

Delivering Capital Ambition

Mid-Year Assessment of Performance
2021/22

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Well-being Objective 1: Cardiff is a great place to grow up – Summary

The lives of all children and young people have been disrupted by the pandemic, with more vulnerable children particularly impacted. As the city emerges from the Covid-19 crisis, the Council committed to putting the voice, needs and rights of children and young people at the heart of the recovery and renewal programme. At the same time as safely reopening schools and regaining momentum there is a need to support curriculum reform, establish a new assessment framework and improve outcomes for identified groups of learners.

Protecting the city's most vulnerable children and ensuring the children in care experience the best outcomes remains the Council's priority. Whilst good progress has been made in addressing the workforce challenges and shifting the balance of care, the service faces significant pressure. The increase in demand and pressure on front door services are significant and translating into acute cost pressures.

- **Supporting a child friendly recovery**
- **Safely reopening schools and regaining momentum**
- **Continuing to deliver the Cardiff 2030 vision for education and learning**
- **Protecting the well-being of vulnerable children, young people and families**

Key Successes

Safely reopening schools and regaining momentum

- Responding to the Pandemic: The health and safety of children, teachers and all school staff has been a clear priority during the pandemic, with extensive work undertaken to diminish the disruption to learners in Cardiff. Cardiff's response to the pandemic has been commended, with Estyn citing its "*sustained strategic leadership*", noting that "*a strength of Cardiff's response to providing support for children and young people...was its collaboration with partners in the public and private sectors.*"
- Reopening Schools: Cardiff Schools opened full-time in early September 2021 for all learners. The relationship between schools and the Local Authority, as well as the Test, Trace, Protect Service and Health partners, has been a real strength of the approach, characterised by good communication levels. Whilst there have been instances where some year groups or classes have had to close due to staffing issues relating to Covid, Education Management Team Link Officers have continued to provide support for managing issues relating to staffing, confirmed cases and isolation, risk assessments and parental concerns.
- A Child Friendly Recovery: Good progress has been made in delivering the Child Friendly Recovery priorities which were approved by Cabinet in May 2021. As part of this work, the 'Summer of Smiles' re-engagement and well-being programme for children and young people was delivered over the summer holidays, which included targeted

activities for vulnerable learners. The programme was attended by over 20,000 participants during the course of the festival.

With a focus on the most vulnerable children and young people across the city, a Children and Young People Recovery Board has also been established to oversee key programmes of work, including Business Intelligence and Information Management, Integrated Youth Support Services, Tackling Youth Violence and Exploitation, and Locality Based Services.

- Child Friendly City: Cardiff is progressing work to become the UK's first Child Friendly City, with the UNICEF assessment due to take place in summer 2022. The Rights Respecting Schools initiative represents a key part of the Child Friendly approach and there has been an increase in the number of accredited schools after the pandemic significantly impacted this programme of work during 2020/21. The Council is now on track to achieve the corporate target and the number of schools that have achieved accreditation has increased by 11.9% – from 67 schools to 75 schools – since March 2021. To date, 47 schools have received the Bronze Schools award, 22 Silver and five Gold.
- Enhanced Support: Enhanced support and an expanded digital offer have been made available for young people through the Youth Service, resulting in improved emotional health and well-being for young people.
- Cardiff Commitment: The Cardiff Commitment, involving effective collaboration between the Youth Service and a range of city partners, provided virtual activities to support school leavers over the summer. As part of a wider programme of activities, it has helped sustain the low numbers of children identified as not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), which is projected to be at 2.1% for summer 2021 leavers. The number of Children Educated Other Than at Home (EOTAS) who are projected to be NEET is 15.6%, and 12.5% for Children Looked After. Whilst the performance overall is positive, outcomes for some learners must be improved.

Continuing to deliver the Cardiff 2030 vision for education and learning

- Supporting Schools: In the absence of a National School Improvement Framework, Cardiff has established robust arrangements for providing challenge and support to schools. The relationship with the Central South Consortium is characterised by effective joint working with a clear agreement at the strategic level on areas of focus and priority activity. This means that there is a shared understanding of the performance issues facing each school in Cardiff, which informs risk management and improvement activity.

Further work will be progressed with the Consortium to consider, challenge and support the latest suite of School Improvement Plans produced by schools during the Autumn of 2021 for the academic year 2021/22. The Director of Education will ensure that Consortium Improvement Partners play a pivotal and consistent role in maintaining the continuity of learning in schools, and in securing positive outcomes for learners, and will further strengthen arrangements for the Consortium to report pupil progress and school

performance to the local authority whilst the new national accountability and assessment framework emerges.

- Cardiff 2030: Work is underway to reconsider the goals and commitments of Cardiff 2030 in view of the disruptive impact of the past 20 months, involving a range of stakeholders. A three-year plan will be published in the spring of 2022.
- Investment in Schools: The major programme of investment in Cardiff schools has made good progress, and 13 Cabinet decisions have been taken over the past year following a review of programme pressures and the demographic challenges. There is now real momentum behind Band B of the 21st Century Schools programme, with education-led designs improving the quality of tenders. Importantly, the value of spend on the asset renewal programme has also increased.
- Addressing Digital Deprivation: A transformative ICT programme has been implemented, building on the Education Technology funding made available through Welsh Government to address the digital deprivation experienced by some young people across the city. This work has involved a more sustainable, long-term, ICT Investment Programme supported by allocating a proportion of the total schools delegated budget into a dedicated investment fund. In the 2021/22 financial year, the annual contribution amounted to £3.8m.
- Additional Learning Needs Reform: Good progress has been made to prepare for the implementation of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) reform, including partnership working in relation to the extended 0-25 age range.
- Children's University: The Children's University, in partnership with Cardiff University, has been launched with 12 schools. An extensive range of opportunities are now available, beginning the 'Passport to the City'.

Protecting the well-being of vulnerable children, young people and families

- Supporting Well-being: Schools, the Local Authority, and partners have implemented a range of effective measures to support well-being, particularly of vulnerable learners, and this has helped to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In May 2021, the Local Authority set out universal and targeted approaches to supporting recovery. This also formed part of the highly successful 'Summer of Smiles' festival, 'Food and Fun' scheme, and an enhanced Youth Service programme to enhance pupil well-being.
- Joint Vulnerable Learners Panel: A Joint Vulnerable Learners Panel has been initiated and sustained in a modified form to ensure stronger collaboration between Education and Children's Services in response to contextual safeguarding, as well as young people experiencing significant mental health difficulties.
- Safeguarding Identification and Recording System: A safeguarding identification and recording system ('My Concern') has been implemented across all schools, the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), the Youth Service and Education Other than at School (EOTAS)

provision. This system helps officers target support where need is most pressing through Central Services, such as Education Welfare Support, Specialist Teacher Teams, Inclusion Services, School-based Counselling and the Youth Service.

- Supporting Vulnerable Young People: Good progress has been made in relation to improving support for homeless young people; safeguarding of Elective Home Education (EHE) learners and school capacity to support emotional well-being and mental health. Exclusions in the primary phase are lower than previous years.
- Educational Outcomes of Children Looked After: Support to improve the educational outcomes of children who are looked after has improved significantly. A new Corporate Parenting Strategy is in place. Information sharing, particularly with Children's Services, has improved and capacity within the Looked After Children in Education (LACE) team has strengthened.
- Pre-16 Mentoring Capacity for Children Looked After: Three Youth Mentors have been appointed to support Children Looked After. Additionally, regular meetings have been set up between the Bright Futures Co-ordinator and Looked After Children Co-ordinator, to gather information on the destinations of care-experienced young-people who have recently left Year 11.
- Recruitment and retention: Continued progress has been made in relation to the recruitment and retention of the workforce. The level of Children's Social Worker vacancies has improved with the vacancy rate filled by agency staff now below the corporate target of 26% (at 22.1%). This reflects the co-ordinated programme of interventions taken forward, including the market supplement, enhanced training provision and recruitment campaigns.
- Residential Provision: The Council's new multi-disciplinary assessment centre, Falconwood, has been registered by Care Inspectorate Wales and the first three young people who will benefit from the new approach are currently in placement. The delivery of the new home is part of the Council's ambitious development plan to increase in-house residential provision, with the aim of reducing out of county placements and better meeting the needs of those on the edge of care or care experienced children.
- Shifting the Balance of Care: Savings of £3.3 million have been realised as a result of shifting the balance of care. Real gains have been made in relation to in-house fostering provision for pre-school and primary age children, but more work is required for older children, particularly for adolescents with complex needs.
- Supporting Children to Return Safely to Their Own Homes: The Reunification Framework, which aims to support children to return to live with family where it is safe for them to do so, has been implemented and focus has now turned to embedding the approach across the service. As part of the process, a Reunification Team has been set, who will focus solely on the reunification of children with their families.

- Supporting Emotional and Mental Health: An Emotional and Mental Health (EMH) Group has been established to review internal and external pathways for working with children and young people who self-harm or have attempted suicide. This quarter, Family Help and Cardiff Parenting have reviewed EMH pathways; work is being completed to establish and improve pathways to respond to need.

A Mental Health Resilience Project has also been established which, since October 2019, has supported 177 families through direct intervention and requested support for 181 children and young people, who received a professional consultation as a result. Training has also been delivered to 938 education staff, including school nurses.

