



Bridgend County Borough Council
Annual Report 2018 to 19
Working together to improve lives



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***“One council
working
together to
improve lives”***

Introduction

Welcome to Bridgend County Borough Council’s annual report. It evaluates our progress against our well-being objectives, which our Corporate Plan outlines. This report relates to our performance for the year April 2018 to March 2019.

Our vision is to act as “one council working together to improve lives”. We will do this by delivering our well-being objectives. These represent our ambitions and commitments to our citizens and our contribution to Wales’ seven well-being goals as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act).

Our contribution to the well-being goals

This report sets out our contribution by well-being objective to the seven well-being goals. These are set out below:

Well-being goal	Well-being objective		
	Supporting a successful economy	Helping people be more self-reliant	Smarter use of resources
A prosperous Wales	✓		✓
A resilient Wales			✓
A healthier Wales	✓	✓	✓
A more equal Wales	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of cohesive communities	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	✓	✓	
A globally responsible Wales	✓		

Progress against our well-being objectives

This report looks back on the progress we made together during 2018 to 19 on the steps to meet our well-being objectives. To evaluate performance, we have 58 measures of success, which we review annually to set targets to drive improvement. Analysis of performance shows that for 56 of the measures for which we have data:

- 37 (66%) met their target
- 9 (16%) were off target by less than 10%
- 10 (18%) missed the target by more than 10%

Where available, trend data shows that 33 indicators showed an improvement in performance or maintained the maximum level of performance (3) compared to last year.

In addition to our measures of success, we also made a number of commitments to support the delivery of our well-being objectives. Analysis of the year-end data shows that we have delivered what we said we would, with 35 88% of our commitments successfully completed. The other five (12%) achieving most of their milestones.

Like many councils, we are facing a number of challenges including decreasing resources coupled with greater demand on services.

One of the most significant pieces of work during 2018 to 19 has been in response to the health board boundary change. This meant that from April 2019 the management of all health services within the Bridgend County Borough transferred from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board to the new Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board. The implementation of the SSWB Act continues to be a priority for us and has been a main driver for change and for new ways of working. The principles underpinning the SSWB Act are further strengthened by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

These principles are:

- thinking more about the long term
- working better with people and communities
- looking to prevent problems
- taking a more joined-up approach

We continue to work hard to change and improve services at the same time as having to make significant efficiency savings. These stand at around £32.6 million over the period 2018 to 19 and 2021 to 2022. Making smarter use of our resources will include prioritising our spend better out of necessity.

Also it will mean investing in those things that make the most difference to outcomes for local people, and particularly the political priorities around young people and the society's most vulnerable.

Similarly we need to be more adaptive to respond to these financial challenges. Thus enhanced and intelligent collaboration with the private sector, other public sector partners and the third sector are crucial. There should be enhanced engagement with the public to gain a better mutual understanding of priorities, and together create workable solutions.

This report focuses mainly on what we achieved on the three well-being objectives that you told us were the most important to you as part of the annual budget consultation process we run. There are also many other areas that we contribute towards to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being. This shows our commitment to improving well-being for all our citizens, although not a corporate priority.

Despite the financial challenges we face, we are proud of what we have achieved. We remain committed to working with our partners and local communities to achieve our ambitions for Bridgend County Borough now and over the longer term. We are putting in place solid foundations that future generations can benefit and improve on. We do this so that we can provide effective services which are important to our citizens, and that will improve people's lives now and in the future.

Please look at our annual report and let us know what you think. For those readers that would like to see more in depth information, the report includes many links to detailed reports and data. We welcome comments on how we have done and how we can further improve our services for those we serve.



**Cllr Huw David –
Leader of the Council**



**Mark Shephard –
Chief Executive**

A snapshot of Bridgend County Borough

in numbers



Population
144,876



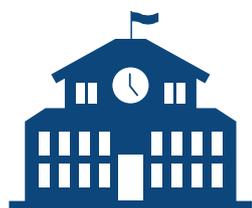
Area
98.5 square miles



Households
64,766



Average house price
£150,412
(UK HPI: April 2019)



Primary schools
48



Secondary schools
9



Special schools
3



Faith schools
6



Wards
39



Councillors
54

Regional AMs
4

Constituency AMs
2

MPs
2



Council staff (full-time equivalent)
4,225

Our services include:

Bridgend County Borough Council delivers over 800 separate services which, these include:

- schools
- social care, safeguarding our most vulnerable adults and children
- planning and building control
- maintaining highways and public transport
- refuse and recycling
- street cleaning and safety
- parks and play areas
- environmental health, including food hygiene and health and safety
- collecting revenues
- and administering benefits
- elections
- leisure, arts and libraries
- supporting business and tourism
- special events and festivals

Well-being in Bridgend County Borough

Below is a snapshot of economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being across Bridgend County Borough. These categories of well-being are prescribed in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) 2015 Act:

Social well-being

- **48%** of school pupils and **22%** of adults take part in sport three times a week
- **40,825** junior swims with **42** disabled children supported
- **81,767** over 60s free swims recorded for **5,000** individual users, which is the highest participation in Wales out of 22 local authorities
- **2,013** referrals through the National Exercise Referral Scheme resulting in **29,593** visits to the 72 weekly classes
- **74%** of adults feel they have good or very good general health
- More than 7 out of every 10 children is a healthy weight (**74.4%**)

Cultural well-being

- **74%** of adults attend or participate in arts, culture or heritage activities at least three times a year
- **65%** of people strongly agree that the 'Welsh language is something to be proud of'
- **27%** of adults volunteer
- Almost **20,000** children attended library events and activities over the summer holidays in July and August 2018 (Plan covers 2018-19)
- **2,835** children took part in the Summer Reading Challenge in 2018
- Over **50,000** children attended library events and activities throughout 2018-19
- Almost **120,000** children's books were borrowed in 2018 to 19

Economic well-being

- **70.8%** of the working age population are in employment
- **20.6%** (provisional) of pupils achieved five GCSEs at A* - A, compared with 20.1% last year
- **98.8%** (provisional) of pupils at A level achieved level 3 threshold, compared with 98.3% last year
- Average full-time resident salary **£28,709** (Welsh average £26,967) (2018)
- **4,160** active businesses

Environmental well-being

- **69%** of people feel they can access information about Bridgend County Borough Council in the way they would like to
- **73%** of people are satisfied with the services and facilities available in Bridgend County Borough
- Since we introduced the new recycling scheme in 2017, we have recycled around **40,000** tonnes of waste, according to Welsh Government statistics
- Bridgend is the top plastic recycling town in Wales, and the 2nd best in the UK with **3,264** tonnes of plastic sent for recycling between 2017 to 18
- In 2018 to 19, Bridgend County Borough residents recycled enough food waste to power a typical school for over four years

How we assess our performance

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires us to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement'. The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires local authorities to deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations' ability to meet their needs. Whilst the Well-Being Objectives are assessed on an annually, they cannot be completed within one year. We therefore review our well-being objectives annually, and refine our planned activities, while monitoring progress throughout the year to our improvement journey.

Performance measures

A number of performance measures are identified within our Council's Corporate Plan which helps show the progress made in delivering the Well-Being Objectives we have set ourselves. Where applicable, targets are set against these performance measures to show the desired level of achievement.

Performance measures are assigned a Red Amber Green (RAG) status of:

- **green** where the measure is on or above target
- **amber** where the result is within 10% of the target
- **red** where the result is greater than 10% from the target.

The trend arrow shows whether we have improved on last year's performance and a brief explanation of where performance is below target is also given.

Well-being objectives

Progress against our key programmes' commitments affects how we assess progress on each well-being objective. We assign a RAG status to each commitment using a balanced appraisal of performance data along with the current progress of agreed tasks. The self-assessment categories are listed below:

A **red** status means that there are delays of more than 10% of the total length of the planned action. And/or budget and/or performance measures for the commitment are mostly red.

An **amber** status means that there are delays of less than 10% of the total length of the planned action. And/or performance measures for the commitment are a mixture of red, amber and green.

A **green** status means that the commitment is being met, and on budget. Also the performance measures are mostly green.



Well-being objective one

**Supporting a
successful economy**

Why we choose this objective?

We want to build a county borough where people have more opportunities to secure meaningful work, develop a career and improve their family income and circumstances. We know that higher levels of prosperity boost health and well-being, and create more resilient communities that need fewer services. We believe that education remains the most important lever for improving young people's life chances. We believe that a successful economy can and should be balanced against the environment's needs.

What do we want to achieve?

Our aims

1. To help local people develop skills and take advantage of opportunities to succeed and extend that success to every community in the county borough
2. To create conditions for growth and enterprise
3. To create successful town centres

Our key programmes

Under this objective, there are four key programmes to help achieve our aims and deliver improvements in well-being.

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

This is a long term programme that will see £1.28 billion invested in the regional economy. The City Deal will help boost economic growth in 10 local authority areas including ours by improving transport links, increasing skills, and helping people into work. Also it will deliver high quality apprenticeships and give businesses the support they need to grow.

Strategic Review of Post 16 Education and Training

This programme evaluates education provision and curriculum delivery across Bridgend County Borough. It ensures that there are clear options available to provide the best possible opportunities for learners in the county borough.

Successful Economy Programme

This programme consists of key regeneration and development schemes, including regeneration and a flood defence scheme in Porthcawl and the redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall. We are also developing a programme of improvement in Bridgend town centre, using Welsh Government's 'Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme'. As part of the Valleys Taskforce, we are working to maximise opportunities for regeneration in the valleys and will continue to lobby for transformative projects such as the Pencoed rail crossing.

Tackling Poverty

To ensure a consistent and targeted approach to tackling poverty, we are streamlining the available grants to do so. Thus we can focus on alleviating child poverty and supporting vulnerable families through early intervention initiatives including Flying Start, Families First, Supporting People and Communities First Legacy Funding.

How did we do?

Performance measures

Aim: to help local people develop skills and take advantage of opportunities to succeed and to extend that success to every community in the county borough.

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The percentage of working age population that is in employment.** (Higher)	71.4%	Increase on 2017 -18 actual	70.8%	▼	73.1%
The percentage of economically active 16 - 64 year olds.** (Higher)	75.4%	73.2%	74.0%	▼	76.7%
The total number of apprentices employed across the organisation. (Higher)	31	17	43	▲	
The number of apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeship work placements taken by looked after children. (Higher)	0	1	1	n/a	n/a
The percentage of children living in households where no one is working.* (Lower)	14.9%	14.89%	19%	▼	12.6%
This is outside of our control but reflects the effect of financial challenges on the local economy. We will target Welsh Government funding to address this.					
The percentage of Year 11 leavers from schools in the authority identified as not being in education, employment or training (NEETs) in the Careers Wales Annual Destination Survey Statistics. (Lower)	n/a	1.5%	0.9%	n/a	1.6%
The percentage of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at: a) 12 months b) 24 months after leaving care (Higher)	a) 60.53%	a) 60%	a) 63.64%	▲	
	b) 46.67%	b) 55%	b) 57.89%	▲	
The percentage of 16 - 64 year olds without qualifications.** (Higher)	11.3%	Decrease on 17-18 actual	10.5%	▲	8.6%

* Dec 2017 figure from StatsWales

** Data from StatsWales

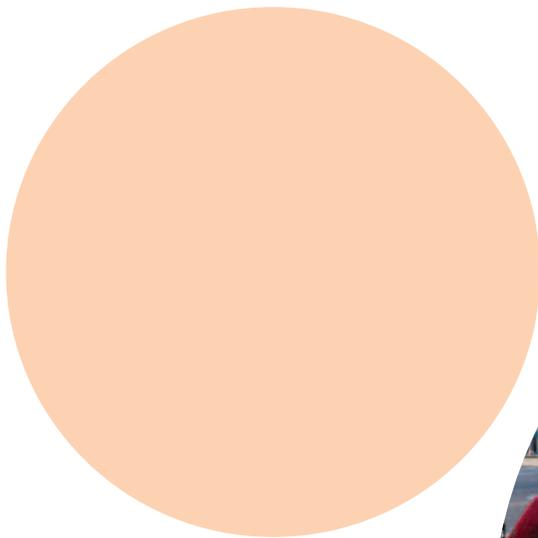
Education measures

(Figures for educational achievement relate to the previous academic year)

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The size (%) of the gap in educational attainments between pupils 15+ entitled to free school meals and those who are not (measured by Level 2 inclusive indicator). (Lower)	29.1%	24.1%	32.9%	▼	32.2%
Performance of both eFSM and nFSM pupils in the Level 2 inclusive indicator improved in the 2017 to 2018 academic year. However, the increase in the performance of nFSM pupils was greater than the increase in the performance of the eFSM pupils and this resulted in the increased size of the gap between the two cohorts.					
The percentage of pupils year 11, in schools maintained by the local authority, who achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A* - C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics. (Higher)	53%	64.4%	56.6%	▲	55.1%
Whilst we missed our ambitious target, Bridgend's performance improved from 53.0% to 56.6% in the 2017 to 2018 academic year, placing Bridgend above the all-Wales average. Bridgend's ranking in Wales increased from 13th to 9th.					
The percentage of schools meeting the Learning & Skills Measure in terms of the subject offer at Key Stage 4 & Post 16. (Higher)	100%	100%	100%	—	n/a
The percentage of pupils at A level achieving Level 3 threshold. (Higher)	98.1%	99%	98.3%	▲	97.6%
The percentage of pupils at A level achieving the Level 3 threshold rose 0.2% from 98.1% to 98.3% this year. Six of our schools achieved 100% performance and we remain above the Welsh average.					
The percentage of pupils achieving 3 A*-A grades at A level. (Higher)	9.4%	10%	9.2%	▼	13.4%
The percentage of pupils achieving 3 A-A* grades at A level fell from 9.4% to 9.2% for the 2017-2018 academic year, while the Welsh average rose in the same period from 10.5% to 13.4%. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The all Wales average result was possibly due to strong performance in the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate; this is expected to be a feature in Bridgend's results in the summer of 2019. 					

Aim: to create conditions for growth and enterprise

Measure and preferred outcome <i>(higher or lower)</i>	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
Total annual expenditure by tourists. (Higher)	£344.23 million	£351.11 million	£347.30 million	▲	n/a
The number of business start-ups. (Higher)	n/a	536	460	n/a	n/a
460 is a provisional result but it will not be confirmed until Nov 2019					
The number of active businesses. (Higher)	n/a	4046	4160	n/a	n/a
The percentage occupancy of council-owned starter units. (Higher)	n/a	90%	93.5%	n/a	n/a
The number of homes benefitting from the low-carbon and renewable energy heat schemes. (Higher)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
This is a four year programme which is at its initial stage in 2018 and target is not applicable as schemes are not yet constructed. One hundred homes are targeted to benefit from the Caerau Heat Network by 2022.					



