge's outline and distinctive Arena silhouette have been used to form an instantly recognisable logo for Copr Bay and contributes to the theme of the regeneration area based on Swansea's industrial past and proximity to the sea.

Case Study: Cupid way

Record-breaking Swansea athlete Cyril Cupid is to have his name immortalised as part of the Copr Bay regeneration of the city centre. Hundreds of thousands of visitors a year to the new Swansea

arena will walk along the newly-named Cupid Way between the city centre up to the new landmark gold-coloured bridge before arriving at the new arena.

Sprinter Cupid was the first Welshman to do the 100-yard dash in under 10 seconds and gained recognition in the 1930s for winning numerous titles on the athletics track. The bridge itself is being eased into place overnight on Saturday and is expected to be named later this year ahead of it being opened to the public.

Rob Stewart, Leader of Swansea Council, said: "Cyril Cupid was the Swansea son of a Welsh woman Maud Palmer and a West Indian father who worked locally as a spelterman in the zinc trade. "Cyril was the first Welshman to clock the 100-yard dash in under 10 seconds so at full pelt he'd have made it across the new 50-metre pedestrian bridge in about five seconds.

"Cyril and his parents are part of our community's heritage and now they'll be part of the new history we are making together with the transformation of the city centre, its new role as a top destination and the new jobs that'll bring."

- The Copr Bay Phase 2 design & viability work, including the potential for a public sector hub, has made good progress but is now dependent on the timing of any announcement relating to the government's Hubs programme. As an interim solution, a temporary public realm scheme has been designed. The St. David's area was demolished in April 2020 and is a priority site; work to progress its regeneration is expected to commence immediately after the appointment of a partner via the 'Shaping Swansea Initiative'.
- Design work has also continued on the 100,000 square foot digital village development on the site of the former Oceana building at 71&72 The Kingsway. Involvement has strengthened the plans for the glass fronted six storey structure. This includes a green wall, rooftop garden and space suitable for cultural events with access reconnecting the Kingsway and Oxford Street. A tendering process is also nearing completion for the adjacent 69/70 site. Both spaces will create quality, digitally-enabled and flexible workspace suitable for a wide variety of companies, educational institutions and individuals. This will provide cutting-edge working spaces for tech and digitally focussed businesses. It will act as a catalyst for new private sector led development and accommodate growing ICT focused businesses from Swansea University and UWTSO incubation facilities. The development will benefit from world class digital connectivity and integration with smart city technology.

Case Study: Swansea scheme design recognised for environmental excellence.

Design work for a major new office development providing space for 600 jobs in Swansea has been recognised for its focus on helping further cut the city's carbon footprint. The high-tech office development planned for 71/72 The Kingsway will include a green roof, solar panels on top of the building, underfloor heating and heat recovery systems to minimise energy use.

There will also be a rainwater capture feature, helping with water supply to plants and trees in and around the building. The green roof will reduce rainwater run-off, saving water consumption within the scheme. Glazing throughout the development will allow natural light into the building, further reducing energy consumption. External shading on the southern face of the scheme will help keep the building cool during hotter days, and doors and windows can be opened onto the building's balconies and roof spaces - some of which overlook Swansea Bay.

The Swansea Council scheme has now been awarded prestigious BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) excellent status. Once complete and operational in 2023, the five-storey development will be carbon zero and worth £32.6 million a year to Swansea's economy.

- The Box Village element of the City Deal programme has been renamed the 'Innovation Matrix'. It takes the form of a precinct and development to enable start up support and growth; a planning application has been submitted.
- The Swansea Bay City Deal's Life Science, Well Being and Sports Campuses project aims to establish an international centre for innovation in life science, well-being and sport, supporting preventative interventions in healthcare and medicine and contributing to the growth of the Sports Tech industry. It is anticipated that the project will deliver R&D, trials and testing facilities and enable the co-location of research and industry alongside clinical infrastructure and investment opportunities. The project is being jointly progressed with Swansea Bay University Health Board and will be located at Morriston Hospital and Swansea University's Singleton Campus.
- During 2020-21, the Campuses Project was re-scoped and a masterplan for the Singleton site was completed. Key letters of support have been received from partners to evidence commitment to the project, in addition to the development of an initial video to engage the private sector. Initial discussion with the UK and Welsh Government have taken place in relation to the re-scoped project; an outline Business Case has been submitted for feedback.
- All City Deal projects will be underpinned by next generation digital infrastructure, as well as a Skills and Talent initiative that will give local young people a pathway in schools and colleges to access the 10,000 high-quality jobs that will be created over the next 15 years. It was announced Vodafone has been selected to deliver 5G digital infrastructure investment.

The City Centre

- The Kingsway's £12m infrastructure project has achieved practical completion and is helping to attract private sector investment to the city. The Kingsway is now greener, healthier and more pedestrian and cyclist friendly due to new road surfaces and landscaping work. Swansea is being re-shaped as a green, walkable city with a clear cycle network. A new two way traffic system has been successfully introduced.
- Following consultation, a feasibility study has been completed and approved for the development of Castle Square with the Council undertaking the role of developer. The scheme considers new restaurant units in Castle Square and a re-imagined green public space but maintains the size of the current open space.

Case Study: Castle Square: Public to shape its green and welcoming future

A bright new future for a major Swansea focal point moved a big step closer. Swansea Council's cabinet discussed a smart new concept for the city centre Castle Square prior to public consultation - one that introduces more greenery, fun and reasons to visit. The plans show that the amount of space for people to gather, sit out and relax would remain the same.

Green space would grow to cover more than 40% of the space. Biodiversity would increase and most existing trees would remain, with new trees planted. The initial design sees the existing water

feature removed. Playful new attractions would be introduced and new opportunities to eat and drink. The plans would see green space increased significantly, a greater number of trees, permanent food and drink unit, a fun water jets feature with mini-fountains, an upgraded paved area and Caer Street and Castle Bailey Street made more pedestrian-friendly. Council Leader, Cllr Rob Stewart said "It will be greener, more welcoming and much more family friendly - a Castle Gardens for the 21st Century."

- The historic but derelict Palace Theatre was acquired by the Council both saving a part of Swansea's heritage and acting as a regeneration catalyst for the Upper High Street. Grant funding was secured and design and refurbishment works are underway. The innovative digital workspace will offer a home for growing businesses in the tech, digital and creative sectors. Heads of Terms have already been signed with the lead tenant Tramshed Tech.
- Another landmark building, the grade II 1864 Albert Hall is set for £7m regeneration as a result of Council support. Loft Co were able to invest in the former music hall due to support securing grant funding and loan funding from the Council via the Town Centre Loan Fund. Plans for a mixed leisure, commercial & residential development are moving forward preserving the architectural profile for future generations.
- The transformation of the city centre resulting from private and other public service investment aligns with Swansea Council's regeneration strategy, which aims to facilitate more people living and working in the city centre. Orchard House has been redeveloped as living and retail space by Pobl Group. While the £45m Oldway Centre redevelopment on High Street will be home to more than 550 students, the Mariner Street development will house 725 students along with 20,000 sq ft of commercial space and new Kingsway development 310 students.
- A mixed-use development on a city centre gateway site (formerly Mariner Street Car park opposite Swansea High Street train station) will comprise purpose-built student accommodation of 780 bedrooms and ancillary communal facilities with commercial units on the ground floor, which is at an advanced stage on construction.
- The Wind Street Public Realm Enhancement aims to deliver a hospitable, attractive and safe area that showcases the best of the city's heritage and built environment and inspires and encourages existing and new businesses. The Re-imagining Wind Street scheme will create a family friendly, high quality environment and make the street more attractive for businesses who wish to trade outdoors. Sustainability is an underlying principle of the scheme with retention and cleansing of the York stone paving to reduce the amount of imported stone. Similarly, many of the granite kerbs and other elements will be retained and re-used with much being re-engineered to create drainage 'dish' channels between at 'at-grade' footway and highway. The scheme will be subject to a CEEQUAL assessment, which reviews the scheme's environmental credentials and awards accreditation on merit.
- Following extensive consultation, the Council is regenerating the former What! premises to form a new city centre community hub allowing the Council to relocate some of its front-facing service, such as contact centre and library, together with complementary partner services. When operational, the Community Hub model will be rolled out to wider communities with all staff fully trained in equalities.
- Shaping Swansea is an ambitious and innovative approach to identifying a development partner to develop a range of Council-owned strategic sites in and around the city centre. Seven sites have initially been identified for redevelopment, which will incorporate the delivery of a wide

mix of uses across the short, medium and long term. They include the Swansea Central North, the Hafod Copperworks, Civic Centre, Oxford Street, Sailbridge and Marina sites.

Case Study: Warm welcome for global launch of Swansea regeneration drive

A high-profile event to attract major investment to Swansea's £1bn regeneration story has seen positive headlines being read around the world. The city's Shaping Swansea launch was covered by journalists writing for a host of publications and websites seen by developers and investors. The launch broadcast, featuring a panel discussion with leading Swansea Council figures, was seen by hundreds of carefully targeted online viewers.

Council officers are now handling initial inquiries coming in from those enthused by the city's ambition and the Shaping Swansea partnership opportunity. Council leader Rob Stewart said: "The feedback has been really positive, with Estates Gazette telling us the response has been as good as that achieved when big cities like Birmingham stage events. "Investors are looking for new opportunities and Swansea can provide them. We have a once-in-a-generation chance for a top class partner to help us deliver major regeneration".

The Tawe River Corridor and Hafod Copperworks

- The Hafod Copperworks/Kilvey site is now one of seven Shaping Swansea opportunities awaiting the appointment of a developer. Good progress is being made on the historic site. The works contract for the Powerhouse funded by Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding has been awarded and is progressing well. Penderyn Whisky Distillery will expand there and fit it out as a new distillery and visitor centre. The iconic Musgrace Engine House has been restored and Vivian Engine House repairs are underway. Work has also continued on the 110 year old Bascule Bridge working closely with Cadw. The Council is working closely with existing friends groups.
- Constructive discussions have continued with Skyline Enterprises who aim to create a gondola attraction with luge tracks, zip lines and visitor facilities on Kilvey Hill. It has developed proposals, which include improving access to and the ecology of the area. Heads of Terms had been signed by the Council and the Skyline board and survey work has commenced before the pandemic. Progress continues to bring a high quality leisure development to Swansea. Discussions are progressing between Skyline and Welsh Government for financial support to make the scheme financially viable to Skyline.

Case study: Swansea's waterways: New destinations planned

Ambitious plans to open up more Swansea waterways for boat travel took a big step forward today. A report into the possibility of creating new ways to travel from the mouth of the River Tawe up the Swansea Valley and towards Neath was unveiled. It was also revealed that funding has been secured for a new riverboat pick-up and drop-off point near the Liberty Stadium. Surveys will now identify the best location for the pontoon, probably near the emerging Penderyn development at the Copperworks. It could open up the possibility of a river taxi service.

The report Copper Jack: New Destinations was published by Swansea Community Boat Trust, a charity that operates the Copper Jack community boat on the Tawe and promotes the heritage, use and environment of the area's inland waterways. Trust board member John Andrew Davies said: "The trust is delighted that the report and video helped the council get the funding for a landing pontoon at the Copperworks."For the first time, passengers will be able to get off Copper Jack to

enjoy the Copperworks experience, or visit the Liberty Stadium". Support comes from the Swansea Bay Fisheries Local Action Group (SBFLAG), managed by Swansea Council.

Regeneration

- The Regeneration Swansea partnership brings together private, public and third sector representatives to progress Swansea's economic regeneration agenda. Regeneration Swansea acts as the local project board managing both the Welsh Government Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) and Town Centre Loan Fund. Swansea Council is a regional lead and works with other South West Wales local authorities to deliver the Property Enhancement Development Grant and Sustainable Living Grant element of the TRI scheme. This funding prevents the long term decline of vacant buildings through grant support to refurbish and repurpose city centre and Morriston buildings. A well-being matrix has been developed for the grant application process; all applicants must now show how their project will maximise well-being in Swansea.
- The Targeted Regeneration Programme ended in March 2021 and has supported significant private sector investment in the city centre. Forecast outputs for the Sustainable Living Grant include the creation of 97 residential units, whereas forecast outputs for the Property Enhancement Development Grant include the enhancement of 3,667 Metres squared of commercial space. The TRI programme has continued at pace and also included Covid-emergency support for outdoor trading cross-county.
- Over £1m of Welsh Government Transforming Towns grant funding was allocated to local businesses through the Premises Outdoor Adaptions Grant, to support local businesses to adapt to social distancing requirements. Swansea's Purple Flag award winning Evening and Night time economy has been heavily impacted with many venues having been the first to close and last to reopen relying in support.
- A Repurposing Report has been commissioned to explore options and opportunities to repurpose the city centre to make it fit for the future, taking account of changes in the retail and leisure markets and the impact of Covid. Swansea Market was named Britain's best large indoor Market in the Great British Market Awards 2020. The market has successfully bid for £439k funding to support a programme of improvements. Work has included work with the public to redesign the central casual trading area, public toilets, a Changing Places facility, lighting upgrade and installation of solar panels on the market roof to reduce its carbon footprint.
- The Council's response to Coronavirus included the swift implementation of a support package for small business. The Council continues to administer Welsh Government Covid-19 financial support to local businesses through schemes such as the Firebreak discretionary grant, Restrictions grant, cultural freelancer grant and start up grant; this has safeguarded jobs during the restrictions. The Council coordinated a business rates relief for 2,400 businesses ensuring eligible businesses had their payment schedules adjusted accordingly. In addition, the council administered payments and carried out fraud prevention on Welsh Government Grants to eligible small business.
- The Council has established a new start-up and enterprise service with an initial budget confirmed for small start-up bursaries to support business starts and self-employment. A 'Shop Local, Shop Swansea' campaign was launched in November and a pilot grass roots initiative to improve perceptions of Swansea and feed into development of a Swansea brand. We have promoted local food and supported local producers through the Swansea Food Partnership, to build on the increased use of local food producers / suppliers in recent months. The Council

promoted a list of local businesses throughout lockdowns offering a delivery service and list of city centre shops currently open. The leisure, hospitality and cultural sectors have also been targeted for support in reopening.

Case study: One-stop shop for business information during Coronavirus

Businesses working out ways to get themselves and employees through the coronavirus crisis can drop in to an online one-stop information centre. The advice for business about Coronavirus web pages are packed with business-related advice ranging from ideas on how to access Welsh Government grants and loans, the UK government's job retention scheme and HMRC support.

Robert Francis-Davies Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism, said: "Thousands of small and medium businesses in Swansea are looking for ways to find their through the pandemic and out the other side. "Our Economic Development Team has come up with web pages to help guide businesses through the maze of opportunities and ideas that may be available and could make a real difference. "On top of that we're working hard to pay our suppliers as promptly as possible and we've also set up a listing on our web pages to put local businesses offering home deliveries, collections and takeaways in touch with potential customers. The pages also carry links to opportunities to join free Business Wales and Superfast Business Wales COVID-related webinars.

Local Development Plan

- The Local Development Plan (LDP) Annual Monitoring Report notes that the LDP Strategic Sites are being progressed in-line with site masterplans and policies. Consultation and development work has taken place developing supplementary Planning Guidance. The Council has signed Welsh Government's placemaking charter, which ensures that multifunctional green infrastructure and access to open space are integrated into the design of new development from the outset
- The Green Infrastructure strategy 'Swansea Central Area - Regenerating Our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife' has seen city centre green infrastructure improvements, including funding secured for additional tree planting and large planting beds along the whole length of Wind Street with a mixture of trees, shrubs and pollinators attracting herbaceous species. Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) funding of Green Infrastructure projects included the Coastal Office High Street's green roof, Dragon Hotel's green walls, the Potter's Wheel's green roof, plus green roof bin shelters around the city centre.

Employment and training opportunities

- Record levels of financial support for businesses have been put in place by the UK and Welsh Governments to cushion the impact of the Covid-19 related restrictions. Despite this, unemployment levels have risen across the UK with the claimant count standing at 2.6m in March 2021. In Swansea, the claimant count unemployment rate stood at 5.7% in March 2021, marginally below the Welsh (5.9%) and UK (6.5%) rates.
- The number of people gaining employment through Employability support is achieved through the Swansea Working coordinated employment approach and associated employability support programmes of Communities for Work, Communities for Work Plus, Workways STU, Workways Plus and Cam Nesa. There has been an increase in the number of people gaining employment through Employability Support in 2020/21 (453) compared to 2019/20 (354). There has been an increase in referrals into the programmes directly and through Swansea Working referrals in

2020/21 (2,566) compared to 2019/20 (2,113). Since April 2020, 686 people have received support and 281 people have been helped back into employment

- Employability provision has been extended and adapted to continue supporting individuals throughout the pandemic, including the short term unemployed. The Kickstart bid has been approved by the Department of Work & Pensions. Internal and external work placements have been set up and the scheme is live.
- The Beyond Bricks and Mortar team continue to drive forward the Council's Social Benefit policy working across council services, partner organisations and the private sector to secure community benefits are embedded in contracts. Social benefit clauses were recorded in 23 contracts with nearly 3,000 targeted recruitment and training weeks achieved since April 2020. Although the target has been exceeded, the number of projects with clauses that commenced works is down compared to last year, owing to Covid-19 impact related delays on site.
- The overall Welsh Quality Housing Standard (WHQS) programme contributed significantly towards community benefits and employment opportunities. By the end of 2020/21, the WHQS programme created 1,645 weeks of targeted recruitment and training specifically for people who were unemployed and experiencing barriers to accessing the jobs market and 18 people from the local community have been employed in this period. In addition, 18 apprentices engaged for WHQS work have seen their employment continue with ongoing projects. To date, 34 community benefit measuring tools have been submitted relating to work undertaken as part of WHQS.

Leisure, cultural and heritage facilities / infrastructure

- Swansea Council continues to contribute to key attractions as part of a commitment to the health and well-being of our residents and the cultural life of the city. The LC, National Waterfront Museum Swansea and Wales National Pool Swansea make an important contribution to our tourism industry which is worth £440m a year and supports more than 5,000 jobs. The latest tourism figures for 2018 from STEAM once again show an increase on previous year by 3% to £447.74 m. Similarly, there was also a 3% increase in visitors to the area, whilst the number of jobs supported rose by 0.9% to 5,753.
- Challenges were presented and overcome by the easing of and then return to lockdown. Venues prepared for and established the means to reopen, only to be closed down again some months later. Theatre and Events were particularly affected and these moved to online engagement, such as the online Airshow and Christmas Parade, as did a number of talks, workshops, virtual exhibitions and learning programmes. New Websites and platforms were created, including the launch of a new site for the Glynn Vivian Gallery and a whole rebrand for the Grand Theatre, with a much improved website and booking system embracing all venues and events as a 'Swansea Box Office' strategy for digital engagement and sales going forward. One significant development was to take the Grand Theatre content off the current council site and to build a stand-alone website to improve accessibility and ticket sales once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.
- All venues saw work continue behind the scenes, with the Arts Wing being upgraded and a complete refurbishment of the Brangwyn Hall floor. Further support was provided to businesses by way of accessing and promoting Freelancer grants to those in the creative industries and businesses in the city centre and districts to enable outdoor trading, health and wellbeing opportunities – including the creation of 'foodcourts' in Singleton and Mumbles.

- Parklives and the National Exercise Referral programme continued online, drawing praise from partners across the region; funding has been agreed for these to continue next year. Our Sport and Health teams have supported online provision for health, well-being and physical activity engagement on a regular basis via social media and other platforms. A range of free access targeted workshops were delivered across venues for schools, children, young people including NEETS, older people, people with disabilities, BAME and LGBT communities and free drop-in activities for families. Activities include grant funded projects at the Glyn Vivian Art Gallery and Dylan Thomas Service.

Case Study: Loads to do during the lockdown

FAMILIES on the hunt for fresh ways to spend their time at home during the Coronavirus lockdown can tap into some new ideas from Swansea Council's, Cultural Services Team. A new set of resources from libraries, cultural venues and the Sport and Health team, will all be promoted under a new campaign from the council's Enjoy Swansea Bay team.

Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism, said: "Our libraries and cultural venues have temporarily closed and other services have been temporarily suspended, to help keep people safe and protect the NHS, there's still lots of resources available to people to enjoy at home." "The teams across Cultural services have come up with some great ideas and activities that individuals and families can enjoy to exercise their minds and bodies on a daily basis over the next few weeks. All of the details, fun activities, information and fitness tips can be found on enjoyswanseabay.com

- Cultural services teams undertook the management of Covid safe practices in the public realm, assisting the set up and management of pop-up catering facilities, city centre crowd and queue management, signage and destination.
- Community Centres undertook a greater role as Food Distribution Centres and Foodbanks, supported by officers and the voluntary sector. Libraries have adapted to offer 'Click and Collect' services during lockdown. While the free library membership benefit of access to thousands of online resources, including e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, e-comics, newspapers and homework help was widely promoted during lockdowns.
- Key successes for the council's Cultural Services team during the pandemic included reaching out to some of the most vulnerable people. This has included bespoke online gallery tours for those with anxieties, web-based art classes and befriending phone calls for older people, activity packs with online resources for distribution with foodbank parcels and online heritage talks for older audiences.
- The service helped maintain social networks and introduce new community and civic partners to each other. This has included podcasts to introduce local area coordinators to their communities and to introduce business, voluntary and creative freelancers to each other, the promotion of new talent with the Swansea Music Hub and attracting blood donors through the use of the city's art collection.
- Cultural services have also been effective in helping families to home school. This has included providing hundreds of online suggestions for arts activities, workshops, performances and quizzes, and providing route maps with a Dylan Thomas theme to make local exercise more interesting.

Case Study: All aboard for online Swansea local history

Those looking for stimulating lockdown activities can now take a trip back into Swansea's past. Staff at Swansea Museum are hosting a series of online talks about the area's heritage. The first of the Swansea History Talks is online now - an informative and pictorial presentation on the world's first passenger railway, The Mumbles Railway. The 30-minute broadcast by the museum's Phil Treseder includes maps, photos, postcards and memories of the famous line, which opened more than two centuries ago and closed in 1960.

It starts with a description of how the line began at Rutland Street Station, on the site of today's St David's Multi-Storey Car Park and ran to Oystermouth Station (later, Southend and Mumbles Pier), passing through stops such as St Helen's (also known as The Slip), Brynmill and Blackpill. The talks series is presented by Swansea Council's cultural services team and the Fusion Programme, a Welsh Government-funded initiative managed in the city by the council.

- Despite the pandemic many award winning initiatives continued. A project run by the Dylan Thomas Centre for refugees and asylum seekers has won a UK national award. The Literature and Trauma initiative won a prize in the Museum Association's 'Museums Change Lives' awards. The creative writing scheme was named the best small museum project that delivers social impact. Literature and Trauma's workshops allow attendees to feel part of the wider community, to access cultural venues and to orientate themselves in a new city. The workshops have become a focal point and safe space for a committed and gifted group from this often neglected community.

Case study: Anti-slavery campaigner to be honoured with blue plaque

A blue plaque is to be put up in the city centre to celebrate the actions of the campaigner. Jessie travelled to Ohio in the 1850s to operate a safe house, risking fines and prison sentences for offering shelter and protection for slaves as they tried to escape from the southern states to the north of America.

Robert Francis-Davies, Swansea Council's cabinet member for investment, regeneration and tourism, said: "Jessie Donaldson was a great ambassador for Swansea. "We're proud to recognise her achievements as a woman who stood for emancipation, education and freedom for all. It's especially fitting that the city celebrates her life and achievements now as we embark on regeneration and the consideration of our heritage and notable characters that have shaped our understanding of the city's history. "It's especially rewarding to announce one for Jessie this month - the UK's Black History Month. We hope it will encourage more people to understand and to be inspired by her story and those she helped here in Swansea and further afield."

City of Culture and Agenda 21

- The legacy of Swansea's bid for UK City of Culture was active participation in the European Culture 21 Pilot programme. The conclusion of the service's work for the United Nations sustainable development action plan, Agenda21: Culture in Sustainable Cities' resulted in the realisation of a partnership with Race Council Cymru to create a new multi-cultural and digital Hub in the Arts Wing of the Grand Theatre and the commitment to Diversity in the service through a 'Pledge'. This work was recognised by APSE as good practice when the service was shortlisted for their annual Leisure and Cultural Service Team of the Year award; contributing to

the wider set of shortlisted services that placed the Council in the running for Council of the Year.