- Early Help Cost Avoidance Tool: A Cost Avoidance Tool is currently being piloted by three teams across Early Help. Officers involved in the pilot are reporting back on its ease of use and practical application as a standard part of casework, and a request has been submitted to incorporate the tool into the Eclipse Case Management System.
- Well-being Projects: The Youth Service have continued to deliver a range of well-being projects funded by the Youth Support Grant. Projects include a gaming club for socially-isolated young people to develop friendships, an inner strength programme and activities with young girls to promote emotional health and well-being through physical exercise. Other activities include emotional health support for children who are Educated Other than at School (EOTAS). The projects have engaged 168 young people, with 134 young people sustaining attendance and 119 reporting improved emotional health and well-being.
- Implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy: The first Corporate Parenting Operational Group has been held to discuss how both external and internal agencies in Cardiff can contribute to the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. Each agency contributed to the Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan and made pledges on how they will help support and improve outcomes for Children Looked After and care leavers in Cardiff. A multi-agency performance dashboard has also been developed, showing a range of key performance indicators to track progress.
- Strengthening Youth Justice: Progress in strategic governance, partnership working, management and intelligence is now becoming evident. The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales agreed in October to deescalate the YJS from stage 3 to stage 1 priority in recognition of the progress made in the improvement journey. Improved performance in the number of first-time entrants (FTE) is also being recorded with 243 first time entrants in 2019 (per 100,000 population of 10-to-17-year-olds), which reduced to 80 in 2020.¹

Challenges and Risks

Education

¹ This data comes from the Police National Computer and is published by the Ministry of Justice.

As the Council continues to support schools to manage the pandemic and sustain learning, there are a number of challenges, including:

- Understanding the true impact of the pandemic on educational achievement: Medium-to-longer-term strategic responses will need to be facilitated in order to understand and respond to the impact of the pandemic on attainment and outcomes, particularly for the city's most vulnerable learners. At present there is no means of measuring learner regression at a local authority, regional or national level.
- Emotional and mental health of children and young people: More work is needed to understand the scale and nature of the impact of the pandemic on children and young people's emotional and mental health and well-being. In the immediate term, effective multi-agency responses will need to be in place to respond to recent spikes in demand for support services in relation to the emotional and mental health and well-being of pupils and ensuring capacity for Educational Psychologists in light of a national shortage.
- Accountability and Improvement: The new Accountability & Assessment Framework in Wales has not yet been announced and so there remains a lack of key performance indicators for education services in Wales at present to support school improvement. Equally, there is not yet clarity of the national arrangements for the examination cycle of 2021/22. A programme of work is underway in Cardiff which involves further developing challenge and support arrangements, strengthening collective intelligence around schools and embedding a systematic approach to school development plans and school improvement priorities for the 2021/22 academic year.

Further work is needed to understand and support school improvement priorities, whilst schools continue to manage resurging Covid-19 levels, maintain teaching and learning, and enable pupil progression. Locally, challenge and support meetings with schools will be further adapted and developed to build collective intelligence. Continued focus will be placed on securing improvement in those schools currently in an Estyn category – currently three schools are in a category: one primary, one secondary and one special – and for the schools receiving enhanced support.

- Supporting Vulnerable Learners: Continued emphasis will be placed on improving outcomes for vulnerable groups including pupils in receipt of free school meals, Children Looked After, and those educated other than at school, who may have been more adversely affected by the pandemic. The Council must also respond to a significant increase in the number of requests for statutory assessments of Additional Learning Needs/ Special Educational Needs that have arisen between July and September 2021. With an anticipated increase in free school meal eligibility, education in Cardiff, and the Council more broadly, must prepare for additional demand challenges and associated delivery pressures.
- Gap in outcomes for Year 11 Leavers: For summer 2021 leavers the number of children Educated Other Than at Home (EOTAS) who are projected to be not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is 15.6%, and 12.5% for Children Looked After against 2.1% for all Year 11 leavers.

- School Organisation: Give the changes to the projected demographic profile, work is needed to resolve localised sufficiency issues at primary and secondary level, demanding additional capacity in the short-to-medium-term. The available provision for ALN learners will need to be developed as part of the Band B work to meet the increasing demand pressures.

Children's Social Services

- Meeting increasing demand: Children's Services continues to face high and increasing demand and increases in case complexity. This demand is reflected in the caseloads from the first point of contact, through to the Child Protection Register and the number of children looked after, including increasing demand on services to address children's mental and emotional health (based on school and hospital referrals). This situation is likely to become more challenging over the months ahead. Alongside all other local authorities across Wales, the Council is therefore developing detailed risk-based business continuity plans. This increase in demand will also likely create additional and sustained financial pressures. Work is underway to understand projections for future demand levels in order to inform future budget requirements.
- Demand on Front Door Services: The increased level of referrals to the Council's front door services, which are responsible for triaging both broader safeguarding referrals as well as specific child protection concerns, are placing critical pressure on the service and on other Council and public services. A review of the referral and response process is required to ensure capacity is retained to meet first-order priorities. Additional resources are also required to support the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Intake and Referral Team given the current level of demand.
- Funding Sustainability: The end of Welsh Government Covid-19 funding poses a major risk to the sustainability of services. Over and above the hardship funding, and despite the Integrated Care Fund Grant Funding being made available for a further five years, it is not known if Welsh Government will make additional funding available to meet the demand pressures. Current demand projections suggest that there will be significant pressure on the Council's base funding beyond April 2022.
- Impact on Legal Services: Significant demand in Children's Services is placing pressure on legal services, with court fees and legal costs increasing as a result. The issue is compounded by backlogs created as a result of Covid-19.
- Recruitment and Retention of experienced Social Workers: Despite improvement in the Social Worker vacancy rate, challenges remain in terms of recruiting experienced Social Workers. Moving forward, the Council will need to consider the career progression and support arrangements for Social Workers.
- Re-shaping Respite Provision: Whilst work has progressed, for example, workshops have been held with stakeholders to look at services for children with additional needs

and disabilities, the Council's current overnight short break provision is being reviewed and the provision will not be fully reshaped by March 2022.

- Youth Justice Service Improvement: Whist work to deliver the Youth Justice Improvement Plan is progressing well, there are two areas of improvement which are at risk of exceeding the set deadlines for delivery. These relate to the operational restructure of the Youth Justice Service and the launch of a new Junior Attendance Centre.
- Improving the Timeliness of the Adoption Process: Work to improve the timeliness of the adoption process continues and a review of children on Placement Orders has been undertaken. Additionally, those children on Placement Orders, where the plan is adoption by foster carers, have been identified and are moving through the adoption process. Though the trend is improving quarter on quarter over the last 12 months, provisional figures for Quarter 2 show that 40.6% of children were not placed for adoption within 12 months of a Placement Order. There are also potential funding implications for Cardiff due to the number of children who are placed in the city by surrounding local areas with responsibility for funding adoption costs transferring to the host local authority three years after adoption.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

Education

- Ensuring that all Cardiff schools can stay open and maintain safe learning environments for all pupils and staff, in line with the gradual lifting of Covid restrictions during 2021/22.
- Responding to spikes in demand for support services in relation to the emotional and mental health and well-being of pupils.
- Removing the three remaining schools from Estyn Monitoring and requiring Significant Improvement, whilst driving forward sustainable improvement in all other schools in enhanced support categories.
- Providing ongoing support for schools to deliver the objectives of the Welsh Government's 'National Mission', including the realisation of the Curriculum for Wales 2022 and strengthen the corporate oversight arrangements.
- Supporting those with Additional Learning Needs by ensuring the first year of ALNET implementation is successful and supports improved outcomes for learners with ALN. This includes reviewing and auditing the use of Pastoral Support Plans and the year 11 roll-out of the new processes from January 2022. Work will also be progressed to implement additional secondary school places and ALN places in the short-term to manage increasing demand during the next two years, pre-Band B.
- Progressing School Organisational Programme, including addressing considerations at Cathays, Pentyrch, Court/ Moorland, Fairwater and St Mellons.

- Undertaking a review of the Youth Service to support post-pandemic recovery, aligning provision with the priorities published in the report of the interim Youth Work Board for Wales.
- Building the 'Team Around the School' model to sustain partnerships in supporting the educational achievement and well-being of the city's most vulnerable learners.
- Ensuring digital inclusion by continuing to improve the pupil-to-ICT device ratio in all schools and enable Wi-Fi connectivity outside of school.
- Delivering the 'Winter of Well-being' programme, funded by Welsh Government, with Play Services, to build upon the extensive well-being programmes offered during the summer.
- Resetting the Cardiff 2030 goals and commitments, considering the experiences of the last 20 months with a view to publishing a three-year plan in the spring of 2022.
- Preparing the 'road to recognition' with UNICEF for assessment as a Child Friendly City in 2022.
- Undertaking audits of whole school attendance in the autumn term to identify if all non-returners have been referred or are being appropriately supported by schools.

Children's Social Services

- Allocate the Recovery Fund by the end of the financial year, which will be focused on responding to immediate pressures, as well as continuing to shift the balance of care.
- Progress workforce development by:
 - Maintaining momentum with improvements to practice, ensuring all vacancies are advertised and that shortlisting, and interviews are carried out as quickly as possible.
 - Supporting Social Workers to focus on direct contact and case work with children and families by recruiting additional qualified, but non-social work, staff.
 - Supporting experienced staff to take the most complex court cases and provide coworking and mentoring support for newly-qualified staff
 - Attracting more newly-qualified Social Workers to Cardiff through a range of initiatives, particularly given that the numbers of newly-qualified Social Workers next year will be the lowest for many years.
 - Ensuring that staff have the right work environment to work in, including supporting those wanting to return to the office.
- Ensure placement sufficiency by:
 - Continuing to increase in-house fostering provisions.
 - Increasing residential placements in Cardiff.