Aim: to create successful town centres

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The number of visitors to town centres - footfall for: a) Bridgend b) Porthcawl (Higher)	n/a	a) 7,307,130	a) 6,761,710	n/a	n/a
	n/a	b) 2,604,245	b) 2,160,100		
The footfall camera in Porthcawl was offline for part of the year after the building on which it was placed became vacant and the power disconnected. The camera was subsequently relocated in July 2019. Therefore the figure shown may contain a significant number of weeks where the data was estimated. These are based on the cameras retained under the new footfall contract for each town, therefore historical data not comparable.					
The number of vacant premises in town centres a) Bridgend b) Maesteg c) Porthcawl d) Pencoed (Lower)	a) 66	Maintain the 2017 to 18 actuals in all 4 towns	a) 60	▲	n/a
	b) 9		b) 10	▼	
	c) 10		c) 11	▼	
	d) 4		d) 6	▲	
Targets have been missed in three towns, but the actual number represents only a marginal increase and is not part of a continual trend. We have recently commissioned a retail study to inform the review of its Local Development Plan. This will recommend appropriate retail policies for inclusion in the plan which will help to promote the vitality and viability of our town centres.					
The number of residential units in Bridgend town centre, that have had: a) Planning application approved b) Work completed (Higher)	a) 14	a) 20	a) 0	▼	n/a
	b) 0	b) 20	b) 24	▲	
The financial value of externally funded town centre regeneration projects underway/in development. (Higher)	£21.25 million	£15 million	£20.8 million	n/a	n/a

Steps taken to achieve our key programmes

We made 13 commitments to support the delivery of this well-being objective, through our four key programmes. In 12 commitments, we achieved all that we had planned. Therefore we have assessed our performance as **green**. The other commitment we assessed as **amber** because we did not fully complete the action we had planned. There was a slight delay in the building works at the Rest Bay Water Sports Centre. External drainage works at the Harbourside Kiosk were outstanding but are now proceeding.

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

City Deal

We are one of 10 local authorities in the programme, which aims to invest £1.2bn in the regional economy. The City Deal will help boost economic growth by improving transport links, increasing skills, helping people into work and giving businesses the support they need to grow.

During 2018 to 19, work continued on key themes. These include a regional housing investment fund, a digital strategy with a regional Wi-Fi, open data and regional skills programme. The latter includes greater access to apprenticeships, schools engagement and a skills investment fund.

In March 2019, the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal listed the first series of localised projects that focus on transport and infrastructure. Each council receiving £3 million to spend in its area. The £3 million intended for Bridgend County Borough will be spent on the 'park and ride' facility at Pyle. This is part of the development of an integrated transport hub to extend and enable improved access to new and existing work, training, education, culture, retail and leisure activities. The development will incorporate space for approximately 75 cars. Also it will have electric vehicle charging facilities, cycle parking bays, enhanced links with the growing Village Farm Industrial Estate and future active travel improvements. We will continue to work alongside the City Region and the City Deal team to ensure we can engage in and influence the programme's opportunities.

Apprenticeships and work placements

A further development as part of the City Deal was the launch of one-year pilot of a new graduate scheme. The scheme will provide targeted support for businesses to create an initial 50 graduate internships in 2019 to 2020. It aims to retain talented graduates in the region. This will be done by highlighting the employment opportunities and investments being made in state-of-the-art sectors like financial technology, cyber security and compound semiconductors.

Also apprenticeships are excellent for encouraging young generations to learn a breadth of skills in varied environments relating to their interests and career choice. Apprenticeships not only offer training but also improved job prospects. Learning a new skill and connecting with people also provides well-being benefits in terms of self-esteem, confidence and life satisfaction. In 2018 to 19, we employed 42 apprentices across our services.

Work placements are another route offering young people an opportunity to access a real-time working environment. Through them, they gain workplace experience to help them make informed choices about their future options. For example, Awen Cultural Trust collaborated with our specialist education partner to create a work placement programme for students attending Heronsbridge special school. We offered one week supported placements to four students at our Wood-B and B-Leaf programmes, in the carpentry and horticultural vocations. The placements proved to be very popular and one student expressed an interest in taking part in taster sessions.

The student has since been accepted onto the programme. He is in the process of being referred to Elite Supported Employment Agency where we will be investing in ways to maximise his potential. There were 50 individuals supported in 2018 to 19 and this is Sam's story.

Case study: work placement

After completing an Agored Cymru accredited course on Health and Safety Awareness in the Workplace, Sam secured a work placement with Foxtroy Residential Care Home. This gave him the opportunity to apply his newly acquired skills in a real work environment.

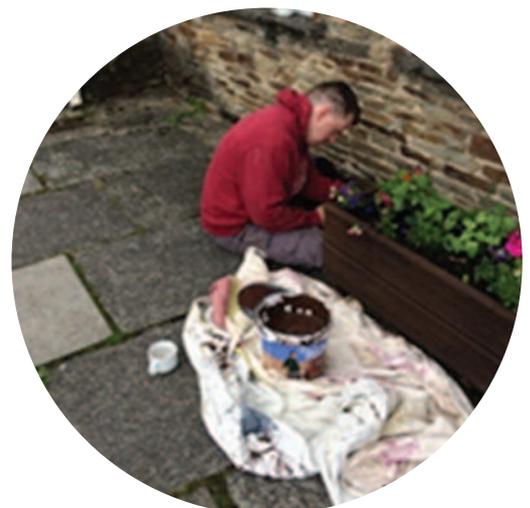
Every Wednesday he attends the care home where he has been buddied up with Paul the caretaker. Paul has proven to be a great mentor, involving Sam in a range of duties including watering plants, painting and general ground maintenance of the premises. Since taking up the work placement, Sam has been increasing his skills and gaining valuable life and work experiences.

A big thank you also must go out to Foxtroy for all the ongoing support in making Sam's work placement such a positive and rewarding experience.

“

“I really enjoy going there and it makes a nice change in the middle of the week. It's good to be doing something different and learning new things”

(Sam)



Strategic review of post-16 education and training

Education provision

In 2017, we completed the review of the curriculum and schools' estates for primary and secondary school education. In 2018 to 19, we concentrated our efforts on the future of post-16 education. We undertook a major consultation over the future of post-16 education in the county borough between December 2018 and March 2019. We wanted to review whether the current provision should be changed, and asked for views on six possible concepts for the future of post-16 education. Local residents made it clear that they opposed any options including the closure of school sixth forms and the development of a county-wide sixth form centre instead.

The two options most supported by consultation respondents were:

Option A: The retention of sixth forms in all secondary schools.

Option B: A mixed model with some school-based sixth forms and one, or more, merged sixth forms/sixth form centres.

Further analysis will be undertaken and once completed, we will be asking residents again for their views on the revised options. We intend to do this between November 2019 and the end of January 2020.

More able and talented

Each year our schools identify the brightest students entering Year 12 and invite them to join the Seren Academy Network. The total number of students is usually around 130. These students will normally have a minimum of six or seven GCSEs at A*/A. The Seren Academy Network is designed to encourage and to support our most able students in preparing and applying to the most prestigious universities. Students are invited to listen to speakers from prominent universities and other organisations. They are also invited to attend a national conference to hear from and meet undergraduates and staff from the UK's leading universities. Students can also attend masterclasses that give them a wider view of subjects beyond the A level curriculum. Other opportunities are promoted through the network. These include summer schools at top universities, internships, specialist support for mathematics and possible work with PhD students on an area related to their research.

Our Seren students gained eight offers for Oxbridge in 2017, six in 2018 and 10 in 2019. This is a positive success rate when compared to applications made. In 2017, 56.3% of Seren students were successful in gaining places at the Sutton Trust top 30 universities and this rose to 73.8% in 2018. When other highly selective higher education destinations are considered, the success rate was 79.3% in 2017 and 87.7% in 2018.

For the Bridgend County Borough launch in 2017, we invited the Outreach Team from Lady Margaret Hall (LMH), Oxford to talk about applying to Oxbridge and also the LMH Foundation Year. This may be due to their background, being in a first generation to attend university or their school being under-represented for Oxbridge applications. The successful students spend a year studying like undergraduates at LMH to prepare them for making a successful application to Oxbridge or the Russell group in the following year. All their costs are met and the course is highly sought after with around 17 places available each year. A Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen student was inspired to apply and became the only successful candidate from Wales. She started her Foundation Year in Oxford in October 2018.

Successful Economy Programme

Porthcawl regeneration

Town centres as lively social spaces are places that people want to visit, which in turn increases footfall and supports the sustainability of local businesses. Porthcawl has undergone significant regeneration to secure its future as a premier seaside town, creating jobs, homes and investment in the local economy for years to come.

In 2018, the £3m project to replace the 'Tarmac beach' with new sea defences was completed. This complements the revitalised Jennings Building, Harbourside Kiosk, Pilots Lookout Tower, Customs House and the marina's redevelopment. The new defences will provide effective protection for around 260 seafront properties against flooding and erosion for the next century. The construction has 185 large terraces designed to divert the force of each incoming wave to either side instead of letting it to hit the seafront head-on.

Further coastal modelling was undertaken, looking at how the existing defences are performing and what different wave climates look like both now and after a century. It focused on the Western Breakwater, Eastern Promenade and Sandy Bay areas. As a result, a series of coastal protection improvements will be carried out to mitigate the flood risk to these areas. This includes the Salt Lake site subject to grant funding availability from Welsh Government.

In November 2018, we announced key developments that will further transform the Salt Lake site. This regeneration scheme is the biggest regeneration opportunity that we will have ever undertaken and is the largest waterfront development site in Wales. The plans for the site are to be delivered in several phases, with the first being the delivery of a 20 to 25 thousand square foot food store. This will be followed by exciting new leisure attractions, housing and improvements to the town centre car park and Eastern Promenade. There will be cycle and pedestrian routes that will enhance the coastal path from Rest Bay to Newton and improve links between the seafront and town centre. A planning and design framework setting out the first phase of the Salt Lake site's redevelopment has been approved. A master planning exercise will be run for the remainder of the site. The public and interested parties will be asked for their views before these proposals are taken forward.

Further around the coast, work progressed on the iconic water sports centre in Rest Bay and this is due to open in late 2019. The new centre will provide a base for local water sports groups and clubs. Also it will offer a café/bistro upstairs, an ice cream kiosk downstairs, and toilet facilities, showers, changing cubicles, a function room and more. The building's design also incorporates solar technology, a covered area for dog walkers and glazed panels to make the most out of the stunning coastal views. The centre is being built as part of our 'Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus' project. This uses £1.6m of EU funding from the Welsh Government's new Tourism Attractor Destination programme which aims to create 13 must-see tourist attractions across 11 destinations throughout Wales.



Bridgend town centre

In 2018, Welsh Government approved a £1m grant for property enhancement projects within Bridgend town centre to complement the Bridgend Townscape Heritage Scheme's achievements. The initiative has enabled the repair and restoration of 29 historic buildings in the town centre, and the grant will financially assist improvements to commercial and new residential properties. The aim is to make businesses and the town more attractive and accessible. It should also

sustain local shops and services, create and retain local jobs and increase footfall and activity. Part of this funding will also support Coastal Housing Group's development of a long-standing vacant site within the town centre. Collaboration with Bridgend Town Council, Bridgend Business Forum and the CF31 Business Improvement District (BID) Group, and regeneration make Bridgend an attractive and vibrant place to visit. Some of the events that took place last summer included:

- Wartime Bridgend, which was an array of activities and re-enactments to celebrate 100 years since the end of the First World War in partnership with Carnegie House
- the annual St David's Day business breakfast hosted by the Bridgend Business Forum with Wales rugby Star, Ryan Jones as special guest speaker
- the Classic Car Show featuring a mix of classic cars from the 50s, 60s and 70s
- the Roots Street Festival featuring live music, a variety of workshops, activities, circus acts and delicious international cuisine
- monthly street markets on Saturday as well as an indoor craft market in the Rhiw

Cultural events and activities within Bridgend town centre contribute to the social, economic and community regeneration of the town centre and surrounding areas.



Pencoed

Lobbying of Central Government, Welsh Government, National Rail and Transport for Wales regarding the level crossing at Pencoed continued. The current crossing causes traffic problems, air pollution and congestion that negatively affect residents and businesses. In December 2018, Welsh Government funded a £60,000 feasibility study to draft long-term solutions to issues caused by the level crossing and the Penprysg Road bridge. The study identified a preferred option, and funding of £240,000 has been secured to turn it into a detailed design as the next stage of the proposal.

A new 'glow in the dark' path to guide walkers and cyclists during the winter months was opened in Pencoed in 2018. This route forms part of a wider £1.5m active travel network to improve Pencoed's active travel access, and the Welsh Government's Safe Routes in Communities programme funded it. The scheme was based on an idea from a young pupil at Croesty Primary School. It was developed by us in partnership with schools, the local community access group, and Sustrans, with support from Redrow and Halo Leisure. Schemes like this encourage people to leave their cars at home and choose a healthier, greener travel for shorter everyday journeys in their daily routine. It sets a trend that can be continued by future generations.

Maesteg Town Hall

We continued to work with Awen Cultural Trust to secure the remaining funds required for the £6m conservation and redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall. The National Lottery awarded the project a grant of £774,900 and Welsh Government contributed £3.5m towards the conversion. This means that the Grade II listed building will now be revitalised, benefiting local people as well as visitors to the area. It will create 18 new jobs in the process. Maesteg Town Hall will become home to the relocated town library, and many community facilities. This will include new performance spaces with improved accessibility for visitors, once again putting this historic building back at the heart of the community.

Bridgend Enterprise Hub

Bridgend County Borough has witnessed a surge in the creation of new micro and small businesses over the past decade. However the levels and variety of business accommodation for lease have not kept pace. Having the right infrastructure to help small, local businesses thrive is a priority for us. Responding to this gap in the market, we approved a £5.5 million investment to create the Bridgend Enterprise Hub programme. The scheme will deliver against a number of key economic opportunities outlined in the Welsh Government's Economic Prioritisation Framework (EPF). This will link with the targeted investment plans of Welsh Government through priority property interventions. In turn, it will benefit the overall economy and job market across the Cardiff Capital City Region.

The programme, which is planned to complete in 2021, aims to provide high quality premises and additional workspaces for 58 micro to medium-sized enterprises. It will support around 150 jobs. The scheme builds on a pilot with Sony to create a rural enterprise centre, which is now full. The £1.75 million Innovation Centre upgrade at Bridgend Science Park, will create an 'imaginative and accessible' venue for up to 15 small firms. It will feature a foyer, meeting rooms and communal kitchen.

The second, £1.3 million, part of the project will create a series of 'enterprise centres' on two plots within the Village Farm Industrial Estate. It will feature flexible space for small businesses of between four and 10 people. We anticipate that construction of this ambitious project will begin in 2019. The Enterprise Hub Programme will take into account other strategic regional and national drivers including the City Deal and Valleys Task Force.



Valleys Task Force

As part of 'Our Valleys Our Future' plan for action, the Valleys Task Force is working to create a Valleys Regional Park (VRP). This is in partnership with the Valleys local authorities, National Resources Wales, Visit Wales and Welsh Government (WG). The VRP aims to connect the Valleys with high-quality walking trails and cycle routes. It will support the development of a high-quality network of uplands, woodlands, nature reserves, country parks, rivers, reservoirs and canals, as well as heritage sites. It will connect them with the valleys' towns and villages.