- The pledge to diversify and recognise all our communities in our cultural programming also set the framework for a review, undertaken by the service, into the city's street and place names, monuments, statues and other commemorations in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign and subsequent Council motion. This Work will continue in partnership with the community, to build a resource for future commissioning and street naming - with the first being applied to the new bridge walkway - Cupid Way - in the city centre.
- Key to the Council's involvement with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is the Council's participation in Europe-wide scheme Culture in Sustainable Cities, which promotes the right to participate fully and freely in cultural life in order for any city or community to be sustainable. This has included using online gallery talks on the theme of the Wales-India relationship to attract hundreds of participants from around the world; they were introduced with live, welcoming views of the city.
- In response to the pandemic, the locations involved in the programme - including Swansea - have regrouped to consider how culture can support cities during recovery from the virus and reinstate its culture in a safe and inclusive way for long term benefits for all; this is illustrated in the Rome Charter, which the pilot cities are supporting.

Case Study: Global audience for Swansea's cultural innovation

The innovative way in which Swansea had adapted its cultural life for lockdown is being discussed around the world. Challenges forced on the city's organisations produced inventive solutions to keep its diverse communities engaged with culture. Swansea Council has been at the forefront of those efforts, with achievements such as new access to heritage, fresh support for online culture and exploring new ways to work in culture.

With cultural venues temporarily closed, council staff have arranged educational and entertaining new content such as podcasts, an online gallery programme and online heritage talks. The city's successes - with others from 50 countries - were discussed in an online event that shared learning experiences. It was arranged by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), a global network of cities and governments.

The new collective knowledge has also been presented at a UCLG international seminar theme of which was cultural rights. The aim is to support creativity and build confidence and cohesion across communities. The programme worked with partners including GS Artists a local artist run gallery on the annual '9 to 90 Creative Community Exhibition' featuring work from people across Swansea. This year's activity attracted 279 entries, including crafts, photography, paintings and prose submitted by individuals, schools, colleges, support groups and adult learning groups.

Fusion also worked with the Dylan Thomas Centre and Swansea University's creative writing department to deliver a six month creative writing project for the second year. Writers of all abilities - from newcomers to lifelong enthusiasts - attended the monthly classes. This year's theme is sanctuary, inspired by Swansea's tenth year as a City of Sanctuary and Wales' aspirations to become a nation of sanctuary. Fusion also worked with Swansea Museum to bring together hundreds of items of Swansea music memorabilia loaned by dozens of citizens past and present. The exhibition '50 years of Music' celebrated the cities musical heritage linking in with Swansea's 50 Year celebrations.

Transfer of leisure facilities

- Prior to and through Covid the leisure partnership with Freedom Leisure has been working well operationally and relationships with the schools are developing and being well-managed. Prior to the lockdowns as a result of the pandemic, the user figures, memberships and learn to swim programmes were at an all-time high, with a city wide approach being adopted by Freedom Leisure.
- Parkwood Leisure Ltd were awarded a 15-year contract to operate Plantasia in 2019. Plantasia remained closed until April 2019 in order for Parkwood Leisure to carry out significant capital works. The revamped attraction now includes Caiman crocodiles, rope bridges, a tree hut high amongst the foliage and interactive waterfall and was well received before the pandemic.
- We have continued to work with Swansea University and our partners to explore the options to deliver an International Sports Village, which has been more recently rebranded Swansea Bay Sports Park and now has a fully integrated booking systems for all associated facilities at the site. Covid has been a significant challenge for the future restarting and medium term business planning for all leisure and hospitality; the Sports park facilities have not been exempt. However, we are committed to ensuring that collaborative work continues to explore all options to ensure that the current facilities remain sustainable and effectively plan for new facilities at the Sports Park with others. We are currently working with the University to undertake an independent review of the performance and operations of the facilities, which will assist in feeding into informing future options appraisals
- Before the pandemic the leisure portfolio estate was in a fit-for-purpose, functional and more sustainable position, with a strong partnership in place making a significant difference in delivering the councils ambitions of encouraging physical activity to improve health and well-being. The past year has been challenging for all parties involved; however all partners have performed well, managed costs and kept them as low as possible, ensuring that staff and customers safety was a priority and that all Government guidance was followed throughout. The aim for the next twelve to twenty four months for all partners is to return to a pre-Covid trading position.
- Financial assistance from Local Authorities has been deemed as critical for Trusts to reopen and support facilities moving forward. Swansea Council has broadly followed WLGA and other advice and guidance as relevant to its partnership arrangements, adopting an open book process through closure periods and reopening phases. Leisure and culture facilities provide vital health, leisure and wellbeing services to local communities and will be a key re-engagement service for those communities post the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Sport and Health service has continued work with its funding partners to deliver key infrastructure. The 3G pitch at Pentrehafod School 3G has been completed and operated successfully until the lockdown in 2020. The facility is accredited to FIFA (World Football Standards) for all levels of play and regularly hosts a range of community bookings Together with Swansea City Community Trust, we remain committed to progressing our plans to improve facilities, including a full size 3G pitch at Bryntawe in Penlan for both football and rugby, in partnership with Education and other key funders. The Team, together with colleagues in Education, continue to support and advise schools with that have ambitions and finance to deliver artificial surfaces in a variety of size and scale at Dylan Thomas, Pontarddulais and YGG Gwyr.

Energy Strategy

- Swansea Council is setting out to become one of the most energy-efficient local authorities in Wales. Over the last decade, the Council has slashed its carbon footprint by 55% but has plans to go even further over the coming years in response to the climate emergency declared by the Council in 2019. This recognised the importance of energy related and other actions taken to date in reducing carbon emissions, enhancing biodiversity and securing a prosperous, low-carbon economy for our region. It also acknowledged the importance of working with expert partners to identify how we can build on these actions moving forward.
- The Energy Strategy, approved in November 2020, is a key means by which the Council reduces its carbon footprint. This Energy and Carbon Management Plan will build on those existing energy saving initiatives and strategies developed from the last Energy Strategy Paper (2016), but focus on the many aspects of energy across the Authority's owned buildings, looking at efficiency, use, building fabric, building services and the management of buildings (including renewable technology options) etc. Moving forward the Energy Strategy will no longer include Highways & Transportation activity; a Sustainable Transport Strategy is in development which will bring together various transport policies. Housing decarbonisation is being addressed via the development of a Housing Decarbonisation Plan.
- To ensure the wider carbon reduction objectives of the Council reach their full potential across the Authority, the establishment of a Climate Change Programme Board was an essential step to bring together the governance of the eight key carbon related strategies under one co-ordinated programme and meeting the aspirations of becoming a net zero carbon emissions Authority. The Energy and Carbon Management Plan is one of the eight key policies: Energy Strategy; Green Infrastructure Strategy; Local Biodiversity Plan; Local Development Plan; Procurement Strategy; Sustainable Transport Strategy; Waste Strategy and Housing Strategy. Roles, responsibilities and policy revisions for each of the key policies will ensure that a consistent approach to the measurement of our carbon footprint is achieved.
- Swansea Council is participating in the Welsh Government supported Re:fit Low Carbon Programme in order to implement energy efficiency saving opportunities in our non-domestic buildings. A £1.3 million interest free loan has been secured from Welsh Government Wales Funding Programme (Salix) to deliver a Re:fit Cymru (Energy Efficiency) Phase 1 project comprising over 18 buildings which is projected to save an estimated 400 tCO₂e every year.
- Work also continued on the development of a solar farm project. Collaboration took place with Welsh Government Energy Services on model size scenarios and financial appraisal assumptions towards the development of an initial 3MW Ground Mounted Solar PV farm. The projected finance model is currently being evaluated; it is predicted over the estimated lifespan of 35 years that 101,302,731 kWh of renewable energy will be generated. This represents 3.6% renewable generation per year based on 2019/20 carbon emissions of 18,757 t/CO₂.
- Support continues for a world-leading Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon, estimated electricity generation of 504,854 MWh, equating to carbon emission savings of 94,913 mT CO₂e. Swansea Council has been working in collaboration with Egni Co-op and has successfully installed 220kW of rooftop Solar PV on three comprehensive schools Pentrehafod, Gowerton and Pontarddulais.
- We have also delivered insulation and energy efficiency measures to benefit tenants of our council housing and promoted Welsh & UK Government campaigns and programmes to increase

energy efficiency amongst private tenants and homeowners, reducing fuel poverty and reducing emissions.

Sustainable and low carbon transport

- A Sustainable Transport Strategy is being developed, having identified the need to collate activity into one document. Current projects already include Green Fleet Strategy, Business Travel Review and LED Lighting Replacement Programme. These three themes will all contribute to our 2030 Net Zero target and are at different stages of development. This approach would allow the Council to integrate and further develop these and other initiatives, as part of one single sustainable travel and transport strategy.
- The Active Travel programme has further upgraded and created six new walking and cycling routes around the County and an interactive route map published to encourage Active Travel as the normal way to get around for local journeys. Work continues to improve routes to encourage use by disabled, older people and families with young children, to encourage environmentally friendly modes of transport and improve safety for all on important routes in communities. The Gorseinon to Grovesend Safer Routes Scheme was completed this year. Future work will ensure dropped kerbs are installed in all highway maintenance schemes.
- Active travel is one of our priorities in terms of enabling residents to choose alternative methods of transport to private cars. The existing cycle network has been expanded to 128km to support the implementation of the Active Travel Act and we have created more sustainable travel networks between residential areas and centres of employment. Swansea Bayways is the name of Swansea Council's active travel campaign and Walk and Cycle Network. This platform has been developed for use by partners and citizens. The 'Share with Care' message part of national etiquette campaign has been promoted this year. The pandemic has stimulated an increase in the patronage of active travel routes.

Case Study: 50 new trees to be planted along new cycle route in Swansea

Fifty semi mature trees are set to be planted along a Swansea road as part of new cycle route plans. Last year, Swansea Council surveyed all trees along Mayals Road - a route known for its tree-lined appearance and out of 127 surveyed, 19 were discovered to be diseased or dying and are now in the process of being felled to make the route safe.

Plans are now in place to replace all the felled trees with a wide variety of semi-mature trees, using Active Travel funding the council has received to create a new safer cycle route along the street. Among the list of species of trees to be replanted are 20 Sweetgum trees and 19 Maple trees of different variety. Other trees to feature in the scheme include Himalayan Birch, Small Leaf Lime and River Birch. The replanting of the trees is expected to be completed following the construction of a 1.6km hybrid cycle lane which is being created either side of the road and will help provide a link between the Swansea seafront and Gower common. The Council also aims to develop a further link along Clyne common and link up the with the Bishopston community, providing a single route between Swansea Bay and Gower. Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, said: "All of our completed Active Travel schemes across Swansea have been developed sensitively taking into account the natural environment."

- Swansea Council has been successful in bidding for the Welsh Government Local Transport Fund, Local Transport Network Fund and Active Travel Fund having secured £12.7million over the past three years; more than any other Local Authority in Wales. We have continued to support the

development of efficient and integrated transport systems, which enhances the built and natural environment and encourages higher levels of physical activity. The County benefits from a particularly good quality strategic network which now bounds the main urban conurbation area.

Case Study: A record £5 million investment is set to boost cycling in Swansea

Swansea Council has received confirmation of £5.1m of Active Travel funding after successfully bidding to the Welsh Government for the money in February 2020. The grant will help to create new cycle and pedestrian routes across different parts of the city.

Almost half of the grant (£2.467m) will help fund the City Centre Links programme - a scheme which involves creating a number of individual sections of permanent cycle way. It will include a 1.4km route connecting the Townhill community to Carmarthen Road and a further 1.2km route at Townhill Road, helping to provide improved cycle links near local schools and other amenities.

The City Centre Links scheme will also see 600m of shared cycle path created along St Helen's Road. The funding will also contribute towards the Swansea Central Bridge, which, when finished will feature cycle and pedestrian facilities and will link up with existing national cycle networks. £1.8m will help fund a series of cycling routes in and around the Sketty and Mayals communities with more than 6km of cycle tracks being created - enabling more than 8,000 households to be within 500m of a safe, purpose built cycle route.

Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management, said: "We are serious about making cycling a sustainable alternative mode of transport for those in Swansea who want to either commute to work or simply cycle for pleasure".

- A street lighting replacement programme had been running since 2011 and the service has upgraded 21,506 lights to LED, which represents 74% of the current estate. In addition to the LED's, 3,854 dimmable SONs (high pressure sodium lanterns) have been installed. This results in a total of 25,360 energy efficient lights (88.13% of the Council's total inventory). These initiatives combined have reduced street lighting carbon emissions since 2010/11 by 4,194 t/CO2.
- 32 fast charging stations for electric vehicles have already been installed in public car parks across the city and part of a new grant (£426,000) will help pay for another 44 charging points at fifteen different locations in Swansea.
- A further bid has been submitted to Welsh Government for funding to develop the South West Wales Metro and the Swansea Valley to Mumbles pilot Bus Corridor Improvement Project in 2021/22. The Council and the 3 other local authorities in the South West Wales region, are working with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to develop agreed bus networks for the region and across Wales. The development of a local sustainable transport policy is underway via the Policy Development Committee process.
- The Council has managed the Bus Emergency Funding Scheme on behalf of Welsh Government for the South West Wales region. It has been responsible for coordinating, reconciling and paying claims from bus companies for additional financial support across the Region during the Covid pandemic. With the redevelopment of the Penderyn Distillery and other sites near Landore, an alternative location for the Landore Park and Ride car park is being investigated. A bespoke park and ride bus service has been implemented for Fabian Way to allow for social distancing between customers. All charges were withdrawn during lockdown periods from the

council's city centre car parks to help key workers who need to leave their vehicles in the city centre.

- The COVID 19 Pandemic had brought about a significant reduction in business mileage and the introduction and (broad) acceptance of new ways of working. The Council's fleet of 750 vehicles is being replaced or converted to be low emissions vehicles in line with the Green Fleet policy effectively reducing carbon emissions each year. Technological advances will be needed to address the needs of large and Heavy Good Vehicles.
- A detailed analysis has been undertaken on the Council's 'Grey Fleet'. Progress had been made in developing an approach to review the use of employees use of private vehicles. Deployment of electric vehicles and initiatives such as car club schemes were in progress. However, the COVID 19 Pandemic had disrupted progress. A 'defined travel hierarchy' has been used to help try to eliminate the need to travel and where necessary minimise the carbon impact. When looking at this type of travel, private cars at bottom of hierarchy and posed a significant cost for the Authority.

Swansea's Coastline / Blue Flag

- In 2019, Caswell, Langland and Port Eynon Bays were all awarded Blue Flag status along with Swansea Marina. However in 2020, the award programme was suspended due to the pandemic. Bathing Water Quality at Swansea Bay based on a prediction model was monitored albeit for a shorter season than usual (22 June -30th September). An overall analysis of the results communicated by social media and public message display were slightly improved on the previous year and generally found to be 'Good'.
- A Consultative study has determined options for improvement works at Port Eynon Bay including toilets, car park and wider foreshore areas. Architects has been appointed to work with local people developing a design concept for a new beach /community centre, survey and assessment work in and around the car park. Preparatory work for the installation of electric charging points in car parks at beach locations including Port Eynon, Caswell, Langland, Bracelet, Knab Rock and Blackpill has taken place this year.
- The Council has secured funding for a scheme that will aim to protect Mumbles from rising sea levels and high tides into the next century. Inspections of the century old seawall has shown deterioration of some sections. Partners Amey Consulting have been appointed to deliver the Mumbles Coastal Protection Project. In addition to improving the sea defences to be able to cope with climate change, the scheme will also enhance the promenade and sea front amenities widening it at pinch points and improving lighting. Studies are talking place to monitor daily sea levels and wave activity to inform the design of the new sea wall.

Case Study: Beaches set to start benefiting from crowdfund project

New initiative Crowdfund Swansea is set to deliver cleaner beaches around the city. A fundraising drive using the scheme has hit its target and now aims to roll out a series of beach cleaning stations. The clean-up network, which will supplement daily beach cleans by Swansea Council and litter picks by others, is being coordinated by Helen Wright, of Kingsbridge, Swansea.

In around five months on the crowdfund website, the project has attracted more than 100 financial support pledges, totalling around £3,360. The support will help fund #2minutebeachclean stations around Swansea Bay and Gower. The stations hold the equipment and information necessary for

visitors and local residents to litter-pick on beaches. One beach clean station is already located outside The Secret Beach Bar and Kitchen, St Helen's. It is being well used.

Strategic Housing and Mixed housing development sites

- The Council is progressing the procurement of a development partner or partners to deliver mixed tenure housing on the Council owned sites, whilst maximising the delivery of affordable housing to meet local need. The Council has also procured a multi-disciplinary team to deliver a masterplan for the regeneration of a large Housing owned site. This work is progressing however the timeframe has been extended as the planned resident consultation events, site visits and surveys were delayed due to Covid.
- The number of additional affordable housing units has increased during the 2020/21 with performance information highlighting how many were delivered through Section 106 agreements, those delivered by Registered Social Landlords and those delivered by the Local Authority. Support for the concept of housing co-operatives and mutual housing continues as per individual requests to Council. Six enquiries have been received to date but unfortunately it has not been possible to progress any at this point, either due to location requirements, or interested parties unable to gain momentum. The Council has explored how co-operative principles could be applied to the Self Build Wales Initiative if interested parties wanted to consider such an option. A new development viability model has been produced to negotiate section 106 agreements, which include affordable housing. Swansea Central Phase 1 includes 33 affordable housing units pre-sold to Pobl. Planning decisions have enabled the supply of circa 200 affordable homes during 2019/20, with a mix of social rented and 'intermediate' (e.g. low cost shared ownership) tenures delivered to meet the variety of needs that exist.
- The Local Development Plan (LDP) allocates various sites for residential development on Council owned land, a number of which are programmed to deliver new homes as part of the ambitious More Homes programme. These vary in terms of size and location and have an estimated capacity for around 550-600 homes. The LDP also includes largescale Strategic Development Areas at Swansea Vale and also on land north west of the M4 junction 46 (former Felindre works), which are being promoted as joint ventures by the Welsh Government and Swansea Council, which have a combined estimated capacity of 1,250 homes. It is anticipated that a minimum of 40% of the properties on these sites will be affordable homes.
- The LDP includes an innovative policy to increase the supply of affordable homes in areas of high need. A total of 6 key sites are allocated specifically for a majority (minimum 51%) of affordable provision to meet local needs in parts of Gower, the Gower Fringe and West Swansea where there is evidence of local people being unable to afford market housing to stay in their communities; these sites have either already delivered homes or are significantly advanced through the planning process.
- A Planning Delivery and Monitoring unit has been established within the Service to help bring forward and monitor housing sites, including: assisting in the early identification of issues and site requirements; engaging closely with developers to identify general issues and/or improve the efficiency of progressing sites; and working collaboratively on master-planning and viability issues to enable sites to come forward in an appropriate manner.

Case study: Self-build homes

The Council is taking part in a trial of Self Build Wales, a Welsh Government Scheme designed to increase the availability of suitable plots and eliminate many of the barriers that put people off. We have identified 3 potential plots for a "plot shop" where local authorities identify potential plots and then make them "oven ready" ensuring all planning and site requirements are in place before they are sold. The self-builder then chooses which home they wish to build from a pattern book supplied at the time of purchase. Successful applicants need to provide a deposit of 25% of the cost of the plot and the Development Bank of Wales provides a loan to cover the balance. Cllr Andrea Lewis said "Self-Build Wales addresses the barriers many people face to building their own homes which is why I am excited about its potential in Swansea. There are also wider community benefits such as bringing derelict land into use and supporting local small building companies and the employment opportunities this creates. There could be potential opportunity for future income generation for the council if this project is successful."

Protect and promote health, well-being, safety and consumer interests

- The Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) has recognised the work of the Council's Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Regulatory Service in the Annual Service Awards 2020 where the team won Best Service Team award.

Case Study: National retailer pays out £31k after food prosecution

A leading discount retailer was forced to remove biscuits and cakes from shelves at hundreds of stores across the country after Swansea trading standards officers found they could put people with allergies at risk. The action was taken after trading standards officers visited stores in Swansea and found the biscuits and cakes did not carry allergy information as they are supposed to do. They alerted the Food Standards Agency and the firm was told it had to check its shelves across the country and remove the goods straight away.

Now the retailer, which has more than 400 stores across the UK, has been ordered to pay more than £31,500 in fines and costs after it appeared in court in Swansea this week and pleaded guilty to nine charges of mislabelling food.

David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Delivery and Operations, said: "Food mislabelling can cause real harm to people with allergies when it's not clear on the packet what the ingredients are. Thanks to the swift action of our trading standards officers we're not aware of anyone coming to harm on this occasion. The size of the fine and costs is important because it sends a message to businesses who sell food to the public that errors of this kind cannot be tolerated."

- The Council has worked to protect the public during the pandemic providing advice to operators of licensed premises, licensed vehicles and at licensed events. While most businesses acted responsibly and abided by the rules, the few businesses that did not comply with initial informal advice were issued with an improvement order and order of immediate closure to enable improvements to take place. In addition to spot visits, an online form has enabled the public to report concerns direct to the licencing and public health teams.

Case study: Babies queuing up to get registered in Swansea

Swansea's busy registrars' service has helped hundreds of babies complete their journeys into the world since the start of the pandemic. After it re-opened in July the service has registered the

names of more than 1,350 babies born since February, with more on the way. Like other council services, the registrar's service went into lockdown in March. It meant the completion of birth registrations had to be put on hold because, for legal reasons, parents have to complete documentation in person with the service. Since the service re-opened last month the registrar's team has been working flat-out with parents to complete the paperwork.

Mark Thomas, Cabinet member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management, said parents of new-borns have been helping out by complying with the rules and booking appointments with registrars in advance.

He said: "The law requires that a parent has to complete a birth registration in person with the registrars' service. Of course that was not possible during the pandemic". Apart from registering births, weddings are now taking place at the register office at Civic Centre under new measures designed to keep guests and staff safe.

5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.

- *A prosperous Wales* – Implementing the City Deal with partners to invest in digital infrastructure and support investment, innovation, growth, jobs, skills and productivity. Building sustainable development principles into the re-development of the city centre by incorporating requirements for resource efficiency (waste and energy), renewables, enhancing biodiversity / green infrastructure and the sustainable use of natural resources that support a productive and low carbon economy and adapt / mitigate for climate change. Maximising benefits from grant funding applications.
- *A Resilient Wales* – Promoting the 'Green Economy' including renewable energy to provide energy security, climate change mitigation and economic benefits. Promotion of green infrastructure methods in developments.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Promoting biodiversity and protecting Swansea's green spaces, including parks for recreation and play and to promote health and well-being. Managing Swansea's coastline and promoting improved water quality and Blue Flag status to encourage tourism, protect the environment and support well-being.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Creating employment and training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in Council contracts.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Giving priority to providing affordable housing.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Improving, expanding and diversifying leisure, cultural and heritage facilities and infrastructure to help boost the economy, promote tourism and improve well-being.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – Building sustainable development principles into the redevelopment of the city centre particularly around resource efficiency and the sustainable use of natural resources contributes to a low carbon economy and adapt / mitigate for climate change. Encouraging grant applicants to adopt green infrastructure measures in building refurbishments.

6. Lessons learnt and areas for development

City Deal and City Centre

- Building on existing relationships with local suppliers, we will reach out to others not currently bidding for work and expand the number of 'Open Days' to encourage local firms to tender for Council works and to encourage supplier feedback. The Council aims to continue the review of documentation and contact design to further encourage SMEs to tender for Council works.