- Developing specialist foster carers for children with more complex needs.
 - Working proactively to shape the external provision to meet the needs in Cardiff.
 - Reducing demand for regulated placements.
 - Strengthening the reunification approach to safely returning children home to their families.
 - Implementing the Interventions Hub to both reduce and step-down cases requiring regulated placements.
 - Developing of multi-agency approach for children with complex needs.
- Enable all young people – who are known to social services – to play an active and central role in planning for their transition to adulthood by conducting a full review of their progress, which will include care leavers with Additional Learning Needs.
 - Support greater joined-up working between the Youth Justice Service and Education through the creation of a new post.
 - Embed the Reunification Framework across Children’s Services with a core group of staff trained to support the roll-out across the wider service.
 - Develop a meaningful feedback process by working with a group of children and young people identified by Family Help Advisors, which will provide the service with information, ideas, and suggestions on how it can develop and improve moving forward.
 - Open two external residential provisions in Cardiff before the end of the financial year. Additional Integrated Care Fund (ICF) funding has also been agreed for a range of residential provision, including a second assessment centre, edge of care provision and a further two residential units.
 - Progress locality working with a model of practice involving Health Visitors, the Police and Community Safety teams. The introduction of joint assessment teams will be piloted in one secondary school.

Well-being Objective 2:

Cardiff is a great place to grow older – Summary

Covid-19 has had a major impact on the city's older people and brought into sharp focus the challenges facing adult social care. The pandemic has also underlined the essential value of social care in supporting people, particularly the most vulnerable, to live independently in the community.

Whilst the delivery of adult social care has been challenging throughout the pandemic, there has been an increase of over 28% in the number of people needing care at home since June 2021, with demand levels higher than at any other time during the last 20 months. Care providers, who have delivered vital services throughout the pandemic, are now struggling to meet the huge increase in demand for care and this surge will impact on the NHS, which is already facing acute winter pressures.

- **Supporting older people to age well and to live the best lives they can in their homes and communities, through the delivery of proactive and preventative services**
- **Supporting older people suffering from social isolation and loneliness and delivering our Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly City ambitions**

Key Successes

Supporting older people to age well and to live the best lives they can in their homes and communities, through the delivery of proactive and preventative services

- Strategic Management and Service Integration: The incorporation of Adults Services into the Housing and Communities Directorate has enabled greater integration of services. The approach is characterised by the effective co-ordination of adult services with wider Council services – including housing, Hubs and libraries – as part of a community-based approach to delivery.

Joint working between the Hubs and Day Centres has introduced opportunities such as exercise classes to support citizens and promote well-being whilst hubs and libraries across Cardiff have implemented a programme of face-to-face events designed to help older people reconnect. This includes a range of activities such as Meet Up Mondays, Friends and Neighbourhood Groups, craft sessions as well as sporting activities that form part of the Falls Prevention Programme.

As part of this approach, a number of opportunities have also been identified to achieve better outcomes for clients whilst delivering a more cost-effective service. A projected balanced budget for the Adults, Housing & Communities directorate at year-end supports this assessment.

- Reducing The Number of People Accessing Acute, Residential or Nursing Care Across Cardiff: An established Occupational Therapy team provides both proactive and reactive reviews or care, and a Hospital Review team is in place to enable a speedy discharge

from hospital. This allows the package of care provided to be reviewed within five days of discharge, ensuring it meets the needs of the individual.

The 'team around the individual' project has been started, in partnership with Social Care Wales and Public Health Wales. This will work with residential homes to create the "as-is" profile with care providers to understand the challenges they face. Research on best practise – with a specific focus around dementia care models, dementia care and care homes to best meet needs – has also been commissioned

- Developing Independent Living and Aging Well Services: Work between Social Care and Health has progressed, with a focus on greater alignment between the hospital's Single Point of Access (SPA) team and with the Council's Community First Point of Contact (FPOC) teams. The SPA process will now take place in hospital for hospital discharges and within the community for step-up cases. Work is underway to agree the required new processes and system changes, and staffing requirements are being reviewed to support hospital and community teams to meet their needs and workload. In addition, a 'Pink Army' (FPOC) frontline triage will be trialled alongside an in-reach into the hospital.
- Implementing The New Way of Delivering Domiciliary Care: Phase 1 of the new domiciliary care approach has commenced, with the portal for the new Domiciliary Care Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) going live in August 2021. This allows potential domiciliary care providers to join via the accreditation and enrolment process in order to have successfully joined by the November DPS launch date.
- Delivering The Older Persons Housing Strategy: Progress has been made across a range of sites to deliver the priorities set out in the Older Persons Housing Strategy:
 - Michaelston College proposals have been presented to Ward Councillors and engagement sessions will be held in November ahead of finalising the plans and drawings.
 - Work on the Community Living Schemes at Poplar House, Whitchurch and Broadlands House, St Mellons are progressing well with the detailed design for Worcester Court, Grangetown having been reviewed.
 - Community Living Schemes at Bute Street and Riverside (Canton Community Centre) have been submitted for planning approval, and both are scheduled for consideration by the Planning Committee in November.
 - The tender evaluation process for St Mellons and Maelfa have been completed.

Supporting older people suffering from social isolation and loneliness and delivering our Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly City ambitions

- Dementia Action Week: A range of activities were undertaken during Dementia Action Week in May, to promote and raise awareness of services aimed at individuals affected by dementia, including a pen pal scheme linking care homes with local schools. An e-reader loan scheme was launched in June which expanded the availability of e-books. Housebound specific e-readers are set to be launched with training for customers to ensure that any digital exclusion concerns are resolved.

- Day Centres: Work is being undertaken with the Health Board to enable people with complex dementia to be supported at the Ely Day Centre.
- Dementia Friendly City: Over 400 digital Dementia Friendly City events have been held across the first half of the year, raising awareness and promoting the support available across Cardiff. The Cardiff's Dementia Friendly Website has also been the focus of extensive promotion.
- Age Friendly City: The 'Working Towards an Age Friendly City' action plan has been finalised and approved by the Regional Partnership Board and the Older People's Commissioner. Consultation events have taken place with the 50+ Forum – both virtually and in person. A work programme has also been approved by Welsh Government under the Age Friendly Nation strategic delivery plan and includes a new Age Friendly web platform for Cardiff.

Challenges and Risks

Supporting older people to age well and to live the best lives they can in their homes and communities, through the delivery of proactive and preventative services

- Responding To Serious Social Care Challenges: Due to a surge in demand for social care in recent months, and compounded by a national shortage of care workers, the social care system in Cardiff is facing unprecedented challenges. Care providers who have continued to provide much needed services throughout the pandemic are now struggling to meet the increase in demand for care. Whilst this is a national challenge, the situation facing the Council's social care services as the winter months of 2021/22 approach is as difficult as at any point during the pandemic.

Enhancing care and professional capacity remains difficult and, given the scale of the challenge, the Council must take steps to safeguard those people who are most vulnerable and in greatest need of support. The Council has therefore made the difficult decision to focus the care that is available on personal care only, and on those who need it most.

The closure of care homes and domiciliary agency failure over the winter period is now a real possibility, with contingency planning work underway to mitigate the risk and prepare for any such scenario. This situation continues to be monitored daily, and regular meetings are in place with relevant associations and the wider sector to monitor the capacity in the system to meet demand.

- Critical Workforce Pressures: The impact of the pandemic continues to create workforce pressures across the social care sector. Business continuity plans are in place to consider a range of scenarios related to staff absences for externally commissioned services and enhanced on-call arrangements have been established to support service providers with staff cover.

- Community Resource Team: Workforce issues are impacting on the ability of the Community Resource Team to meet the demand for support and to provide the target number of hours support – this is leading to backlogs and additional work pressures on the health sector.
- Independent Living: The pandemic continues to impact on the ability of individuals to live independently following support from the Council's Independent Living Service. Not all groups and activities have been restarted, and where they have, some service users continue to be apprehensive about participating in community-based activities. Social distancing measures continue to place restrictions on the number of individuals able to participate in community-based activities and work is ongoing to expand the number of opportunities available and to provide a blend of community- and online-based services.
- Joint Equipment Service: There is a national shortage of equipment aids which is impacting all equipment services across the country including the Joint Equipment Service (JES). The bulk of equipment aids are sourced from an all-Wales contract managed by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) who are aware of the difficulties being faced by Welsh equipment services but are unable to provide a solution to this global challenge. Issues are attributed to Brexit due to the congestion at ports, slower sailing times (in some cases up to double the time of pre-pandemic); the worldwide shortage of shipping containers; the Evergreen (Suez Canal) incident; and a week-long closure of South China's largest and busiest port at the end of May which is now starting to impact the UK.

Whilst these are global challenges, every effort is being made to mitigate the impact. For example, equipment is being sourced from all possible avenues and equipment that is no longer required is being actively collected, cleaned and re-used back into the community. The process continues to be monitored and managed daily.