As part of their delivery plan for 2018, WG announced a series of Discovery Gateway sites. These included Bryngarw Country Park and Parc Slip Nature Reserve. We were invited to submit proposals to WG for funding for enhancements and improvements. We supported the managers of both sites to develop full funding bids and are awaiting the outcome to determine next steps.

Caerau Heat Scheme and Bridgend Town Heat Network Project

The Caerau Heat Scheme is an innovative project. It aims to use the water in the former Caerau Colliery's flooded workings as a sustainable, low carbon heat source for hundreds of homes in Caerau. The scheme is part of our response to the decarbonisation agenda through our Smart Energy Plan. A feasibility study was completed in 2018 which showed that water is present beneath the village at a consistent temperature of 20.5°C. The Coal Authority ran a mine water resource assessment beneath the village which will be validated through further investigations in 2019. Hitachi also completed an assessment of local energy supply options for the heat pumps. As an alternative to a grid connection, a connection to a local wind farm via a private wire is being explored.

The findings of the work to date have resulted in the need to submit revised proposals to the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO). This is for additional funding of £330,000 on top of the £6.5m grant already secured. The scheme will proceed if mine water investigations show sufficient mine water is available, and if the business case demonstrates that the project is viable.

The Bridgend Town Heat Network Project aims to supply several public buildings and homes with heat and power. The energy will be generated from a gas combined heat and power unit in the Bridgend Life Centre. We will bid for grant funding from the Heat Network Investment Programme (UK Government) to run the project. Key activities in 2019 to 20 are to secure the funding, and, subject to success, to procure a contractor to design, build, operate and maintain the project.



Tackling poverty

Over the last few years, Welsh Government has been working with local authorities to align various grants. This is to enable service re-design so as to provide sustainable improvements for people across Wales. Bridgend County Borough is among seven 'pathfinder' local authorities in Wales that have been testing flexible funding approaches to fulfilling these aims during 2018 to 19. An Early Intervention and Prevention Central Grants Team has been established. An initial mapping exercise of all early intervention and prevention services was run with further mapping to be done in 2019 to 20. Several initiatives which are set out below were run during the year to tackle poverty.

Learning and Skills Partnership Board

The Anti-poverty framework highlights the importance of working with partners and communities. As a council, we play a key role in the Public Services Board learning and skills partnership. This aims to get more people into work, better paid jobs and increase their skills. This partnership has worked with schools and colleges, partner organisations and businesses to promote apprenticeships and junior apprenticeships. It has a particular emphasis on our diverse communities and under-represented groups. These include Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people, disabled people, looked after children and young people for whom school has been challenging. With Bridgend College, we hosted 'Have a Go' events for over 1,200 pupils aged 11 to 16 at Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen. These events are designed to showcase to pupils the different options available to them and promote vocational learning opportunities.

In 2018 to 19, the number of students starting has increased from 52 to 72. Available routes are construction, Public Service, and hair and beauty. Students attend for five days and also study Maths and English GCSE. Bridgend College was recently shortlisted as Apprenticeship Provider of the Year at the TES Further Education Awards 2019.

Financial and digital inclusion

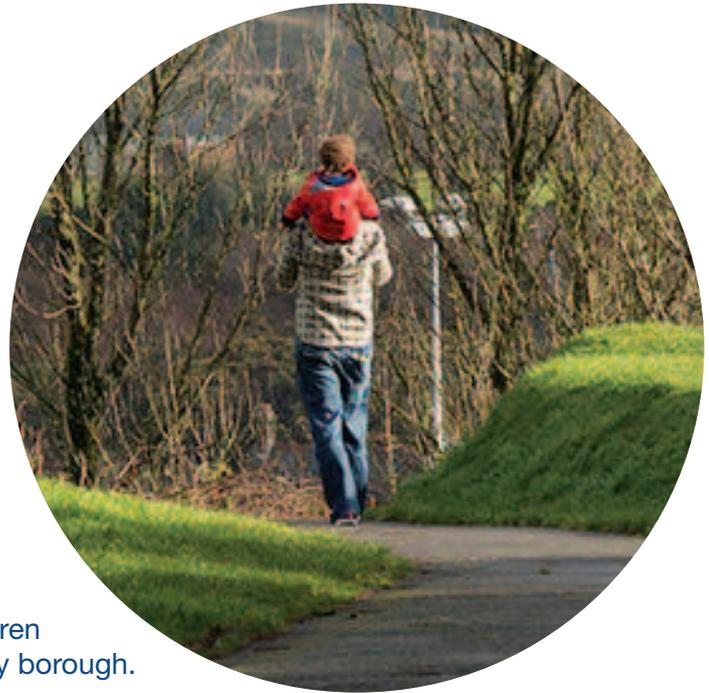
Financial and digital inclusion are important. They equip people with the knowledge and skills to manage money effectively and help them access online technologies that can improve lives. We commissioned a Financial Advice and Support Service from Citizens Advice Bureau in October 2018. The service has supported 264 people to improve their financial situation by providing financial/debt and budget management advice. It has also provided support with welfare benefits and particularly, Universal Credit.

Also, we had 282 learners engaged on Digital Inclusion Sessions and basic IT courses. These courses provide basic IT training along with using internet services, as well as advice on using PCs, tablets, laptops or other devices.

Family support during school holidays

School holiday activities provide the opportunity for socialisation, personal development, learning new skills and the creation of a sense of community. However, for low-income families, affordable activities are limited, and the holidays can put families under financial strain.

For children entitled to free school meals during term time, there is no provision during holidays. During the summer of 2018, we utilised the Legacy Funding to add additional support to our free Active 4 Life scheme. Every Friday at Caerau Community Centre, we funded children, their parents, carers and siblings to attend activities and have a hot meal throughout the school holidays. There was also fruit provided daily for the children attending all the Active 4 Life schemes across the county borough.



Employability and volunteering

To support a successful local economy, we are providing people with the skills to access employment and providing businesses with the right infrastructure to help them thrive. These are the key steps we are taking in collaboration with partners. We support individuals who are unemployed, economically inactive, experiencing in-work poverty, face barriers to work, or are in or at risk of poverty, to improve their job prospects. In doing so, we support their whole employability journey from economic inactivity or unemployment through to sustainable employment. Partnership work is undertaken with the Department of Work and Pensions, Careers Wales and a range of other partners. This included an annual jobs fair held in September 2018 attended by over 700 local people and 50 local employers. We also hosted a pop-up business school attended by 85 people looking to set up a new business.

We also provided a range of employment and pre-employment opportunities. These resulted in 778 people accessing employability and pre-employment provision with 225 people gaining employment with other organisations. 306 people accessed training and 81 undertook a volunteering opportunity, which supported them on their employability journey. We worked with Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) to deliver a second volunteering support programme. It was accessed by 33 people as a route to more resilient communities, and a possible route to employment. We helped 44 individuals gain seasonal, Christmas work with Amazon as part of the Transport to Work project. The project is in partnership with local employers, with the aim of getting people into work, removing the barrier of the availability of transport.

Case study: employability

Sam Jackson first met with Bridges Into Work (BIW)2 Mentor, Bill, in March 2016 following a period of unemployment after developing epilepsy. Sam always had an interest in sports and indicated an interest in any possible employment involving sports activity and coaching.

Sam had a meeting with Bridges Into Work Skills Trainer, Adam, who discussed training options. Sam completed the FAW Football Leader's Award, the FAW First Aid in Football Awareness and the FAW Safeguarding courses, which enabled him to coach voluntarily.

Sam dedicated himself to developing his coaching skills and making contact with semi-professional and professional football clubs in Wales. In the summer of 2018, Sam's dedication paid off when he gained a place onto a football academy coach identity scheme with a professional football club. After a few months of voluntary work, Sam achieved his ambition of paid employment. However working with a professional football club so early in his coaching career, exceeded his expectations.

Sam continues to further his training and has been accepted onto a Foundation Degree in Community Football Coaching and Development. The Employability Bridgend team nominated Sam for an Inspire! Award this year in recognition of his progression and dedication to his personal development. He was shortlisted before narrowly missing out on the winning prize in the 'Life Change and Progression' category.



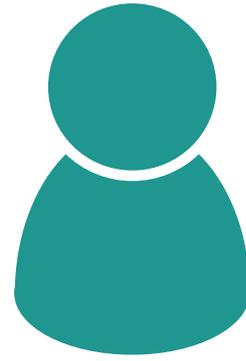
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“When I first joined the project, I didn't know what to expect. I am a dad with a young family but had to give up my job as a plumber because I developed epilepsy. I didn't think joining the project would get me anywhere.

After my first meeting with Bill, I left feeling very positive and that I could still achieve something, even with the barriers I faced at the time. We had talked about doing a football coaching course because I have always played football, and I've also been involved with coaching football teams. I met with Adam, and he showed me what the pathway was for somebody who wanted to be a football coach, and he supported me through each of the courses.

Becoming involved with the project and doing the coaching courses has given me my confidence back. I played football since the age of five and if it wasn't for Bridges Into Work 2, I wouldn't have been able to fulfil a big ambition. It has given me something to aim for, a target to achieve, and hopefully a professional career in something I love to do.”

(Sam)



Well-being objective two

**Helping people to be
more self-reliant**

Why we choose this objective?

Providing the right support, in the right place, at the right time can make a real difference while ensuring individuals and families can thrive. A people-centred approach with a focus on prevention and well-being helps ensure we support people to lead independent lives. It also reduces the likelihood of becoming dependent on council services.

By building on our track record of working with the third sector and private sector, we can support communities to develop their own approaches to local issues. This will also meet the needs of people within the community.

What do we want to achieve?

Our aims

1. To give people more choice and control over what support they receive by providing early access to advice and information.
2. To reduce demand by investing in targeted early help and intervention programmes.
3. To support carers in maintaining their roles.
4. To support the third sector, town and community councils and community groups to meet local needs.

Our key programmes

Under this objective, there are two key programmes to help achieve our aims and deliver improvements in well-being.

Remodelling social care

- recommissioning adult home care, developing extra care and information and advice services for people and their carers.
- implementing a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as a single point of contact for all safeguarding concerns.
- remodelling residential care for children and young people and respite care for children with disabilities in order to make them more targeted and more effective.

Community asset transfer

This programme is about the sustainable transfer of assets to communities to preserve community assets for the long term and help build community resilience.

How did we do?

Performance measures

Aim: to give people more choice and control over what support they receive by providing early access to advice and information

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The percentage of a) adults and b) children who received advice and assistance from the information, advice and assistance service during the year. (Higher)	a) 63.67%	a) 50%	a) 74.36%	▲	n/a
	b) 71.35%	b) 70%	b) 81.37%	▲	n/a
The percentage of people who are satisfied with the care and support they received a) Children aged 7-17 years b) Adults aged 18 years+ (Higher)	a) 84.09%	a) 80%	a) 86%	▲	n/a
	b) 85.97%	b) 80%	b) 82.87%	▼	n/a
The number of people who have been diverted from mainstream services to help them remain independent for as long as possible. (Higher)	973	1000	1284	▲	n/a
The percentage of adults who completed a period of re-ablement and six months later have: a) a reduced package of care and support or b) no package of care and support (Higher)	a) 70.64%	a) 62%	a) 67.27%	▼	n/a
	b) 58.27%	b) 60%	b) 61.31%	▲	n/a

Aim: to reduce demand by investing in targeted early help and intervention programmes

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The percentage of children supported to remain living within their family. (Higher)	61.64%	65%	64.13%	▲	n/a
Whilst marginally below the target of 65%, there has been an improvement from last year's figure.					
The percentage of children who receive Connecting Families interventions during the year who remain out of the care system as at 31 March of that year. (Higher)	95%	85%	Data not yet available		n/a
The percentage of completed TAF (Team Around the Family) support plans that close with a successful outcome. (Higher)	74%	70%	69%	▼	n/a
Performance reduced slightly on the previous year. A small change in reported cases that do not close with a positive outcome can skew the overall percentage. In addition, we are also working with more complex families with entrenched issues – a large proportion previously open to statutory services, and this has an impact on reported performance. Given this context, a performance for the year of nearly 70% is considered to be positive.					
The percentage of looked after children on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year. (Lower)	10.68%	12%	10.24%	▲	n/a
The percentage of individuals discussed at Transition Panel that have a transition plan in place by age of 16/17. (Higher)	100%	100%	100%	—	n/a
The percentage of people presenting as homeless or potentially homeless, for whom the local authority has a final legal duty to secure suitable accommodation. (Lower)	9.42%	12.85%	8.1%	▲	n/a
The percentage of care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year. (Lower)	13.79%	<13%	5.88%	▲	n/a
The percentage of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months at 1 April that were returned to occupation during the year through direct action by the local authority. (Higher)	3.48%	7.86%	8.41%	▲	4.6%

Aim: to reduce demand by investing in targeted early help and intervention programmes (continued)

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The number of new homes created as a result of bringing empty properties back into use. (Higher)	0	5	5	▲	n/a
The percentage of people who feel they are able to live more independently as a result of receiving a Disabled Facilities Grant in their home. (Higher)	87.7%	75%	100%	▲	n/a
The average length of time older people (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes. (Lower)	861.49 days	900 days	807.28 days	▲	n/a

Aim: to support carers in maintaining their roles

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The percentage of carers of adults who were offered an assessment or review of their needs in their own right during the year. (Higher)	97.46%	97%	95.63%	▼	n/a
Performance is marginally below target. Robust monitoring is now in place.					
The percentage of identified young carers with an up-to-date care and support plan in place. (Higher)	94.83%	90%	92.98%	▼	n/a

Aim: to support the third sector, town and community councils and community groups to meet local needs

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The number of adults who received a service provided through a social enterprise, cooperative, user-led service or third sector organisation during the year. (Higher)	379	370	529	▲	n/a
The number of council owned assets transferred to the community for running. (Higher)	0	2	4	▲	n/a

Steps taken to achieve our key programmes

We made 13 commitments to support the delivery of this well-being objective, through our three key programmes and our early help initiatives. In 12 commitments, we achieved all that we had planned. We have therefore assessed our performance as **green**. The other commitment we assessed as **amber** because we did not fully complete the action we had planned. Indeed we had planned to finalise a transition service model to help disabled children move smoothly into adulthood. The development of this service has been slower than we wanted and therefore it continues to be a priority. The service has recently been evaluated and the recommendations from the review will be taken forward in 2019 to 20.

Remodelling social care

Several developments came to fruition during 2018 to 19. We are confident that they will make a real difference and improve the way we deliver support and services. More importantly, they will make a difference to the outcomes people experience.