Regeneration

- The pandemic has reshaped the way people live and work. The Council has used evidence and pre-existing trends, combined with Welsh Government Town Centre First principles, to learn from these changes in behaviour. Plans to locate a Community hub in the city centre aim to increase footfall and help bring empty buildings back into use. We've also talked to Council departments, the public and other agencies who have been supportive of an accessible city centre location.
- A re-purposing feasibility study has been carried out to identify opportunities to revitalise the city centre in the wake of the impact on retail from the Covid-19 pandemic. An action plan is being prepared to identify key interventions; this links to the Swansea Economic Recovery Action Plan that was prepared in partnership with key stakeholders and agreed by Cabinet as part of the Council's wider Covid-19 recovery strategy. The Council has also been leading the refresh of the Regional Economic Regeneration Strategy in collaboration with other authorities in the region. This work will be completed later this year and will provide an economic delivery plan to guide transformational project investment in the region, utilising funds from the UK government's Shared Prosperity Funding programme that is envisaged in future years.

Leisure, cultural and heritage facilities / infrastructure

- Joint research was undertaken with Sport Wales, which provides an insight on local projects. This can be used to inform Sport Wales' proposed regionalised approach. Officers are adapting lessons learnt from the execution of other regional approaches and are working with other authorities and stakeholders to design the optimum future model, which will be fit for purpose and sustainable. The challenge moving forward will be to ensure target communities within Swansea are identified and included as a priority within regional plans.
- Many events were cancelled throughout this unprecedented year. All being well, rescheduled programming from last year will go ahead in the following year and fresh opportunities for new events, commissions and a new cultural strategy can also go ahead. The Wales National Airshow continues to thrive as an annual event (notwithstanding Covid shut down). Enhancing the event through additional events monies remains an opportunity for post lockdown, thanks to additional events funding; as does the opportunity to enhance our reputation as host to world class events through our interaction with the new Arena site and the digital asset management. As part of our recovery planning, we are liaising with Welsh Government on Covid guidelines for future events and national and international bodies to be able to safely stage events in the city, as a national host along with other international sporting and music programmes.
- 2020/21 has presented unprecedented challenges for the Leisure and Cultural Sector. Following the first lockdown, team members undertook to support the community, taking on leadership for services to those shielding or without family support; organising food distribution and volunteer responses in the communities. While normal service was disrupted, positive new ways of working evolved as a result, with project work continuing during this period with the third sector and colleagues in poverty and prevention, area coordination and health; these links will be retained and developed post-pandemic.

Energy Strategy

- Reporting of carbon emissions focused on two of three identified scopes in anticipation of delayed Welsh Government reporting requirements. Work on carbon related performance

indicators and measurement was difficult in the absence of agreed standards; no universally agreed models exist for many measures, such as the measurement of sequestration, procurement activity. Work will be needed to retrospectively establish a baseline and assess 2020/21 in line with guidelines published after the year-end and work with Welsh Government and partners will continue to define common measurement frameworks.

- There is a clear need and ambition to support the decarbonisation of the existing housing stock whilst also increasing the supply of new affordable homes. The links between these investment programmes and the post-pandemic economic recovery are clear to see. There is also a need to recognise the significant costs involved and the potential for competing investment priorities within the Housing Revenue Account business plan. As part of the Council's response to the Welsh Government Decarbonisation consultation, strong representations will be made to highlight this issue and request clarity on a Welsh Government funding strategy to assist the Council in maximising the potential benefits; but also in meeting the financial challenges these programmes present.
- The Retro fit at Craig Cefn Parc was completed with a lot of interest from other authorities, several visits carried out to share our experience and lessons learnt. Moving forward, regional group working on Homes As Power Stations and green energy technology will take place to agree the best way forward.
- The Energy Strategy supports 'Growth & Sustainable Jobs', the outcome of which is creating a sustainable low carbon economy with a commitment to 'reduce Swansea's impact on climate change through reducing carbon emissions'. However skills in Green Technology have been difficult to procure or develop in-house even with internal commissioning of training. In future the development of skills to support the green economy both within the Council and in the wider City and County of Swansea will continue to be a priority.

Sustainable Transport

- Swansea has benefited in huge investment on main cycle paths but these have been primary routes mainly. The target is to increase penetration into the residential areas in order to provide infrastructure from within the community. Presently 60% of the resident population is within 500 metres of an off-road cycle route; this is a figure which will need to continue to increase if active travel is to become a viable alternative to the car.
- An audit of all bus services and operators, to ensure compliance with vehicle quality standards and support improvements to access public transport, identified improvement opportunities for bus stops that would benefit in future from having raised kerbs.
- The provision of appropriate charging stations for a green fleet is a challenge. The development of Hydrogen is slow and expensive. As the technology and infrastructure comes forward, the Council can proceed on an exponential curve. Whilst there are currently charging points within depots, many employees take vehicles home; this creates a logistical challenge. Issues such as Council investing in home charging kits could be examined later in the year.
- Metro development will be a long term programme of works, which will contribute towards other 'wins' each year as it develops (e.g. when we consider transport hubs and facilities provided, which in turn supports and promotes active travel).

Protect and Promote Health, Well-being, Safety and Consumer Interests

- Environmental Health Officers in the private sector housing team have been part of the direct Covid-19 response, including enforcement of Regulations and work in regional Test Trace Protect (TTP); this has resulted in reduced capacity to deal with private sector housing work. There have been fewer inspections of occupied premises and although complaints from tenants have been investigated, the majority of routine property inspections have been postponed. Advice has been provided to landlords via website and bulk e-mails and individually in response to specific circumstances. A recovery plan for Service is being prepared but will need to take a longer-term approach before 'business as usual' is achieved.

Tackling Poverty

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective?

- We want a Swansea where having poverty of income is not a barrier to doing well at school, having a healthy and vibrant life, developing skills and qualifications and having a fulfilling occupation.
- We want to challenge inadequate access to necessary services of good quality by targeting resources where they have the most effect, with decisions about that made in conjunction with service users.
- We want all of our residents to have the opportunity and resources to join in with social, cultural and leisure activities and decision-making.
- We want people to maximise their income and get the most out of the money that they have.
- We want people to avoid paying the 'poverty premium', the extra costs people on low incomes must pay for essentials such as fuel and transport.
- We want to ensure removal of barriers to employment such as transport and childcare.
- We want to ensure inclusion of people from Swansea's most disadvantaged communities so that we reduce inequalities between and within communities.

2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.

- Continue to implement the Poverty Strategy and ensure that tackling poverty is everybody's business.
- Support the establishment of a Poverty Truth Commission to bring together key decision makers with people who have direct lived experience of poverty to work together to bring about change.
- Target resources to maximize access to opportunity and prosperity and focus on utilising data to target support, employability and financial inclusion.
- Help to address the impacts of Welfare reform, such as supporting people to claim the full benefits they are entitled to so that they are able to maximise their income and promote access to affordable credit.
- Work with our Health partners to ensure that, through our Early Years Strategy, children in their early years and at Foundation Phase achieve their expected language, emotional, social and cognitive development and are ready for learning and for school.
- Ensure that young people are able to access employment, education or training after reaching 16 years of age.
- Support individuals to overcome their barriers to employment through coordinated person-centred employability support.
- Invest to improve housing and build more energy efficient Council homes and support the building of affordable housing to help meet housing need, reduce fuel bills, regenerate estates and bring wider economic and employment benefits.
- Explore creating our own energy venture to provide low-cost energy to homes helping to tackle high domestic fuel bills and fuel poverty. Support tackling climate change and help eradicate fuel poverty and boost economic development through the ARBED scheme and energy efficiency measures in social housing.
- Prevent homelessness and support people to maintain their tenancies to help provide stability and security for families and communities by implementing the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2018-22.
- Provide art, culture and heritage opportunities in order to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration.

- Continue to implement the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan to promote cohesive and inclusive communities in Swansea.

3. What success will look like.

- Swansea has a corporate and comprehensive strategy to tackle poverty. Success will be judged by the success of work to help tackle, mitigate and help overcome the causes and effects of poverty. Success will mean: starting at an early age to help children meet their developmental milestones and giving young people opportunities for employment, work or training; mitigating the impacts of income poverty; preventing the causes of social exclusion, such as homelessness; helping to mitigate the effects of the so-called 'poverty premium' on housing, fuel and transport costs, and; helping to remove barriers to employment such as unaffordable childcare.

4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.

Tackling Poverty Strategy

- We have continued to implement our Poverty Strategy, which aims to ensure that tackling poverty is everybody's business. Swansea Council's Poverty Forum is chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive and facilitates cross departmental working and development, through the sharing of information and best practice. Work is underway to co-produce the revised Tackling Poverty Strategy that will incorporate some of the lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic and responding to emerging messages about the effects of the pandemic from the wider evidence base.
- This year the Council adopted a new Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020-24 in April 2020 and further embedded the tackling poverty priority into core Council business by developing an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), which aims to assess the impact of decision making on people, including those living in poverty. We have undertaken a range of activities to prepare for the implementation of the new Socio-Economic Duty (2021); including the provision of training and awareness raising sessions and the development of tools e.g. checklists to support decision makers to consider how their decisions might help reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. This year we have also established a Future Generations and Strategic Equality Board which includes the Cabinet Members for Equalities and Poverty to ensure that work around both Poverty and Equalities is integrated and embedded across the organisation.

Swansea's Poverty Truth Commission

- Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, we had been working with partners to develop a Swansea Poverty Truth Commission, which was the first Poverty Truth Commission in Wales. The aim of our Poverty Truth Commission is to place those affected by poverty at the heart of decision making about poverty. Although the Covid-19 pandemic has delayed the pace of delivery, a Commission has been established, which includes a mix of Community Commissioners with lived experience of poverty and key decision makers, known as Civic/Business Commissioners. The Facilitation Team has been recruited and is hosted by SCVS (Swansea Council for Voluntary Service). Work is currently underway to identify the themes that the Poverty Truth Commission will focus on.

Covid-19

- As a result of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, we refocused our Tackling Poverty service and repurposed Council staff drawn from other service areas, which were temporarily stopped or re-focused during lockdowns, to support the distribution of food parcels to vulnerable and shielding people. Over 8,500 residents were identified as part of the Shielding programme and we delivered more than 500 food boxes to shielded and vulnerable people every week during the first wave of the pandemic. We established a food supply and distribution network and supported the expansion of the food bank network in Swansea. In addition, we expanded the Local Area co-ordination network to cover all areas of Swansea and responded to over 20,000 enquiries and requests for help. The Tackling Poverty Service administered more than 40 Food Poverty grants to support the network of food banks and food aid projects across Swansea.

Case Study: #HereforSwansea

Swansea Council's Cultural Services' has been working with colleagues to support those in need throughout the Pandemic.

Supporting the Shielding and Vulnerable:

The new Corona Helpline was established for the Shielding group, consisting of 11 staff from the Library Service, 2 from the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, 3 from the Grand Theatre Swansea, 2 from Special Events, 2 from Swansea Museum and 1 from the Dylan Thomas Exhibition. These were all facilitated to work from home taking calls and signposting individuals in need to the Welsh Govt. food parcel scheme; the Local Area Coordinators; emergency food line or Swansea Council for Voluntary Service.

Assisting those in need

In partnership with the Education Welfare Team, Sport and Health officers supported the free school meals delivery service. Initially this was for families that were isolating or unable to collect the 'grab bags' from school sites; but evolved to home delivery as the lockdown continued. The team looked after the Pontarddulais cluster and also delivered to Penlan, Gendros and Blaenymaes.

The Community, Partnerships & Destination Development Team repurposed their service team to provide support to the community foodbank network via four 'Food Distribution Hubs'; taking receipt of purchased product to ensure the community foodbanks supplies are strong. In the early days of lockdown, following the closure of restaurants, cafes, and drop in centres alongside the placement of homeless and vulnerable individuals in temporary accommodation, they also established links with Matthew's House and Swansea Together, to utilise donations from local cafes and restaurants wishing to donate their surplus product. Matt's House and facilities such as the kitchen at Mecca Bingo, coordinated a supply of pre-prepared meals and essentials such as bottled water to the most vulnerable in the city, enabling them to stay indoors and safe, during the early days of the crisis.

- Research undertaken by the Bevan Foundation (2021) – 'Different experiences of Poverty in Winter 2020' - found that the Covid-19 pandemic was having a significant impact on those already experiencing poverty and was increasing the risk of people falling into poverty. The report found that almost 1 in 4 households had seen their income drop and just over 1 in 3 households had seen their living costs increase. The research also showed that many households had experienced a drop in living standards and had to cut back on their spending. A relatively small but significant proportion of households reported that they had cut on essentials such as food (15%) and utilities such as heating (14%). The report also highlighted growing levels of personal debt and borrowing with 1 in 10 households reporting that they had fallen behind with

one or more bills since the pandemic and 15% of households reporting that they had borrowed money following the inception of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- This year the Council's Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee have developed a Promoting Affordable Credit Policy, which is designed to promote awareness of affordable credit options such as credit unions, warn people against the risks of high interest lenders such as door step lenders and signpost people to impartial debt and money advice services. The Tackling Poverty service has continued to publicise alternative low cost credit options and signpost to debt at "key pinch points" such as Christmas throughout the year. The Council's Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee has also continued to work on a Corporate Debt Policy, which aims to encourage people to engage with the Council at an early stage in relation to debts and ensure that it treats all people with personal debts owing to the Council in a fair and consistent manner.

Welfare Rights and steps taken to address Welfare Reform

- We are continuing to address the impacts of Welfare reform, such as supporting people to claim the full benefits they are entitled to so that they are able to maximise their income and promote access to affordable credit. Our Welfare Rights Team have continued to increase the knowledge and capacity of the workforce to meet the demand for welfare benefits advice and support by providing training on a range of welfare benefits, providing an advice line, holding joint appointments for complex casework and appeal representation. The amount of benefits secured has increased from £1.359m in 2019/20 to £1.366m in 2020/21. The team have achieved a 91% success rate in appeal representation during 2020/21 despite face-to-face appeals not taking place.
- Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Welfare Rights Unit were working in partnership with the Revenue and Benefits service and other services across the Council to target support and ensure that people were maximizing the benefits that they could claim. During 2020-21, the Welfare Rights Team ran a Pensions Credit take up campaign to ensure that eligible pensioners could maximize benefit entitlements. To date, the take up campaign has resulted in more than 240 enquiries, supported 70 claims for welfare benefits which resulted in an average weekly increase of £81.27 and average backdated arrears of £547.52 per claimant.

Case study: Pension Credit take up campaign

This year our Welfare Rights Team, Care and Repair Western Bay and Citizen's Advice ran a free advice to enable pensioners to check whether they were missing out benefits. Research has suggested that 2 in every 5 people who qualify for this benefit, do not claim what they are entitled to and were on average missing out on £39-a-week. The research also suggested that other family members who live with them have also been missing out on other benefits and each additional £1 people receive in benefit is worth £4 to the local economy, helping to support local jobs and local businesses.

One pensioner said: "I only rang up to see if I qualified, I didn't, but my son who lives with me was missing out on £37.50 a week."

Another added: "My daughter, who I live with, has received a 25% discount on her council tax so it's well worth giving this line a ring as we didn't know anything about this."

Entitlement to Pension Credit also entitles claimants to fringe benefits including help with travel costs to hospital and NHS charges, access to a free TV licence, discretionary assistance payments to assist with purchasing one off items and they are automatically processed through the financial means test for Housing benefit and Council tax reduction.

One pensioner who called added: "I've now got some money in my pocket, so no longer have to penny pinch. With the arrears I am going to take my family out for a meal once restrictions have been lifted."

- This year, the Tackling Poverty Service have also worked closely with the Welfare Rights Unit to publicise information on the Council website about benefit entitlements brought about as a result of Covid-19 pandemic. Information was provided in relation to Covid-19 isolation payments, benefits for people with Covid-19 symptoms, benefits for people working who were or are working prior to Covid-19, benefits for people who were not working prior to Covid-19, redundancy, self-employment, disability and other Covid-19 related benefits provided by the Welsh Government.

Early Years

- We have continued to work with our Health partners to ensure that children in their early years and at Foundation Phase achieve their expected language, emotional, social and cognitive development and are ready for learning and for school. Our regional transformation programme aims to integrate Health, Learning, Childcare, Play, and Family Support services into an integrated and seamless approach, which are proportionate to the needs of children, young people and families, from conception until age 7.
- This year, the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the ways in which we have worked with children in their early years and their parents/carers. Working with Health, our regional response has focused on a rapid response of Children and Family Services to lockdown requirements, adopting a risk-based approach to safety and well-being of children and young people, maintaining placement stability for Looked After Children [LAC], collaborative working between Social Services, Health and Education, the use of virtual platforms to continue delivering vital services and support to children, young people and families during lockdown and supporting staff well-being.
- Our work with partners to support children in their early years, which aims to ensure that children have the best start in life and to be the best that they can be, is co-ordinated by the Early Years steering group and led by Swansea University Health Board. We have worked with our partners to implement our Early Years Integration Transformation – Pathfinder programme with a number of pilot projects. This year we have developed a number of pilot projects including: a co-ordinated Early Years Support System in the Llŵchwr GP Cluster area; improved access to Speech, Language and Communication Support through the use of the Wellcomm toolkit; supported the continued workforce development of Health Visitors with New born Behaviour Observation training and wider Early Years workforce with training to support a great understanding of Physical Literacy for Pre-School training, and; supported the UNICEF baby friendly Initiative.
- This year we have also made use of the repurposed Welsh Government's existing Childcare Offer Grant to provide a Childcare Assistance Scheme (CCAS) to enable pre-school aged children of key workers, as well as children identified by Social Services as vulnerable, to access registered childcare. During the operation of CCAS in Swansea, 750 children (of which 8.4% (n=63) were

identified as vulnerable, benefitted from the scheme. We also reviewed the Flying Start Childcare Assistance Scheme and transition out of the “pilot” phase to the Early Years Childcare Assistance Programme (EYCA) to ensure the EYCA programme will be available for children and young people aged 0-16 for 52 weeks and to enable dovetailing to the 30 hour Childcare Offer.

- As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we made use of the Welsh Government’s Child Development Fund to support the initial impact of Covid-19 on children in their early years. The work focused on; support for pre diagnosis, workforce development, training and resources for parents, additional resource for Third sector projects to support children, intensive Early Years support within Schools and the promotion of engagement, bonding and attachment. Work has also continued to support the development of the Early Help Hubs, Jigso and ensuring that children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) receive early, timely and effective identification and interventions and that all environments and services for children and young people are inclusive.

Access to employment, education or training

- This year we have continued to identify those young people who were most at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) and provide them (and their families) with the personal support they require to remain engaged with education, employment and training. The proportion of school leavers who were NEET in 2020/21 was 1.4%, representing a reduction from 2% in the previous year.
- The Cynnydd project continues to support children who are at risk of becoming NEET, providing tailored interventions to individual pupils in key stages 3 and 4 to prevent them from becoming disengaged from learning. However, it is anticipated that the disruption in education may affect NEET numbers in future. A new NEET partnership now meets with a clear aim of NEET reduction. Enhancements planned for the Vulnerability Assessment Profiles (VAP), which are a tool that can help in assessment of future NEET, were delayed due to the pandemic but are now due to take place in Autumn 2021.

Person-centred employability support

- We have continued to support individuals to overcome barriers to employment by providing individually tailored employability support. Swansea Working is a single gateway which co-ordinates employability across associated employability support programmes of Communities for Work, Communities for Work Plus, Workways STU, Workways Plus and Cam Nesa.
- The aim of a single gateway is to simplify access to support for employability for local people who are either ‘out of work’ or ‘under employed’, giving them one place to call and to access support tailored to their individual needs. This year the number of people gaining employment through Employability Support increased to 453, compared to 354 in the previous year. The number of referrals into the programmes directly and through Swansea Working increased to 2,566, compared to 2,113 in the previous year.
- This year we have also been supporting the UK Governments new £2bn Kickstart programme, aimed at supporting young people aged 16-24 into fully funded six-month work placements. Employability staff have been working with employers across the City to promote the scheme and offer assistance as a DWP intermediary partner.

- The number of accredited qualifications achieved by adults with Local Authority support has dropped significantly in 2020/21 (450) in comparison with 2019/20 (1000). This is due to employability/learning programmes being unable to offer face-to-face training for long periods of 2020/21 due to Covid restrictions. Whilst training opportunities continue to be offered online, a number of the awarding body sector specific accredited qualifications require an element of practical assessment.

Energy efficient Council homes

- We have continued to invest in improving housing and building more energy efficient Council homes and support the building of affordable housing to help meet housing need, reduce fuel bills, regenerate estates and bring wider economic and employment benefits. During 2020-21 we have continued to deliver the Council's More Homes Programme, which aims to provide new build Council housing, as well as considering alternative opportunities such as buying properties to convert into social housing and working in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and Private Developers.
- The More Homes Programme aims to provide a 1000 new Council homes and 4000 other affordable homes over the next ten years developed by Registered Social Landlords. The first More Homes scheme of 18 unit development of passivhaus homes were completed in 2018 at Colliers Way - Phase 1. A further 16 new homes at Parc Y Helyg and 18 new homes at Colliers Way - Phase 2 were completed in September 2020 and April 2021 respectively and were pathfinders for the City Deal programme "Homes as Power Stations" (HAPs). These new homes have been built to the Swansea Standard (which uses key principles of passivhaus design) and have been built to incorporate energy efficient measures, such as solar panels and battery-powered energy, as well as the inclusion of swift bricks to support biodiversity in their construction. All new homes built by the Council and Registered Social Landlords will meet the Welsh Government's Design Quality Standards, which includes the Lifetime Homes Standard. This ensures that all homes funded through public subsidy are appropriate for people with disabilities. Work was also been completed on a conversion of a former social services building in West Cross into two new family homes. Work is underway on the construction of a new scheme with further 25 houses in Clase built to the HAPs specification. This will also be the site of a new build Welsh medium primary school, and will provide an opportunity to regenerate the area. All schemes have been designed and delivered by the Council's Building Services team.
- The Council is also developing eight one-bedroom homes at a former Education site in Uplands. Work will also be starting at West Cross, to develop six bungalows and a further ten homes in Clase. All these schemes have been funded through Welsh Government funding to support Councils to deal with homelessness through the pandemic. This funding has also enabled the purchase of 20 1 x bedroom units. Three additional homes have also been purchased and adapted through the Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) and will be used to house families or households requiring adapted accommodation.
- The Council is also progressing the procurement of a development partner or partners to deliver mixed tenure housing on the Council owned sites, whilst maximising the delivery of affordable housing to meet local need. The Council has also procured a multi-disciplinary team to deliver a masterplan for the regeneration of a large Housing owned site. This work is progressing however the timeframe has been extended as the planned resident consultation events, site visits and surveys were delayed due to Covid-19.

- We have continued to invest in the improvement of our Council houses to ensure that they meet the Welsh Quality Housing Standards (WHQS) and have undertaken improvement works to thousands of our homes in relation to roofing, windows, external doors, kitchens, bathrooms, heating/boilers, rewiring, smoke alarms and external facilities/gardens. Although work on the WHQS like other programmes has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, work has continued and good progress has been made. As of December 2020, 100% of Council properties were fully compliant with the WHQS in relation to windows, doors and smoke alarms, 99% were fully compliant in relation to heating systems and electrical systems and 97% were compliant with roofing standards. Major external repairs and improvements were made to 280 properties which includes reroofing, weatherboards and rainwater goods together with insulated render and other insulation upgrades. Other energy efficient measures, such as the installation of 350 high performance combination boilers, have also been delivered this year. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in agreement with the Welsh Government, the completion date for the WHQS Capital Investment Programme has been revised to the 31st December 2021.
- The overall WHQS programme contributed significantly towards community benefits and employment opportunities. By the end of 2020/21 the WHQS programme created 1,645 weeks of targeted recruitment and training specifically for people who were unemployed and experiencing barriers to accessing the jobs market and 18 people from the local community have been employed in this period. In addition, 18 apprentices engaged for WHQS work have seen their employment continue with ongoing projects. To date, 34 community benefit measuring tools have been submitted relating to work undertaken as part of WHQS.
- During 2020/21, we have also provided support for over 170 energy efficiency measures to be installed in private sector homes, through accessing funding to support energy efficiency improvements for low income households from the ECO Flex Scheme (funding provided by energy companies) and the Warm Homes Scheme (funded by the Welsh Government). This has included improvements such as new boilers, first time central heating, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and external wall insulation.