Supporting older people suffering from social isolation and loneliness and delivering our Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly City ambitions

- Dementia Friends: The percentage of Council staff completing Dementia Friends training is well below target. Significant progress will be required to meet the 85% compliance target. A new management dashboard – providing granular detail on team and staff compliance levels – has been developed and face-to-face sessions are being made available to teams without computer access.
- Dementia Friendly Businesses: The number of businesses pledging to become Dementia Friendly is also low, which is to be expected as they continue to respond to new demands and pressures from the pandemic. However, 32 businesses have submitted expressions of interest during this period and if this interest can be translated into business pledges, the annual target may be achieved.
- Social Isolation: The pandemic continues to have an impact on the services and opportunities the Council is able to offer to help people reconnect with their

community, both directly and digitally. Day centres have begun to reopen, and as individuals start to rebuild their confidence, it is anticipated that increasing numbers will be able to reconnect.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

- Recovery Fund: An in-year financial allocation of £4.47m has been made by Welsh Government to address the challenges facing adult social care, though this must be spent by 31st March. The funding will be used to improve resilience in the care market, grow the workforce and supporting people to stay independent at home.
- Develop Enhanced Proposals to Support the Winter Response Plans: As demand increases there will be challenges to grow the existing care and professional capacity, with preparatory measures being put in place given the real risk of care home or domiciliary agency failure in the winter months. Business Continuity Planning is underway to prepare for care home / agency failure with collaborative arrangements being pursued with the local Health Board to expand volunteering capacity.
- Investment In Prevention and Reablement: It is clear that managing demand represents a key component of ensuring future services pressure can be mitigated. This will require a programme of investment in prevention and reablement based on detailed proposals. Robust business plans will therefore be developed to set out a major transformation programme in Adult Services to manage demand, improve service outcomes and reduce the running costs of the service.
- Addressing Recruitment and Retention Challenges within the Care Sector: Given the significant workforce shortage within adult social care, the Council will undertake a review to understand the local factors which are influencing the local labour market and develop proposals to create a stable social care workforce characterised by good career progression opportunities. The review will consider the impact on Adult Services budgets of increasing demand for services and increased costs. It is anticipated that costs will increase due to a number of factors including less market competition, increased staff costs as a result of staffing shortages, the need to attract additional workers to the sector, and increases in the real Living Wage.
- Age Friendly City: Cardiff's application to join the World Health Organization global network of Age Friendly Cities will be progressed, with Cardiff's application and associated action plan brought forward for Cabinet approval in Quarter 3.

Well-being Objective 3: Supporting people out of poverty – Summary

Some of the longstanding inequality gaps in the city will have been widened by the pandemic. The pandemic has also exposed how existing inequalities, such as deprivation, low income, and poor housing – and the interconnections between them, such as ethnicity, gender, and geography – are associated with an increased risk of becoming ill with Covid-19. This highlights the need to narrow the inequality gap and create more prosperous, healthier communities as recognised by Capital Ambition and the Council's recovery and renewal strategies.

- **Supporting those most impacted by the economic crisis into work, education or training**
- **Continuing our Living Wage City ambition**
- **Embedding our new approach to tackling homelessness and ending rough sleeping**

Key Successes

Supporting those most impacted by the economic crisis into work, education or training

- Increase in Apprenticeships and Trainee Opportunities: 124 paid opportunities for apprentice or trainee roles were provided by the Council at the end of Quarter 2 against an annual target of 125. 28 Kickstart corporate trainees (funded by the Department of Work & Pensions with corporate funding top-up) have also been advertised.
- Into Work Service: Demand for the Into Work Service has risen dramatically in line with the end of UK and Welsh Government job support schemes. The Into Work Service has continued to expand to ensure that the increased demand on the service can be met. Mentoring projects have seen a sharp increase in numbers, with young people and those who have been recently made redundant making up the highest caseloads. The new pathway team supports clients through volunteering, work experience, Adult Community Learning, Cardiff Works and into employment, providing a complete wrap-around service. The service has adapted to specifically support those whose employment has been affected by Covid-19 by reskilling clients in demand employment sectors. Employment mentors have assisted 700 people into secure employment since April, many of which are in high-demand sectors.
- Into Work Support for Care-Experienced Young People: The Into Work Service has secured 29 possible Bright Start placements across various Council departments, with five care-experienced young people already completing their first three-month placements. An additional three young people are undertaking a mini-placement with the *Down to Earth Project*, a landscaping project at one of the local hospitals. The 'not in education, employment or training (NEET)' status for our care-experienced young people is reviewed on a daily basis and the Bright Futures team target those who have a NEET status and contact them directly.

- Universal Credit: During the first six months of 2021/21, 50% more people have approached the Council for support with their Universal Credit claim than anticipated; 1,546 versus a half-year target of 1,000. To increase the accessibility of the support available, the Money Advice Team now provide a digital support service, including help with Universal Credit claims, from foodbanks across the city as well as new outreach locations including Cardiff West Community High School.
- Onsite Construction Academy South-East Wales: The new Construction Academy opened in August 2021 on the site of the former Eastern High School off Newport Road, Rumney. The Academy will help tackle the skills gap within the construction industry and seeks to encourage many more people to consider construction as a career, including individuals from under-represented groups in the industry, such as women and individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Continuing our Living Wage City ambition

- Increases in Living Wage Employers: At the end of Quarter 2, 146 employers are accredited as real Living Wage employers in Cardiff, only four short of the target of 150 by May 2022. The total number of workers employed by accredited real Living Wage employers currently stands at 61,183 against a target of 48,000 by 2022. Almost 8,000 workers have received a pay rise to at least the real Living Wage in Cardiff, and this is above the target set in Cardiff's real Living Wage target for 2022.
- Keeping Wages in the Local Economy: Cardiff University have calculated that an additional £39m has gone into the Cardiff economy as a result of uplifts to employees' salaries following their employer becoming an accredited Living Wage employer.
- Living Wage Buildings: The first two Living Wage buildings in Wales are both in Cardiff, with more in the pipeline. The first was the new Cardiff University Sbarc|Spark building which was announced in July.

Embedding our new approach to tackling homelessness and ending rough sleeping

The vision for homelessness services, *No Going Back*, aims to prevent homelessness wherever possible, and where it is not possible, for the experience of homelessness to be rare, brief and not repeated.

- Family Homelessness Centres: Funded by Welsh Government capital grants, the first Family Homelessness Centre opened at Briardene in Gabalfa in May and all 38 units were available for use by the end of June. Two further centres are being delivered at Harrison Drive in Trowbridge and the Gasworks site in Grangetown and will be completed by winter 2021. All three centres will offer good-quality, family accommodation with staff on site during the day and other provision such as Early Help family services, health visiting and parenting support.
- New Single Person Assessment Centre: A new process for assessing the needs of single homeless people started at the beginning of June 2021 when the new Assessment

Centre opened. Clients are holistically assessed at the point of entry through a new wellbeing assessment. This assessment determines whether a client has complex or low needs. Clients with low needs are referred to the low-needs pathway which initially means they will be accommodated in the YMCA and from there, supported into an appropriate Private Rented Sector (PRS) property. Since April 2021 there have been 84 positive moves from the low-needs pathway into permanent accommodation with over half moved into PRS accommodation. The rate of positive move-on from the low-needs pathway supports the view that this new process has been effective in supporting clients to avoid the traditional 'staircase' approach and this supports rapid transition into permanent housing.

- Multi-disciplinary Team: Clients identified as having complex needs will be supported by the Multi-disciplinary Team and housed in suitable accommodation. Further development of the multi-agency approach has continued with GP services available at the Assessment Centre and Housing Options Centre since August. A one-off dental hygienist session has also been arranged alongside services from optometry and dietetics.
- Diversionary Activities: The Diversionary Activities (DA) initiative is dedicated to tackling the rise of negative street cultures, moving people away from the lucrative nature of street begging activity and building people's skills and ability to move into independent living. The DA Service is operating a full curriculum across all six hostel sites. The Service has been working closely with Sport Wales, delivering physical activity sessions, for example walks in the Brecon Beacons and white water rafting. Discussions are also ongoing with 'Learning for Life' to help people gain new skills. A new peer mentoring service commenced in September 2021 in partnership with the mental health charity, Plattform. This gives people with lived experience an opportunity to work face-to-face with service users as part of the wider DA project.

Challenges and Risks

Supporting those most impacted by the economic crisis into work, education or training

- Increased Demand for Support: Cardiff has seen a dramatic increase of people claiming Universal Credit between March 2020 and June 2021, an increase from 19,000 to over 36,000. At the end of Quarter 2, this number has only slightly dropped to just below 36,000. Referrals to the Into Work Service are at an all-time high. There has also been a large increase in applications to the benefits assessment team for Free School Meals, increasing from 12,005 before the start of the pandemic to 15,476 in September 2021. 10,000 applications have also been made for the new Pupil Deprivation Grant (help to buy school uniforms) as people's income has decreased and a change in eligibility criteria has increased the number of people entitled to claim. Currently the service area has sufficient capacity to deal with the increased demand.

Removal of European Funding: Grants of just over £1m are currently received from the European Social Fund which fund 26 full-time employees in the Into Work Service. The grants are ending over the next 18 months and it is not yet known whether the UK

Government's replacement for EU funds - the Shared Prosperity Fund- will support employability activity, nor is the amount of any funding known at this stage. Direct representations on this issue have been made to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities by the Leader of Cardiff Council and the WLGA. This issue is also fully recognised within the directorate Risk Register and Business Continuity Plans have been updated to set out the Service's response should the funding be removed.

- Council Tax Reduction Scheme: The Council Tax Reduction Scheme has seen a significant increase in expenditure due to the economic downturn. The caseload increased from 30,567 in March 2020 to 31,379 in June 2021, but in the months since has decreased to 30,694 as at end of September. At the midway point of the year, it is anticipated there will be sufficient budget to cover costs. It is anticipated that the strategy to manage the increase will accommodate the financial pressure, although volatility in the economy mean further monitoring of caseload and costs will continue to be undertaken to ensure early warning of further pressures are raised.
- Volunteering: Volunteering placements were temporarily suspended due to Covid-19 during the first half of this year and social distancing requirements have significantly impacted the number of people volunteering, particularly within hubs and libraries. Since libraries and hubs re-opened in June, they have seen a rise in footfall. Libraries and hubs continue to develop and build face-to-face activities (within social distancing guidelines) which will see an increase in number of people using these venues.