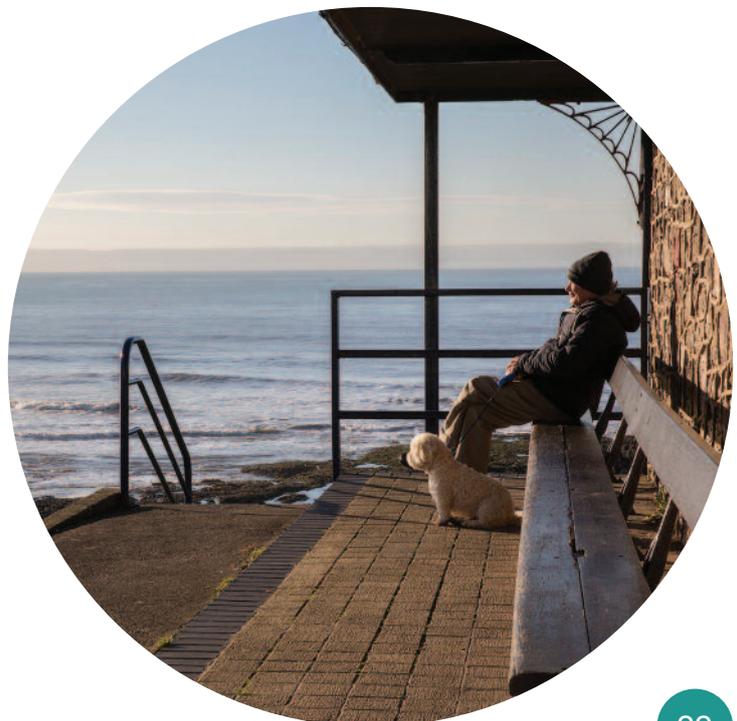
Adult Social Care

The new assessment process gained pace and continues to focus on ‘what is important to individuals.’ In the way, attention is given to how that person can remain independent for as long as possible.

Two council-run, older people residential care homes were replaced with two new Extra Care schemes. Extra Care enables people over 65 who have additional needs to live in their own flats with the equipment they need to remain safe and independent. Each scheme contains communal facilities including a dining room, a lounge, a laundry room, salon, activity rooms and gardens. These new facilities of 45 flats and 15 residential beds are valuable assets to the local community, providing Extra Care housing, residential care, and employment opportunities. A third care home was transferred to an independent provider, and we now have only one council run care home. The longer term plan for this care home is to provide more flexible community type beds.

We have reviewed and will now be recommissioning several of our services that help support individuals to live as independently as possible. This includes:

- Shared Lives service (adult placement scheme)
- Direct Payment support service
- carer’s services, including our short break services



Children's Social Care

The safe reduction of the number of looked after children remains a priority for us and during 2018 to 19 the numbers have continued to steadily decrease. The figure as at 31 March 2019 was 381 compared to 384 in March 2018.

Early help

Children's Social Care has continued to focus on early help and support to prevent children coming into the care system. National grant funding has provided opportunities to improve edge of care services and two new family support services become operational in 2018-19.

- In collaboration with Rhondda Cynon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils, we commissioned and implemented a 'Reflect' service to support parents who have had one or more children previously removed from their care. Reflect helps parents around issues such as contraception, housing, substance misuse and mental health.
- The new Baby in Mind service provides intensive support for pregnant mothers and their partners. It develops the necessary skills to keep their children safe, and prevent the baby from being taken into care. This new service has led to a reduction in the number of parent and baby placements from 10 in 2017 to 18 to just six in 2018 to 19.

Residential and placement services

We remodelled our placement service for looked-after children to improve the way that we and our partners protect and help vulnerable children. This ensures they receive the right care and support. The new developments at two local care homes are helping to prevent children from having to be placed outside of the area.

1. Maple Tree House has been refurbished to provide a reassuring environment for children aged between eight and 18. The staff can get to know them within a comfortable, homely setting as they develop a better understanding of what long-term support may be required. While their needs are being assessed, trained professionals are on hand twenty-four seven to offer the children the right type of practical and therapeutic support. Also there are four short-term assessment beds as well as facilities for two emergency placements. The improvements mean that Maple Tree House will be important in helping keep children in the area instead of having to be placed further away.
2. Sunnybank residential home has also been developed. Now it offers improved levels of support for children and young people who need to be cared for in a residential setting over a longer period.

Fostering services

This service was identified as an area for further development. It was felt it could lead to better outcomes for children and young people through increased placement choice, improved placement matching and more local placements. Throughout the year, we recruited 19 foster carers. During the same period, 16 foster carers left the service.

In 2018 to 19, we worked to improve the support we offer by setting up a cohort of transitional carers. These are specialist foster carers that provide short-term care for children and young people with a variety of complex needs and challenging behaviours. The aim is to provide a secure transition for young people to help them either move to a long-term fostering placement, return to their birth family, or live independently.

We also have five Liaison Carers, who provide advice guidance and mentoring to help us to successfully recruit and retain potential new foster carers. Liaison Carers are active foster carers with a significant amount of fostering experience. At the end of 2018, we recruited a Development Officer within the Fostering Team to enhance our ability to recruit and retain carers. This officer works with the marketing team to increase the frequency of our foster carer recruitment campaigns, research and identify best practice and innovations, and will work with the groups of foster carers to identify gaps in training.

Support for disabled young people

We recruited five Transition Social Workers to work directly with young people and their families during their transition into adulthood. The development of this service has been slower than we wanted and therefore it continues to be a priority. The service has recently been evaluated and any recommendations from the review will be taken forward in 2019 to 20.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

MASH became fully operational in July 2018 and is the third such hub in South Wales. There are over 80 professionals based in Ravens Court council offices. The vision of the MASH is to improve the outcomes for children, young people, adults and their families. It does this by making sure that systems and processes enable needs to be identified as early as possible, and responded to proportionately and by the right person. MASH has helped change the way we work with the introduction of the Daily Discussion process. High risk Public Protection Referrals are assessed daily. This ensures the right resources are deployed at the earliest opportunity to protect the victim, and associated children and adults. Sharing various agencies' information provides a holistic picture of each referral and improves our understanding of the key issues so safeguarding is always prioritised. This way of working also ensures agencies are not duplicating areas of work.

From April 2018 to March 2019, there were 7945 contacts or referrals about children and 275 about adults. The case study below is an example of how MASH is working to keep children safe.



Case study: Early Help

Child A had been attending CAMHS for 18 months and had missed a scheduled appointment. A follow up letter was sent to the family but with no response Child A was discharged from the CAMHS service. Following an escalation in her behaviour a referral was made to Early Help Screening Team, based within MASH this was then allocated to the Early Help Safeguarding Hub. As the situation deteriorated it was agreed that Child A would be referred to Helen the CAMHSs liaison worker based full time within the MASH. At this time, Child A was eating just one meal a day and it had to be a takeaway, school attendance was at 50% and when she did attend she was regularly late. Cut off from her friends, she would not go out and reported her anxiety was “through the roof”. Helen undertook an assessment of Child A and referred her to the GP. A review of CAMHS notes revealed that the psychologist felt she might be on the autistic spectrum but the family were maintaining the problems. Up until this point, the family had not found any input helpful.

Helen undertook various pieces of work with Child A including strategies for ASD/CBT therapy and relaxation techniques. Working with the family, Helen gave them strategies to help manage Child A's behaviour. This was critical in helping sustain Child A's progress, and in supporting the well-being of the family.

Child A is now back in school full time and her attendance has improved considerably. She eats healthy meals with her family and only has a takeaway meal on a Saturday. She is out with her friends and enjoying life and her anxiety is now at a minimum thanks to the strategies she learned from Helen. Child A was discharged on 22nd of July 2019.

Without MASH, Child A's case could have been escalated to the Safeguarding Team - meaning opportunities to use specialist interventions to keep the child safe at the earliest opportunity would have been missed.

Information advice and assistance

The Common Access Point (CAP) is the first point of contact for adults and adult carers to access quality information and low-level advice. Also, we can direct people to more appropriate support. We proactively manage the number of referrals coming into the statutory service while also ensuring that people have an effective response to their query. We are also testing “Signvideo”, a platform that gives deaf people using British Sign Language access to the Common Access Point.

Carers

During 2018 to 19, Bridgend Carers Centre provided support to 763 carers. 287 adult carers assessments were completed and 33 young carers assessments. 240 pupils were involved in personal social education days on young carers’ awareness, rights and entitlements

Action for Children continues to support young carers, providing access to relevant information advice and assistance. During 2018 to 19, 54 young carers received support. Feedback shows that:

- 65% reported improvement in emotional and mental well-being
- 55% reported improvement in family relationships
- 44% felt they could make positive changes in lifestyle and behaviour because of the support received

We have extensively consulted with carers to understand their needs and how best we can meet them. Their feedback has informed the new service model for the Carers Well-being and Short Breaks services, which commenced in April 2019 and July 2019 respectively.

DEWIS

The Ageing Well in Bridgend web resource provides information and advice on the development of age friendly communities, dementia supportive communities, preventing falls, loneliness and isolation. There were over 4000 visits for information in 2018 to 19.

Also, we helped to arrange a number of network events to ensure community partners had good levels of awareness of each other’s services and activities. There were specific events focused on dementia and falls prevention. We plan to launch self-service accounts and supported self-assessments which will be linked to Dewis. The links should empower people to find their own solutions and improve the customer experience.

Local Community Coordinators (LCC)

In recent years, we have supported three LCC roles in the Ogmore, Garw and Llynfi Valleys, funded by Welsh Government Legacy funding. Each LCC supports between 8,000 to 12,000 people, supporting a caseload of up to 70 vulnerable people per role at any given time. In 2018 to 19 there were 148 referrals compared with 117 the previous year. The role helps people develop their strengths, well-being and resilience, stay active and engaged, and reduce isolation by making connections with local networks and resources. This model of service delivery produces a social return of £4 for every £1 invested by preventing escalating needs. The case study below provides an insight into the impact on well-being.

Case study: Betty Kerry

In the Ogmore Valley, there are three buildings close to each other that had little connectivity between them until recently. These are the sheltered accommodation Cwrt Gwalia, Ogmore Valley Life Centre and Ogmore Vale Primary School. Maria, the LCC, spotted an opportunity to maximise the potential of bringing together the people that use these three buildings. Here is Betty's story.

Betty lives in Cwrt Gwalia and is a regular visitor to the gym at the nearby life centre. Betty enjoys keeping busy, being active and loves meeting people. Making the most of her strengths, Maria approached Halo with the suggestion of offering Betty a volunteer position in the life centre.

As part of the Halo team, Betty has her own uniform and gives a generous amount of time helping with a variety of tasks. These include fortnightly Olympage sessions, and a Film Club which she started and provides homemade cakes for. She helps out with the My Sporting Memories project in conjunction with Awen too. In particular, Betty enjoyed participating in intergenerational Olympage games sessions attended by pupils from Ogmore Vale Primary School. Some of the pupils have continued to attend over the summer as part of the Halo Summer activity scheme.

Betty is now an established and cherished member of the Halo family and is thriving in her new role. She is someone who always goes the extra mile to help out others. In recognition of her efforts, Betty won the Good Neighbour Award at the recent Bridge FM Local Hero Awards.

When asked about her volunteering she said: "I like to be busy and help others and volunteering at the library helps with this." Betty likes the life centre as she enjoys being part of "different conversations and the fun and laughter of the team and those that pop in." She said the role helped her get to know a lot more people and feel part of the community.



Community asset transfer

Community asset transfers (CAT) is one of the key ways in which councils can help build community resilience and safeguard services that are of value to the community. We have an active policy of CAT, and continued to prioritise working in collaboration with voluntary-sector organisations to identify viable opportunities that keep community assets for the long term.

A revised CAT policy was introduced during 2018 to 19 to include a 'Fast Track' protocol to streamline the process, and is appropriate to the scale of the asset being considered. During 2018 to 19, the following assets were transferred to the community.

Bryncethin RFC

Last year, the sports club became the first to complete a 'community asset transfer' deal with us so that they could take over the ownership of their playing field and pavilion. As well as agreeing a 35-year lease, the rugby club also secured more than £500k funding. This is to completely transform the pavilion into a facility for the whole local community to enjoy. The new pavilion includes modern changing rooms, kitchens, IT suite, a meeting room, large hall area, a patio and balcony and a dedicated car park. Funding has been provided from Bridgend County Borough Council's Community Asset Transfer Fund, the Rural Communities Development Fund, the Communities Facilities Programme, Welsh Rugby Union, National Lottery Community Fund, and Section 106 monies.

Pencoed Town Council

The former Coed Bach Playground was transferred to the town council on a 35-year lease. It enables the playground to be reinstated for the area's children and young people. Also, terms have also been agreed to grant a further 35-year lease of the two tennis courts at Pencoed Recreation Centre for their multi-use games area and a proposed skateboard park.

Laleston Community Council

The community council has entered into a short-term tenancy agreement. This is taking place while a feasibility study is being carried out into a 35-year lease with the council to ensure that the Bryntirion and Laleston Community Centre could remain open. It follows the lease's surrender by the local community association. The community centre is presently used by a playgroup, Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw, and the community council is seeking to widen community usage. They are also developing plans to refurbish the building.

Playing fields and sports pavilions

The business case for the transfer of Hermon Road/Metcalf Street playing fields by Caerau FC was approved. £50,000 awarded to refurbish the existing facility under the council's CAT Fund. Caerau FC have ambitious plans to install a 4G pitch, 250-seater stand and new changing and car park facilities.

Carn Rovers FC

The business case for the transfer of Cwm Garw playing fields by the club was approved. The club is now in the process of submitting an application to the CAT Fund, and has access to permanent changing facilities. At the start of the new season, it relocated from temporary changing facilities at Pwll-Y-Garn playing fields to a pavilion in good repair which the local rugby club vacated.

Early intervention and prevention programmes

Although not identified as a key programme, one of our aims is 'to reduce demand by investing in targeted early help and intervention programmes'. During 2018 to 19, we continued developing our approach and improved well-being by delivering community-based initiatives focusing on early intervention and prevention. Some of the key achievements are set out below.

New generation of community health and well-being centres

We are focussed on improving residents' health and well-being by developing community health and well-being centres throughout the county borough. We secured a funding package to support Halo Leisure and Cwm Taff Health Board to develop a well-being Hub at Bridgend Life Centre. The facilities to be completed in October 2019 will support employability, community and workforce development, third sector engagement space and group activity rooms. The outcomes will focus on dementia support, falls prevention, combatting loneliness and isolation and physical and mental well-being.

This focus on co-location and accessibility of facilities and services will be expanded to other locations. Considerations would include Maesteg Town Hall, Maesteg Sports Centre, Grand Pavilion (Porthcawl) and community centres.

Strengthening communities

We value our partnerships with community-based organisations which help us identify the best way to deliver services that meet local needs. A 'Building Resilient Communities Plan' was produced with the third sector. Also, we gave financial assistance to a variety of organisations that provide important services to help us improve well-being.

- We worked with BAVO to recruit, train and deploy an additional 14 volunteers to support third sector opportunities
- In partnership with town and community councils there were 9700 visits to summer holiday well-being programmes by children and young people
- A falls prevention network was supported with a falls awareness partner event and also a mobile falls programme developed via Halo Leisure
- As a local partnership, Bridgend County Borough achieved 'excellent' in the Quest UK quality awards for active communities
- Services were accessible for people living with sensory loss thanks to video signing and use of email, letter, fax and mobile text
- Cruse provided bereavement counselling services and social support to bereaved people. This included joint working with Local Community Coordinators on a 'comfort café' project at the ARC centre supporting 234 people
- Bridgend Community Transport provided a transport service for people who are socially excluded or isolated to help them access community-based well-being services. The majority of journeys were to attend LCC programmes, day services, shopping, socialising or health appointments. There are 1,021 registrations for the 'Town Rider' scheme and 131 registrations for the 'Community Car' scheme. 67% of people who used community transport felt community transport had reduced their social isolation and 78% felt it had improved their social networks
- New accessible 'Changing Places' facilities which include changing beds and hoist facilities were developed in partnership with Invacare UK. They are based at Bryngarw Country Park, Pencoed Library and Bridgend Life Centre
- We worked in partnership with Awen to tackle loneliness and isolation by developing initiatives including a variety of men's sheds across the county borough
- Nature can also help to reduce isolation and loneliness, as well as support mental well-being whilst providing the opportunity to improve physical activity as the 'Sunflower Community Garden Project' demonstrates.