Energy efficiency, fuel poverty and climate change

- We have undertaken a review into establishing our own energy venture and completed an options appraisal. The review concluded that the volatility of the energy market, coupled with price cap makes the option financially unviable. Two previous public sector energy ventures have now ceased trading and been sold to private companies and we have concluded that creating our own energy venture is unworkable for the foreseeable future. However, a further review of options will be undertaken as part of the Dragon Energy Island programme (a revised proposal for Swansea's Tidal Lagoon).
- However, our commitment to provide low-cost energy homes to tackle fuel poverty and climate change remains unchanged and is being addressed through a number of activities we have undertaken to tackle climate change and the adoption of a Climate Change Charter. Work undertaken to produce low-cost energy homes is being taken forward through our More Homes programme and the construction of new energy efficient homes and retro fitting existing homes. Craig Cefn Parc was assessed as an exemplar project for retro fitting; monitoring of energy use continues with initial feedback being very promising. The Swansea Standard continues to be improved with each new site.
- The Welsh School of Architecture (WSA) have been commissioned to monitor all the schemes built by the Council so far to assess how comfortable and energy efficient the homes are and

how the technologies work. We are also working with WSA to ensure that our new build standards are as near to zero carbon as possible and to investigate what we can do to improve this on a scheme-by-scheme basis

- The UK Government and Welsh Government have recently given final approval the Swansea Bay City Deal's Homes as Power Stations project, which represents an investment of £15 million to use energy efficient design and technologies to retrofit 7,000 homes and construct a further 3,330 homes throughout the Swansea Bay City Region. In addition to decarbonising the regional economy and tackling fuel poverty, it is also anticipated that the project will support the development of a regional skilled supply chain to support the transition to energy efficient new build and retrofit homes.

Case study: Optimised Retrofit Programme

Swansea Council was selected to launch the Welsh Government's Optimised Retrofit programme, which forms part of the Welsh Government's Innovative Housing Programme. The programme aims to retrofit more than 1,000 Council owned homes, or homes provided by Registered Social Landlords with solar panels, battery storage, ground source heating and other renewable technologies which create low cost energy and lower the city's carbon footprint.

At the launch, the Minister for Housing and Local Government, Julie James said:

"The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the importance of a warm, secure and affordable home like never before. This scheme is essential to tackling climate change, and driving down household energy costs now and in the future. While we have plans in place to ensure new homes are heated and powered only from clean energy sources, ensuring our existing housing stock is as energy efficient as possible is vital if we are to meet our ambitious target of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 95% by 2050. We've chosen to launch the programme in Swansea after seeing the Council do such a great job in retrofitting similar innovative equipment to their existing housing stock."

Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Homes and Energy, welcomed the launch of the new national programme. She said: "We're thrilled the Housing Minister has visited our completed scheme in Swansea and is able to see the benefits for tenants that new innovative technologies can bring to existing homes.

"Tenants living in these homes have previously had to contend with expensive energy bills due to the absence of a gas supply. The introduction of the new technology in these homes now means our tenants are benefitting from very low energy bills and the homes are also helping to reduce our overall carbon footprint in Swansea."

Prevent homelessness and support people to maintain their tenancies

- A mid-point review of our Homelessness Strategy (2018-22) was undertaken and reported to Council in April 2021. Overall, the review concluded that the aims and objectives of the Strategy remain robust and fit for purpose and good progress had been made across all five objectives, with high levels of homelessness prevention being maintained. However, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a significant change in the way services are delivered and there has been a significant increase in the demand for homelessness and support services.
- Despite increased demands on the service the Council managed to maintain high levels of homelessness prevention. During 2020/21, homelessness was prevented in 69.4% of cases,

which is just below the target of 70% and a significant achievement given the increased pressures on the service caused by the pandemic. A Youth Homelessness Charter has been developed and a Youth Homelessness Pathway co-ordinator is in post. The Bays+ Service have continued to prevent homelessness in 80% of youth homelessness cases.

- During the pandemic, Welsh Government issued guidance to Local Authorities to ensure that all homeless households were considered to be in priority need and entitled to temporary accommodation. This resulted in a significant increase in the demand for temporary accommodation. Working with partners we developed Ty Tom Jones, which provided an additional 20 units of temporary supported accommodation for single people during the pandemic (increased to 24 units in 2021). We also increased provision of adapted temporary accommodation for single people and families and ensured that B&B accommodation was only used for families in an emergency and that the average stay was no longer than 5 days. We also worked to reduce the barriers in access to temporary accommodation by increasing flexibility around accommodating people with pets and as couples and making use of the Prevention fund to support people with the high cost of supported housing if they were not entitled to full housing benefit or Universal Credit housing costs. We also secured additional temporary domestic abuse accommodation with Swansea University between April and September 2020 to ease accommodation pressure during the first lockdown.
- Building on the impetus of working with our partners to increase the supply of affordable housing, we successfully bid for £5.4m from the Welsh Government's Phase 2 Homelessness capital funding this year to increase the amount of one bed, permanent, affordable, accommodation. This will be delivered in partnership with local Registered Social Landlords (Pobl, Family Housing and Coastal) through a number of schemes that will provide between 70 to 80 additional units of permanent accommodation during 2021.
- We have continued to prevent homelessness and providing support to households to maintain their tenancies through our Tenancy Support team and the Homelessness Prevention Fund. Our Tenancy Support team have provided immediate assistance either when moving into a property or to provide "on demand" support to alleviate a crisis situation. The Prevention Fund has played a key role in enabling the Homelessness Service to take direct action to prevent people from losing their homes or by providing funds to facilitate moves into alternative accommodation e.g. through payment of rent arrears, rent in advance, removal costs, bond/deposits etc.
- Throughout the last year, the Council has continued to prevent homelessness and support Council tenants to maintain their tenancies. During the pandemic we quickly determined priorities in response to the commitment that no-one should be sleeping rough and to ensure a throughput from temporary accommodation; allocating Council properties to those most in need. Prioritising and preparing properties and providing furnished tenancies where required.
- We have continued to provide a holistic estate and tenancy management service for the Council's 13,500 Council homes and has been committed to keeping Council tenants safe and secure. The approach has been a continued focus on early intervention, prevention and support to Council tenants to sustain their tenancies. Communications to tenants have focused on encouraging contact as soon as possible if tenants are worried about paying their rent in order that we can do all we can to help, with communication in respect of rent arrears continuing to shift from letters to more person centred approaches; including visiting people in their homes.
- Proactive targeting exercises have been undertaken to identify and contact those tenants who may require additional support including those who could be at risk of possession proceedings if

the pause in possession proceedings (implemented by Welsh Government during the pandemic) had not been in place. Engagement with tenants has focused on understanding the specific impacts of COVID-19 e.g. ill health, loss of employment, financial implications, and then the provision of person centred financial and well-being support, advice and signposting, including, but not limited to; welfare benefits, awards from the Homelessness Prevention Fund, urgent financial support, food support, energy and utilities, debt advice, employment support and physical and mental health support.

- We have continued to work with internal services and external partners, including those in the third sector and Housing Associations. We have continued to take a flexible approach to the payment of rent and rent arrears where we think that will help, working with tenants to make affordable, realistic payment agreements.
- The recommendations of the Housing Commissioning Review have been implemented to transform and reshape service delivery to meet the needs of service users now and in the future, including redirecting resources to meet the ongoing increase in demand in key service areas. A Housing Rents Management Strategy is in development, which supports the corporate priorities and includes a specific objective in respect of supporting Council tenants to sustain tenancies and prevent eviction. Throughout the last year, we have ensured that no one has been evicted as a result of financial hardship caused by the pandemic or otherwise.
- However, the on-going and long term impacts of the pandemic are anticipated to lead to further increased demand on homeless, support and accommodation services, The pandemic has led to many challenges, specifically an increase in mental health issues and substance misuse, a rise in domestic abuse and relationship breakdown, in addition to the inevitable economic impacts, which could lead to further increases in homelessness applications.

Case study: Ty Tom Jones – working in partnership to develop additional temporary supported accommodation during the Pandemic

In response to the COVID emergency, Swansea Council, Pobl, The Wallich and Goleudy came together to rapidly set up a new supported temporary accommodation project, in a condensed timeframe – six weeks rather than the normal 12-18 months to get a project of this scale up and running. During early April 2020, as a response to the Welsh Government’s directive to house all rough sleepers, the Council was placing large numbers in B&B. Despite a good supply of supported housing projects in Swansea, they were at full capacity and due to the pandemic, move-on to permanent accommodation slowed down with significant reductions in new lettings across all tenures. Various solutions were considered to support the response and at this point Pobl Housing Association offered Ty Tom Jones, a city centre building formerly operating as a youth homelessness project, for use as a temporary supported housing project during the crisis. A Collaborative Working Group was set up with the Council, Pobl, The Wallich and Goleudy to develop the project.

Each organisation received substantial internal support (e.g. from their executive boards, Cabinet Members, legal department, maintenance service, procurement etc.) to move things forward at pace and take on board the risks associated with the project. The attitude from each organisation was to do whatever it took to get the project up and running. The additional COVID Emergency Homelessness Funding that the Welsh Government made available at the start of the pandemic was also a critical element to enable the establishment of the Project.

The project was successfully set up to provide COVID safe accommodation for 20 individuals providing them with en-suite facilities and communal kitchen space. Long term funding has now been secured

to ensure the project will remain in place and it has been expanded to provide an additional four units of accommodation.

Art, culture and heritage opportunities to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration.

- This year has presented unprecedented challenges for the Leisure and Cultural sector. During the first lockdown, staff from Cultural Services played a key role in the leadership of the Council's response to the pandemic through the establishment of a strategic group which oversaw several working groups to support people in communities. This included the management of a Shielding List, establishing a Covid-19 Helpline, Foodline and partnership with SCVS, to give support to over 8,000 shielding residents, coordinating daily meetings to support the most vulnerable, marshalling its transport unit and community development team to distribute food and other essential supplies and securing supplier sponsorship and purchasing powers. The response also included redeploying staff to expand the Local Area Coordination and volunteer network coverage across Swansea and launching a volunteer recruitment strategy and training programme to support thousands of individuals who volunteered to engage in supporting their communities.
- During the pandemic our museum, galleries and libraries developed innovative ways of working to engage with a wide range of audiences, providing on-line events and materials, whilst maintaining sites and collections. Our online content has included the development of weekly on-line programmes, lectures, storytelling, looking back at past exhibitions, conservation, future exhibition planning and selecting favourite objects from the collection through videos, tweets and images. We have also facilitated a numbers of on-line workshops and events and joined local, national and international partners to explore and celebrate cultural icons and themes. This year we continued to support LGBT history month, Black history month and Interfaith Week by hosting a series of online events, talks and workshops. We also supported freelancers by administering Freelancer grants to those in the creative industries, and businesses in the city centre and districts to enable outdoor trading, health and wellbeing opportunities – including the creation of 'foodcourts' in Singleton and Mumbles
- Work to provide and promote leisure, sporting and cultural opportunities activities has continued, albeit in different ways throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Our Sport and Health team have supported the emergency childcare hubs, assisting teachers by providing much needed physical activity opportunities for pupils, many of which are of the pupils' own design and ingenuity. Staff have also worked with Child and Family services to increase the well-being of vulnerable children and young people through the distribution of packs of multi-use sports equipment, that could be used and adapted for a variety of games and activities. We have also continued to support prevention through physical activity through the National Exercise Referral scheme and its continuation through remote working.
- This year our work for the European Pilot programme 'Agenda21: Culture in Sustainable Cities' resulted in the realisation of a partnership with Race Council Cymru to create a new multi-cultural and digital Hub in the Arts Wing of the Grand Theatre, and the commitment to Diversity in the service through a 'Pledge'. The pledge to diversify and recognise all our communities in our cultural programming also set the framework for a review, undertaken by the service, into the city's street and place names, monuments, statues and other commemorations, in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign and subsequent council motion. This work will continue in partnership with the community, to build a resource for future commissioning and street naming - with the first being applied to the new bridge walkway - Cupid Way - in the city centre.

Case study: The Sport Diversity Cymru – Swansea Forum

The Sport Diversity Cymru – Swansea Forum (formerly known as the Swansea BME Sports Forum) aims to improve the inclusion of under-represented culturally diverse communities in sport and physical activity in order to improve the long-term opportunities and health outcomes of those communities. Working specifically with community groups, the forum has been instrumental in the development of sporting and physical activities with a diverse range of communities getting involved.

The forum currently has 53 members, with over 100 different attendees over the last 5 years. This includes representation from Swansea Council Sport & Health team, local Leisure Providers, NGBs, Charity Organisations, Coaches/Instructors and community groups/organisations. The forum gives community groups and organisations the platform to share ideas, thoughts and network with various partners in a comfortable, open and relaxed environment. Organisations such as African Community Centre, Renew Mind Centre and Chinese in Wales Association have been regular attendees and beneficiaries of the forum.

The Forum has been successful in a number of funding applications to Sport Wales, which has resulted in a diverse range of people from Bangladeshi, Chinese, Congolese, Sudanese and many other ethnic groups benefitting in getting involved in activities such as football, swimming, table tennis and badminton. The forum has also provided the platform for members to add value to existing projects and activities by promoting inclusion. For example, a multi-sports activity for young children in Brynmelyn Park which is part of the ParkLives programme has recently been established. The forum has also been the platform to encourage those key individuals/projects to be nominated for the Swansea Sports Awards.

The forum has given the platform for members to engage with communities and develop projects and activities. For example, more recently the ParkLives programme has started a multi-sports activity for young children in Brynmelyn Park. The forum has also been the platform to encourage those key individuals/projects to be nominated for the Swansea Sports Awards. To date there has been a respectable number of nominations from BME communities, with the highlight of Christian N’Gossema and Saadia Abubaker being awarded the Volunteer of the Year award for 2018 and 2019. This recognition not only helps the individuals to progress but it also gives the community the impetus to succeed and support their respective communities.

Community Cohesion.

- We have continued to implement the Welsh Government Community Cohesion programme during 2020-21 through a range of regional and local community cohesion activities. Although many of our planned face to face engagement activities with our Equalities Forum have not taken place as planned as a result of the pandemic, we have continued to promote Community Cohesion through a range of on-line events such as National Hate Crime awareness week, Welsh Government Hate Crime campaigns, Interfaith week, LGBT+ History month, Black History month and the Holocaust Memorial day.
- This year we also worked to promote awareness of the EU settlement scheme (EUSS) to encourage EU nationals and their family members to apply for “pre-settled” or “settled status” to ensure that they are eligible for access to public services. We have support the delivery of a number of EU Settlement Information sessions for Councillors, front line staff and key partners. Almost 8,000 people in Swansea have applied to “settled” or “pre-settled” status up to March 2021. We have also continued to work with our local partners including South Wales Police to monitor tensions and hot spots, co-ordinate a multi-agency response to reduce tensions,

undertake preventative work and continue to work with communities to better understand the impacts of Brexit on communities.

- In May 2020 we published the results of a Community Cohesion (Brexit) survey with local residents. The survey aimed to establish a local evidence base on community cohesion and Brexit, explore the views of local residents on the impact of Brexit and to assess perceptions of safety and well-being in communities. The survey found that although almost 80% of respondents had felt welcomed by people from their local community in Swansea, over half of the respondents thought that the decision to leave the EU would have a negative effect on them personally, on their community and felt nervous about their own future prospects with the UK's departure from the EU.

5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.

- *A Prosperous Wales* – Maximizing benefit take up and entitlement and providing a single gateway to employment support.
- *A Resilient Wales* – Build more energy efficient Council homes and affordable housing to meet housing need, reduce fuel bills, regenerate estates and bring wide environmental, economic and employment benefits.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Providing free or low cost art, cultural and heritage events at targeted communities through a wide range of talks, workshops and activities aiming to address health and wellbeing.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Creating employment and training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in Council contracts.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Implementing the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan to promote cohesive and inclusive communities in Swansea.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Helping Swansea's poorest communities tackle poverty by accessing arts, culture and heritage in order to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – Measures contributing to tackling climate change including energy efficiency measures in housing and building more energy efficient Council housing.

6. Lessons Learnt and areas for development

- The Council has made significant progress meeting its well-being objective but lessons have been learnt and there are areas for further development.

Poverty Strategy

- Sustained and focused work is required to ensure a one-Council approach to tackling poverty and cross- departmental recognition to the approach that tackling poverty is 'everybody's business'. It is anticipated that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will have a significant impact on our work to tackle poverty with new groups of people at risk of poverty who have previously not been risk.

Ensure that young people are able to access employment, education or training after reaching 16 years of age

- Cuts in Welsh Government post-16 funding and uncertainty around the replacement of European funding continues to undermine the future sustainability of the breadth of 'offer' to

learners. In addition, more individually tailored support is required to address the needs a core group of NEETs with complex needs. Emerging evidence from the impact of COVID-19 suggests young people will be particularly vulnerable to unemployment.

Welfare Rights

- Research has shown that recent changes in welfare policy will result in increasing number of households being adversely affected by the cumulative impact of welfare reform and at risk of financial hardship. The Council must continue to develop its internal data sharing policies and those with its partners in order to proactively support household at risk at an early stage and to prevent problems from escalating.

Energy efficient Council homes

- Lessons learnt from the first Passivhaus pilot project at Colliers Way have informed the development of the new Swansea Standard energy efficient homes. The Swansea Standard can also be combined with additional renewable technology such as solar roofs and battery storage to further reduce fuel energy costs for residents.

Preventing Homelessness

- A new Homeless Strategy and Action Plan 2018-22 was published in November 2018. Key challenges remain in terms of meeting all priority needs within the current level of resources. Sustained cross departmental working and work with external partners is needed in order to support households with debts and rent arrears at an early stage in order to prevent evictions into homelessness and problems from escalating.

Energy Venture

- The Council have outlined an ambitious and innovative approach to energy ventures within the plan for Dragon Island. Strong Political Leadership and buy-in from Welsh Government and the private sector is required to implement the proposals.

Support individuals to overcome their barriers to employment through co-ordinated person-centred employability support.

- Swansea Working provides a single gateway to training and employment. Engagement with those furthest away from the labour market remains a challenge and further work is needed to remove barriers to employment, such as the provision of sufficient childcare at days and times which meet the requirements of the training and/or employment and the needs of individual families.

Providing art, culture and heritage opportunities in order to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration

- The Council have developed new ways of working and models of delivery with the private sector and the community in order to improve and sustain leisure opportunities. Challenges remain in terms of sustaining the breadth and quality of offering within the current budget constraints. However, the Council and its partners have delivered a varied, diverse and high quality series of

programmes, projects and events over the year and will endeavour to use the opportunities to promote well-being particularly with vulnerable and/or disadvantaged groups.

Transformation and Future Council Development

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective

- We want to modernise and transform the council through our Sustainable Swansea: Fit for the Future programme to help tackle rising demand and reducing revenue budgets.
- We want to modernise services by using the internet, reducing administration and back-office services. We want to generate additional income to pay for services and help families earlier so that we can reduce costs later on.
- We want to improve efficiency and further reduce management and business support costs. We also want to continue reviewing all of our services to ensure they are delivered in the best way and saving money by working with partners such as the police and health, or preventing the need for people to access costly statutory services where need can be met elsewhere.
- We want the public to play their part by co-producing and helping to run services, such as the successful scheme where bowlers are maintaining their greens, or by increasing recycling at home.
- We want more people involved in the Council's business and in making decisions on things that affect them and their families and communities.
- We want to invest in our priorities like the city centre, improving classrooms, improving and extending our energy efficient housing stock, and delivering the City Deal with the potential to create 10,000 jobs.

2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective

- Update the Council's Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future modernisation programme in order to transform services and deliver better outcomes. Develop an organisational culture to support “working together, working differently” and embed transformation, innovation and organisational learning.
- Implement the Council's Organisational Development Strategy to deliver transformed services, so that we have the right people with the right skills.
- Embed equality and diversity into service delivery through a network of Equality Representatives appointed in each service and produce a new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-23 for the Council.
- Review the Council's approach to procurement to secure local economic and community benefits, in line with sustainable development principles.
- Continue to embed a “Digital First” strategy so that citizens can access more Council services and information on-line.
- Promote Digital Inclusion and access online services by providing citizens with lifelong learning opportunities to undertake free computer courses and training.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with other local authorities and partners and share services, including back office, to save costs and improve services to citizens.
- Undertake targeted and effective engagement to develop more collaborative and partnership working with the third and private sectors to achieve the Council's shared priorities and outcomes.
- Review work with communities, organisations and ‘friends’ groups to encourage and enable greater community ownership of assets and services and to ensure their long-term sustainability.
- Continue to modernise public engagement in local democracy and Council decision making through accessible meeting times, web broadcasting, electronic voting and e-petitions.
- Continue to strengthen the Welsh language service and language services generally offered by the Council by providing basic language training for front-line staff.

- Make community budgets available so that local people can decide together with their representatives what their local priorities are.
- Provide the opportunity for local citizens to influence how policies are written and services are delivered through the development of a Corporate Co-production Strategic Framework and a revised Consultation and Engagement Strategy

3. What success will look like

- The Council has services that are sustainable and fit for the future. The Council is financially sustainable and has a workforce that is equipped to deliver transformed services, including in Welsh. People are involved more in Council decision-making and in deciding local priorities and in co-producing and helping to run services and manage assets.

4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked

Covid-19 Recovery and transformation

- In October 2020, Cabinet approved the new “From Recovery to Transformation” report detailing the 3 Phases of recovery from Covid-19 through to the “Swansea – Achieving Better Together, Transformation Strategy & Programme Framework 2022 – 2026”. The Managing the Present and Shaping the Future, Swansea Council – From Recovery to Transformation Strategy, replaces Sustainable Swansea - fit for the future.
- The Council has not only maintained services throughout the pandemic but is already well underway in its recovery phase. Many of the service transitioned to working from home and the many capital and development programmes were maintained through the planning and preparation process to ensure at the first opportunity, and when safe to do so, the projects, plans and strategies were re-introduced and building work began; this ensured that Swansea didn’t fall behind in its ambitions and programmes to make Swansea better.
- A major review of Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future was undertaken in 2020. The review recognised that the programme had successfully delivered the majority of £70m worth of savings and enabled the Council to maintain services, performance levels and protect jobs during a period of austerity. However, there are now new challenges and opportunities arising from the new Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 as well as a changing national political landscape and economic uncertainty, including COVID-19 and post-Brexit risks.
- The strategic aims of Swansea – Achieving Better Together will now focus on:
 - The core purpose of the Council.
 - Transforming services to be effective and efficient.
 - Greater collaboration with other Councils, organisations, community groups and residents, with a focus on regionalisation.
 - Balancing the budget for current and future years.
 - Greater and more meaningful engagements with our residents and community.
 - Meeting the aspirations and targets within the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- Work is ongoing in relation to the continued recovery, refocussing and reshaping the Council and is structured around the following work streams; Care Services, Education and Learning, Future Workforce and Equalities, Community Support, the Economy and Environment. An Organisational, Cross Cutting and Transformation steering group has been established to ensure

that the work streams can interact, avoid duplication and synergies are sustained across the Council. The work streams have been aligned to existing bodies, meetings and boards to maximise the outcomes that each can achieve. Work is currently underway in relation to the first Refocus phase which will set the budget for 2020-21 and refresh the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Organisational Development Strategy

- This year the key priority for our approach to Organisational Development has focused on the impact of Covid-19 on our workforce and the measures we have put in place to support our staff. During the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, a significant proportion of our staff were required to work at home. The Council had already been delivering an agile working programme for several years when the pandemic hit and was well placed to shift to homeworking. However, the shift to homeworking entailed a number of challenges in terms of increasing the pace and scope of our agile working programme including the transition of our Call centres, which prior to the pandemic, had only been Office based. In order to support staff in the shift to homeworking we undertook a number of measures including; the development of interim Home Working guidance and the provision of information and guidance on DSE risk assessments and safe working practices. Staff were also able to collect Office furniture to set up working spaces at home and claim for the reimbursement of ICT equipment to support working at home.
- We undertook a staff survey in the summer of 2020 to assess staff well-being and perceptions around the new homeworking arrangements. The results of the survey showed that the majority of staff felt very positive about homeworking, did not feel the need for ICT training and showed a high level of digital competence. Many staff indicated that they would like to continue with flexible working the future and we are currently working to develop these arrangements in the future as we come out of the pandemic.
- During the pandemic we worked closely with the Trade Unions to consider and consult on HR and Health & Safety issues and concerns. The work included developing an agreement on the management of Employee relations and consultations around organisational change during Covid19, the agreement on additional support to BAME workers during Covid -19 (which has been recognised as an example of good practice across Wales) and the agreement on risk assessments across service areas facilitating the return to services with employees in a safe and working environment. Our Corporate Health and Safety Team continued to provide a range of training activities on-line for staff during the pandemic including a new Manual Handling application and to new staff members within Social Services Domiciliary Care, Residential and Day Service Settings as the social care workforce was increased in response to the pandemic.