Despite the impact of social distancing restrictions on volunteering opportunities, volunteering continues to play an important role in supporting service delivery and, in certain circumstances, supporting the transition into work. Where volunteering places are available, the Council has robust health and safety measures in place to ensure the well-being of volunteers, staff and service users. In terms of promoting volunteering placements, the Council must strike an appropriate balance between preventing the spread of the virus and promoting safe opportunities. The call for support within the adult social care sector is a particular case in point with targeted communication work being undertaken in this area.

Embedding our new approach to tackling homelessness and ending rough sleeping

- Rough Sleepers: After the extraordinary efforts made during the pandemic which saw rough sleeper numbers fall to single figures, the number of rough sleepers in the city is beginning to increase. Maintaining the progress of the past 18 months will be a priority for the Council over the months ahead.
- Private Rented Sector: The cost of private sector housing in Cardiff represents an ongoing challenge, making it difficult to support service users into private rented accommodation. Although 81% of households threatened with homelessness were successfully prevented from becoming homeless in Quarter 2, Homelessness Prevention Services are under immense pressure. This is due in part to a lack of suitable private rented accommodation in the city. Many private landlords are selling properties as prices have increased whilst private rents have risen to a level that many people cannot

afford. The Housing Options Service currently has greater demand for clients at risk of homelessness, and the prevention team are finding it more difficult to find accommodation in the private sector.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

- Managing increased demand and supporting those most impacted by the economic crisis into work, education or training:
 - In advance of any funding bids to the Shared Prosperity Fund, the ten Capital City Region Local Authorities have sought to create a single, clear, consistent framework for future employability programmes in the region. A report is due to be considered by Cabinet in December.
 - To address the shortage in the social care workforce, the Into Work Service has teamed up with Adult Services to create a new Cardiff Cares Academy. This Academy will identify and train new carers, ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills needed to work in the sector, and that they have undergone the necessary vetting.
 - A further six care-experienced young people will start Bright Start placements in October. Also during October, the Bright Futures team will review Year 11 leavers from summer 2021 to identify any looked after young people with a NEET status and will contact them to offer advice and support to access employment, education or training opportunities.
- Maintaining progress in homelessness: A Housing Support and Homelessness Strategy is due to be considered by Cabinet in January 2022. This will provide a single strategic view of the Council's approach to homelessness prevention and housing support services. The Strategy aims for the prevention of homelessness and the transformational shift required to move to a rapid re-housing approach. Key areas of work going forward will include
 - Developing additional emergency accommodation until new projects come online.
 - Developing a rapid rehousing plan in line with Welsh Government guidelines.
 - Developing leasing schemes and move-on provision.
- Living Wage City: The Living Wage City Action Plan is being reviewed to develop a list of target organisations for 2022. Work is also ongoing to explore how the Council can raise the profile of the real Living Wage across the Cardiff Capital Region given the wider economic and health benefits.

Well-being Objective 4: Safe, confident and empowered communities – Summary

Crime and Community Safety data continues to make clear that Cardiff is a safe city. The Welsh capital has the second lowest crime rate of the UK Core Cities, where comparable data is available, and ASB offences are on the decline. Cardiff has also had the lowest rate of Violence against the person and the second lowest rate for Criminal Damage. Since the easing of restrictions in June 2021, levels of crime and anti-social behaviour have returned to pre-Covid levels. This has led to a significant increase in non-emergency calls to the Police, which has placed pressure on the 101 helpline and on A&E services through non-Covid related admissions.

Partnership working at a community level, across the public services and with communities, has been a feature of the work undertaken in response to the pandemic, in particular in health and social care services and in supporting older and more vulnerable people to live safely and independently in their community. Allied to this, the 'stay home' and 'stay local' restrictions in place as a result of the pandemic has led to greater appreciation amongst citizens for the local areas and a greater demand for easy access to local services.

- **Building new Council homes and investing in community facilities**
- **Ensuring children and adults are protected from risk of harm and abuse**
- **Creating safe and inclusive communities**
- **Promoting the Welsh language**
- **Working together to support a healthier and more active population**

Key Successes

Building new Council homes and investing in community facilities

- **New Council Homes**: Work is ongoing to deliver 1,000 new homes by December 2022 as part of a £1 billion Council-led programme to deliver 4,000 homes over ten years. 591 homes have now been completed, with delivery set to accelerate towards the end of the programme.
- **Specialist and Supported Housing Schemes**: Progress continues on the 'Cardiff Living' and community housing programme delivering new specialist and supported housing schemes to help meet the needs of the most vulnerable. The Briardene homeless family scheme is now fully operational and planning permission for Meridian Court that adjoins this site will shortly be submitted. The Colum Road scheme providing single person support accommodation is now on site and is due for completion in January 2022.
- **Neighbourhood Regeneration**: The Council is working with its partners to design and deliver a wide range of development schemes across the city that will transform neighbourhoods, provide low carbon homes and boost local economies.

- *Maelfa redevelopment*: This transformational scheme in Llandeyrn is now complete, providing a modern new shopping centre, affordable new homes as well as better road infrastructure, parking and public realm improvements.
- *Channel View*: Outline planning has been approved for Channel View, a £65 million investment in more than 250 low carbon homes, replacing the homes of every existing resident in the area and providing improved access to green space.
- *Rumney*: Work is ongoing to deliver 200 high-energy performing homes at the site of the former Eastern High School, which will also provide residential accommodation to meet the needs of older people.
- *Environmental improvement schemes*: Consultation on final plans to make environmental enhancements to a number of estates were held over the summer and work on the Trowbridge Green and Pennsylvania schemes are being progressed. The Cowbridge Road East Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme (NRS) and Phase 1 of the Llanishen Park NRS have been completed as part of a three-year programme of smaller environmental regeneration projects. Survey results reveal that 89% of residents have been satisfied with completed regeneration projects to date.
- *Investment in the South Riverside Business Corridor*: This large-scale regeneration project, supported by Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRIP) funding from Welsh Government, is progressing well with two phases of shop front improvements complete and work to the public realm taking shape. The scheme will see over £4 million invested in Tudor Street delivering improvements to the business environment, transport infrastructure, as well as the regeneration of 30 business premises.
- Hubs: Progress continues to be made on the development of the Hubs programme. The Cardiff Royal Infirmary (CRI) Chapel partnership project has now been completed providing a health and well-being facility for residents in the south and east of Cardiff. Work also continues with the University Health Board on the development of the Maelfa Health and Well-being Hub and Rhiwbina Hub, both due for completion during 2021/22. The most recent customer survey revealed that 96% of respondents agreed that their experience of using a Hub met their needs.

There has been a rapid increase in the use of the new website that provides information on Hub services across the city. The website now has 2,000 users per month and received over 40,000 hits in Quarter 2, three times the number received in Quarter 1.

Ensuring children and adults are protected from risk of harm and abuse

- Strength-based Practice and Signs of Safety: To embed strength-based practice and Signs of Safety within frontline social work and preventative teams, a new training structure for the Social Care Training Unit has been developed for consultation. A new induction programme is also being developed including mandatory training for new care staff.

- Tackling Youth Violence and Exploitation: As part of the Child Friendly Recovery in response to the pandemic, a Children and Young People's Safeguarding & Recovery Board has been established. A priority will be taking a proactive approach to tackling the causes and consequences of youth violence and exploitation through the development of a robust contextual safeguarding strategy. The SAFE (Safeguarding Adolescents From Exploitation) model is proactively mobilising the response to exploitation through strengthening the completion of screening tools to inform risk management plans and reduce the risk of exploitation to children in Cardiff. The Council is also strengthening contextualised safeguarding with a collaborative multi-agency approach to support risk within the community through risk management meetings.

Creating safe and inclusive communities

- Responding to the Afghanistan crisis: Cardiff successfully provided support to recently arrived Afghan evacuees at bridging accommodation sites, with a full range of support for those being temporarily accommodated. This included education, English and Welsh classes, employment support, access to health care and a range of activities provided by both partnership staff and volunteers. Several families from the original September arrivals have now been matched with their long-term homes across Wales and their move-on journey has begun. An additional group of Operation NewHope families, who have worked alongside Welsh Units of the British Armed Forces, were accepted in November as part of Wales' continued resettlement efforts and will be initially supported in Cardiff following their arrival to the UK. Some of the additional NewHope families have already arrived, with the remaining families expected to arrive in December/January with the support of the Ministry of Defence.

Cardiff's contribution to the Wales-effort has been recognised and two media pieces in February 2022 will showcase the work that has taken place in partnership with the Urdd, on Channel 4 News and as part of a Welsh language S4C documentary exploring the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in Wales. Both items will be screened after families have been relocated to protect their privacy.

- Supporting EU citizens to Apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS): Through a very successful programme of engagement and digital support, 23,990 applications were made to the EU Settlement Scheme by its close in June this year. This was in line with the highest estimate for the number of EU nationals eligible to apply for the scheme in Cardiff. Following the end of the scheme, the Council has supported the resolution of open EUSS cases where additional evidence is required to demonstrate residency in the UK, particularly for child applicants.
- Street Based Lifestyles and Complex Needs group: As part of the Council's work to address the needs of the homeless and some of the most vulnerable on our streets, this group has been established to take a public health approach to tackling street-based lifestyles including substance misuse, aggressive begging and sex work. Work will focus on finding sustainable solutions for individuals and communities.