Case study: Cwrt Gwalia 'Sunflower Community Garden Project'

Cwrt Gwalia is a Linc Cymru managed Sheltered Accommodation Scheme for older people in Ogmores Vale. Residents can be independent or may experience a degree of difficulty. In partnership with several organisations residents formed a Garden Committee and worked together to create their Sunflower Community Garden.

The community garden project started two years ago by Maria Bennett, Local Community Coordinator (LCC) when providing well-being support to some residents.

The first stage of the project is complete. Residents are now enjoying using their new seating area surrounded by flower baskets and sunflowers, which overlook three low rise beds containing vegetables and flowers. There are further plans to build a greenhouse and extend further around the property. Some residents have formed a weekly gardening group and enjoy coming together to maintain the garden and discuss ideas to develop the project further. Members of the wider community are also able to join the weekly gardening group.

The success of the project was purely down to us effectively working with our partners:

- Halo
- Ogmores Vale Fire Service
- Valleys to2 Coast Space Saviours Scheme
- Keep Wales Tidy
- Cwrt Gwalia Residents
- Awen
- Linc Cymru
- Treorchy and Ogmores Valley/Cwm Ogwr Men's Shed

To extend the enjoyment of the garden, Maria will be supporting intergenerational gardening. She will do this by linking residents with children who attend the local primary school and the holiday activity scheme with Halo Ogmores Valley Centre. The impact of the garden is plain to see from what the residents have to say.

The sunflower garden in Cwrt Gwalia recently won first prize for best garden transformation in Linc's Gardening Competition.

“

“We are not amateur gardeners, never grew anything, but now we are learning.”

(Resident)

“

“I'd like a garden in my own home, but you can't, so now we all have a garden to enjoy. My granddaughter couldn't believe the residents did all the work.”

(Resident)



“

“It is fab. At first, I didn't want it. But now I love it. The social side, the get-togethers, watching it grow you do feel a sense of achievement.”

(Resident)



“

“Every night me and Brian are out watering the garden. I enjoy it. It's made a lot of difference to me, something to do. I love it. It's relaxing.”

(Resident)

Dementia support

People with dementia can become lonely and isolated from the community. But with the support of dementia friendly initiatives, we can help them to feel understood, valued and included. Research shows that low impact exercise can be beneficial for physical and mental health and can improve the quality of life for people in all stages of dementia.

During 2018 to 19, we delivered a successful programme of dementia supportive activities with our partners. The Alzheimer's Society offered dementia support services, dementia cafes, 'Singing for the Brain' and a carers' support group for over a 100 people. Monthly 'Feel Good Groups' were held in Porthcawl and Ogmore with over 35 individuals and carers supported. Bridgend County Crossroads ran lunchtime café opportunities and a social club for around 47 people living with dementia.

Age Connects Morgannwg also offered engaging and meaningful activities to improve skills and independence for those with dementia. The successful dementia swimming programme run by Halo Leisure was a finalist for a national award via Community Leisure UK.

There is growing engagement with primary and secondary schools, recognising their potential to contribute to Ageing Well in Bridgend and the development of age friendly communities. This includes:

- dementia friends and champions training in secondary schools Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School and Pencoed Comprehensive School
- Inter-generational activities between primary schools and older adults such as the LCC programme Ogmore Valley, and nursery school visits to Bryn-Y-Cae

“

“It’s not only important for the people with dementia; it’s important for the people who care for them. I’ve had such a benefit from all the people that I have met. He’s having exercise, he’s meeting people and I see a smile on his face.”

(Carer – Dementia Friendly Swimming)

“

“It was fun being all together playing games.”

(Primary School child)

“

“Fantastic event... and we’ve all really enjoyed it”

(Older Adult)



Housing and homelessness

Housing has a significant impact on health and well-being. We took a proactive approach to a broad range of housing issues and continued to work collaboratively with partner organisations. These included the Wallich, Pobl and South Wales Police. We worked to prevent homelessness cases, supporting people with a variety of housing support needs and took steps to increase the supply of housing in Bridgend County Borough. Some of our other projects include:

- Housing First which helps people who keep returning to live on the streets and are unable to break the cycle to get and maintain accommodation
- the floor space project, which is a safe place for people who would otherwise have to sleep on the street
- the SCART project, which provides support for people with mental well-being issues

We also continued to support Syrian refugee families to come to Bridgend County Borough to escape difficult situations

We worked to improve our online housing services. Also, we trained customer service staff to help people make better applications to the 'Common Housing Register' and prevent their issues from escalating.

We focused efforts on how best to support young people who present as homeless. We used funding to provide emergency beds for care leavers. Also, we put in place a personal adviser within the 16 plus team. Furthermore, we extended the existing young person supported accommodation by three additional units of supported accommodation for vulnerable and complex young people.

We started the process to change the way we deliver Disabled Facilities Grant services. By streamlining processes, we are aiming to provide a better quality and more timely service to residents who use the service.

We launched a new service called 'Early Doors' in partnership with Llamau to help private sector landlords and their tenants who are having difficulties in paying their rent. There are many reasons why rent arrears can occur and having the right support early can have a significant effect on a person's well-being. The service enables landlords to ask for help on their tenants behalf at an early stage to prevent the tenant ending up further in arrears. You can read more about the scheme here:

www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/help-offered-early-doors-to-resolve-rent-arrears/



Case study: Ty Ogwr

A young adult female was housed due to significant issues with complex needs including adverse childhood experiences, domestic violence, historic sexual exploitation risks, substance misuse, mental health and pregnancy. The individual struggled to engage with staff and displayed very complex behaviours. She disengaged with health professionals, social services and mental health professionals.

The individual was placed in temporary, interim accommodation where her risks were managed, and she engaged with staff. Our staff, including the housing team attended multi-agency meetings and acted on risks escalating with the individual. Due to risk concerns, the female decided to stay with family and receive floating support from staff. We located a domestic violence hostel out of the area. The female is reported to be doing well and engaging with mental health professionals and social services. She is stable and safe in her accommodation.

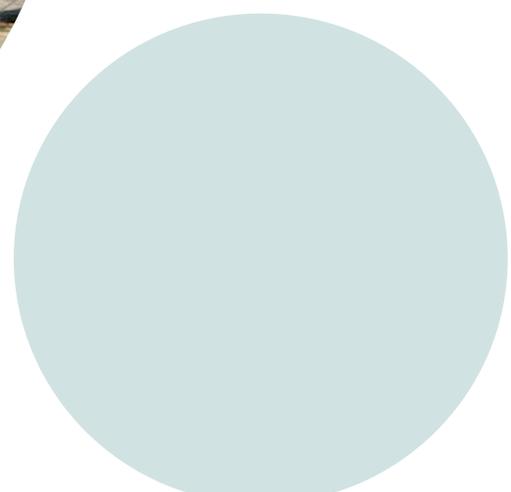
Empty properties

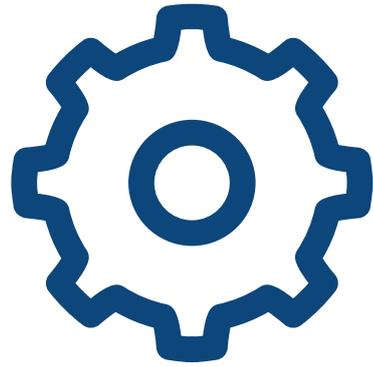
We worked actively with owners of empty properties to turn empty properties into homes by investing grant monies and loans to help ease the housing shortage. We also removed the 50% council tax reduction for properties empty for six months or longer and a 100% charge is now payable. These actions have had a direct impact and we met our target of bringing five empty properties back into use.

Team around the family

To ensure that we identify needs and provide the right support to families who need it, we used the Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) and Team Around the Family (TAF) processes. JAFF provides a simple process for a holistic assessment of a child's needs and strengths. It takes account of the roles parents, carers and environmental factors have on their development. A TAF is required when the family require support from different services to meet their identified needs.

In 2018 to 19, we received 2,094 JAFF referrals, 25% of these were from schools and 26% from health services. A total of 1,037 JAFF assessments were undertaken, which resulted in 312 TAF action plans. 69% of TAF action plans were closed with a successful outcome, meaning that there is evidence that the families' needs reduced.





Well-being objective three

**Smarter use of
resources**

Why we choose this objective?

Over the period 2018 to 19 to 2021 to 22, the council is expected to make recurrent budget reductions of some £32.6 million. For 2018 to 19, our target budget reduction was £6.123 million and as in previous years, we continue to be committed to finding at least 50% of these reductions with smarter use of resources while minimising any reductions in services. Each year it becomes harder to make further budget reductions. Yet this year, we continued seeking ways of working to save us money, and primarily by making smarter use of our resources. This includes our people and our buildings, and making the most of the assets we retain.

What do we want to achieve?

Our aims

1. To achieve the budget reductions identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy
2. To improve the efficiency of and access to services by redesigning our systems and processes.
3. To make the most of our physical assets, including school buildings
4. To develop the culture and skills required to meet the needs of a changing organisation
5. To make the most of our spend on goods and services

Key programmes

Under this objective, there are three key programmes to help achieve our aims and deliver improvements in well-being:

Digital Transformation Programme

This programme aims to change the way we operate to enable customers to access information, advice and services online.

Rationalising the Council's Estate

This programme is about disposing of assets by transferring them to communities to manage while making the most of assets we retain.

School Modernisation Programme

This programme invests in a sustainable education system in school buildings that reduces cost and schools' carbon footprint.

How did we do?

The below is how we performed against the performance measures we set ourselves to meet this well-being objective and what we achieved in 2018-19 against our three key programmes.

Performance measures

Set out below shows how we performed against the measures we set ourselves to meet this well-being objective and what we achieved in 2018 to 19 against our three key programmes.

Aim: to achieve the budget reductions identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The percentage of budget reductions achieved (Higher)	69%	100%	91.7%	n/a	n/a

Aim: to improve the efficiency of and access to services by redesigning our systems and processes

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The number of services that are available to the public online. (Higher)	(New indicator in 2018-19)	5	5	n/a	n/a

Aim: to make the most of our physical assets, including school buildings

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The percentage of surplus capacity of school places in a) primary schools b) secondary schools (Lower)	a) 5.21%	a) 10%	a) 4.89%	▲	n/a
	b) 20.5%	b) 18%	b) 22.01%	▼	n/a
Overall capacity in secondary schools increased by only 4 places but as the number of secondary school pupils reduced by 34, the result was an increase of 38 surplus places compared to the previous year. Pupil numbers are projected to rise slightly again in 2018 to almost the same level as in 2016 and, therefore, the overall surplus capacity is likely to reduce to around 20.2%.					
Realisation of capital receipts target (Higher)	£452,375	£4 million	£1.821m	n/a	n/a
The actual capital receipts achieved include former Pencoed Primary School, former Heol y Cyw Primary School and land at Penyfai. Contracts were exchanged on £4.3 million worth of capital receipts, £1.821 million realised in 2018/19 with the rest to be realised in 2019/20.					
The percentage change in carbon emissions in the non-domestic public building stock on previous year (Higher)	6.46%	6.46%	4.94%	▼	n/a
We achieved 3% in line with Welsh Government's set target, but our challenging target of 6.46% was not met due to diminishing resources.					
Additional income generated from the council's non-operational property portfolio (Higher)	£25,000	£25,000	£29,028.45	▲	n/a

Aim: to develop the culture and skills required to meet the needs of a changing organisation

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence (Lower)	10.85	8.5	11.79	▼	10.5
<p>There has been an increase in the overall absence level compared with last year. Long term absence accounted for 74.1% of all days lost, with absences classified as 'Stress/Anxiety/Depression/Mental Health' accounted for 30.83% of all days lost. During the year there has been improved compliance regarding managers undertaking return to work interviews, with 99.6% completed. Other actions taken, include a review of the training for managers which from April 2019 has become mandatory, with more detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of the training.</p>					
The percentage of employees completing e-learning modules (Higher)	50.2%	45%	54.1%	▲	n/a
The number of managers receiving training to improve their people management skills (including absence management) (Higher)	179	150	124	▼	n/a
<p>Course was cancelled due to trainer availability and further courses cancelled due to low numbers. A review of these training courses has been undertaken, and revised programmes and course duration has meant more targeted content for delivery in 2019/20.</p>					
The number of interactions from citizens on the corporate social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) (Higher)	69,414	39,473	48,701	▼	n/a

Aim: to make the most of our spend on goods and services

Measure and preferred outcome (higher or lower)	Actual 2017 to 18	Target 2018 to 19	Actual 2018 to 19 and RAG	Trend	Wales average
The percentage of tenders above EU threshold with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 that are compliant (Higher)	100%	100%	100%	—	n/a

Steps taken to achieve our key programmes

We made 14 commitments to support the delivery of this well-being objective, through our three key programmes. We set out what we wanted to achieve on 11 commitments and have assessed our performance as **green**. There were three commitments that were **amber** where we did not fully set out what we had planned to do. As part of the rationalising the estate programme, there was a delay in marketing the Waterton site. This is because some advice was needed to inform on the boundary of the site to be disposed. Under the digitisation programme, planned savings were not realised as there was a slower take up of people using the online system. This resulted in interventions required from back office staff. We did not meet our planned budget reductions. However we did still realise full savings by holding vacancies and making savings elsewhere.

Digital Transformation Programme

The Digital Transformation programme has a citizen centred focus. We listened to the feedback from the 2015 budget consultation that 87% of our citizens wanted more council services online. New, modern functionality also meets the demand of over 85% of our citizens who have internet access and prefer the convenience of online transactions (ONS). We launched our new online citizen portal 'My Account' in conjunction with our new responsive website on 24 April 2018. Citizens are now able to:

- register for an account
- view and pay their council tax
- set up direct debits
- apply for discounts and exemptions
- make a new housing benefit claim and easily notify us of any change in circumstances

During the year we also put in place the single person discount and vacant property function within 'My Account' as an online self-service function. Since April 2018 there have been 24,941 'My Account' registrations, 11,923 council tax registrations, with 8,482 registrations subscribing to e-billing. (These figures were correct as at 8 August 2019).

Parents and guardians can now apply for their child's secondary, infant, junior and primary school places plus nursery places via 'single sign on functionality' in My Account. This new functionality has seen a true channel shift with over 5,000 school applications made during the 2018 to 19 school year. The service is now in the process of developing the "in-year transfer" application form.