Case Study: Psychological First Aid Support Service

At the onset of the pandemic, our Stress Management and Counselling Service changed the Helping Hands service provision into a 'Psychological First Aid Support Service' for front line workers immediately at the start of the Covid -19 pandemic. This entailed retraining over 25 volunteers in a new way of supporting employees, including new processes, procedures and training developed in a very short space of time. From the first referral dated 20th April 2020 to 31st December 2020, the Psychological first aid service facilitated by Helping Hands volunteers and volunteer counsellors delivered weekly support to over 1000 front line workers and managers. Along with the Psychological first aid weekly calls the service also developed online training that could be easily accessed via intranet or sent via email to managers. These training courses and information packs included, stress management, psychological first aid for front line workers, preventing burnout, email stress. The

service also supported private care homes who did not have any form of psychological support for their employees during the pandemic. All front line workers were prioritised for counselling referrals in order to prevent sickness absence.

- Although, our focus has been on developing measures to support our workforce in relation to the implications of Covid-19, we have also been developing a draft Workforce strategy. The purpose of the Workforce Strategy is support the Council's strategic priorities and identify what the workforce needs to look like and how it needs to operate in delivering the right outcomes for Swansea. The draft strategy contains a number of high level themes; Leadership and Management, a Workforce Fit for the Future, being an Employer of Choice and Wellbeing and Inclusion. The draft strategy is in its early stages and the next steps involves a process of wider engagement and consultation with managers, staff, Trade Unions and other stakeholders over the coming months.

Equality

- We have established a High-Level cross Council Strategic Equality group and secured a resource to help co-ordinate and deliver the action plan of the board. We have appointed a Strategic Equality and Human Rights Co-ordinator to deliver our Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24, working with departments across the Council, as well as supporting the Equality & Future Generations Board. The focus of this post is to help embed equalities across the organisation by supporting the Board to enable the delivery of good quality and accessible services to all residents and contribute to the goal of Swansea becoming a Human Rights City.
- Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, we were beginning to revise the terms of reference of the group in relation to the development of the new Strategic Equality and Future Generations Board. Heads of Service were also asked to review membership from their area. The group had also met and were given information on the development of easy read/plan English resources and were in discussions about co-production. Work had also begun in February 2020 about how to directly involve Councillor Champions in our Disability Liaison Forum. However, the Covid-19 pandemic meant that work in this area was temporarily halted as resources were directed to other areas. We are now currently revisiting the terms of reference for the group to take into account the implications of Covid-19 with a view to holding regular meetings as directed by the Strategic Equality and Future Generations Board.

Sustainable procurement and local economic and community benefits

- We are continuing to review our approach to procurement to ensure local economic and community benefits that are aligned to sustainable development principles. All procurement is undertaken in line with Contract Procedure Rules and always originate from implementation of Council strategies and objectives. In particular Our Beyond Bricks and Mortar policy specifies community benefit and social value outcomes, such as training weeks and work placements as part of any planned spend across a range of activities.
- Between April 2017 and March 2021, our Beyond Bricks and Mortar policy has created over 13,200 training weeks and BBM clauses have been incorporated within 86 Council contracts. We have also created over 120 apprentice opportunities across a range of Council departments over the same time period. By the end of 2020-21, our Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) programme had created 1,645 weeks of targeted recruitment and training specifically for people who were unemployed and experiencing barriers to accessing the jobs market. Overall, 34

community benefit measuring tools have been submitted relating to work undertaken as part of WHQS.

- This year we have also been working to embed the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 into all Council procurement. Current discussions are around the methodology and the advantages/disadvantage of using one of the “off the shelf” monitoring tools such as TOMS, the CB Measurement tool or the Public Sector Sustainability Risk Assessment Template.

Case Study: Local Procurement - More Homes Parc yr Helyg

An exercise was carried out on the More Homes Parc yr Helyg contract to establish the distance from site of all the suppliers and sub-contractors that were utilised on the project. The outcome showed that:

- 82.45% of the cost of the contract was procured within 15 miles.
- 83.07% of the cost of the contract was procured within 20 miles.
- 92.46% of the cost of the contract was procured within 50 miles.

This followed a previous project that had a lesser proportion of local spend and the subsequent procurement was amended to improve this, which is demonstrated by the above analysis.

- In addition to the inclusion of community benefits and social value clauses in our contracts, we have also been working to ensure that potential consultants and contractors evidence commitment to, and have company policies in-place for: Modern Slavery, Equal Opportunities, the Welsh Language and Safeguarding (Cohesive Communities). Completion of Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) are also relevant and follow through into the procurement process for larger projects that require Cabinet approval. In addition, larger projects are also required to produce a Sustainability Statement, which outlines how the contractor will meet the Council’s priorities and relevant strategies and policies. We have continued to host Meet the Buyer (MTB) events and this May hosted the first virtual MTB event of its kind in Wales, paving the way for other Local Authorities to follow suit using the model that Swansea created with Sell 2 Wales.

Digital inclusion

- Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council already had an established focus on increasing digital inclusion with Get Swansea Online, which was established in 2013 and aimed to provide free courses for beginners provided by Lifelong Learning. During the onset of the pandemic, there was a need to ensure that both our staff and the wider public had the equipment, digital skills and access to broadband.
- Our agile working programme had already enabled most office-based staff to work from home. Our Digital Services team worked quickly to address any gaps and produced guides and offered support to upskill staff to use all the tools available to them such as Microsoft Teams. The number of chats and messages in Teams increased from 238,000 between January to March 2020 to 715,000 between April and June 2020. We also accelerated work to move all our Calls Centres to homeworking and deployed MiFi devices to staff who lived in rural areas with poor Internet access.
- The emergency call centre was set up in a matter of days, with scripting developed on Staffnet and forms to help staff triage the shielding callers to the food help administration team, SCVS for prescription help, Local Area Co-ordinators, financial inclusion or help to get online as

appropriate. The emergency call centre received 3823 contacts to its closure on 23 August 2020. Local Area Co-ordinators took 22,935 enquiries, the food help administration team processed 850 requests for help and facilitated the delivery of 7,700 Welsh Government food boxes to shielding residents in need, and SCVS had 940 referrals in the same time period.

- Our strategy for assisting residents who were digitally excluded was to provide information and signposting online for those who could access it and self-serve, while giving offline help and support for those who needed it. Schools recognised an early digital gap between pupils who could access online learning remotely and those who could not. Challenges included a lack of suitable devices, no or poor Internet connection and technical issues such as accessing work through different platforms. By June, Welsh Government had funded 450 MiFi dongles and 700 devices to digitally disadvantaged families via schools. This was supplemented by a central resource of around 100 Chromebooks that were deployed on an as-needed basis. Schools also worked hard to provide paper based resources, provided help with technical issues and have also recorded lessons and work through a virtual learning environment – which allowed pupils to engage with learning at a time convenient to the home.
- Our Employability team worked with the Welsh Government to establish an ICT loan project for participants who were receiving support under the Communities for Work/Communities for Work Plus programmes. This scheme enabled eligible participants to borrow ICT equipment in order to search for employment functions. The scheme also enabled staff to link clients with other provision to develop their digital skills further (for example Lifelong Learning courses and other providers, including Digital Communities Wales courses). Additionally, the Council's Lifelong Learning service supported clients to get started via phone.
- Our Life Stages Team also worked to promote opportunities for residents 50+ to get online due to the pandemic through the production of posters, newsletters and messaging for citizens and partners to understand what help and support to get online was available, mapping local and national provision for assisting citizens to get online and stay connected and by linking with Digital Communities Wales to promote their free opportunities to the Ageing Well subscribers.
- Our Life Long Learning Team continued the delivery of its programmes during the pandemic by switching to on-line delivery and supporting access to the courses. During 2020-21, just over 1500 learners participated in 56 courses. Just over 170 learners participated in accredited Learning for Life, Essential Skills and Family Learning. The service also offered a number of free absolute beginners' digital courses through the Learn My Way programme to 181 learners on IT courses for beginners during 2020/21. The service loaned 25 laptops, 17 MiFis, one MiFi booster and 17 iPads to participants who did not have access to the appropriate equipment or access to the Internet for learning. Lifelong Learning staff were also offered training to improve their own digital skills and how to provide ongoing digital and blended learning training. The Lifelong Learning service also introduced daily digital support sessions for individuals during lockdown and provided individually tailored support to just under 100 people.
- During the pandemic, we also worked to promote and improve the digital skills of staff and different teams across the Council. The training focused on the effective use of Teams and Zoom, which included tips on security, running interactive sessions online, organising meetings, assessing needs and ability of clients and gaining confidence in digital skills. We provided training on digital skills to over 200 staff in the Early Help Hubs, Jigso, Play Team, Life Stages Team, Children's Centres and the Family Information Service, in addition to staff from our Third sector partner organisations, which allowed them to reach families and children effectively online.

- A Scrutiny Inquiry that examined the impact our work on Digital Inclusion during the pandemic identified a number of effects from the pandemic, which need to be considered moving forward in terms of reviewing our Digital Inclusion Strategic Framework. These include: a shift towards digital channels by all companies and organisations, e.g. banking has been one significant change for people where all banks were encouraging customers to shift to online banking, with support via telephone as only a small amount of transactions were available face-to-face; greater community and family support to help people get online. As more people have migrated to online channels, skills and confidence will have increased compared with the 2019 data; the profiling of non-users may have changed and this needs more data and analysis.

Collaboration to save costs and improve services.

- We have been working to explore the development of a Public Sector Hub with the potential of a first phase in the order of 7,000m² to be occupied by the Council and another public sector partner on part of the Swansea central Phase 2 site. Since 2019, Swansea Council has been working with the Government Property Agency (GPA) and Welsh Government on the creation of a regional office hub located in Swansea Central North. Swansea is identified as part of the 'Places for Growth' initiative and the office hub is a key project in delivering growth for the city, as it currently suffers from a lack of professional led employment.
- Outline planning has been secured for the site and a feasibility study/RIBA Stage 1 designs are complete. Swansea Central North comprises of four development zones, of which the public sector hub will either occupy one or two of the largest of the zones, dependant on the quantum of accommodation required by the GPA. We are awaiting GPA to secure commitments from interested departments and commence the procurement process by issuing the Request for Information (RFI). Initially, GPA issued the RFI in January 2021; however it was withdrawn from circulation and has not been re-issued because of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it is understood that as part of the 2021 Spending Review, Her Majesty's Treasury ring-fenced a funding allocation for 16 hub projects across the UK, which included the Swansea hub. To access the funding, a hub must secure commitments from 95% of the identified tenants and have an approved business case.

Partnership working.

- The Council has continued to collaborate with other local authorities and partners and have played an active role in regional collaborations for Education (ERW), Health and Social Care (West Glamorgan Health and Social Care Partnership) and Economic Development (Swansea Bay City Deal). The Partnership landscape locally, regionally and nationally is both crowded and complex and whilst there is evidence of some benefits gained from working collaboratively, there also remains a number of challenges for the Council in Partnership working.
- The introduction of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act in November 2019 provides an opportunity to re-think collaborative working for the Council. Part 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("the Act") provides for the establishment, through regulations, of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs). Establishment Regulations have now been approved by the Senedd to establish four CJCs in Wales, including the South West Wales CJC Regulations 2021. The key purpose of the CJCs is to bring coherence to regional governance, strengthening local democracy and accountability by integrating decision making and wherever possible building on existing regional arrangements. The CJCs will focus on strategic development planning, regional transport planning, and promoting or improving the economic well-being of the areas covered by the Principal Councils within the region.

- Work has recently commenced to establish appropriate governance arrangements for the South West Wales CJC. An application for funding to the Welsh Government has been made to support regional transitional planning arrangements and support preparatory work. The Chief Executives of the four Principal Councils are currently undertaking work to develop and establish the work streams that are needed to establish the CJC.

Community ownership of assets

- We have continued to encourage greater community ownership of parks and services and have worked with 'friends of parks' organisations to ensure their long-term sustainability. We currently have more than 30 active Friends of Parks/Open Spaces with a couple of groups undertaking leases and considering a Community Asset Transfer. Financial investment in community centres and parks has been significant over the last two years due to external funding, beyond bricks & mortar, third party investment and that provided by the groups themselves.
- Many of the groups have successfully bid for grants; they are able to apply for funding which the Council cannot. As a result, a large amount of funding in excess of £300k has been obtained to support the parks/green spaces. A memorandum of understanding has been produced in partnership with the groups, which will assist with funding applications. Buildings have benefited from kitchens, toilets, flooring, internal/external painting, windows and general refurbishment; parks investment has been substantial with new playground equipment, MUGAs, events and family days and new trees and shrubs being planted.

Public engagement in local democracy and Council decision making

- We have continued to modernise the scrutiny process and ensure the Council is subject to greater accountability, transparency and scrutiny. Work on a hybrid policy and constitutional changes is being undertaken following the introduction of the Local Government and Elections Wales (2021) Act. Electronic voting has been utilised in Council and Cabinet meetings and work on e-petitions is to be finalised.
- We have also continued to maintain opportunities for public participation in the Council's decision making process. Public question time is now part of all scrutiny meetings. Around a third of all of scrutiny meetings have generated media coverage and almost half of all scrutiny meetings have included public observers. Members of the public have also had input into scrutiny discussions on the Scrutiny work programme. Scrutiny now has input into Cabinet decision-making through pre-decision scrutiny on new Council policy and decision-making and there are active Joint Scrutiny Committee arrangements for Swansea Bay City Region City Deal and regional Scrutiny Councillor Group for ERW School Improvement Consortium.

Strengthening the Welsh language and language services

- Swansea Council remains committed to complying with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) and the Welsh Language Standards. The Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills champions Welsh Language Standards at a Political level and the Cabinet Member for Supporting Communities also supports the Welsh Language Standards through the lens of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act. The Welsh Language Standards are implemented corporately through the Chief Transformation Officer down to services through Heads of Service. Each service area has a Welsh Language Champion as the main channel for information (inward and outward) relevant to their work areas and practices. During 2020-21 all

reports through Cabinet/Council were assessed for impact on the Welsh Language through the EIA process. During 2021-22 the objective is to fully embed this into the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA).

- This year we have proactively recruited and sought Welsh speakers into the Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) team and increased Welsh Language capacity on the Council's main telephone line and face-to-face at the Civic Centre. Our new telephone system has improved resilience and access to Welsh speakers on the Council's main phone number. We have also introduced a new automation project within the Welsh Translation Unit and developed a new complaints system. We have reviewed the central corporate Welsh Language structure to strengthen compliance and created the post of Standards Officer and funded an additional post added to the Welsh Translation Unit to bolster simultaneous translation. We have also developed bilingual applications during the pandemic, including applications related to free school meals, payments to carers and those self-isolating and domestic violence. We also secured a grant from the Digital Democracy Fund to upgrade equipment and software to enable virtual meetings and encourage greater participation including from Welsh speakers.
- We have also continued to promote Welsh Language courses on the homepage of the Council's intranet and in news stories. A Welsh Language Training Group has been established to identify training needs in support of the Welsh language. This has included the development of a mentoring scheme to support Welsh learners. Courses have been run at Mynediad Level 1 (years 1 and 2) and Sylfaen level 2 (year 1).
- We also participated in virtual St. David's Day promotions and a special campaign for Welsh Language Rights Day on 7th December 2020, which involved members of the Welsh Translation Unit recording YouTube videos for dissemination across the Council. Although 2020-21 has been a very challenging year for the Council as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have endeavoured to provide and publish information for both the public and staff in both Welsh and English on the website and the intranet and meet the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Community budgets.

- We have continued to make available dedicated money for community budgets so that local people can decide, together with their representatives, what their local priorities are. We have revised the guidance relating to Members community budgets, which aims to support the delivery of small local measures that are a priority for individual Councillors and their local community but are not funded by any other Council budgets. The scheme provides each Councillor with a budget currently set at £10,000 per annum and has been divided equally between all 72 elected Councillors to use on supporting initiatives within their Ward. Examples of work carried out include repairs to bus shelters, donations to their local schools or community charities, the installation of defibrillators in public places, minor footpath or road improvements, floral displays, tree planting, re-instating or providing extra street lights as well as a range of equipment in local parks.
- We revised the scheme and identified an extra £1m for community priorities and to allow for the funding of larger schemes in communities, such the introduction of zebra crossings, junction improvements and pedestrian guard rails. The scheme ties in very closely to the near £1.5m Economic Stimulus fund, which has been allocated to Swansea by the Welsh Government to invest in improving the look and feel of parts of our city. This year we have made a further £1m available under the scheme, which was ring fenced to improve access to play facilities. A further

£1 of funding has been secured from community groups and other organisations, s106 agreements with developers and Welsh Government play sufficiency grants.

- New schemes have included the refurbishment of existing playgrounds/ equipment, the enhancements of related facilities and the creation of new facilities. The schemes which have been completed include; Golden Grove Playground, Victoria Park, Knoyle Playground, Parc Yr Helig Playground, Cwm Glas Playground, Llanyrnnewdd Play Ground and Heol Frank Playground. Schemes currently under construction include; Gowerton park, Kingsbridge Playground, Montana park, Newton Road Playground in Clydach, Pollys Playground, Port Tennant Playground, Ravenhill Playground and Weig Fawr Playground. It anticipated that at least £36,000 will be spent in each ward across the City and County of Swansea in terms of improving, upgrading and/or installing new play equipment.

Case study: Investment in Children's Playgrounds across the City and County of Swansea

Swansea's Heol Las Park was officially-opened on the 16th Augusts 2021 by Council Leader Rob Stewart at a special community event made memorable day by staging a mini-fete featuring lots of stalls, fun and games for children to enjoy. The refurbishment is part of a Swansea-wide £2m-plus programme of youngsters' play areas across the city that aims to fund schemes in more than 30 parks and play areas over the coming months. The £120,000 Heol Las project was paid for from ward members' budgets alongside a fund-raising effort locally by the Friends of Heol Las Park, which has helped boost facilities children will be able to enjoy for years to come. The play area at Heol Las features a 12m zipline, mini trampoline, swings for infants and older children and a range of other equipment to keep youngsters happy for hours on end.

Cllr Stewart said: "It is great to see all the changes and improvements that have happened at the park. The commitment of the community to helping make the project such a success is great because people will feel they have a real sense of ownership.

"During the pandemic the council made sure play areas were kept open for safe play for young children and they became an important safe haven for young families in a difficult time." Now we are continuing to stand side-by-side with our communities in the recovery, encouraging the spirit and togetherness that helped us all through the difficult times with these exciting new play areas." The Council worked with ward members in the local community to make sure that equipment youngsters wanted was the equipment they've now got. "It's brilliant to see young people enjoying themselves so much today and it makes all the effort so worthwhile. I hope they'll have fun in this space for years to come."

Upgrade work has just started at Ravenhill Park and at the popular play area near Singleton Park's Boating Lake. Work at both locations is expected to be completed in about six weeks. So far upgrades at eight locations across Swansea have been completed, with plans in the pipeline for more in areas including Mayhill, Morriston, Bishopston and Cwmbwrla.

Co-production

- Our Regional Carers Strategy and Co-production strategy for Social Care have both been co-produced. Carers have been fully involved in the Regional Strategy Development Group and our Regional Carers Strategy. The Co-production Strategy for Social Care has also been co-produced with many carers who are part of the Co-production Network.
- Although our work on a corporate approach to co-production was temporarily halted as a result of the COVID pandemic and the re-prioritising of resources, work is now underway to implement

our Corporate Co-production approach across the Council. Members of the Council's Recovery and Future Generations Policy Development Committee (formerly the Equalities and Future Generations Policy Development) have played a key role in the development of our Strategic Corporate Co-production Framework and continue to monitor and make policy recommendations in relation to co-production and the Council's revised draft Consultation and Engagement strategy.

5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.

- *A prosperous Wales* – Supporting and training the Council's workforce to deliver transformed services that provides the most sustainable outcomes for residents.
- *A Resilient Wales* – The Managing the Present and Shaping the Future, Swansea Council – From Recovery to Transformation Strategy underpins our recovery from Covid-19 and aims in order to transform services, deliver better outcomes for residents and achieve financial sustainability with reduced carbon footprint.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Encourage greater community ownership of parks and work with 'friends of parks' organisations to ensure the long-term sustainability and control of parks and public spaces.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Providing the opportunity for local citizens to influence how policies are written and services are developed through the development of a co-production strategy.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Making community budgets available so that local people can decide together with their representatives what their local priorities are.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Continuing to strengthen the Welsh language service and language services generally offered by the Council by providing basic language training for front-line staff.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – Continue to modernise public engagement in democracy and Council decision making through accessible meeting times, web broadcasting, electronic voting and petitions.

6. Lessons learnt and areas for development

Recovery and transformation

- Good progress has been made in relation to developing our Managing the Present and Shaping the Future, Swansea Council – From Recovery to Transformation Strategy. However, challenges remain in terms of delivering our transformation programme at the pace and scale required, whilst the full effects of the Covid-19 pandemic are yet to emerge.

Organisational Development Strategy

- The Council's Organisational Development Strategy has been designed to ensure that the Council has a workforce that is fit for the future. The strategy is an essential part the Council's transformation and change programme. Challenges still exist to ensure that there is sufficient resources and capacity to support formal training and e-learning and a change in culture to ensure that both staff and residents are equipped with the right skills and values for the Future Council.

“Digital First” strategy

- The Council is continuing to roll out its Digital First strategy, which has enabled new ways of working and models of service delivery. However, the Council must continue to ensure that services are accessible for the most vulnerable people and provide training, support and alternative means of accessing services to vulnerable people who have more complex needs and for those people who require additional support to access services.

Exploring opportunities to collaborate with others to save costs and improve services to citizens.

- The Council is continuing to collaborate with others to improve efficiency, reduce costs and improve services. However, the different regional geographical footprints and ongoing developments in relation to local government re-organisation are still hurdles in terms of ensuring that developments are sustainable in the long term.

Community ownership of assets and services to ensure long-term sustainability.

- The Council has made good progress in supporting community groups to run some community assets and services. However, the increase in the number of groups and the level of support required from the Council, particularly with newly formed groups, is difficult for the Council to sustain in the long term.

Public engagement in local democracy and Council decision making

- The Council has successfully trialled webcasting for some Council meetings. However, the wider role out of webcasting, electronic voting and e-petitions is dependent upon further funding and support from Welsh Government.

Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's **Natural Resources and Biodiversity**

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective

- We shall seek across the range of the Council's responsibilities, as appropriate, to maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, and improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment, thus benefiting our health and well-being.
- Swansea is one of the most ecologically rich and diverse counties in the UK. Its unique variety of habitats and species and wonderful range of parks, greenspaces, nature reserves, beaches and landscapes needs to be maintained, enhanced and sustainably managed for the benefit of everyone now and into the future.
- Our future survival and quality of life is dependent on a healthy resilient natural environment and the multiple benefits it provides to society.
- Our natural environment and biodiversity is under threat and in decline due to unsustainable human activities. Habitats and species are being lost at an alarming and unsustainable rate.
- We urgently need to tackle climate change by reducing our use of carbon and by maintaining and enhancing resilient ecosystems and a strong green infrastructure network to help us mitigate for and adapt to the pressures of climate change.
- We have a legal duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and under the Well Being of future Generations Act 2015 (Resilient Wales goal) to protect and enhance biodiversity and maintain resilient ecosystems, and to report our progress to Welsh Government.
- Evidence shows that contact with nature has significant benefits for people's physical and mental health.
- Our future prosperity and well -being is dependent on a healthy resilient natural environment.
- We need to work with nature to improve the quality of our air, water and soils.
- We want everyone to understand and appreciate the unique value and fragility of Swansea's outstanding natural environment and to play their part in looking after and enhancing it.
- Our ambition is for everyone in Swansea to have access to and to benefit from an ecologically diverse, attractive, well managed and resilient natural environment.
- We want to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity so that its contribution to Swansea's economic and social well-being is not lost or reduced.
- We aim to create a greener more sustainable, ecologically diverse and resilient county, where its unique natural environment is recognised as one of its most valued and distinctive assets.
- We have a moral responsibility to look after biodiversity for its own intrinsic value.