- Community Safety Problem Solving Group pilot: A multi-agency problem solving group is being piloted and has brought over 30 organisations together to identify and address community safety issues across the city requiring a partnership response. This has already led to the quick resolution of issues in a number of areas of the city, through the introduction of diversionary and community safety measures and joined-up community engagement.
- Safer Streets Fund: Cardiff's bid to the Home Office for £432,000 for the latest round of Safer Streets funding has been awarded in full. The funding will be used to improve street lighting, CCTV and other security measures to address areas of the city with high levels of acquisitive crime.

Promoting the Welsh language

- Bilingual Cardiff: Diwrnod Shwmae Su'mae, the annual day to celebrate and promote the Welsh language, saw the launch of consultations on the Council's Bilingual Cardiff Strategy 2022-2027 and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032. Both plans are integral to the city's vision of becoming a truly bilingual capital of Wales and meeting the target of doubling the number of Welsh speakers in Cardiff by 2050. The Bilingual Cardiff Strategy sets out actions for achieving this ambition across various aspects of city life including the growth of Welsh-medium education and promotion of Welsh across all schools so that every young person has the opportunity to hear and speak the Welsh language.
- Council recruitment: "Welsh desirable" is now a minimum requirement for all Council customer-facing posts when advertising recruitment opportunities.

Working together to support a healthier and more active population

- Supporting a Healthier and More Active Population: As Cardiff looks to recover from Covid-19, supporting a healthier and more active population, which is more resilient to any future health crises, has been a key strand of work. Working with partners, the Council is supporting the delivery of the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board 'Move More, Eat Well' plan, through which a whole-system approach is being developed that will align key partner strategies relating to healthy weight, food, active travel and physical activity. As well as Food Cardiff's 'Good Food Strategy 2021-2024', a key partnership will be the 'Move More' Leadership Group, chaired by the Leader of the Council, which has been established to oversee the development of Cardiff's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2022-2027.
- Sport Club Recovery from Covid-19: Sport Wales introduced a number of grants to support clubs post Covid-19. Sport Cardiff has supported clubs with grant applications and clubs have seen membership returning to pre Covid-19 levels. To support Bowls Clubs at Council-run venues, the maintenance fees have been reduced by 50% taking account of the lack of opportunity to fundraise during lockdown.

- Council's Parks and Green Spaces: 15 Council parks and green spaces have been awarded Full Green Flag status with Waterloo Gardens meeting the international standard for the first time. All of last year's applicants have retained their awards. The awards are judged by independent green space experts against a range of strict criteria including biodiversity, community involvement, cleanliness and environmental management. 19 projects across Cardiff have also been awarded the Green Flag Community Award.
- Increasing Cardiff's tree canopy: As part of the response to the Climate Emergency, work is progressing on an overarching plan for the mass planting of trees to increase tree cover across the city from 18.9% to 25% by 2030. This will build on Coed Caerdydd, a major programme of tree planting already in development.

Challenges and Risks

- New Council Homes: Issues relating to the pandemic and availability of building material has caused disruption to delivery and progress will be closely monitored.
- Shared Regulatory Services: Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) continue to play a central role in Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) with officers seconded to support its delivery. Although actions in the SRS Business Plan are now being taken forward with several completed and many in progress, staff recruitment and retention remains a significant issue. A shortage of staff along with a significant increase in customer calls has had an impact on customer service. In response, work is being reprioritised and communication strategies are being implemented to manage customer expectations.
- High-Rise Cladding: The Council has committed to supporting residents of privately owned high-rise properties in Cardiff with unresolved cladding, building control and fire safety issues and to ensuring that developers are held responsible for their obligations through planning policy and by Shared Regulatory Services. Council officers are supporting the development of a national response and work is being taken forward with Swansea City Council to bring shared capacity to bear in support of funding and legislative measures being provided by the Welsh Government. The Council has also made representations to the UK Government on the urgent need to make the additional funding – arising from the £3.5 billion announced in February 2021 to support affected buildings in England – available to Wales immediately. The Council has been in ongoing dialogue with developers to encourage remedial works to be undertaken at no cost to leaseholders, such as the work being undertaken by Hartlands at Celestia in Cardiff Bay. Developers, however, still have a major role to play in contributing to addressing safety defects where they exist to protect leaseholders from having to bear these costs. Further proposals to provide any additional support where possible to leaseholders are also being developed by the Council but are critically dependent on support from National Government.
- Crime at pre-Covid-19 Levels: Since the easing of restrictions in June 2021, levels of crime and anti-social behaviour have returned to pre-Covid levels, leading to a significant increase in non-emergency calls to the Police - putting pressure on the 101

helpline and increasing pressure on emergency hospital services from non-Covid related admissions.

- Domestic Abuse Referrals: Following referral, contact is required to be made with the victim within one calendar day. This has been increasingly difficult due to a significant shortage of staff and a steady increase in high-risk referrals. Efforts to recruit staff are ongoing. In Quarter 2 contact was made within one calendar day for 85% of referrals compared to the 90% target, an improvement on 82% in Quarter 1.
- Corporate Safeguarding: The review of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been delayed ensuring that it aligns with the development of national guidance by Welsh Government. Cardiff Council has been invited to be part of a national working group that is to be established in January 2022. Training completion levels for Safeguarding remain below the corporate target of 85%. A new management dashboard has been developed which provides accurate and timely data on staff compliance levels, against all mandatory training modules included within the Corporate Plan. The work to establish more accurate and timely compliance data has, in some cases, led to a decrease in reported performance but an enhanced understanding of compliance levels will allow targeted interventions to drive up compliance.
- The Continued Impact of Covid-19 On Local and Community Services: Libraries and Hubs have seen an increase in footfall since restrictions were eased in June 2021. However, footfall in Quarter 2 was a quarter of the levels expected pre-Covid. Reduced use of local community services and face-to-face contact will continue to have a community-wide impact in terms of the health and well-being of residents. This will also have an impact on Council income from community events and activities. Ensuring recovery in footfall numbers within hubs and libraries forms part of the Council's longer-term recovery and renewal plans.
- Sustainability of the Leisure Services Contract: Lack of income due to Covid-19 has had a significant impact on leisure services providers and the Council has worked with GLL to ensure the sustainability of the service.
- Playground Improvement Schemes: A programme of playground improvement schemes has delivered over £500,000 in Quarter 2. This is below the anticipated progress of £1.7m reported at Quarter 1. This is primarily due to supply chain issues for materials and availability of contractors. However, the playground programme is on schedule for schemes completing in Quarter 3, with more in the pipeline for completion by the end of Quarter 4.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

- Invest In Homes and Communities: Further progress developments across 60 sites as part of the 'Cardiff Living' partnership. Future schemes include the Gas Works in Grangetown that will deliver a new community of 500 homes.

- Review of the Leisure Services Contract: A review is to be undertaken of the current operating model, contract management and financial sustainability of the contract.
- Community Safety and Violence Prevention: The Community Safety Partnership has established a Violence Prevention Group which is focused on preventing and reducing serious violence by taking a public health approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence. The Group will create a profile of Cardiff using data and intelligence from partners to inform the development of a Violence Prevention Strategy. To strengthen Cardiff's approach to developing a strategy, three sub-groups have been created which focus on Night Time Economy; Serious Violence and Serious Organised Crime; and Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV).
- Support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC): Work with Newport Council to develop enhanced support for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children.
- Promote the Welsh Language: Present the Council's Bilingual Cardiff Strategy 2022-2027 and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 to Cabinet following the consultations. Launch a mandatory eLearning module for staff in Quarter 3 along with Welsh language courses that meet the needs of learners of all levels.
- Cardiff's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2022-2027: Work with partners to develop Cardiff's physical activity and sport strategy, contributing to the delivery of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's 'Move More, Eat Well' plan.
- Regional Sports Partnership: The Task & Finish report for the Regional Sports Partnership will be submitted to Cabinet who will respond to the findings and recommendations.
- Increasing Cardiff's Tree Canopy: Develop an over-arching plan for mass planting of trees, building on the Coed Caerdydd programme as part of the city's response to the Climate Emergency.

Well-being Objective 5: A capital city that works for Wales – Summary

The pandemic has had a significant impact on Cardiff's economy, causing the extended shutdown of key sectors employing high numbers of our residents, including hospitality, retail, leisure, cultural and events, thereby putting thousands of local jobs at risk. The Universal Credit claimant count rate in Cardiff doubled at the beginning of the pandemic; however, it has since declined. Despite the lockdown restrictions, high and sustained levels of unemployment in Cardiff have been avoided, with the unemployment rate in Cardiff standing at 3.8% at the end of December 2020, which is below the UK average and the average for most other Core Cities.

The UK Government's furlough scheme has also come to an end. Initial Office for National Statistics (ONS) data show that the number of UK workers on payrolls rose by 160,000 between September and October, however the full impact of furlough coming to an end is likely to take months to emerge. Whilst the most impacted sectors within Cardiff have taken major steps towards recovery, serious challenges remain. The hospitality sector is facing labour shortages and recruitment difficulties, as many workers previously employed in this sector made a permanent shift to other industries during the lockdown period. Attendance at cultural venues and events has yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels, although good progress has been made since the reopening of this sector over the summer and autumn. Furthermore, the major projects that will drive recovery and create jobs in Cardiff, though progressing well, are being impacted by the global shortages and cost inflation of construction materials.