Work on the website content has been ongoing since launching in April 2018. We achieved accreditation with the Digital Accessibility Centre meaning that our website is recognised as accessible to all users. Also, in June 2019, SocITM (Society of Information Technology Management) rated our website as 11th out of 350 local authority websites, scoring 9/10 for accessibility. In the second quarter of 2019, the website was UK's second most improved website.

In July 2018, we launched the events portal of the website as part of the 'School's Out' summer programme. As well as being able to browse local events, it also allows users to submit requests to add community events taking place within the county borough.

We are continuing to ask the public via citizen panel surveys and social media what online options they want which fit in with their busy lives. We are also analysing statistical data in customer services to identify areas of high demand that can be improved by doing things differently. One online service that we are continuing to progress is an interactive reporting tool. This gives citizens a quick and easy way to report highways issues like potholes and street lighting. Citizens can submit the report and track through to completion, which avoids time consuming chase-ups to customer services.

Many calls taken by our customer service advisors are answered and closed at the first point of contact. They mainly concern topics covered within our webpages and are simple queries that can be quickly automated due to their repetitiveness. To enhance the current front line services, and recognise that an increasing number of customers prefer online chat, we have also launched a bilingual 'chatbot'. It is programmed to answer commonly asked questions, integrate with internal systems and perform pre-programmed tasks.

In February 2019, we launched the national online blue badge application system. Since launching, we have received 498 online applications and we have seen a decrease in the number of face-to-face interactions. This demonstrates that more people are embracing the self-serve technology.

In November 2018, the Housing team procured a bilingual portal to allow customers to register their own applications online for the first time. This will reduce the time taken to process applications and will benefit the customers by enabling them to be more proactive. The portal is due to be launched in September 2019.

Providing more online services and self-serve solutions lets us explore streamlining and automating current manual processes as well as helping save money on paper and postage. For example, to set up a direct debit for council tax costs an average of £4.32 to process if received via the post. This compares to 92p when set up by the resident themselves via My Account. It is also more environmentally friendly as it is paperless and reduces our carbon footprint.

A local resident from Pencoed created his My Account and registered his council tax. This enabled him to easily create a direct debit and subscribe to eBilling. He said:

“

“This is a good idea. The site is excellent. Setting up an account was easy, and I can use it on my telephone. All services are in the one place. It's brilliant. It's definitely the way forward.”

As well as automating processes for citizens, we continued to automate a number of processes across finance and HR. Our improved invoicing arrangements have helped with the efficiency of the school transport team. The online accident reporting system was completed and roll-out commenced. An alternative and more cost-effective approach for the replacement of the catering management information system has been identified. Also, work to consolidate energy payments will streamline processes as well as let us improve our energy monitoring, which will potentially save money.

Rationalising the council's estate

As a council we have a large number of assets. We need to ensure that assets which are no longer needed are disposed of in the most effective way. Also the assets we continue to hold utilised effectively and efficiently. Our portfolio comprises of some 950 assets, with a value of circa £400 million and a budget of £15.7 million per annum.

Corporate landlord model

During 2017 to 18, we developed the corporate landlord model which was implemented in April 2018. It was the first of its kind in Wales to support how we as a council manage and maintain our property and assets. We centralised all property related functions under a single integrated team, allowing them to be managed corporately and strategically. Importantly, it freed up time for the service areas to focus on their objectives rather than on running buildings.

The first phase of the new service involved running compliance surveys on all our buildings to provide certification and identify any necessary remedial works. These are now complete. We are now performing full property condition surveys of the entire estate to determine what assets we will need going forward and what we don't. These will be completed through 2018/19. We also opened a facilities helpdesk which initially handled emergencies before it become fully operational in May 2019. Corporate and school service level agreements were also reviewed and improved, with more than 40 schools in the county borough choosing the fully managed compliance service.

Staff relocations have enabled one wing of Raven's Court to be leased to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which is also contributes to annual savings. Consideration is also being given to the best exit strategy for the Sunnyside House offices in 2021. To meet current suppliers' commitments, demonstrations of potential products for an integrated technology system are taking place before we can start procurement.

The Corporate Landlord Service is also investigating new technological solutions that will enable staff to be fully agile and provide a better service. Also an online portal is being developed that will provide information, process customer requests and enable staff to log jobs and track progress.

Disposal of assets

During 2018 to 19, contracts on assets worth £4.3 million were exchanged and £1.82 million of capital receipts generated. This included sale of development sites at Pen-y-Fai, the former Pencoed Primary school, former Heol-y-Cyw Primary School and Ysgol Bryn Castell schools. We are expecting to receive the residue of these sale proceeds in the 2019 to 20 financial year. This means our 5-year enhanced disposals programme will have generated £21 million and will be primarily used to support the 21st Century Schools Programme.

Funding was also granted for the new enterprise hub. This will enable us to renovate the Innovation Centre and create new starter units at Village Farm Industrial Estate in Pyle, Bridgend. The project will be progressed during 2019 to 20.

An options appraisal was also undertaken on the Parc Afon Ewenni site at Waterton, Bridgend, in the area following demolition of the county supplies depot. A planning application for a new council maintenance depot which is to be located there is being worked on and we will determine the boundary of the new site. It is intended that the surplus land will be sold and the receipts used to help fund the depot project.

Energy

As part of our drive to make smarter use of our resources, we continued to implement energy and carbon reduction measures in our public buildings. New solar panels have been fitted to the roof of Raven's Court which will have a significant impact on the building's energy use. The panels will help to reduce energy bills and lower our carbon footprint too.

Also Oldcastle Primary School has also gone solar by installing 28 panels on the roof of their canteen building. It is hoped that the energy generated will be used to power the facility which services hot meals to over 200 children daily. The school also anticipates saving enough CO2 emissions to the equivalent of planting one tree per month. Several other schools have achieved major financial savings during the last year by making a concerted effort to reduce their energy usage. For example, Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen have cut their electricity usage by 10 per cent, giving the school a projected saving of £10,000.

A small change can make a difference. Thanks to staff, our core buildings used 40 per cent less energy over the last May bank holiday weekend when compared to the same period in 2017. This is because staff were encouraged to switch off energy sources where possible for the holiday. As a council, Welsh Government set us a target of achieving a 3% year on year reduction in carbon emissions in the non-domestic public buildings. We have consistently achieved above this target, and, in 2018 to 19 achieved a reduction of 4.94% on the previous year.

We are currently evaluating the different options for delivering energy efficiency improvements as part of an ambitious £1.3m investment programme. We will introduce new energy efficiency measures such as upgraded heating, lighting, insulation and more. Additional investments will be delivered over time in the form of prioritised spending and preventative works. We are engaging with the Welsh Government Energy Service and local partnerships to agree on the best way forward.

Schools Modernisation Programme

Our flagship school modernisation programme continued to deliver new educational facilities for the county borough, which are designed to support 21st century teaching and learning.

The £10.8 million Pencoed Primary School project completed with the school opening its doors to pupils in September 2018. The replacement school caters for up to 510 pupils aged between four and eleven. It has a 70-place nursery and facilities for children with special educational needs. The school has an all-weather pitch that can be used by the wider community. Built on the old school playing fields off Penprysg Road, the design is similar to the new Betws Primary School, which opened in January 2018.

The new two-storey school at Pencoed contains facilities to meet modern educational needs. Large interactive screens can be found in classrooms located off one long circulation space or 'street' running through the school's ground and first floors. Above the 'street' are large windows that run the length of the building at the apex of the roof. As well as allowing light to flood in, the windows open automatically when the building reaches a certain temperature, and close when it gets cold. The school also has underfloor heating throughout. The building has achieved an 'excellent' rating against the British Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method, which is a method of determining buildings' sustainability and environmental friendliness.

Significant local authority investment was made in terms of traffic calming and highways works which improved road safety in the Pencoed area. It also enabled active travel to the new school.

The scheme has used a 'sustainable urban drainage system', a pond, to deal with surface water drainage from the car park area. This has been sited next to the school's woodland area, which greatly enhances outdoor learning opportunities for pupils. The school's very active Eco Committee were heavily involved in planning the outdoor spaces.

The old Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwm Garw, has been renamed Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg (YGG) Calon Y Cymoedd. Formerly one of Bridgend County Borough's four Welsh medium primary schools, it has relocated from Pontycymer to its new home in Bettws. It shares the site with Betws Primary School.

The number of learners with autism spectrum disorder is rising. We are committed to ensuring these learners can achieve positive outcomes with the right support, and in a mainstream school environment whenever possible.

Following a successful consultation process, plans are now underway to establish a Welsh-medium learning resource centre at YGG Calon Y Cymoedd. The provision which opens in January 2020 will enable young children with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis to learn in Welsh. This provision fulfils the strategy of ensuring there is a continuum of Welsh-medium education for ASD pupils from primary to secondary. The secondary provision opened last year at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd,

With more than £52 million of capital funding set to be committed towards the next phase of the school modernisation programme, it remains our largest investment. We plan to build four primary schools and one special school over the next five to seven years. This is part of Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme. The programme enables us to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of pupil places in both primary and secondary schools. It will help us achieve the best value for money by making schools more efficient and sustainable.

Also, it is envisaged that Welsh Government's new Mutual Investment Model (MIM) will fund two of the schemes. Under the model, gaining £31 million of funding will be generated from private funding with the remainder coming from council resources.



Corporate change

Although this was not identified as one of our key programmes, we have three aims which focus on doing things differently corporately to meet our well-being objective of 'Making smarter use of Resources'. The three aims focus on delivering budget reductions, developing culture and skills in a changing organisation. Also, it focuses on making the most of our spend on goods and services through procurement. The steps we made are set out below.

Budget reductions and our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

When developing our MTFS, we consider a number of different funding scenarios. We try to balance investment in preventative measures against the costs of reacting to unanticipated situations in statutory services. Also, we aim to ensure that the most savings are generated from making smarter use of resources with front line service reductions kept to a minimum. Each budget reduction proposal is weighed in terms of the impact on other areas of the council, the public and the well-being of future generations.

Where a budget cut in one area of non-statutory prevention would lead to increased costs in another, it is not considered good financial management. Similarly, budget reductions are achieved through remodelling existing service provision. Also they are achieved through self-sufficiency rather than removing services entirely, which makes them more sustainable going forward.

Aligned to this is a Capital Strategy coordinated with a 10-year capital programme. This demonstrates how we ensure that all of our capital, investment plans and borrowing are prudent and sustainable. It is intended to give a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management actively contribute to providing services. Also it gives an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future sustainability.

Of the £6.123 million budget reductions required for 2018 to 19, we achieved £5.615 million. The majority of these were met from making smarter use of resources rather than by cutting the quality or level of services. These included:

- developing extra care housing, leading to £300,000 of savings
- introducing the Corporate Landlord Model which generated savings of £300,000, although we had planned to save £500,000
- rationalising software and hardware budgets further, saving £210,000
- making energy savings of £110,000 which were generated through the completion of LED street lighting installations across the county borough
- reducing our annual bad debt provision for housing benefit which means a saving of £189,000
- reducing our corporate budgets by £2.610 million

The last point was mainly achieved by reducing capital financing charges, reducing and re-aligning budgets for corporate pension and national insurance costs. Also, we reduced the budget required for the council tax reduction scheme.

We did not achieve our savings in full in regarding:

- public conveniences (£100,000)
- removing subsidies for bus services (£188,000)
- implementing Learner Transport Policy (£67,000)

The public conveniences and bus subsidy savings have been met in full in 2019 to 20 following completion of formal consultations. An external review of our transport arrangements has been commissioned. It is hoped that this will support changes to the current arrangements with a view to making the identified efficiency savings for Learner Transport. We consult widely with citizens on all of budget proposals as an integral part of our MTFS, and we strive annually to increase participation and involvement. This is reflected in the increased response rate year on year.

Developing culture and skills

We recognise the importance of having an appropriately skilled and flexible workforce in place to enable the achievement of our well-being objectives and service priorities. There are sound arrangements in place for the provision and analysis of workforce planning data. During 2018 to 2019, key workforce developments included a review of the Human Resources/Organisational Design (HR/OD) service. This was to help to plan for the future with a sustainable HR function, a renewed focus on staff engagement, skills development and growing our own.

The HR/OD review found a strong correlation between the HR/OD team's aims, as the Workforce Plan describes, and the organisation's wider objectives, as the Corporate Plan and respective Directorate business plans note. The HR/OD team and respective internal stakeholder groups were also correlated regarding priority workforce issues, as proven during engagement sessions with such groups. The review's conclusion is to implement a new operating model which focusses more on proactive HR services, longer-term workforce planning and development, and increased engagement.

New staff engagement arrangements were established in 2018 to 19 through:

- regular induction sessions for new starters with the Chief Executive
- open engagement sessions for staff with the Chief Executive and Leader
- the introduction of an annual staff survey

In many cases, the feedback from the survey has reinforced the priority workforce issues. Work is ongoing to show that staff views are valued and listened to, and the survey action plan intends to address this. Examples of progress to date include a new managers' induction programme, staff health checks, mental health awareness training, a new staff suggestion scheme and refreshed staff communications.

The provision of corporate training has been targeted in order to maximise the use of limited resources. This has included:

- providing face to face training in key areas to improve skills
- offering E-learning, a low-cost training method to provide knowledge-based training to large numbers of employees
- accessing externally funded training

54.1% of employees completed e-learning modules last year, which was an increase on the 50.2% who completed it in 2017 to 18. While identified training needs have been met, the projected target for Welsh language training exceeded actual demand. 65 staff received Welsh language skills training against a target of 75, and fewer than the 81 who received training in 2017 to 18.

Being in work has a positive effect on people's well-being. Therefore policies to support staff well-being help safeguard the protective factors associated with employment and keep people in work. All employees have access to the 'Care First' services and resources.