2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.

- Develop, adopt and implement a Corporate Biodiversity (Section 6) Action Plan.
- Work with partners to develop and deliver a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Swansea.
- Develop and adopt a Council tree policy.
- Begin to map existing Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision, and identify areas, which provide the best opportunities for improvement.
- Undertake a preliminary biodiversity audit of Council owned land and where possible manage our corporate assets for the benefit of biodiversity and natural resources.
- Work with partners to develop and implement opportunities to enhance biodiversity and improve ecological connectivity.
- Work towards creating a low carbon economy, which promotes renewable energy and takes actions to reduce our carbon footprint.
- Delivery of the Energy Strategy to reduce costs, provide cheaper energy and reduce our carbon footprint.

- Act in response to the Climate Emergency.
- Continue to participate in and support the Low Carbon Swansea Initiative.
- Support initiatives that will increase Swansea's urban tree cover.
- Improve awareness and understanding of our natural environment through provision of information, training and events.
- Provide opportunities for schoolchildren to access and learn about their natural environment.
- Work towards improving access to and maintaining the quality of our parks and greenspaces.
- Continue to deliver a programme of wildflower planting and management.
- Engage with local communities to encourage volunteering and to support them taking action to enhance and maintain their local greenspaces and wildlife sites.
- Take actions that help to control invasive non-native species
- Undertake (selected or targeted) enhancements to greenspace as part of an environmental works programme to meet our commitment to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.
- Minimise our use of non-recyclable products and materials, and recycle more waste.

3. What success will look like.

- Swansea's outstanding natural assets are recognised as underpinning the health, well-being and success of its citizens. Knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and how we can maintain and enhance it is improved and applied. This helps citizens benefit from ecosystem services and the opportunities of a low carbon economy. Trees and other habitat are valued and supported. Biodiversity is maintained and enhanced, our carbon footprint is reduced and resources are used less and recycled more.

4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.

A Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan.

- Swansea Council continues to prioritise actions in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 'Biodiversity Duty' to maintain and enhance biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems. An Action Plan is in development, which includes the steps within this objective; progress will be reported to Welsh Government via the 2022 Section 6 Monitoring Report. A coordinated, corporate approach to biodiversity is achieved through the work of the Climate Change Programme Board. This integrates actions to protect and improve biodiversity across council services and within key policy areas at both strategic and operational levels.

Green Infrastructure Strategy

- Following extensive involvement activity, the Swansea Central Area Green Infrastructure strategy, 'Regenerating our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife' was formally adopted in February 2021. Green Infrastructure describes all the green space, soil, vegetation and water that provide the ecosystem services that make places more liveable. This includes, for example, streets trees, green roofs and walls, natural play spaces, wildlife / nature gardens, pollinator corridors, landscaping, drainage and air quality management solutions. The strategy sets out a vision for the central area of Swansea to be much greener, creating spaces which deliver resilience, prosperity, health and well-being.
- It identifies the benefits and cost-effectiveness of green infrastructure i.e. reduced flood risk, summer cooling, cleaner air and water, reductions in noise, better mental and physical health, gains in biodiversity, reduced CO2 emissions and energy costs and a strengthened economy. The aim is to double the amount of green infrastructure (with the exception of open water) within

10 years to create a distinctive destination city with a high quality environment that is more liveable, better adapted to climate change and better for people and wildlife.

- The Strategy also includes a Green Space Factor Tool. This practical tool is designed to increase the quantity and quality of green infrastructure and maximise compliance to the Welsh Government's statutory Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Standard 2019. The tool is not mandatory but developers will be encouraged and expected to use it as part of the pre-application planning process for the central area.
- This work is already helping to guide developers on how nature can be integrated into their designs including vertical wall gardens, urban allotments and more trees. This strategy has led to the securing and award of £748,000 of grant / investment towards four city centre Green Infrastructure projects. Two new 'demonstration' green walls and a green roof have been created at the Swansea Environment Centre as well as a 'Mumbles to Margam' Pollinator Corridor.
- The inclusion of biodiverse green space is now an expectation in both the planning of new development and the refurbishment of existing buildings and public spaces in the City Centre. This best practice approach developed in Swansea has inspired and is referenced within a new national assessment framework and has led to a Wales-wide programme of investment.
- Work has commenced on a County-wide green infrastructure strategy. This wider strategy will be appropriate for adoption by adopted by Public Service Board partners. Both strategies will be supported by Supplementary Planning Guidance that will set standards.

Council Tree Policy

- The Council has approximately 900 woodlands and tree groups that contain an estimated 250,000 trees and 38,000 individual trees mapped and surveyed in Parks, Schools, Cemeteries, Housing, Land & Highways. Trees are currently managed using nationally and internationally recognised standards and a set of comprehensive guidance is available on the Council's website.
- However in line with a Natural Environment Scrutiny Panel recommendation to 'Develop and adopt a Council tree policy', the Council aims to develop and formalise a tree strategy. This will maintain and expand tree cover; raise awareness of the value of trees; ensure risks from trees are adequately managed; conserve trees of value and ensure that the Council meets its biodiversity duties in respect of trees. It will also include a county-wide survey to identify sites suitable for tree planting. The draft Tree Strategy is to be considered by Policy Development Committee prior to wider consultation.
- Officers have produced a guidance note on planting trees (The Right Tree in the Right Place). The Strategy will take account of draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) consulted on this year and under review. A 'Trees and Development' SPG document was based on best practice and informed by the experience of Bristol City Council, whilst a draft Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands SPG has also been out for public consultation and is under review.
- The Council has continued to implement an Ash dieback management strategy to tackle Ash trees affected by Ash Dieback, a fatal disease threatening the entire species. The fungal disease causes trees to become brittle over time with branches breaking away from the main body of the tree. If they are not identified and dealt with, trees are at risk of collapsing, presenting an immediate danger to the surrounding area. A cross cutting Ash Dieback Action Plan is in place;

over 3,000 Ash trees have been surveyed on public land, many of which show varying signs of Ash Dieback. Council resources are focussed on dealing with diseased trees on public land to reduce the risk that diseased trees will fall on people, property, power lines and roads in future. Online advice has been provided for landowners, householders and businesses with Ash trees on their land.

Case Study: Cherry tree gift brings new cheer to city parks

Visitors to two Swansea parks are enjoying the spectacular sight of 100 new cherry blossom trees. They are gifts to the city from a project linked with the 2019-20 Japan-UK Seasons of Culture. Half have been planted by Swansea Council tree specialists in Cwmdonkin Park, Uplands; the other 50 have been planted in Jersey Park, St Thomas. The trees will be particularly attractive when they blossom each spring. Ceremonies were held at each park to celebrate the initiative. Both took place safely and in line with government guidelines.

Mark Child, Lord Mayor of Swansea, said: "Swansea is a green city and it's getting greener. The beautiful new cherry blossoms emphasise that. "We thank those who run and support the Sakura Cherry Tree Project for their exceptional gift; these trees will provide many years of enjoyment for this and future generations. "The trees will bloom well into the 22nd century and will offer a legacy of friendship between the UK and Japan."

Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management said "We want to fight climate change - and richer biodiversity such as that encouraged by the cherry trees will play a big part."

Urban Tree Cover Initiatives

- Over the last year, the impact of repeated lockdowns reduced the extent to which it was possible to involve local communities in participating in tree planting initiatives; opportunities to involve citizens and local groups were taken forward where possible. The Council continues to work closely with partners such as Coeden Fach, a local and not-for-profit nursery, where volunteers help nurture indigenous trees.

Case Study: New trees boost biodiversity at four city parks

One hundred new trees have been planted improving biodiversity and the wider environment at four parks in Swansea. Swansea Council's Nature Conservation Team secured a grant through the Welsh Government's Local Places for Nature scheme for the work.

It has seen a hundred semi-mature deciduous trees planted across Cwmbwrla Park, Ravenhill Park, Duvant Park and Hafod Park with the assistance of local contractors. Pupils at some local primary schools lent a hand and learned more about the multiple benefits associated with trees, such as habitat creation and carbon capture.

Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, Cllr Mark Thomas, said: "The sites were carefully selected so that the new trees complement the existing environment within the parks and took into account factors such as surrounding existing tree cover, woodland connectivity potential, air quality and natural flood management.

"The Nature Conservation Team also worked closely with ward councillors, Friends Groups and local residents to form planting designs that will be enjoyed by the public in years to come.

- Around the city centre we are creating new parkland, new green areas, planting many more trees and a delivering a huge re-greening programme. The £12 million Kingsway development has resulted in 170 new trees being planted in the adjacent areas. Although around 50 existing trees had to be removed following assessments. The total number of trees in the Kingsway area - more than 220 – is now more than double the number previously there and is boosting biodiversity alongside large areas of grass and scores of new shrubs and plants.
- This investment not only helps combat the Climate Emergency but makes Swansea a pleasant place to live in, work and visit and provides a great backdrop for the new outdoor café culture and increase in cycling. The growing greenery is creating a positive environment, which is helping to attract visitors and business back to the city centre supporting the economic recovery." Green cover in the city is currently estimated at 13% but the Council's aim is to increase this to 26% by 2030.
- Despite the pandemic, further extensive tree planting has been undertaken on Council land throughout the County, including over 230 heavy standard trees and 2800 whips. In March 2020, the total number of trees planted by Nature Conservation Team in parks and greenspaces since Oct 2020 numbered 3400 whips and 100 heavy standards funded by a variety of sources including Coed Cymru, Glastir and Trees for Cities.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard Green Space Improvements

- £1.75m has been invested in maintaining or improving the wider environment of Council owned housing estates during 2020/21; this includes softer landscaping and planting and green space improvements. Much of this work forms part of the Welsh Quality Housing Standard programme, which was delayed and has been extended due to the pandemic. Enhancements to greenspace are part of an environmental works programme to meet the Council's commitment to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and to address deficiencies in access to natural greenspace. Work undertaken on the draft Housing Estate Management Strategy reflects the importance of this work with environmental improvements and their use to engage and develop communities identified as priorities for 2021 to 2026.

Mapping Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure Opportunities

- High level mapping has been completed using a Welsh Government grant obtained for initial ecosystem mapping. This starts to identify areas of poorest environmental quality and prioritise areas for enhancement. Improved monitoring evidence and wider public and corporate understanding of the benefits of ecosystem service provision is helping to put sustainable development at the heart of Council policies and ensure Swansea's unique natural environment is valued. More detailed mapping of existing Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision on a ward-by-ward basis is being planned.
- Mapping technologies are also helping flood management resilience planning, particularly in relation to adverse weather and flooding. The Council continues to work with Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Water and developers, looking to support green solutions to combat flood risk due to local sources, surface water flooding, watercourses and groundwater.
- The Council has worked to be in a position to submit an application to the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) to gain Gower Dark Sky Community status. A pre-requisite for this is the review and adoption of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) relating to lighting within the Area of

Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); this has now been incorporated within the revised AONB Design Guide, which was consulted on in 2020.

- As part of Gower AONBs pending application for Dark Sky Community Award with the International Dark Sky Association (IDA), we are required to undertake annual monitoring of sky quality within the AONB; the latest of these was undertaken on the evening of 9 January 2021. The 2021 results for Gower appear broadly comparable with the results of previous years. These monitoring reports will form part of the Gower AONB formal application for the Dark Sky Community Award.
- Work on the AONB Management Plan was suspended in March 2020 due to the pandemic and recommenced in March 2021 with Natural Resources Wales notified and a revised timeline and process agreed by the AONB Steering group.

Biodiversity Audit of Corporate Assets and Effective Management

- A scheme of work reviewing all council assets in terms of biodiversity has been delayed due to the pandemic. The intention is to set up a task group reporting to the Climate Change Programme Board that will undertake a preliminary audit of Council owned land including a review of all Council owned Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and boundaries. We continue to monitor and survey the Council's biodiversity resource to improve our evidence base and understanding of the benefits. Initial work was begun undertaking a desktop audit of all More Homes sites.
- Despite Covid restrictions preventing volunteer support, the management, maintenance and access improvement to the rights of way network (over 400 miles) and local nature reserves has continued and intensified e.g. at Bishops Wood and Swansea Vale. Whilst heritage, interpretation, access and biodiversity improvements have been undertaken in Clyne Valley Country Park. This has enabled people to more easily visit, enjoy and benefit from their local greenspaces and the wildlife on their doorsteps.

Enhancing Biodiversity and Improving Ecological Connectivity

- The Local Biodiversity Action Plan is due to undergo a review by the Swansea Biodiversity Partnership, which was delayed last year. This will update actions and incorporate new species and habitats declared of principal importance in Wales by the Welsh Government since the last update in 2005. The process will involve working with partners to enhance biodiversity, improve ecological connectivity and resilience and promote the sustainable management of natural resources; this document will become the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Swansea.
- 2020 to 2021 also saw the co-ordination and delivery of the Local Places for Nature programme. This included the co-ordination of events and partnership activities (primarily online) and the facilitation and support of Local Nature Partnership meetings and projects. Projects included tree planting at various parks and other sites, green infrastructure enhancements e.g. Environment Centre Green roof and green walls; support for new tree nursery at Clyne; habitat management and enhancement work such as the removal of Invasive Non Native Species at Clyne; cutting firebreaks at Kilvey and Fairwood; tackling flooding issues at Bishop's Wood Local Nature Reserve; access improvements at Swansea Vale and Swansea Point plus a pilot project with the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre to map ecological resilience.

Case Study: New social media support helps you celebrate Swansea's wildlife

The Swansea Local Nature Partnership has launched a Twitter account to coincide with Wales Nature Week (May 30-June 7). @Swanseanature welcomes and encourages people around the city to share nature stories and photos - and Wales Nature Week focuses on nature on your doorstep and in gardens. There are a number of virtual events and activities people can get involved with online.

Friday, June 5, is World Environment Day with a focus on biodiversity. Its online toolkit shows how you can do your bit for nature. Swansea Council's biodiversity champion Cllr Peter Jones said: "Many of us walk and cycle in our wonderful local public parks and are breathing less polluted air from the reduced levels of vehicle traffic.

"Moreover, bird-song is more audible, especially as we moved a little while back into the breeding season. Birds themselves are more noticeable as we've found more time to stand and stare. In general, we've been able to connect more to the vibrant natural world that we're so fortunate to have here in Swansea. "Biodiversity in Wales, as everywhere, is diminishing and we must do all that we can to counter this."

- Development and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) was adopted in February 2021. This requires the Council to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems. This duty is embedded as an objective in the Local Well Being Plan, is a Priority in the Council's Corporate Plan and incorporated as policy within the Swansea Local Development Plan.
- The SPG specifically focusses on how the Council will follow a "stepwise approach" to implementing the biodiversity duty through its own planning decision making process. It will integrate greater obligations around biodiversity with some major developments approved subject to Section 106 agreements providing financial contributions towards practical on/off site mitigation and/or compensation measures against biodiversity loss and also in support of maintenance agreements.

The Climate Emergency

- The Council's response to the Climate Change Emergency continued to be prioritised throughout the pandemic wherever possible, although some progress was inevitably impacted particularly due to the challenges and logistics of public and stakeholder engagement. In November 2020, a policy review set out how the co-ordination and a focus on key policy areas could be used to catalyse change across Council Services. By grouping key policies into a framework around the well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the Council's Corporate Plan and Sustainable Development Policy synergies and gaps can be addressed.
- The review proposed action moving forward will take the form of two clearly defined work streams designed to meet two interconnected objectives:
 - A Net Zero Swansea Council by 2030: This workstream is co-ordinated by a Climate Change Programme Board and addresses how the Council is making changes to reduce its own in scope emissions. This approach is driven by an immediate focus on action via the cross cutting Energy Strategy, Green Infrastructure Strategy, Biodiversity Plan, Local Development Plan, Procurement Strategy, Sustainable Transport Strategy, and Housing Decarbonisation Strategy.

- A Net Zero City and County of Swansea by 2050: This Workstream focuses on how the City and County of Swansea, its major employers, its citizens and businesses can achieve net zero carbon by 2050. It focuses on partnership working and the involvement of citizens, business and the third sector. This recognises the essential role that the city as a whole plays in tackling the challenges of climate change. Synergies with Swansea Public Service Board's Working with Nature Group's local area objective have been identified and relationships with expert organisations established. Swansea Environment Forum has accepted the Council's invitation to assist in developing its climate action plan, particularly in relation to supporting and facilitating wider stakeholder engagement.

Case Study: Council unveils its Charter on Climate Action

Members from across Swansea Council's political spectrum have become the first signatories of the council's Charter on Climate Action. Other people and organisations around the city will also soon have the chance to sign the charter online. It is a visible public reminder that the Council aims to become net zero carbon by 2030 - and aims to make the city net zero by 2050.

Political leaders were the first people to sign the charter in a socially distanced ceremony at the Guildhall. Cllr Stewart said: "The charter demonstrates this council's commitment to do all we can to help fix the problems of climate change that recent generations have created. "As a Council we've been very successful in cutting our carbon footprint year after year with almost 24,000 tonnes saved per year compared to 2009 emissions - a reduction of over 55%.

"We've been on an ambitious path of carbon reduction since 2012, and are now leading Wales in so many areas of climate change, carbon reduction, sustainability and biodiversity, but we intend to do much more."

- Real progress has been made despite of and, in some instances, because of the pandemic's impact; such as reduced travel related emissions as a result of working from home. We are building some of the most energy efficient Council houses in Wales and retro-fitting others. Our schools are being fitted with solar panels, reducing bills and cutting carbon emissions, over 24,000 street lights have now been replaced with LEDs and we are expanding our network of electric vehicle charge-points.
- Swansea Council runs the largest green fleet in Wales with a rapidly increasing number of electric or hybrid vehicles. Our award-winning pension fund is recognised as one of the greenest funds of its kind in the UK and is on course to cut its carbon footprint by 50% of index levels. While Green infrastructure and technology are at the heart of the City Centre's regeneration and 1.3bn city deal. Procurement contract procedure rules have also been revised and processes must now take into account the Well Being of Future Generations Act, sustainability and carbon reduction considerations. Other carbon-reduction measures being put in place across the council's existing property portfolio include LED lighting upgrades and building insulation.

A Low Carbon Economy

- Our Energy Strategy and the City Deal regeneration are key mechanisms by which the Council works towards a low carbon economy. Projects associated with these, along with sustainable and active travel measures to combat climate change, are detailed within the 'Economy and Infrastructure' chapter; although a low carbon approach increasingly and proactively underpins all our well-being objectives.

- We are continuing to seek opportunities to replace our corporate fleet with Ultra low emission vehicles, which is currently the largest in Wales; Electric Vans (40); Electric car (1) and working with others nationally to urge Welsh Government to develop electric car charging infrastructure. We have begun developing an infrastructure of Electric Charging Points, which includes installation of the first 32 charge points and associated recharging bays installed in 12 car parks across Swansea; all the electricity supplying the pillars will be 100% sustainably sourced.
- We are continuing to implement agile working policies into the long term so that our workforce can reduce unnecessary travel and plans are underway to vacate the Civic Centre and establish a Central Public Sector hub. This process was accelerated with lockdown; staff feedback regarding agile working where appropriate has been positive. We have been leading the implementation of the One Public Estate programme within Swansea and the South West Wales region. As a result, significant interest from public sector bodies has been established on the proposal to share office accommodation and associated services within a Central Public Sector Hub. The development is a key component of Swansea Central – Phase 2 and is aligned to support the development of an agile workforce.

Renewable Energy

- We procure our energy using Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreements via the National Procurement Service (NPS). In 2020/21, 100% of our electricity was from renewable energy sources and work was undertaken exploring green gas options. The Council is also developing the potential for a solar farm to generate electricity that will either be sold back to the grid.

Case Study: Plans to establish a council-operated solar farm at Tir John

The Tir John scheme would see the council selling green electricity generated to the national grid and help reduce the council's carbon footprint by 3% a year until at least the year 2050. The 17-acre scheme would generate 3MW a year and make use of former landfill areas at the site. As a landfill site, the ground conditions are not developable. However, the 'capped areas' areas no longer being used for landfill could accommodate the solar farm.

Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Homes and Energy, said the project would be another example of the council's commitment to playing its part in supporting the provision of clean energy to local communities. She said: "Councils around Wales are accessing Welsh Government funds to develop green energy projects that pay their own way and help cut carbon footprints." "This Solar Farm could play an integral part in our ability to achieve our goal of becoming a Carbon Neutral Council." "Over the lifetime of the project it should generate 101,302,731kw of energy. The Welsh Government has set out an ambition that 70% of energy consumed in this country should be from renewable resources by 2030. This project will help towards that ambition."

- While Swansea's Tidal Lagoon did not meet the necessary value-for-money criteria to secure subsidy support in 2018 and planning permissions expired in June 2020, we have remained committed to the building of the world's first purpose-built tidal energy lagoon. Through the Swansea Bay City Deal region, we established a Tidal Lagoon Task Force which reviewed the proposal. This resulted in a re-imagined concept of an Integrated Dragon Island, which incorporates development of a Tidal Lagoon and a large floating development of commercial and residential accommodation. It includes public sector Power Purchase agreements and has a broad scope including solar, wind and data storage elements.

- In November 2020, Bridgend-based battery storage firm DST Innovations Ltd announced it had brought together a consortium to deliver the project; this would remove the need for large government subsidy. The council is committed to supporting the Dragon Energy Island project, which would be one of the biggest integrated green energy projects in the world.
- The Council has given full consideration to an energy company proposal but volatility within energy market coupled with price cap made the option financially unviable. The previous two public sector energy compares have now ceased trading and been sold to private companies so it would appear the option is unviable for the foreseeable future and this project is now closed; although a further review will be undertaken as part of the Dragon Energy Island programme if progressed.
- Swansea Council was the first Council in Wales to partner with a co-op to install 360kW of solar through the award-winning Swansea Community Energy Co-op (SCEES). A new collaboration with community energy co-op Egni has resulted in the installation of more than 1,000kW of rooftop solar through its pioneering cooperative approach. This included Morriston Comprehensive School and Cefn Hengoed Community School. Pentrehafod, Gowerton, Pontarddulais comprehensives, and Portmead and Glyncollen primaries. Further Swansea school projects will follow and extending the scheme to non-school buildings is being explored. Most of the electricity generated will be used at the schools, reducing electricity bills by £6,200 a year and cutting carbon emissions from the schools by about 1,400 tonnes over the next 20 years. Some electricity will be exported for use in the city.
- Photovoltaic panels have also been installed at the Quadrant, Guildhall and the Council's Building Services Depot at Heol y Gors. Collaboration has taken place with Swansea University to implement new technologies for renewable energy such as the photovoltaics at the 'pod in the park'. Plans are also in place for PV installation on the roof of the new Digital Arena.

Case Study-New green installation set to help power city centre market

Swansea Market is turning to solar power to help the city tackle the climate emergency. More than 40 photovoltaic panels have been fitted to the roof to increase the venue's green credentials. The 80 sq m surface of the panels is expected to provide more than 5% of the market's power - and to reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by three tonnes.

Other carbon-reduction measures already in place at the Swansea Council-run facility include LED lighting in the offices and in other locations plus recycling amenities for the treatment of waste. Robert Francis-Davies, cabinet member for investment, regeneration and tourism, said: "The market is home to more than 100 stalls and, in normal times, attracts many thousands of shoppers every week. "It's a jewel in our retail crown and, by helping fight the climate emergency, it's setting a powerful example to the whole community." The electricity generated by the new panels will feed directly into the market's supply.