- **Leading the economic recovery in Wales**
- **Leading a recovery programme for the City Centre and Bay**
- **Supporting innovation and business development, with an enhanced package of interventions to help the sectors worst affected by the pandemic**
- **Supporting the recovery of the Cultural Sector and major events programme**

Key Successes

- The Council's city recovery and renewal strategy, 'Greener, Fairer, Stronger', was launched for consultation with constructive engagement from a range of stakeholders.
- City Centre Recovery is progressing with footfall back to pre-pandemic levels.
- Major Regeneration Programme for the City Centre:
 - Metro Central: Good progress has been made on the Metro Central development, which will deliver the improved transport connectivity needed to drive an inclusive pandemic recovery.
 - Canal Quarter: In June, the Council approved the Canal Quarter Development Framework, setting out the delivery aspirations for the area and representing an

important step forward for the Canal Quarter project, which will bring new life to the eastern edge of the city centre.

- New Office Developments: The Capital Quarter and John Street developments are progressing, which will expand the city's 'grade-A' office space offer, helping to attract new businesses and create jobs during the recovery period.
- Indoor Arena: The delivery of the new 15,000-capacity Indoor Arena at Atlantic Wharf has taken an important step forward, with the Council's appointment of the consortium of Live Nation, Oak View Group as operators and Robertson as the developer, as well as the completion of the Full Business Case.
- Incubation Workspace: The Council and FOR Cardiff, the city's business improvement district, have undertaken a review of potential incubation workspace in the city centre to support the start-ups and entrepreneurs that will be key in delivering a strong economic recovery.
- Heritage Buildings: Work has progressed to secure the long-term future of a number of heritage buildings:
 - Merchant Place and Cory's buildings: The future of Merchant Place and Cory's buildings – two of Cardiff Bay's finest heritage buildings – has been secured, with the Council approving the sale of the buildings to Duke Education for redevelopment as a college. This development will allow for the full restoration of the heritage buildings, support the regeneration of the wider local environment, and progress the Council's aspirations for the area.
 - Norwegian Church: In November, Cabinet agreed proposals regarding the transfer of the Norwegian Church – including the current lease – to the Norwegian Society, a new charitable body led by the Welsh Norwegian Society. The approach will see the charity invest in the building and take control of the day-to-day operations, which will provide a sustainable future for the Church, whilst respecting its historical links with Norway.
 - Old Library: The Council considered a report proposing to transfer use of the Old Library via long lease to the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama. This new model will transfer the full operational and maintenance costs to the College, ensuring the sustainability of this heritage building. The College's plans include the restoration of the building, the introduction of a series of music and performance spaces in the existing rooms and the creation of a "city living room" on the ground floor with café and creative workspace.
- Business Rates Suspension: Welsh Government have suspended business rates for hospitality and retail businesses for the entire year, providing crucial relief to two of the sectors hit hardest by the pandemic and creating the conditions to accelerate recovery.

- Strength in Places Bid: The successful Cardiff University-led, Council-supported Strength in Places (SIP) bid has been awarded, bringing £50m worth of funding into the region, which will help develop the city's emerging creative sector and contribute to a strong local recovery.
- Supporting The Recovery of The Cultural Sector and Major Events Programme: The Council has continued to work with Welsh Government, event promoters and the city's cultural venues to safely rebuild the capital's event and cultural offer as part of a co-ordinated post-Covid events strategy. This included supporting the Welsh Government's test event programme over the spring and summer, allowing residents to safely enjoy public events for the first time since the onset of the pandemic.

Cardiff Castle was the host venue for a series of music events over the summer, and the Council also supported the Titan Event at Alexandra Head, which included three nights of music.

- Music City: The Council has worked with the Cardiff Music Board to establish new arrangements for monitoring planning applications with a focus on supporting venues. Furthermore, the Council has developed a new Busking Strategy, currently subject to consultation, to support street music and animate public spaces.
- Securing the New Theatre's Future: The Council has concluded the property lease for the New Theatre with HQ Theatres & Hospitality, enabling its reopening in September. A comprehensive programme has been made available with positive trends in ticket sales and attendance.
- Reopening of Key Venues: St David's Hall, The Museum of Cardiff, Cardiff Castle and City Hall have all reopened and are hosting events and activities in line with current guidelines. Bookings across all venues are encouraging, although not yet back to pre-Covid-19 levels.

Challenges and Risks

- Labour Shortages: Due to the extended lockdown of the leisure and hospitality sectors during the pandemic, many workers previously employed in these sectors have made a permanent move to other sectors, creating labour shortages in hospitality and leisure businesses in the city. To address this issue, the Council's Into Work Service is working with the hotel and hospitality sectors to address the industry's recruitment concerns, which involves highlighting work opportunities in the sector to large parts of our communities who have found it difficult to access employment.
- Material Shortages and Cost Inflation: In recent months, shortages and cost increases in key materials, including cement, timber and metal, have created a potentially significant risk for the delivery of the Council's major development projects, in terms of delayed timescales and project costs. The Council is reviewing all affected projects, and controls have been put in place to reduce further risk to the programmes, including

discussions with Welsh Government and negotiation of Covid-19 clauses with contractors.

- Cultural Venues, Events & Tourism: The local and international travel restrictions and the ongoing shutdown of the cultural and events sectors during the pandemic has had a significant impact on visitor numbers, the tourism economy and the associated benefits to the broader economy resulting in significant lost income to the Council. This income loss has been mitigated through effective working with Finance, as well as the Welsh Government's Hardship Fund. This fund has been extended to the end of the financial year but with no clarity on any provisions beyond this point, there is a risk of significant ongoing income pressures for the Council in terms of culture and events-related services.
- End of Furlough Scheme: Initial data released from the ONS shows that, despite the furlough scheme ending, the number of UK workers on payrolls rose by 160,000 between September and October to 29.3 million. While this is a positive sign, the ONS have stated that it could take several months to see the full impact of furlough coming to an end. Any changes to unemployment must be monitored, not least given the potential increase in demand for Council services. Referrals to the Into Work Service were already at an all-time high in October 2021 and the number of people claiming Universal Credit have increased by 19,000 in March 2020 to over 36,000 in June 2021, with the figure remaining relatively constant since. The number of customers supported and assisted with their claims for Universal Credit is already 75% above the projected target for the year.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

Leading the economic recovery in Wales

- City Centre Recovery Strategy: Cabinet will consider the City Centre Recovery Strategy in December, which was informed by engagement sessions undertaken over the summer with key stakeholders.
- Canal Quarter: Over the coming months, the Council will continue to work with the landowners of the site to develop proposals for the Canal Quarter.
- Central Quay: The first phases of the Central Quay development are now being brought forward, which will deliver a vital link between the city centre and Cardiff Bay.
- Indoor Arena: The Indoor Arena will continue to be progressed in the coming months, with approval of the Full Business Case and submission of the planning application expected later this year.
- International Sports Village: The Council is currently negotiating the acquisition of land to deliver the next phase of the International Sports Village, which will include new sports, leisure and hospitality facilities. A report on this land acquisition, as well as an updated masterplan for the proposed velodrome, will be completed later in the year.

- Transforming Towns Fund Bid: A funding bid has been developed to submit to the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Fund to invest in the marketing and promotion of the city centre.
- Corporate Joint Committee (CJC): The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal has been leading the development of arrangements to transition its current structure into the Corporate Joint Committee. A transition board has been established to facilitate this, and the Leader of Cardiff Council is represented on the board. A report was taken to the Cardiff Capital City Deal Region City Deal Cabinet in September 2021 that established the core principle that "There is no threat to LA services with the assumption that functions, services and resourcing are being pulled from the centre not local authorities".

Supporting innovation and business development, with an enhanced package of interventions to help the sectors worst affected by the pandemic

- Fund for Business Growth: The Council is working with Welsh Government to establish a new fund to support business growth.
- New Office and Incubation Space: Proposals are being brought forward for new incubation space as part of the regeneration scheme for Tudor Street, the extension of Chapter Arts Centre and the repurposing of Landmark Place in Churchill Way to provide office accommodation. Furthermore, a venture initiative is currently taking place that includes the establishment of a fintech foundry at the Tramshed. Active discussions are also taking place to establish a city-wide innovation space, as well as an incubation and start-up space in Millennium Plaza.

Supporting the recovery of the cultural sector and major events programme

- Signature Music Event: A revised plan for holding the Covid-delayed Signature Music Event is currently being established, with the event expected to be held in 2022.
- FIFA World Cup 2030 Bid: Over the coming months, the Council will continue to work in partnership with the Welsh Government, Principality Stadium and the Football Association of Wales (FAW) to inform the feasibility of a 2030 FIFA Football World Cup bid.
- Future of St David's Hall: The Council will continue discussions with stakeholders regarding the long-term sustainability of St David's Hall and detailed condition survey of St David's Hall has been undertaken. The Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26, which includes the condition survey, will be brought to Cabinet for consideration in December.

Well-being Objective 6: Cardiff grows in a resilient way – Summary

The Council recognises that the climate emergency remains the defining global challenge. The impacts of climate change are putting tens of millions of people across the globe at direct risk, and these issues are already impacting the Cardiff area and its population.