Procurement

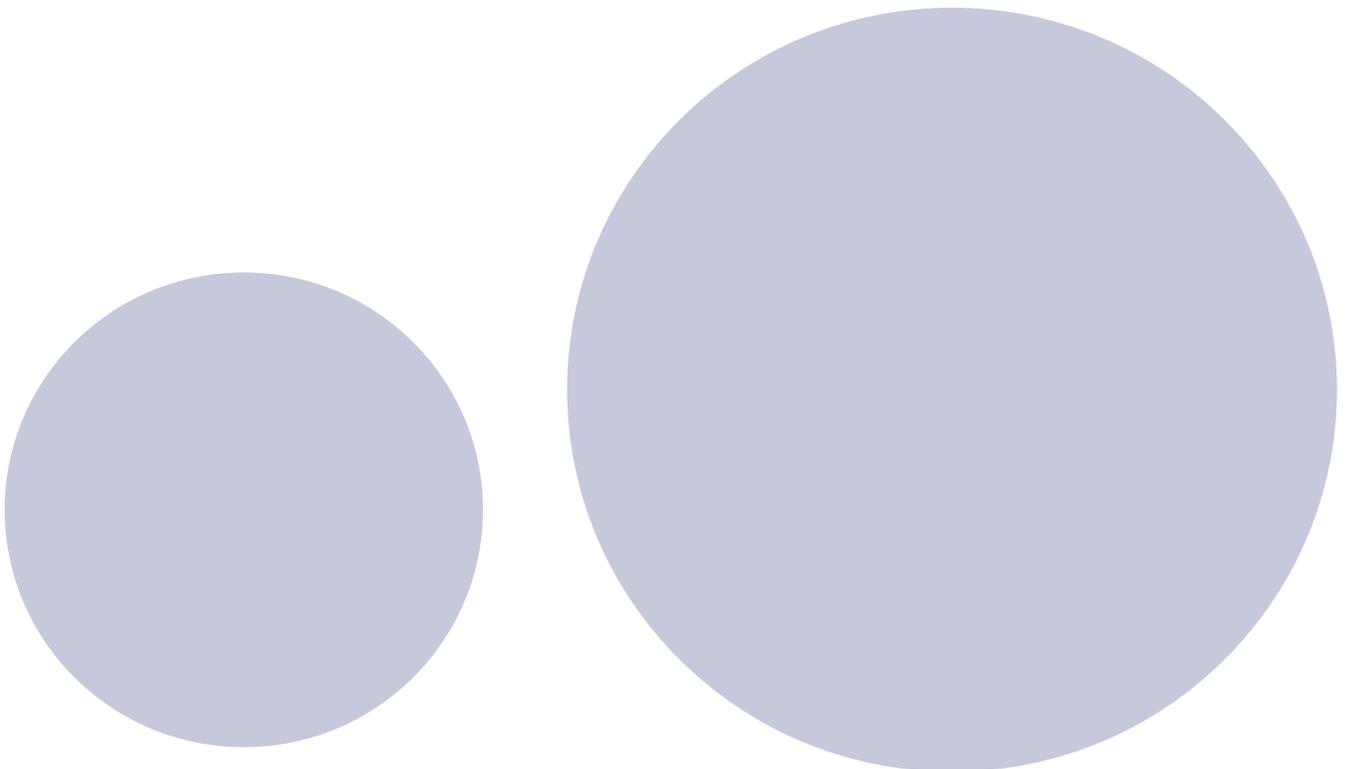
We spend around £170 million annually through procurement on bought-in goods, services and works. Influencing the ways this is done can make a key contribution to sustainability and resilience. Currently, we are developing a new procurement strategy, which focusses on the way we procure goods and services to create efficiencies, benefits and added value internally. It will nurture local supply chains, create jobs and develop new and existing business growth in the Bridgend County Borough.

We are working towards the circular economy principles. This ensures sustainable procurement, which ultimately underpins the seven well-being goals under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFGA). Procurement will consider 'whole life costing'. This is where money is spent to create wider benefits and add value, as opposed to traditional procurement routes based on the lowest price. Consideration like energy consumption and end of life decommissioning, financial and environmental factors will be considered as part of awarding contracts.

We will engage with businesses within our communities, to support new and innovative ideas. The procurement function will focus more on long-term vision to identify needs, forecast change and let us act proactively to prevent problems before they can arise.

We are considering how to integrate the five ways of working into our new procurement strategy and ensuring that the strategy enables procurement to maximise contribution to the well-being goals. Also, we are considering some specific initiatives. For instance, we are at the early stages of considering the UK Steel Charter and the foundation economy model.

As part of the new procurement strategy, we will consider co-producing services with the public, private and community sectors to develop innovative solutions. We will work with suppliers to identify the best solutions to suit our needs. Where relevant, we will work with others to replicate good practice. Our new procurement strategy will enable us to maximise our contribution to the well-being goals and encourage initiatives to help deliver sustainable procurement.



Consultations and citizen feedback

Throughout the year we carried out a range of consultations to find out your views and inform our decisions. We undertook online surveys, roadshows throughout the county borough, ran focus groups and invited comment through social media on:

Public consultations open to everyone about:

- dog fouling
- post 16 concepts consultation
- subsidised buses
- empty properties

Closed group consultation/engagements which were public surveys for a specific groups in the community about:

- Llangynwyd learner travel
- Cynffig learner travel
- Archbishop learner travel
- Porthcawl learner travel

Internal consultations about:

- Porthcawl 10k
- Bridgend

Further information can be found at www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/consultations/.

During the latter part of 2018, we worked with community groups and conducted engagement sessions in libraries as part of the 2018 budget consultation. The consultation team attended 53 events across the county borough, carrying out 2,148 face-to-face interactions. Face-to-face engagement activities enabled people who may not have previously participated in online consultation to have their say on proposals.

We worked with People First Bridgend on our first 'easy read' budget survey and Porthcawl Comprehensive School pupils on a survey aimed at 11 to 25 year-olds. This has helped us to maximise engagement with those targeted groups.

The easy read version of the survey was extremely popular, with 267 members of the public completing it. We will aim to continue this work in collaboration with People First Bridgend. Also, we engaged with 730 secondary school pupils in structured clicker pad sessions, and engaged with 832 Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in primary schools in pupil-led interactive sessions.

Social media enabled us to increase the profile of the consultation. Social media content was seen 141,534 times and resulted in 447 social media comments. The response rate for Citizens' Panel members was 48%, with 524 Citizens' Panel survey completions. This represents a 17% increase since 2017. The Citizens' Panel was also promoted during the period October 2018 to January 2019, which resulted in an increase from 1,088 to 1,115 members.

We also engaged with community groups such as the Bridgend Coalition of Disabled people and SHOUT Bridgend on the subsidised bus and public convenience consultations.

Improving well-being in Bridgend

In addition to our well-being objectives, we are also taking complimentary steps to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of Bridgend County Borough. Working to improve the four pillars of well-being is one of the key aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Below are some examples of the steps we are taking with partners and communities to make Bridgend County Borough a better place to live, work in and visit.

Economic well-being

Partnership working

We work in partnership with a number of organisations to provide services for our citizens to improve their economic well-being. Some initiatives are provided jointly, and some are delivered by our partners. All improve well-being for our citizens. Our PSB partner, Bridgend College is integral to providing educational support to our young people to improve their economic well-being. One of the innovative programmes they launched is a supported internship programme. It has enabled nine young people with additional learning needs and disabilities to secure a supported internship based at the Princess of Wales Hospital. Read more about this at: www1.bridgend.ac.uk/internship-opportunity-for-young-people-with-additional-learning-needs/

The Welsh Government Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning Eluned Morgan AM commended the project as "...outstanding and...leading in Wales."

Support to businesses

There are many ways in which we support businesses to improve outcomes for economic well-being. Two initiatives include the recent action we took to revive the fortunes of Bridgend Indoor Market. You can read more about this in the news article: www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/radical-plans-to-revive-bridgend-indoor-market/

We know how important financial assistance is to new or existing local micro-businesses. The Kick Start Grant can help. You can read more about this and about how Jollie's Hair Lounge benefitted from the grant in the news article: www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/kick-start-grant-helps-bridgend-based-salon-thrive/

Social well-being

Festival of Learning

We held the inaugural Festival of Learning in June 2018, which was the first of its kind in Wales. Over the last few years there have been significant developments in technology and insights into the health and well-being of children. The festival is a unique way to showcase these developments and share knowledge on ways to support the well-being of learners.

Attended by over 800 pupils, teachers, educators, trainers and employers, the festival showcased new, innovative learning and teaching methods in schools throughout the county borough use. It was an opportunity for schools to share effective best practice with one another while establishing new training opportunities for teachers and staff.

Schools hosted up to 100 workshops demonstrating the latest modern classroom developments to benefit local children alongside traditional numeracy and literacy techniques. A symposium event at Bridgend College featured key speakers and a Q&A panel. This gave educators an opportunity to focus on how the health and well-being of pupils can be developed, maintained and improved.

The week culminated in the Learners' Day showcase event at Bridgend Life Centre. While there, pupils from local schools set up stalls and displays, and gave practical demonstrations of some of the classroom techniques in use.

One of the key learning events was to engage directly with pupils to improve our understanding of what makes children happy.

Case study: **what makes children happy?**

The Youth Development Team was asked to facilitate an hour-long consultation event titled the Learner Voice Forum. The aim was to engage 100 primary and secondary school pupils in several activities promoting participation and stimulating learner-led discussions around three key questions:

1. What makes you happy in your learning?
2. What makes you happy in school outside of lesson times?
3. What makes you happy outside of school?

The consultation was also delivered through the medium of Welsh to ensure maximum participation.

Learners overwhelmingly expressed the single biggest factor which influences their happiness in school is spending time with friends. Working together with friends in their lessons was the most frequent point of positive feedback.

Sport was a reoccurring theme across each of the three questions. Learners participated in a wide variety of sporting activities, with some representing their country in their chosen discipline. Learners noted that they would like the opportunity to expand and share their sporting disciplines with pupils in both their own school, and with others in the county borough.

The evidence and feedback gathered was collated and a list of recommendations detailing the things pupils feel would make them happier was produced. This was shared with schools and many have taken these forward in their School Improvement Plans.

Recommendations

1. Singing in whole-school assembly to include more popular music instead of just traditional hymns.
2. Lessons to start and finish on time.
3. More challenging work for those who need it.
4. More access to extra-curricular clubs and activities, and more awareness raising of them.
5. Teachers to be more approachable.
6. More competitive sporting fixtures against other schools (during and after school time).
7. Promotion of girls football and rugby teams.
8. More shaded areas around school like gazebos.
9. Outdoor shelter and benches for lunch and socialising.
10. Music to be played in the yard.

Nature and well-being

Evidence abounds of how the public health can be improved by increasing access to green and blue space, and improving the quality of our natural environment. Bryngarw Country Park's accessible natural environment and the services on offer provide a range of opportunities to:

- connect with nature
- learn to enhance the quality of the environment
- engage in physical activity outdoors like
- birdsong walks
- Tai-chi
- watching wildlife
- using nature trails

The park's value as a community space has been recognized by its designation in the Valleys Regional Park, and its inclusion in £7 million of future investment.

Libraries as places of learning and entertainment

With our partners Awen, we consider libraries to be a vital community asset to support health and well-being. We believe libraries should be welcoming places for people to have fun, be educated and entertained.

To help grow future generations of library users, we focus on building a love of reading from a young age. This has the twin benefit of improving literacy levels among children which will help them to succeed in education. Library staff are very active in engaging with local children and have held a number of activities including:

- 'Bounce and rhyme' for babies, story times and book clubs, craft sessions, and coding clubs
- the Fire Service, Coastguard, local vets, animal charities and others have all delivered community-led story times making reading fun and engaging
- libraries host themed events, based on Harry Potter, attracting over 90 children and parents including book nights, quizzes, games and reading sessions
- visits from professional schools from across the borough came to our libraries to enjoy visits from professional children's authors Shoo Rayner and Pip Jones to learn about the writing process and how to illustrate characters
- library staff engaged with over 100 foundation phase children at Pyle and Porthcawl
- new partnerships being created with local voluntary organisations such as St John's Ambulance

Cultural well-being

Artistic excellence available locally

Our aim is to bring world-class performances and creative experiences into the area as well as champion home grown talent. Awen venues provide a busy and successful professional programme of music, theatre and comedy as well as the annual professional pantomime. This brings high profile names and acts to local venues for local theatregoers so they don't have to travel out of the area for live entertainment. Local children are also given the opportunity to participate in workshops with professional companies, particularly in the area of dance. We actively promote and programme Welsh language work in music, spoken word and literature, and ensure that all marketing material is bilingual.

Accessible arts

Awen support the Hynt scheme, a national access scheme working with theatres and arts centres to support visitors with impairments or specific access needs. This includes their carers or personal assistants. 506 people were supported by the Hynt scheme in 2018 to 19.

Our innovative 'Live and Loud' programme of events provides affordable access to the arts within an easily-accessible community-setting. Hosted by our Awen Libraries, events include Welsh music, theatre, children's theatre and classical music. This has provided people with opportunities to see high quality artistic work in their local library. Ticket costs are heavily subsidised which helps reduce financial barriers to participation.

Throughout the year, Awen venues host a broad range of daytime activity. This encourages participation by users who rely on public transport or who do not want to be out at night-time and particularly if alone. Activities include craft workshops, tea dances, visual arts, and singing. These workshops can teach new skills or encourage users to re-engage in a favourite activity, whilst also providing social interaction. Daytime cinema has also proved very popular, offering recently released titles at an affordable price compared to commercial cinemas.

Ogmore Heritage Trail

Proper management of heritage resources has the potential to bring social and economic benefits to communities, while also helping preserve history for future generations to enjoy.

There are ambitious plans to open the history of Ogmore Valley through an interactive heritage trail which will combine the natural environment with technology. Starting at Bryngarw Country Park and winding up the valley along the cycling and walking route to Nantymoel, the trail will be dotted with interpretive information panels. These will document the area's past and highlight places of interest, as well as additional walking and cycling routes. A new smartphone app will be linked to the trail to help bring the valley's history into the present. Also the trail will climax with a new art feature on the site of the former Berwyn Centre.

The new trail will contribute to our goals of helping people become more physically active. Indeed the trail is being created along a cycle path with a self-service bike maintenance station. There is also potential for new bike hire facilities at Bryngarw Country Park.

The project includes the renovation of Memorial Hall in Nantymoel to become a Heritage Hub for the valley. It will showcase memorabilia and heritage information, and have a digital heritage display in the community café.

Sport, literacy and the Welsh language

Pupils and teachers at Afon-Y-Felin Primary School in North Cornelly worked closely with the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) to help develop an exciting new learning resources. These will use rugby to boost literacy skills, and you can read more about this in the news article: www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/rugby-to-boost-literacy-at-afon-y-felin/

Environmental well-being

Tree management and enhancement programme

We approved a Tree Management Plan in June 2018. Also we held a workshop with the Public Service Board (PSB) partners to identify potential sites for tree planting, and a shortlist of eight sites was identified. So far, two sites, Caerau Bowls Centre and Pyle Swimming Pool, have had planting. A further planting scheme is in the design phase at Heol-y-Cyw on a rugby pitch that is no longer in use. Through a joint project with Bridgend Ford and Natural Resources Wales, over 1200 trees have been planted including heritage fruit trees and hedgerow plant. This will result in rewilding areas providing long-term environmental benefits.

Biodiversity enhancement

Increasing the opportunities to develop biodiversity is a key driver behind the cross directorate steering group created to write the new strategy on Parks and Highways Biodiversity Enhancement. Its aim is to promote ecosystem resilience, and the project focussed on specific, well-sited road verges and parkland areas.

The seven community based and community led sites have benefited from biodiversity enhancements are:

- Badgers Brook Allotments
- the Wilderness Park and Allotments
- Maesteg Welfare Park
- Bryn y Cae Nursing Home
- Bryngarw Country Park
- Glanrhyd Hospital
- Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club

These schemes include wildflower meadow creation, a tree nursery, woodland management, wetland creation and Hügélkultur.

Volunteering to improve the environment

Volunteering is a great way to support community resilience, develop new skills, combat social isolation and promote well-being. Volunteering also helps preserve important ecological resources for the long term. Volunteers at Kenfig National Nature Reserve (KNNR) engage in a range of practical and recording activities. These include scrub clearance, butterfly transects, and fen orchid monitoring, and they access a range of training which helps preserve and maintain the site.