Low Carbon Swansea

- We are a founder member of Low Carbon Swansea Bay (LCSB), a network of public, private and voluntary organisations in South West Wales working to reduce our carbon footprint by sharing knowledge, ideas, networks and training opportunities. Low Carbon Swansea Bay is funded through membership subscriptions and sponsorship and is managed by members with support from Swansea Environmental Forum. We are active participants in the Swansea Bay Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle Group. To achieve an integrated approach, the Council works with others

nationally to urge Welsh Government to develop an electric car charging infrastructure. A virtual programme was maintained throughout the pandemic.

Information, Training and Events

- Repeated lockdowns impacted the popular annual Environmental Events programme, with many of the free or low cost environmental events planned having to be cancelled. However awareness raising talks and training have taken place virtually. Interpretation boards help visitors appreciate environmental and cultural features at both community green spaces and key visitor attractions. Internal training for the Council on biodiversity, green infrastructure and Carbon Literacy were trialled online for staff, members and Public services Board partners with funding from Welsh Government, Local Place for Nature and Natural Resources Wales.

Opportunities for School Children

- Disruption to education and pressure on schools and restrictions meant that delivery of projects working with schools and young people was largely not possible. However, where possible opportunities were taken to deliver biodiversity awareness raising projects at 15 schools. Anecdotal evidence suggests that work connecting schools to local wildlife sites may have helped during lockdown as families reconnected with local green spaces as part of their daily exercise.

Case Study: Chalk trails show youngsters the way to lots more fun

City youngsters are getting the chance to add a little zip to daily walks in some of their local parks thanks to a new council initiative. Devised by the council's Parks, Play and Sports Development services, it's called active play and it's all about encouraging youngsters to get out and about in their local parks and have some fun while they're there. Scores of city parks already have children's play areas but now four of them have permanent 'chalk trails' for younger children to have a go at.

Elliot King, Cabinet Member for Children Services, said the chalk trail idea is simple, easy to do and fun for youngsters on a cold, sunny day out. During the Covid-19 pandemic city parks have become both a destination and a haven for young children and their families to get out and about safely and enjoy a bit of fresh air.

"When other activities have been out of bounds due to Covid-19 regulations, our parks and now these trails are an easy way for old traditions to meet new ones families have been creating in a response to the pandemic." We're hoping the chalk trails will help youngsters keep up the new traditions when things start returning to something like normal in the months ahead."

Improving Access to and Quality of Parks and Greenspace

- The Council has mapped access to green space, including access points, and identified opportunities for improvements. The aim is to ensure that at least 75% of the local population live within 300m (5 minutes' walk) of their nearest area of natural greenspace. Work has continued on a green fairness policy. Green fairness is about ensuring high quality green infrastructure and natural greenspace is available in deprived neighbourhoods to help improve resilience to climate change and reduce health inequalities. Nature is widely acknowledged to have helped many people cope and build resilience during the coronavirus crisis.
- The annual programme of wildflower planting and management, which benefits both pollinators and people, was much reduced this year. The timing of lockdown in 2020 coincided with the

time when usually an extensive programme of wildflower seeding and growing takes place. However, late planting still enabled busy areas of the city such as Oystermouth Road, Mumbles Road, the Llangyfelach Roundabout and Morriston Park trail to benefit from bright displays. The Council's hanging basket scheme was popular in 2020 with many households and businesses taking advantage of the service leading to the creation of almost 1,500 hanging baskets as well as lamp-post displays and flower troughs for summer in the city.

- Among the 2020 winners of the prestigious Green Flag Award are six Swansea Council parks including Clyne Gardens, Victoria Park, Brynmill Park, Cwmdonkin Park, Parc Llewelyn and the Botanical & Ornamental Gardens at Singleton. Green Flag Community Award status was also awarded to a number of community run spaces in Swansea including Swansea Canal, Llys Nini and Rosehill Quarry Park. The Green Flag Award is an international mark of a quality park or green space. It is delivered in Wales by Keep Wales Tidy, with support from the Welsh Government.

Engaging and Supporting Local Community Action

- We have continued to encourage greater community ownership of parks, nature reserves and wildlife sites and have worked with 'friends of parks' organisations to ensure long-term sustainability of parks and public spaces. We currently have more than 30 active Friends of Parks/Open Spaces with several groups undertaking leases and considering a Community Asset Transfer. This year, Swansea Council was able to support Swansea Community Farm, the only City Farm in Wales by granting it a new 35 year lease at a peppercorn rent. The volunteer run farm not only hosts a range of animals, growing spaces and a cafe but improves health and wellbeing, builds skills, produces local food and cares for the natural environment.
- Many groups have been successful in obtaining grants as they are able to apply for funding which the Council cannot. Friends of the City of Swansea Botanical Complex were successful this year in raising £5000 via the Council's crowdfunding partner Spacehive. This enabled the group to commission eye-catching, nature themed, steel gates for the entrance of Swansea Botanical Gardens in Singleton Park.
- Several roles across Council services and partner organisations now include volunteer coordination. This involves liaison with all relevant Service Areas, Ward members and external organisations such as Community Councils to encourage and provide volunteering opportunities for adults and children. Co-ordinators also recruit, train and engage with new volunteers. Since the pandemic, requests for help and information from partners and groups have increased relating to environmental volunteering.

Controlling Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

- Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) have been mapped and sites are subject to an ongoing programme of treatment. This year the removal of INNS from Nature Reserves and Council owned housing land continued, supported by grant funding. Species subject to control include Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, wild parsnip and hogweed. A Japanese Knotweed advice leaflet has been produced and guidance and advice is provided on the Council's website. Commercial Services are supporting the marketing, promotion and sale of services that tackle invasive species, such as the Japanese knotweed control service. Advice is provided to landowners in various formats to raise awareness of the problem to help control the spread of INNS.

Case Study: Work taking place to protect sand dunes

Work is taking place to increase biodiversity at the sand dunes near Swansea Marina and to prevent non-native species from damaging the habitat. Swansea Council manages the dunes and has been working with expert botany consultants to increase native sand dune plant species benefitting wildlife at the site. But a number of non-native species including Italian Alder and Japanese Rose have taken root. These are being removed by the council's Nature Conservation Team to protect the dunes by stopping them establishing themselves and spreading. Much of this work is funded through Welsh Government grants for biodiversity recovery and follows detailed surveys by the consultants.

Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, Mark Thomas, said: "The dunes are a priority habitat and part of the Swansea Bay Wildlife Corridor and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). "Unless we carefully manage the site then the non-native species will establish themselves and that could lead to a loss in the native dune habitat".

Reducing Waste and Increasing Recycling

- Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Council recycling and waste teams have ensured kerbside collection has been maintained throughout the pandemic with collections from over 100,000 houses every week. In addition to kerbside collections, the Council also maintained bulky waste services and kept its recycling centres open when Welsh Government regulations have allowed it to. After the initial lockdown was over, there was a surge in demand, which again the Council was able to manage due to the commitment and professionalism of staff.
- Swansea Council met its reuse and recycling target of 64% for 2020/21. Increasing tonnages of waste collected during lockdown is attributed to the increase in people staying and working at home. In September, the annual campaign providing advice for new students 'Get it Sorted' took place with more than 1,500 recycling starter packs sent to rented accommodation used by students in the city.
- We have continued to prioritise cleanliness in our communities. Over the 2021 Easter Bank Holiday weekend, Council teams supported by volunteers had to clear around 12 tonnes of waste and litter from our beaches, parks, streets, the Marina and other beauty spots around the city. The Council launched its hard-hitting 'Don't Be a Tosser' anti-litter campaign in 2021. The 'Don't Be a Tosser' campaign focusses on those dumping litter and asks: 'Why are you tossing litter around here?', to which the answers are 'I'm lazy', 'I don't care about this community' and 'I think other people should pay to clean up after me'. To back-up the anti-littering drive, the Council has also advertised for a partner organisation to provide an additional task-force of officers trained to issue fixed penalties to people caught littering or not cleaning up after their pet.
- The Council is also keen to encourage reuse rather than recycling where possible. As a result our services avoid sourcing virgin materials where possible, reuse parts and offer surplus materials at cost to the public or our partners. Collaborative work has focused on seeking long term recycling improvements and improving the circular economy potential.
- In order to help divert waste from landfill, the Council has been awarded Welsh Government grant funding for a number of projects which increase the amount of products repaired and kept in, or put back into beneficial use. This includes funding to establish repair cafes, a Library of

Things, a textile reuse centre, mobile repair centre, bike repair network and expand the Tip Treasures reuse shop.

- A Repair Café is a facility to run periodic sessions where residents can bring along items which need repairing, and a network of volunteers to do the repairs, if possible, upskilling the resident at the same time. The idea is to build an ethos of repair and re-use rather than discard and buy new. This project is being set up with support from partners Repair Café Wales and Benthylg, who have extensive experience in these areas. A mobile repair café uses a low emissions vehicle and toolkits to visit community locations working with local volunteer networks. These are expected to commence in the Autumn. A Bike Repair Network project is being led by our partners at Swansea Environment Centre who have set up and will maintain bike repair stations located at key community hub.
- A Library of Things is a place where residents can hire everyday items such as diy tools, gardening equipment, household gadgets etc. instead of having to buy and only use a couple of times. The inventory of items are generally items others have discarded, and have been brought back into re-use; this will be located at the Llansamlet site along with a textile re-use area.

Case Study: Waste wood set for new lease of life

Waste wood is set to be given a new lease of life under a £100,000 project planned for Swansea Council's Llansamlet recycling centre. Wooden furniture, doors and worktops, pallets, flooring and bed bases could all be turned into items for sale, offered to volunteer groups or broken up and sold on for sawdust or woodchip. A Welsh Government grant will see a workshop set up alongside the Tip Treasures shop at Llansamlet, from where some of the recycled goods will be sold.

Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management, said the Llansamlet site receives more than 4,000 tonnes of discarded wood and timber a year which costs £240,000 to dispose of. "By creating a specialist workshop to make the most of the wood and timber we receive we'll be able to give new life to wood materials, reduce the amount of waste we have to dispose of and save on costs.

5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.

- *A Prosperous Wales* - The unique natural environment in Swansea and its Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty supports thousands of jobs in the tourism sector worth £440 million per annum to the local economy.
- *A Resilient Wales* - The resilience of our natural environment is improved by restoring degraded habitats and through habitat creation and improving connectivity.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Trees play an important role in relation to filtering air of harmful particulates reducing respiratory conditions, while natural spaces have a documented beneficial impact on mental health
- *A More Equal Wales* - Involvement in environmental training and volunteering builds skills that are accessible to all.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – The social benefits that accompany improving the percentage of tree cover and natural open space within Swansea create welcoming communities where people are proud to belong and experience an improved quality of life.
- *A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language* – Accessible, managed green and beach space offers sport and recreational opportunities while Swansea's physical geography and maritime location have inspired a rich local cultural identity.

- *A Globally Responsible Wales* – Reduces our impact on the planet, moving towards a ‘one planet’ Wales that does not use more than its fair share of resources.

6. Lessons learnt and areas for development

A Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan

- There is a determination that any positive consequences resulting from the pandemic are not lost and that the experiences of lockdown help to inform Council actions on climate change and nature. Embedding positive behaviour change which benefit nature and habitats will be an important element when implementing the Biodiversity Action Plan across services. A number of pilot training courses for Council staff relating to biodiversity and climate change have been trialled with funding from Welsh Government Local Places for Nature and NRW Grants; these can be fully developed and rolled out in future years.

Green Infrastructure Strategy

- The Regeneration Team plan to use the Strategy to advise current and future phases of the Swansea Central Area regeneration programme. The Strategy has been aligned to the Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (SCARF) to reflect this. The Green Space Factor tool is being piloted on the Digital Village Scheme. Partners and developers will be encouraged to use the strategy and tool as a simple and effective means of demonstrating compliance with legislation. It is hoped that an ENRAW Green Infrastructure grant will enable the implementation of work to map existing Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision and identify areas, which provide the best opportunities for improvement.

Council Tree policy

- A Corporate Tree Strategy has been drafted ready for consultation at the appropriate time in line with other linked activity. However, resource issues are likely to continue to be challenging due to the onerous demands of the Ash die back situation on internal and external capacity relating to this specialist area.

Urban Tree Cover Initiatives

- While a high level of tree planting took place across council land, only 232 trees were planted in Swansea parks due to the impact of lockdown on the service; this was a significant decrease on previous years and planned workstream. Every opportunity will be taken to plant trees moving forward where appropriate in Swansea Parks.

Mapping Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure Opportunities

- We plan to take forward the development of ecosystem and biodiversity maps at a ward level in consultation with local residents, Friends of groups and Members and identify opportunities for enhancement. We will continue to work with all service areas and partners to develop a high level map of the County's existing ecosystems services and the potential green infrastructure opportunities, deficiencies and constraints. This will help to inform the development of the County Wide Green Infrastructure Strategy Biodiversity Audit of Corporate Assets and Effective Management

- As part of a collaboration between the Nature Conservation Team and Pollution Control, the installation of a 'Green Screen' along Fabian Way (junction of Port Tennant Road) took place in March 2020. Analysis of the data is taking place to assess whether the installation has had an impact on air quality and noise and appropriate follow up measures will be determined.
- Future development opportunity to use Traffic counter / traffic flow data: Capability exists to look into specific days/events and the effect of higher density traffic on the data. Swansea University plan to research major events in Swansea, and any subsequent impact on air quality.

Enhancing biodiversity and improving ecological connectivity.

- There is a need for greater public awareness of initiatives, for example there is a relatively low awareness of the Mumbles to Margam pollinator corridor; this will be addressed via development of a biodiversity communications plan. During lockdown, an increase in wildlife sightings by the public were reported; this has been partly attributed to a reduction in verge and grass cutting. The Council is hoping to encourage these outcomes by investing in 'cut and collect' equipment. The latest guidance from Plantlife recommends a two-cut management programme that allows flowers to complete their full lifecycle rather than being cut down in their prime before they can set seed. The less and later, two-cut approach will replenish the seed bank, restore floral diversity, save councils money and provide pollinator habitat across the county. Work will continue to identify those locations in Council ownership that can be given over to self-seeding, less intensive mowing and/or seeding with perennial species mixes.

The Climate Emergency

- Swansea Rural Development Programme has set up a Local Action Group made up of people from the third, private and public sector. Its governing document the 'Local Delivery Strategy' now incorporates One Planet principles to address climate change, by placing sustainability and community resilience as the fundamental element of our work.
- This is the first time any local authority LAG has used the One Planet approach in Wales to affect strategy and grant making decisions. It is a new way of working and thinking, which will also be required from those who wish to partner or benefit from the £160,000 fund it manages with Swansea RDP. This acknowledges Swansea Council's declaration of a climate emergency and the urgent need for everyone to change tack away from 'business as usual' to a way of doing things to protect the lives of future generations. Successes of earlier funding rounds have included schemes that led to a plastic-free community group and shop in Pennard and to Wales' first community solar farm. It built on this experience to support social enterprises, the countryside and communities in rural areas by encouraging new ideas and ways of working to address energy efficiency, sustainable transport and schemes that grow the green economy through community initiatives and skills development.

A low carbon economy

- The City & County of Swansea Pension Fund has successfully adopted its Responsible Investment and Climate Risk Policy; this has also informed and influenced a positive change across fellow Welsh local government pension service providers. The Pension Fund is now considering if there is scope to broaden this review further, to include other Environment, Social and Governance related aspects such as human rights, labour rights, governance, etc. This would work in a similar way to the process followed in the analysis resulting in a climate risk policy; by examining the

Fund's underlying holdings compared to a broader universe using a provider's underlying scoring.

- The move to greatly increased agile working accelerated by the pandemic has resulted in reductions in carbon emissions resulting from travel that the Council is keen to take forward working with staff and unions with the development of a new agile working policy. The move to paperless office has also accelerated with development work undertaken to further the use of online signatures etc.; this will be rolled out across suppliers and partners.
- The Council works with the local community to help maintain environmental assets. However, active, committed volunteers are only one part of a solution, which also requires equipment, supervision, training and transport costs. As a result, while the wider benefits to individuals and the local community are significant, valuable and the local impacts critical, organisational resources are still needed to maintain the majority of our environmental assets.

Renewable Energy

- Swansea has benefited from first mover advantage in adopting community energy schemes and in schemes around energy generation and storage in housing. The Council is supportive of emerging green technologies and looks forward to taking advantage of opportunities relating to alternative energy such as hydrogen in future.

Information, Training and Event

- Lessons have been learnt from the pandemic about social media and online methods to augment standard communications tools for engaging with the public and environmental voluntary groups, etc. The Environmental Events publication will be in environmentally friendly online format as a result next year.

Improving Access to and Quality of Parks and Greenspace

- Work on a green fairness policy, which aimed to ensure access to green space in disadvantaged areas, encountered issues related to the cross cutting nature of the work. Increased collaborative working and shared accountability will be needed to explore fairness in green health policy development moving forward. Opportunities exist to explore shared gardens and community garden policy options supporting and learning from work of projects, such as Room to Grow and Lend and Tend.

Engaging and Supporting Local Community Action

- Despite the impact of the pandemic, considerable support for, and collaboration with, community groups and other partners has been maintained and increased over the past year. This includes support for the Swansea Local Nature Partnership, Clyne Community Volunteers, Rosehill Quarry, various Friends of Parks Groups, the Environment Centre, etc. There will be capacity to increase this work if and when the ENRAW GI grant is available in 2021. This will enable greater engagement with local communities to encourage volunteering and to support them taking action to enhance and maintain and enjoy their local greenspaces and wildlife sites.

Reducing Waste and Increasing Recycling

- While online services have been available for some time, lockdown has helped raise awareness and use of automated online services. Online requests and reports around recycling increased substantially with bag requests jumping from a total of 7,800 in January - March 2020 to 16,496 from April - June 2020 and online bookings for recycling centres. The challenge moving forward is to retain and expand on this behaviour change in future years.
- A year-long pilot recycling scheme launched in Swansea city centre in 2019 has been completed. The joint partnership between the Council, environmental charity Hubbub and the Swansea Environment Centre led to the launch of the #intheloop recycling initiative with the introduction of 119 revamped recycling points around the city centre, promoting better use of litter bins with a separate section for glass, metal cans and plastic. Shoppers in the city centre helped Swansea Council recycle more than 145,000 recyclable items over the trial period including plastic and glass bottles, cans and coffee cups and reduce contamination rates by 30%.
- Shoppers will also have witnessed the appearance of an unusual art installation during the pilot scheme where a giant wave made out of used recyclable items was on display - made up of bottles and other items and showed how much recyclable material goes to waste every twenty seconds in the UK.
- The benefits of increased recycling opportunities and disadvantages in terms of greater levels of contamination preventing recycling will be evaluated and future actions informed by results.

Part 2: How we have worked when taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective

- This part of the Review will set out how the Council has worked when meeting the steps to deliver its Well-being Objectives in line with the sustainability principles (5 ways of working) set out within the Act.

Addressing long-term challenges

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - An ageing population represents a significant increase in the demand for health and social care services. We will address this by working towards a financially sustainable position, delivering on agreed savings targets and delivering priorities identified by our established improvement programmes.
- *Improving Education & Skills* - Continuing at pace with the transformation of our school estates to meet current and future demand.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* – Maintained the Council's many capital and development programmes and reintroduced building work on key sites at the first opportunity and when safe to do so. This ensured that Swansea didn't fall behind in its long term ambition and positioned the City Centre for long term economic recovery.
- *Tackling Poverty* – using the Swansea Standard to construct new homes and retrofitting existing home with energy efficient measures will contribute the reduction of Swansea's carbon footprint.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - developing the Council's Organisational Development Strategy to ensure that the Council has a workforce that is fit for the future.

- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - Our well-being, prosperity, quality of life and future survival is dependent on a healthy resilient natural environment and stable climate. We are worked to better understand our carbon footprint, in line with emerging guidance for public sector greenhouse emissions reporting. We have reviewed council policies in relation to climate change and are integrating adaptation and mitigation strategies to inform all future work programmes between 2021 and 2030.

Preventing problems from occurring or getting worse

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - by managing demand effectively and implementing Swansea's Corporate Prevention strategy and through our Sustainable Swansea Programme.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – ensuring that emotional health and well-being is at the centre of our recovery from Covid-19 and that learners are equipped and well placed to fulfil their full potential.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - Climate change and loss of biodiversity have been mitigated and adaptation measures taken by prioritising and investing in Green Infrastructure and low carbon design. This offers a preventative approach in reducing our carbon emissions and improves the economic prospects of the city centre by repurposing the area as a green destination.
- *Tackling Poverty* – continuing to focus on prevention of homelessness by encouraging residents to engage with our Tenancy Support Unit and Housing Options Service at an early stage, using a psychologically informed approach to deal with Council tenant rent arrears and making innovative use of the Prevention Fund to support tenants in the privately rented sector.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - developing our procurement approach, which incorporates community benefit and social value clause which provides opportunities for unemployed people in the local area to undertake training and secure employment.
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - In order to understand long term impacts and protect our environment and heritage for future generations, measures have been put in place and studies commissioned to measure and take action to reduce visitor impacts on biodiversity and the historic landscape, e.g. at Cefn Bryn and Port Eynon.

Working in partnership with others

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - through our new regional partnership arrangements to achieve collocation and integrated health and social care, and joint safeguarding board.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – continuing to work with a wide range of partners across the region and in the business community to develop our vocational offer and careers information, guidance and advice.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - The successful reopening of the city centre between phases of lockdown was achieved through partnership working between City Centre Management, Swansea BID, local traders and businesses.

- *Tackling Poverty* – continuing close partnership working with the Third Sector, Homelessness Organisations, Housing Associations, the Welsh Government and Health to develop joint responses to prevent and address homelessness during and post-pandemic.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - continuing to work with community groups, friends of groups, the Welsh Government and other partners to secure additional funding and add value to community resources such as the repair, upgrade and installation of new play equipment in many of our Playgrounds across Swansea.
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - The Council has forged close relationships with both national organisations like Natural Resources Wales and the RSPB and also local ones such as Swansea Environmental Forum, the Swansea Biodiversity Partnership and the Swansea Environment Centre. The Council provides supports and works in partnership with several key not for profit organisations. The development of tools and strategic guidance for developers is resulting in closer working with the private sector.

Integration - Joining things up and avoiding conflicts

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - by empowering our workforce to be the best they can be, by setting the right conditions to achieve excellence in their practice and to have a real impact in their work to achieve wellbeing through partnerships and in working towards the personal outcomes of all people we work with.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – developing our work with Child and Family Services to build upon a shared understanding of vulnerability and identifying those most at risk of harm as we recover from Covid-19.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - There is no better example aligning goals than the effort to build a field hospital (which unlike many similar builds is fit for use in the long term if health board plans require it). From the initial site search working with Neath Port Talbot Council to co-ordinating the build to meet the health board's needs to taking an integrated approach ensuring public transport linked to the site.
- *Tackling Poverty* – our single gateway approach to employability support integrates a number of different funding streams and programmes, providing single and clear pathways to training, employment and other forms of support.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - working with the UK Government's Property Agency and the Welsh Government to establish a Public Sector hub and make the most effective use of shared ad back office services.
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - The Swansea Central Green Infrastructure strategy was developed collaboratively with NRW to ensure the approach aligned with common objectives across the public, private and third sectors. This integrated approach is being expanded with the development of a county wide Green infrastructure Strategy where a variety of Public Services Board partners will be involved in ensuring a strategic approach is developed which aligns priorities and addresses potential conflicts. The Climate Change Programme Board provides a forum where Council policy overlaps, gaps and synergies can be identified in relation to Green Infrastructure and other climate and nature related activity.