As an outreach function of the KNNR, a Bridgend volunteering group has been established since 2002. This group runs a range of practical projects focussed on the local nature reserves which we manage including coppicing, dry stone walling, hedge laying and woodland management. In addition, educational events such as plant, bird and bat walks also operate through this group.

Case study: management of coastal landscape in Bridgend County Borough

Led by us, the 'Dunes 2 Dunes' project started in August 2018. For the and was created to enjoyment of future generations, it was created to:

- sustainably manage the coastal landscape
- improve ecosystems
- increase biodiversity
- improve connectivity between the two dune systems at Kenfig and Merthyr Mawr Warren.

We collaborated with Natural Resources Wales, Kenfig and Merthyr Mawr National Nature Reserves, landowners, farmers, Kenfig Corporate Trust, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation as well and Royal Porthcawl and Pyle and Kenfig Golf Clubs. Volunteers have been trained in countryside management and surveying skills. These newly trained volunteers are now helping manage the habitats on the Bridgend coast and survey the rare species that live in those habitats.

A series of planned activities over the short and long term have been agreed by all partners to deliver the following expected outcomes by July 2020:

- habitat preserved and restored
- paths and boundaries restored
- increased visitors
- more responsible visitors
- less visitor impact
- health and well-being benefits for visitors
- economic benefits
- landscape character preserved and enhanced



Eco Friendly Schools

Three quarters of our schools have achieved the eco-schools green flag, while more than half have attained platinum status. You can read more about this in the news article:

www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/platinum-award-for-eco-friendly-tynyrheol-primary-school/

Local parks and green spaces

The benefits of green spaces on peoples well-being is well evidenced, therefore managing these resources is essential. Nine of Bridgend County Borough's most beautiful parks and green spaces have been awarded the prestigious Green Flag award. You can read more about this in the news article:

www.bridgend.gov.uk/news/awards-for-local-parks-and-green-spaces/

How do we compare?

For 2018 to 19, data has been released for 17 of the 31 Public Accountability Measures which we use to compare ourselves to the rest of the local authorities in Wales. As just under 55% of indicators have been reported on, a full picture of our performance at a national level cannot be fully compared.

Below is a summary of our performance on the data that has been released to date. Yet it should be remembered that our overall performance compared with other local authorities is likely to change as the full data is published.

In summary:

- 59% of indicators are in the top two quartiles, compared with 53% of comparable indicators in 2017 to 18, which is an improvement in performance.
- When compared to the Wales average, we are better in nine (53%) indicators, the same in one (6%) and worse in seven (41%).
- Of the 26 indicators where we set our own performance target, 15 (58%) met the target, compared with 16 (62%) in 2017 to 18.

We were among the best in Wales for:

- ✓ **School leavers.** We ranked third lowest in Wales for the percentage of Year 11 leavers known 'Not to be in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) which was at 0.9%. The Wales average is 1.6%.
- ✓ **School attendance.** We ranked fourth highest for pupil attendance in primary schools (94.9%). Despite slipping to eleventh in secondary schools (93.9%), we remained on a par with the Wales average. Bridgend County Borough remains committed to secure the regular attendance of all pupils, and strives to ensure that they reach their full potential.
- ✓ **Planning.** We ranked second highest for appeals against planning application decisions dismissed, with a score of 75%. The Wales average is 67.6%.
- ✓ **Empty Homes.** We ranked fifth highest for the percentage of private sector homes brought back into use with a score of 8.4%. The Wales average is 4.6%.
- ✓ **Food Hygiene.** We ranked fifth highest for the percentage of food establishments which are broadly compliant with food hygiene standards, with a score of 97.5%. The Wales average is 95.7%.

We did not compare so favourably for our:

- ✘ **Highway cleanliness.** The cleanliness of our highways ranked 21 out of 22 with a score of 85.7%. The inspection is a one-off annual inspection on a selection of streets and so inevitably subjective. By comparison, the Keep Wales Tidy assessment happened on a different day with a different set of streets. It gave a much better overall result on an all Wales basis. The Keep Wales Tidy inspection scored Bridgend County Borough at 96.7% in line with the majority of other Welsh authorities.
- ✘ **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG).** At 291 days, we ranked 20 out of 22 for the average number of days taken to deliver DFG's. Work on improving the DFGs process is continuing. The whole systems review which started the previous year has produced findings which will help shape our operational practices and procedures. Investigating and implementing a cohesive and joined up process will deliver a better service that benefits applicants and has demonstrable results. In parallel to this work, focussing on the preventative and well-being agenda to support people in their own home for as long as possible has seen a significant increase in the amount of small scale discretionary work.
- ✘ **Planning.** We ranked 19 out of 22 for planning applications determined within required time periods. We have one of the smallest planning teams in Wales and deal with complex applications which can affect timescales. However, this figure needs to be looked at in the context of the whole planning performance framework. On average, we take 72.5 days to determine planning applications, while the Welsh average is 77 days so we are above average in this respect. Also, although we may rank 19 for planning applications determined within required time periods, we rank second for appeals against planning application decisions dismissed. This shows that although it takes us longer, the right decision is made and a change in the decision on appeal is very low.

Each year, the Welsh Government publishes a range of national performance indicators that enable citizens to compare how their local authority performed in comparison with the other 21 Welsh local authorities across a whole range of services.

You can see more detail about how councils across Wales compare by clicking on

www.mylocalcouncil.info

Financial performance

Our financial environment is becoming increasingly challenging. We need to make unprecedented savings in the future that can only be achieved by changing the way we work and how services are delivered. Last year the gross amount we spent on delivering services to our citizens and investing in our landscape and infrastructure totalled around £450 million. The total amount that we had available to spend was made up from three main sources listed below.

Revenue expenditure

Our revenue expenditure represents day-to-day costs such as salaries, equipment, supplies and services. Our **net** revenue expenditure in 2018 to 19 was **£265.796 million**, which resulted in an underspend of £429,477 which was transferred to the Council Fund. This was calculated after allowing for appropriation to earmarked reserves, additional income from council tax and an underspend against council-wide budgets. The table below shows the expenditure the expenditure and proportion of spend per well-being objective in 2018 to 19, and spend on other core services and statutory functions:

Well-being objective for 2018-19	Revised Budget 2018-19 (£'Million)	Actual Outturn 2018-19 (£'Million)	Actual Over / (Under Spend) 2018-19 (£'Million)
1. Supporting a successful economy	47.1	47.2	0.1
2. Helping people to be more self-reliant	53.9	52.5	-1.4
3. Smarter use of resources	4.4	4.2	-0.2
4. Core services and statutory functions	160.5	161.6	1.1
TOTAL	265.9	265.5	-0.4

Capital expenditure

This represents our spending on schools and infrastructure such as roads, bridges and buildings. These assets will benefit the community over long periods of time and the expenditure is largely financed by borrowing and capital grants. Our capital expenditure in 2018 to 19 was **£27.614 million**, where the main projects carried out during the year included:

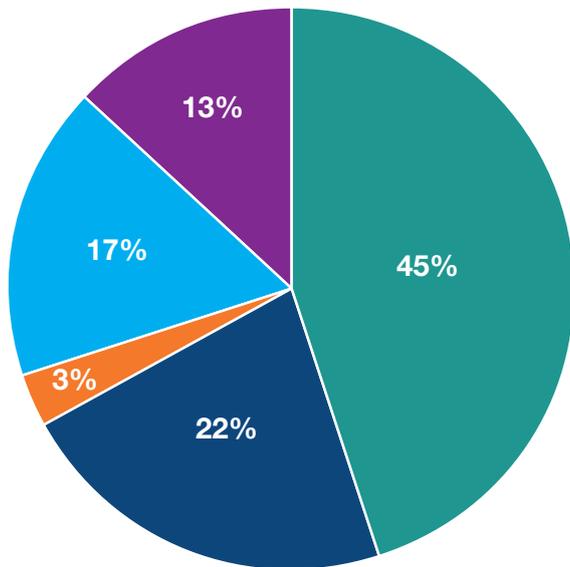
- £4,193,000 for Garw Valley South primary provision
- £4,652,000 for Pencoed Primary School
- £1,713,000 for extra care facilities
- £2,093,000 for the Town Beach Revetment Scheme in Porthcawl
- £1,162,000 for the Cardiff City Deal
- £2,594,000 for Disabled Facility Grants and private sector housing

Grants

We also received specific government grants in addition to the core Revenue Support Grant and Non-Domestic Rate (NDR) allocations and Housing Benefit Subsidy. These totalled **£44,168 million** in 2018 to 19, which we are able to use in addition to our own revenue budgets. The main grants received during 2018 to 19 included:

- £6,022,468 in the post-16 grant
- £6,074,086 in the supporting people grant
- £4,921,253 in the education improvement grant
- £4,549,137 in the pupil development grant
- £3,226,944 in the flying start grant
- £1,858,469 in the families first grant

The following chart summarises where the money came from and where the money is spent:

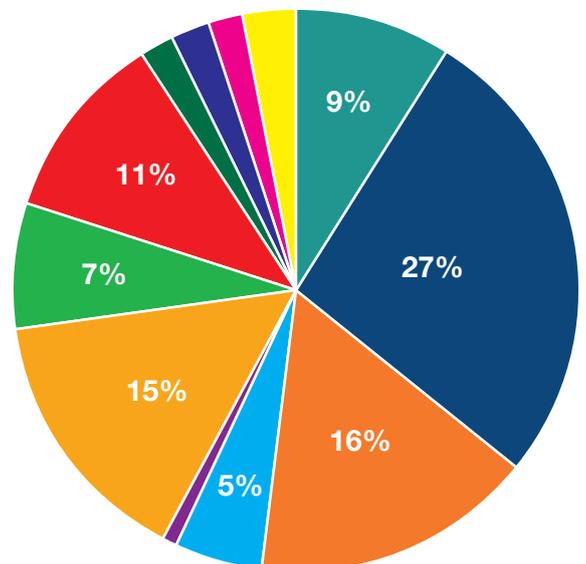


2018-19: Where the money comes from

- Revenue Support Grant * Non Domestic Rates (from Welsh Government) **(45%)**
- Specific Government Grants **(22%)**
- Other Grants & Contributions **(3%)**
- Council Tax **(17%)**
- Fees, Charges & Other Income **(13%)**

2018-19: Where the money is spent

- Education & Family Support **(9%)**
- Schools **(27%)**
- Adult Social Care **(16%)**
- Children's Social Care **(5%)**
- Sport, Play & Active Well-being **(1%)**
- Communities **(15%)**
- Chief Executive **(7%)**
- Benefit Payments to Claimants **(11%)**
- Capital Financing **(2%)**
- Levies & Contributions **(2%)**
- Corporate Functions & Insurance Premiums **(2%)**
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme **(3%)**



What our regulators said about us

Wales Audit Office

The Auditor General for Wales (the Auditor General) audited the council's Improvement Plan for 2018 to 19. They certified the council had discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Measure and had acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties. The Auditor General certified that we are meeting our statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement. The Wales Audit Office also undertook the following reviews of the council during 2018 to 19 which can be seen via the below reports.

Review	Link
Overview and Scrutiny - Fit for the Future?	 Item 230
Service User Perspective of Disabled Facilities Grants	 Item 83
Local government use of data	
Planning Services: Improving the economic well-being of Wales	
Examination under the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 – Step 'Deliver the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus Programme'	Final report yet to be published.
Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014: First point of contact assessments	Final report yet to be published.
Tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence	Final report yet to be published.

Estyn

In March 2019, Estyn undertook an inspection into the council's education services. The Estyn report and the post-inspection plan to address the recommendations. These can be seen at: democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=394&MId=3716&Ver=4&LLL=0

This also includes delivering priorities identified in the Welsh Education Strategic Plan which can be seen at: www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/4855/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan-bridgend-2017-to-2020.docx

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

Performance monitoring and evaluation of social care services is monitored throughout the year by CIW. During 2018 to 19, CIW also undertook some more focused work, which can be seen at democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=3341&Ver=4&LLL=0

Important themes that underpin our work

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act

A number of key principles underpin how we work. Within these principles, we have embedded the sustainable development principal noted in the Well-being and Futures Generation Act as follows.

Sustainable Development Principles	 Long term	 Prevention	 Integration	 Collaboration	 Involvement		
To support communities and people to create their own solutions and reduce dependency on the Council.							
To focus diminishing resources on communities and individuals with the greatest need.							
To use good information from service users and communities to inform its decisions.							
To encourage and develop capacity amongst the third sector to identify and respond to local needs.							
To not let uncertainty over the future of public services prevent meaningful and pragmatic collaboration with other public sector bodies.							
To work as one Council and discourage different parts of the organisation from developing multiple processes or unnecessarily different approaches.							
To transform the organisation and many of its services to deliver financial budget reductions as well as improvements.							

Performance Management Framework

Performance management is about taking action in response to actual performance to make outcomes for users and the public better than they would otherwise be. You can see our Performance Management Framework here: www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/2281/bcbc-performance-management-framework-2017-version.pdf

Scrutinising our performance

Overview and scrutiny committees are a valuable part of the transparent and democratic process. They support the work of the council as a whole in the improvement of public services. You can see more information on the role of scrutiny here: www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/democracy-and-elections/overview-and-scrutiny-committees/

Risk management

With growing demands on services at a time of increasing pressure on finances, effective risk management remains an essential part of the framework for ensuring good corporate governance. We agreed the Corporate Risk Assessment as part of the MTFS in February 2019 and you can be found at: democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=8994#mgDocuments&LLL=0 item 281 Appendix I

Equality and diversity

We are committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity through all of our services. Also we are dedicated to treating our residents, customers, employees and visitors with respect, while providing services which respond to people's individual needs. More information can be found at: www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/equality-and-diversity/

Welsh language

We are committed to treating Welsh and English on an equal basis when carrying out our public business. Our five-year strategy and more information on how we promote the language can be seen at: www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/welsh-language/

Bridgend Public Services Board

Bridgend Public Services Board (PSB) is a group of public sector and non-profit organisations who work together to create a better Bridgend County Borough. In July 2019, the PSB published its first annual report highlighting its activity during 2018 to 19. You can read the full report and see five short videos reflecting progress on each of the well-being objectives at: <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/6276/public-service-board-annual-report.pdf>.

Our well-being objectives for 2019 to 20

In our Corporate Plan 2018 to 22, we set out our well-being objectives or priorities. These are:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Helping people to be more self-reliant
- Smarter use of resources

These well-being objectives were reviewed against the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We decided that they were still pertinent and should remain our well-being objectives. Full details on the actions we have in place can be seen in our Corporate Plan here: www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3632/corporate-plan-2018-2022.pdf

Feedback

We welcome your comments on this annual report and your suggestions for improvement. You can give your feedback through:



our website: www.bridgend.gov.uk



on Instagram: www.instagram.com/BridgendCBC/



via Facebook: www.facebook.com/BridgendCBC



on Twitter: [@BridgendCBC](https://twitter.com/BridgendCBC)



emailing: talktous@bridgend.gov.uk



in writing to: **Corporate Performance Team, Bridgend County Borough Council, Raven's Court, Brewery Lane, Bridgend CF31 4WB**

This report is available in both Welsh and English. It is also available in another language or format on request.