Involving people

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - through Swansea's rights-based approaches, such as Signs of Safety & Wellbeing, used with Children and Families and Collaborative Communication in our work with vulnerable adults; and by embedding coproduction and a focus on promoting supportive communities through Our Neighbourhood asset based approaches, such as Local Area Coordination.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – building on work to listen to the voices of children and young people in terms of our recovery from Covid-19 and the nature of their learning experiences and outcomes.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - Swansea Council has worked with older citizens this year to ensure they had an opportunity to feed into both Older Person's Commissioner reviews of the impact of the pandemic on citizens lives. As a result the views of older citizens were captured in engagement events that informed the Older Person's Commissioners' "Leave No-one Behind" report. The identified actions of the "Leave No-one Behind" report particularly relating to 'The Economy and Older People' were then used to actively to inform City Centre regeneration plans and development of local initiatives around "Sport Wales" Active 60 offer on a local level.
- *Tackling Poverty* – our Poverty Truth Commission places people with lived experience of poverty and the heart of policy development and the re-configuration of services. They are equal to the Civic Commissioners in terms of determining the areas of focus and priorities.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - building on the work undertaken by Social Services to co-produce services and develop a corporate and cross departmental framework for all services to consider co-production and a range of other mechanisms to involve and engage people in a way which is appropriate and proportionate to the issue/decision in question.
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - In order to become a Net Zero City and County of Swansea by 2050, the Council recognises everyone will need to play their part and so started a long term engagement process during lockdown. This was the first time Swansea Council has specifically asked residents about their attitudes to climate change. The survey response rate was particularly high with over 1000 citizens participating in a survey, related Twitter poll and discussions. The overwhelmingly positive response indicating widespread concern about climate change and an appetite for action provides a firm foundation to take forward ongoing broader involvement activity.

Part 3 - How the Council is changing the way we work: Where the change needs to happen

Swansea Council's response to the pandemic demonstrated how fundamental the seven areas of change are to changing behaviours and organisational culture. In meeting, both the challenges of the pandemic and in taking forward the recovery, the Council recognises that we have to work differently if we are to build further resilience to meet the demands of the future.

For this change to happen we have to first change the Council-wide systems that support the delivery of specific services. We believe focusing on 'seven areas for change' within our organisation will best help us change the way we deliver services outside the organisation. The work undertaken to date has proven a firm foundation enabling an agile response to the Coronavirus crisis:

Corporate Planning

The Corporate Plan describes the steps being undertaken to meet our Well-being Objectives and contribute to the seven national well-being goals in line with the five ways of working outlined in the Act. Following the adoption of the Corporate Plan in May 2017, the Corporate Plan was refreshed for 2018/22. This enabled consideration of Swansea Public Services Board's (PSB) Local Well-being Plan, a review of progress and an assessment of the evidence, looking at how we could close any gaps and further maximise our contribution to the National Well-being Goals. The main change following the review was the addition of a sixth well-being objective to the Corporate Plan – 'Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity'. Minor refreshments of the plan have been made each year since to reflect changing circumstances; for example, the Council's Declaration of a Climate Emergency.

The focus has now moved to ensuring that our service plans which underpin and operationalise the Corporate Plan best reflect the sustainable development principle. Rather than prescribing a top down approach to service planning, Heads of Service worked to co-design a structure that would best add value at an operational level. This structure has embedded not only the five ways of working but our Equality and diversity objectives deeply within the planning process.

Swansea Council's Recovery Plan: 'Achieving Better Together' works in tandem with the Corporate Plan to help the Council maintain and improve well-being in Swansea as we continue to manage and learn to live with the virus. Together the documents provide a holistic approach enabling us to build a better Swansea for both current and future generations. In addition, futures work with Leadership Team is being undertaken to help develop a long-term vision.

Financial Planning

Each year the Council allocates financial resources to ensure we are able to take the steps necessary to meet our Well-being Objectives. The Annual budget is set in the context of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and linked to the corporate planning process. This overarching strategy is a live document, which is updated as information is available and risk is understood. Identification has taken place of some areas of preventative spend. The budget setting process for 2018/19 saw the initial introduction of the five ways of working via a series of questions designed to challenge thinking; this is now an integrated part of the budget process. Budget consultation involves residents, community groups, partners, employees, the School Budget Forum, Joint Phase Head Teachers, Trade Unions and others.

Clear budget principles underpin decision-making, including sustainable outcomes, prevention, engagement and new models of delivery (often working with partners). This year, a Future Generations Impact Assessment was piloted with the 2020/2021 budget; this approach was then used to create an Integrated Impact Assessment, which has since been adopted to guide all Council decision-making.

In January 2019, the City & County of Swansea Pension Fund became one of the first Pension Fund's in the UK to adopt an Environmental, Social & Governance Policy, which commits the pension fund to reduce its already low exposure to carbon based fossil fuel investments by up to 50% over the next 4 years. This is significant as pension assets are in excess of £2.3bn. An initial review identified Swansea's investments in carbon based industries were already 9% below average. Since then over £0.5bn of assets have been moved into low carbon index tracking funds, which has reduced further what was already a low level of equity portfolio. The fund also actively seeks to invest in energy-efficient infrastructure projects (renewables, solar, alternative fuels) and clean tech in other parts of

its portfolio; always seeking to optimise its return, whilst having a positive environmental impact. In 2021, The Pension Fund Committee has commissioned work into appraising the impact of setting a carbon net zero target in respect of its investment portfolio, what this would look like, the roadmap to achieving this and realistic timetables for attainment. In its work with Wales Pension Partnership, the fund continues to explore the wider adoption of fundamentally sustainable investments, which in turn would lead to a lower carbon portfolio.

Our Environmental Social and Governance policy explicitly recognises the duty on protecting future generations around exposure to carbon, climate change emergency, and the government aim of net zero carbon by 2050. In 2020, the Pension Fund was recognised as having the best approach in the UK to sustainable investment by the Local Authority Pension Fund Awards. As part of its yielding assets portfolio, the Pension fund has also made a sizeable allocation to investing in affordable social housing. This investment, whilst playing an important part in addressing the affordable housing shortage, also provides an important yield component for the pension fund. By being an early investor, the fund has been able to direct some of the deployed capital locally.

The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement Review responded to a change from regulation to guidance on how local authorities account for capital expenditure on assets with a life expectancy of over one year. The adoption of 'prudent annual charge' will reduce the historic liability on future generations and generate short term savings.

Further steps have been taken towards localising and improving the participatory nature of allocating neighbourhood expenditure. A £1m Community Fund was introduced last year and was extended by a further £1m. This will be specifically ring fenced to improve access to play facilities accessed by Councillors on behalf of their communities; this builds on existing community budgets held by each councillor. The funds are intended to tackle local priorities highlighted by communities, such as play areas, installation of zebra crossings, bus shelters etc. where a small investment can result in a significant local difference.

In responding to the pandemic, the Council managed to meet short term demands while maintaining the longer-term investments essential to supporting the recovery. Council used its flexibility and place shaping role to use the capital equalisation reserve, designed to help fund the City Deal and wider city investment, by building a field hospital in advance for the NHS and Welsh Government and re-using the sums by recycling a second time to help underpin its own financial response to Covid as it awaited top-up support from Welsh Government to flow later. The value of the fund has been broadly maintained, despite the Covid disruption, for future years through to 2025-26. It has meant that the city has stayed open and building continued at pace, resulting in the likely largest ever outturn capital programme for 2020-21 at over £200m.

The pandemic has accelerated the pace of automation to speed up manual processes and enable residents to access online services at times that suit their needs and lifestyle. The fast development of apps was crucial during the pandemic so residents could apply for vital support and grants, e.g. free school meals, self-isolation payments, carer support payments, business support grants. In addition the MTFP and Capital tracking system has been recreated as an App in Office 365.

The future financial landscape continues to be increasingly challenging; innovation and transformation will continue to be vital in order to maintain local priorities. To support this, an Economic Recovery Fund of £20m was created in 2021/22 to support the local economy in recovering from the pandemic over the next two years. This fund will be used to support a range of schemes, such as Local Business Improvement Grants, parking schemes, free bus travel, price freeze on school meals and many other projects.

Workforce Planning (People)

The Council's robust response to meet the changing and on-going demands of the pandemic has relied on a well-coordinated realignment of the workforce and the ability to swiftly pivot and meet the rapidly evolving needs. Organisational structures were adapted to meet new requirements and transfer resource to where it was most needed in the changing circumstances. Staff across the Council have risen to this challenge and proved their ability to flex and adapt while focusing on delivering outcomes that helped the Council to be #Here for Swansea.

Inevitably this has placed significant pressures on staff, which have impacted services differently across the Council at different times. The cumulative impact of the changing demands made of services as we have transitioned between repeated lockdown and supported repeated re-openings over the past year should not be underestimated. As a result, considerable efforts have been made to ensure staff are supported in maintaining their mental and physical health. This has ranged from advice and support ensuring those working at home did so in a safe, healthy workspace to helping managers ensure the well-being and safety of the workforce in Covid secure settings and encouraging staff to still take leave so they have time to rest and recuperate.

The Stress Management and Counselling Service changed the Helping Hands service provision into a 'Psychological First Aid Support Service' for front line workers immediately at the start of the Covid - 19 pandemic. This entailed retraining over 25 volunteers in a new way of supporting employees, including new processes, procedures and training developed in a very short space of time. From the first referral dated 20th April 2020 to 31st December 2020 the Psychological first aid service facilitated by Helping Hands volunteers and volunteer counsellors has delivered weekly support to over 1000 front line workers and managers and continues to do so.

Cultural change is essential to meet the challenges of the future. To equip staff with the right skills and support Organisational Development, strategic aspirations have been set out for 2018-22 addressing leadership and staff development so that the workforce is fit for the 'future Council'. Work has begun to develop a Workforce Strategy for the next three years, which includes the context of Covid 19's impact, to identify the key Themes and Strands and subsequent action plans to deliver the workforce for the future. This has included an agile working policy, which has been introduced to support the accelerated changes in working practices across the Council.

Despite the pandemic, other important areas of focus have remained a priority. This includes continued support and advice on the management and resolution of Employee Relations cases, strategic workforce planning, the provision of additional resource to help manage and reduce sickness absence levels, recruitment and training of Track, trace and Protect teams. Reminders have been issued to Managers ensuring that mandatory training is completed. Work has continued to ensure the best support and advice is provided to Managers ensuring the recruitment and selection of best quality candidates and is reflective of the communities we serve. Work has also taken place on an i-recruitment solution, which encourages applicants to provide Equal Opportunities information covering all job adverts across the authority including schools; this will improve monitoring so that appropriate action can be identified.

Procurement

The Council spends some £290 million a year on a diverse range of goods, works and services from our external partner organisations. This year the Service's response to Covid 19 was enabled by a team that not only met the challenge of sourcing essential PPE and other supplies effectively,

working to support the Council's care infrastructure – both our suppliers and workforce - and Neath Port Talbot Council, but which also assisted departments in accessing Covid relief grants, prepared a large range of contract variations due to the massive disruption caused by Covid-19, and so supported our social care and regeneration throughout (that will support the Recovery).

Important changes that assisted in responding to the pandemic, but which also create a more robust and sustainable service, include the a new low value self-service procurement process, with pack and guide for departments to self-manage low value contracts and the introduction of Docusign software, which (for example) enables electronic contracts to be issued and signed by suppliers direct. This has resulted in 24,000 less pages being printed in Commercial Services alone with associated benefits and enabled the critical continuity of service during the pandemic.

Sustainable procurement principles as set out within the revised Wales Procurement Policy Statement issued in March 2021 underpin the Council's procurement practice. Procurement officers work with services at the earliest stages of the procurement process so specifications can be developed by managers that consider value-for-money on a whole-life basis (costs relating to maintenance, disposal and consumables are taken into account). This includes work undertaken on a Procurement Guidance Document on The Well-being of Future Generations Act and Procurement, which provides practical advice to staff ensuring they consider the Sustainable Development Principle at the earliest opportunity. Supplier Suitability Questionnaires also include a section on sustainability focusing on environmental issues, but also address equalities and safeguarding in addition to more traditional technical and economic criteria. This social value work, which includes a focus on the development of local suppliers, is a key development piece for the Service and a new model of social value consideration is being developed, working with the WLGA and Welsh Government, with further details below.

Beyond Bricks and Mortar is an award winning initiative led by the Place Directorate, which secures social benefits from construction and regeneration activity across sectors in the City & County of Swansea for the lasting benefits of the community. Our Community Benefit Policy has broadened this approach to encompass all Council procurement projects. This makes the most of opportunities to achieve added value and to maximise contribution to the Well-being Goals as a result of public sector spending in Swansea. Additional steps have also been taken towards integrating a circular economy approach with a review undertaken with WRAP, working with Commercial Services.

The Council has modified its Constitution to place greater emphasis on using local suppliers to meet our need for goods, services and works by ensuring local companies are invited to bid for certain projects; and we have also sought to maximize the value of the Swansea Pound through the development of the Foundational Economy. We have also taken part in Welsh Government's pilot to develop the Foundational Economy, working on issues related to local procurement and focusing on the construction sector. A pilot approach to the design and specification of contracts for the Council has allowed small businesses to bid for public contracts and increase the amount of money spent locally by the Council. The pilot focused on changing the procurement approach for 3 construction based contracts; the learning from that process is being used to change the overall procurement strategy within the Council. The 'Foundations for Local Success' seeks to develop contracts with local suppliers to supply and install Solar PVs, supply and install Air source heat pumps and undertake external environmental works. A Swansea Food Partnership has also been established.

Ongoing initiatives are being carried out in conjunction with the External Funding Programme Officer to encourage more local SMEs to tender for work for the Council. This entails speaking to local contractors to establish any perceived barriers to them tendering, splitting contracts into smaller lots to be more attractive and relevant to SMEs and simplifying documentation.

We are currently working to further embed the Well-being of Future Generations Act into all Council procurement. As an example, an exercise has been carried out on the More Homes Parc yr Helyg contract to establish the distance from site of all the suppliers and sub-contractors that were utilised on the project; and we are working on two further pilot projects to review how we can further embed additional social value, creating an enhanced system to integrate such value. Whilst the Council seeks to give sufficient weight to biodiversity, natural environment and culture and health considerations, further consideration is being given to how this approach can be expanded in line with social value principles.

In addition to the inclusion of community benefits and social value clauses in our contracts, we have also been working to ensure that potential consultants and contractors evidence commitment to, and have company policies in-place for: Modern Slavery, Equal Opportunities, the Welsh Language and Safeguarding (Cohesive Communities). We have continued to host Meet the Buyer events and this May hosted the first virtual MTB event of its kind in Wales, paving the way for other Local Authorities to follow suit using the model that Swansea created with Sell 2 Wales.

Risk Management

Corporate risk management, monitoring and reporting was temporarily suspended in March 2020 whilst officers were otherwise engaged or impacted following the lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the pandemic was still in progress, formal risk management was recovered in July 2020, with monthly monitoring and reporting recommencing in August 2020.

The Council specifically considered longer-term strategic risks and trends, in line with the Policy and Future Generations Act, when undertaking the annual review of Corporate Risks for 2020/21; this included the inclusion of Covid-19 as a corporate level risk on the Council risk register. Directorate level risks are also centrally recorded and controls logged. The way the Council defines and manages risk was reviewed in 2017 in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The Council's Corporate Risk Management Policy and Framework seeks to embed the five ways of working into the identification, assessment, response and control of risk. Work has continued to improve compliance to the Policy, which has been regularly kept under review by the Governance & Audit Committee. This has included the development and roll out of a new risk register application, albeit delayed as a result of the pandemic. Clear officer responsibility is assigned and a monthly review of risk by Corporate Management Team and quarterly reporting to Audit Committee takes place. The publication of corporate and directorate level risk ensure greater transparency and scrutiny.

The Council's Corporate Risks in 2020/21 listed below are aligned to our Well-being Objectives. They are those risks that, should they come into effect, would have an impact on the whole Council and would have a detrimental impact on the ability of the Council to achieve its priorities and objectives. Risks were reviewed during 2020/21 for the impact of COVID-19:

- Safeguarding.
- COVID-19
- Post-Brexit Trade Deal with EU.
- Financial Control – MTFP aspects of Sustainable Swansea
- Sustainable Swansea transformation programme delivery.
- Local economy and infrastructure.
- Pupil attainment and achievement.

- Tackling Poverty.
- Workforce strategy.
- Digital, data and cyber security.
- Emergency planning, resilience and business continuity.
- Health & Safety.
- New legislative and statutory requirements.
- Tax Evasion.
- Regional working.

The internal audit work undertaken in 2020/21 provided assurance over the risk management processes within the Resources Directorate and also provided assurance over the controls within the new Risk Management System. However, other work undertaken in year highlighted issues in relation to the way in which some of the mitigating controls were documented, which was noted in the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2020/21. Work has been undertaken in 2021/22 to improve the quality of risk control measures and this will continue during the financial year.

Performance Management

Council services report on performance meeting our Well-being Objectives each quarter which includes a qualitative overview to place the data within its proper context. Data reporting was suspended in March 2020 in line with national practice and guidance due to the impact of coronavirus although later recovered, allowing the publication of the end of year 2020/21 performance data to help highlight the impact from Covid-19 on performance. While some data was able to be retrospectively collected and reported, inevitably some data gaps exist. This is part of a national phenomenon and will impact the analysis of trends over time.

Since the adoption of a new well-being objective in 2018/19, we have worked to identify appropriate and suitably robust performance indicators to fully and quantitatively measure the Council's contribution to improving environmental well-being through the new Corporate Well-being Objective on Natural Resources and Biodiversity. In future years, this reporting mechanism will also include progress relating to the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency.

In line with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, preparation is taking place to meet a forthcoming new duty to keep performance under review, consult, and report on performance through self-assessment. Swansea Council aims to discharge this duty in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act's five ways of working.

Assets

The roll out of agile and mobile working has been a key focus over recent years. This investment has proved invaluable in enabling the Council to maintain services throughout lockdowns and subsequent shift to working from home where possible in 2020 and 2021. The transition to enable staff to work more flexibly has helped release significant space, which has facilitated partnership working and income generation. In addition, staff are able to work more effectively reducing the need for business travel to meetings and reducing commuting to work. These trends lead to positive impacts on carbon emissions, work-life balance and finance; these impacts were evident as not only the Council but wider organisations relied upon agile working due to Coronavirus.

The co-location of Gorseinon District Housing Office and Library has been completed successfully. Work is progressing on a new City Centre Community Hub, which will set and test the model for wider community roll out. More than 500 formal responses were given to a Swansea Council survey

on plans to create a community hub in an existing city centre building. The responses were overwhelmingly supportive of the proposals. By repurposing the substantial former BHS building, we avoid the cost of building a new structure, reduce overheads and help revitalise the city centre. The council plans to acquire the leasehold interest in the former BHS building and to refurbish the premises with the aim of opening as a community hub in 2023.

The Council is always looking at new ways to improve the way we manage our buildings, land and amenities more effectively. Collaborative working is an increasing feature of how we manage our estate. The Local Property Board enables public bodies to work together to find solutions that safeguard assets for the benefit of our communities in the long term. In addition to working with partners, we have continued to involve citizens by enabling them to take responsibility for assets over the long term with safeguards in place for their retention at community level. Asset transfer mechanisms have enabled a number of transfers to be taken forward; for example, the November 2020 Lease of Underhill Park to Mumbles Community Council. The adoption of a commercially minded approach and the Local Property Board, has led to major successes in terms of investment acquisitions generating in excess of £600,000 per annum.

Part 4 – Governance & Accountability

Sustainable development has been a central organising principle of Swansea Council since 2012, embedded within Swansea's governance via a Sustainable Development Policy; the policy is being reviewed during 2020/21 in line with the Future Generations Act.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act is increasingly being incorporated into all aspects of governance. The Council's first Well-being Statement was integrated within the Corporate Plan 2017/22 and adopted in 2018. Sustainable development principles were at the core of the Council's transformation programme Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future and are established as central to its replacement Achieving Better Together. The Council is using a question-based approach to building the five ways of working into the budget setting process linked to the MTFP and Corporate Plan. Service Plans have been reviewed and coproduced with Heads of Service to incorporate the Act by enabling services to better show their contribution to the Council's Well-being and Equality Objectives and how they can maximise that contribution through the five ways of working. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) incorporating the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act was developed during 2020/21 after being tested during the 2020/21 budget setting process; this will be used as part of the decision-making process within the Council.

The City and County of Swansea has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the new CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016'. The Council revised its Annual Governance Statement, which demonstrates how the Council is governing and making decisions in line with the Code and the principles of good governance. The Councils Audit Committee provides assurance on the effectiveness of internal control, risk management and governance in the Council.

Accountability

The Council reports performance using local and national indicators to help measure progress meeting its Well-being Objectives. A performance monitoring report is presented to Cabinet each quarter and at the end of the financial year. These reports are subject to review by the Council's scrutiny panel on a quarterly and annual basis.

Inspection and audit bodies, such as the Wales Audit Office, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales, test the performance of specific services and the extent to which the Council is contributing to the national goals and maximising its contribution through the five ways of working. These regulatory bodies publish their findings; in their Annual Audit Summary on Swansea Council for 2020/21, the

Audit Wales found that the Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement and had acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in the areas it had reviewed. In terms of value for money, Audit Wales' Annual Audit Summary 2020 noted that the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money from the resources it uses.

The Council consults and engages with the people of Swansea and others on how they view the services provided by the Council. Complaints and compliments from the public and service users are also a source of information used to improve services. The Council engages with the public through a range of forums and methods and has recently reviewed its approach so that it is appropriate to the circumstances, ranging from informing all the way through to coproduction with the development of a Corporate Co-Production Strategic Framework.

Many Committee meetings are open to the public and questions welcomed. This includes Council, Scrutiny, Audit Committee and Swansea Public Services Board Partnership meetings. Scrutiny members in particular use the five ways of working to hold Cabinet Members and the Public Services Board to account. Questions are increasingly framed around the five ways of working. Cabinet Members are systematically required by Scrutiny to report on the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations Act on their portfolio and the way they work and make decisions. They are asked to explain the links between the Public Services Board and their work and how this makes a difference.

The Public Services Board is also subject to regular scrutiny as to how it is making a difference. Statutory members are invited to give evidence relating to the priorities on which they lead. Scrutiny consists of not only elected Members but representatives of PSB partner organisations. The panel is made up of the Chairs of other Scrutiny Committees ensuring an integrated and robust approach to inquiry. Scrutiny has contributed to the Council meeting its key priorities in a number of ways, which are set out in the Scrutiny Annual Report.

Regional working

There are three key regional partnerships that the Council is participating in: Swansea Bay City Deal, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board and ERW School improvement.

Whilst good progress was made in 2019/20 (albeit at different rates), regional and partnership working remains challenging in a crowded and complex landscape. In particular, whilst the Council has continued to work through ERW during 2019/20, there is emerging agreement on the need to change the regional footprint for school improvement, which had previously been directed by the Welsh Government, to ideally operate on the City Deal footprint; this is so that school improvement and education is better aligned with economic opportunities and the ambitions of our young citizens.

Performance against National Indicators 2020/21

Each year, the Welsh Government and Data Cymru (formerly the Local Government Data Unit) publish resources on local authority performance information. This makes it possible to compare the performance of the 22 Welsh local authorities across those services. However, the collection and reporting of indicators for 2020/21 was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The list of Comparable National Measures for previous years and currently available can be found at <http://www.mylocalcouncil.info/>, which includes historical national performance information.

Where to find additional information

If you have any questions or comments on the content of this plan, you can contact by: Email to improvement@swansea.gov.uk Telephone 01792 637570.

Corporate Plan 2021/22 Delivering a Successful and Sustainable Swansea:

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/corporateimprovementplan>

PSB Well-being Plan

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/localwellbeingplan>. More information in the Public Service Board can be found here : <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/psb>

Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

[Swansea - Well-being of Future Generations](#)

Scrutiny Board Reports

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny>

Governance & Audit Committee

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=123&Year=0&LLL=0>

Equality & Diversity

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/sep>

Audit Wales reports

http://www.audit.wales/publications?combine=&field_topics_tid_i18n=All&field_sectors_tid_i18n=55&created_1=All&field_area_tid_i18n_1=All&field_reports_tid_i18n=All&=Update+Results

Estyn Inspection Reports

[Inspection | Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

Care Inspectorate Wales Reports

[Our reports | Care Inspectorate Wales](#)

My Local Council

<http://www.mylowalcouncil.info/>