The One Planet Cardiff Strategy sets out a response to the Climate Emergency and the commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

- **Delivering One Planet Cardiff to decarbonise the city and lead a green recovery**
- **Transforming Cardiff's public transport and active travel systems**
- **Putting sustainability and well-being at the heart of the city's growth**
- **Enhancing Cardiff's flood defences**
- **Building resilience into our highway network**
- **Making Cardiff a world-leading recycling City**
- **Working as one team to keep our streets clean**

Key Successes

Delivering One Planet Cardiff to decarbonise the city and lead a green recovery

- One Planet Cardiff Strategy: A Final One Planet Cardiff Strategy and Action Plan were approved by Cabinet in October 2021. The document contains a detailed analysis of the carbon footprint of both the city and the Council, assesses the carbon reduction impacts of current projects and strategies, and sets out target areas for action over the next decade.
- Achieving Carbon Neutrality: Since the draft One Planet Cardiff strategy was launched in October 2020, a number of key projects have been progressed that will support the Council in achieving the ambition of carbon neutrality, including:
 - Continuing the energy efficiency retrofit of the Council's estate.
 - Rationalisation of the Council fleet, with the start of a transition to electric vehicles underway.
 - Securing the first phase of a low carbon district heat network serving Cardiff Bay.
 - The allocation of Capital Funding to accelerate several new projects, such as Heat Source Pumps at Rhiwbina Library, Carbon Reduction and Heat Recovery at Thornhill Crematorium, an Electric Vehicle Charging Pilot, improved real-time air quality monitoring and improved food composting for nine schools.
 - A commitment to design all forthcoming new building to near zero carbon performance levels from 2024.
 - Developing a wide-reaching public engagement and behaviour change programme with the Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformation (CAST).
 - In addition, the 9MW solar farm at Lamby Way is now operational.

- Climate Emergency Board: A Climate Emergency Board has been established, with the Public Services Board, to identify and implement mutually beneficial projects in partnership, and to aggregate the effects of collective carbon reduction plans.
- Mapping Fresh Food Outlets: Following completion of the mapping of fresh food outlets in June 2021, discussions have been ongoing with Public Health Wales to feed the findings into projects that are being established to increase access to fresh food in areas that have been identified as deficient.

Ensuring High Quality Natural Environment

- Clean Air Plan: The Clean Air Plan continues to be delivered in collaboration with Welsh Government. As part of this, the Bus Retrofit Scheme, whereby 49 buses have been upgraded to meet the latest Euro 6 emission standard and improve Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) emissions by over 90%, is nearing completion. Additionally, using Clean Air Funding, an initial five Wheelchair Accessible Taxis have been acquired in advance of launching the taxi lease scheme later in 2021.
- Ferry Road Landfill: Work is being undertaken with Natural Resources Wales and specialist landfill contractors to identify the source of a leak and upgrade the existing infrastructure to ensure that the leachate management system is fully operational moving forward.

Transforming Cardiff's public transport and active travel systems

- Bus Strategy Consultation: The Council's consultation, which will inform the development of the Bus Strategy, opened in October 2021. The six-week consultation aims to engage with the public, key stakeholders, as well as hard to reach groups.
- Public Transport and Network Improvements: Projects are progressing well, in partnership with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and other Local Authorities in the Cardiff City Region:
 - An Outline Business Case has been prepared for the Crossrail.
 - New stations are being developed in Cardiff Bay, Crwys Road and Butetown.
 - Further Metro studies are being undertaken to progress Phase 1 from the City Centre to Cardiff Bay.
 - WelTAG (Welsh transport appraisal guidance) 2 Phase 1 work for the Northwest Corridor is in progress.
 - The brief for the Eastern Corridor WelTAG Stage 2 study is being prepared.
 - The Park and Ride at Junction 33 is continuing to advance.
- City Centre (Loop) Network Improvements: Improvements are continuing to be progressed:
 - *Central Square*: Construction is progressing, and phase change has been implemented.

- *Castle Street*: The temporary scheme was completed in October 2021.
 - *City Centre East*: The scheme has been tendered and returned, with contractors on site.
 - *Boulevard De Nantes*: Whilst the scheme has been delayed due to Covid-19 and programme pressures, detailed design has restarted.
- Safe Cycling Network: The Council is continuing to expand its safe cycling network, with the Cross City Scheme nearing completion and the Bay Pop Up Cycleway now complete. The Cycleway 1 Scheme also entered on site in September 2021.
 - Promoting Safe and Active Travel in Schools: 127 schools have either produced or are progressing the development of Active Travel Plans, meaning almost all of Cardiff's schools have a plan in place. Additionally, using active travel funding, a number of small-scale infrastructure improvements, as well as larger schemes, are being progressed in schools across Cardiff.
 - Adopting a Healthy Streets Initiative: Healthy Street principles are being delivered through a number of schemes, with sustainable drainage being included as part of new cycleway schemes. New innovative design features have also been introduced across Cardiff such as blended footways within the Crwys Road Safety Scheme and regeneration improvements on Cowbridge Road East. An artist-designed zebra crossing has also been implemented on Cowbridge Road East.

Putting sustainability and well-being at the heart of the city's growth

- Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP): Consultation on the Replacement LDP draft Vision and Objectives is complete, as well as the draft Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and Call for Candidate Sites. The revised Vision and Objectives, as well as the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, were approved following pre-decision Scrutiny in September 2021.
- Sustainable and Well-Connected Communities: Work continues to embed the master-planning and placemaking principles within major development proposals, including Strategic Sites identified in the adopted Local Development Plan.
- Green Infrastructure: Revised Replacement LDP Vision and Objectives prioritise the protection and enhancement of Green (and Blue) Infrastructure. Work to prepare a Green Infrastructure Assessment to support the preparation of the Replacement LDP is ongoing.

Building resilience into our highway network

- Resurfacing Roads: Approximately 28,000m² of resurfacing has been delivered on high-speed route, namely the A4232, A48 and A4234 (Central Link). The carriageway micro asphalt treatment programme has commenced, and the footway reconstruction works are ongoing. Localised resurfacing and patching works have continued throughout Quarter 2. Delivery rates and quality remain on track.

Making Cardiff a world-leading recycling City

- Programme of Service Improvement in Waste services: Strengthened operational management arrangements are now in place. Work has been progressed to establish a modern fleet, with digital systems that provide real-time information on delivery. The 4-day week has been introduced which has eliminated the bank holiday disruption. Productivity has also improved with each shift now working 9 hours per day, collecting two pickups. Rounds are being completed 5 hours faster, so litter is being taken off the streets much sooner and the teams are now working 90-100% of their contracted hours.
- Recycling Performance: The service adaptations to the Household Waste Recycling Centres have increased recycling rates from 80% to 85%, which is amongst the highest in Wales. A Reuse Shop opened at Lamby Way Recycling Centre in August 2021 and has sold over 5,000 items to date. Work is also ongoing to develop a new Recycling Strategy for the city, informed by collections modelling to understand the areas of improvement and interventions necessary to drive up performance.
- Education and Enforcement: Alongside the Pink Sticker Campaign, a dedicated Recycling Education Team has been established to target areas with the highest levels of contamination, to encourage improvements in recycling behaviour.

Working as one team to keep our streets clean

- 'Love Where you Live': The student campaign has commenced as planned, with activities so far including:
 - A letter has been sent to all 3,500 student-registered properties, welcoming them to Cardiff and enclosing a recycling one-step guide.
 - The Council has door-knocked over 4,000 properties and spoken to over 700 students.
 - The Council attended Fresher's Fairs across all three universities, speaking with 1,000 students.
 - Pop-up outreach sessions have been held in Cathays.
 - The Council has created a new suite of communication materials which are downloadable online.
 - Bags and recycling equipment have been delivered to over 1,000 student properties.

Challenges and Risks

Delivering One Planet Cardiff to decarbonise the city and lead a green recovery

- Cardiff Heat Network: An easement is required for the connection of the heat pipes between the Viridor Energy from Waste Plant and the back-up energy centre. The terms for the easement were agreed in the spring, however, the Council is still in the process

of gathering approval to proceed. Though the risk of failure to secure the easement appears to be low, the time delay and uncertainty is now exerting pressure on the project delivery timeline.

- Housing Retrofit Activity: The Council has recognised the need for a major upscale in housing retrofit activity, especially in privately owned housing, in order to address the city-wide carbon challenge. Issues and risks exist as a significant upscaling of activity may be inhibited by a potential skills and materials shortage, given the similar project ambitions across the UK. Additionally, building works are significantly increasing in costs due to a combination of Covid-19, Brexit, and customer demand.

Further to this, one of the Council's Housing Energy Retrofit Projects, a 250-unit Welsh Government grant-funded scheme, is delayed. This is due to Welsh Government's Arbed scheme ending on 3 November 2021. Alternative funding and delivery mechanisms are being discussed in order for the scheme to progress. If discussions are successful, there will be a significant delay to the project as a full procurement will need to be undertaken prior to the works taking place.

- Supporting the Transition to Clean Vehicles: Further work is required to ensure that the Council achieves its electric vehicle transition targets, and this forms part of a wider programme of service transformation work. Additionally, the number of Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) across the city has not increased since Quarter 1. However, the authority has been working with the Cardiff Capital Region to appoint a contractor to facilitate the increase in Electric Charging Points across the region and meet the corporate plan target. As part of this contract, 14 dual charge points are scheduled to be installed by the end of March. Further work is ongoing to facilitate the installation of EVCPs into existing Streetlights, with a further 35 EVCPs being installed by the end of March.

Transforming Cardiff's public transport and active travel systems

- Covid-19 and Public Transport: Lockdowns and the requirements of social distancing had a major impact on public transport, particularly municipal bus companies, with passenger numbers falling drastically and services reduced. Work is needed to understand the long-term trends of public transport post-Covid and effectively manage the impact on mobility and ensure passenger numbers recover across the wider public transport network.
- Castle Street: In June 2021, Cabinet took the decision to implement a Clean Air Scheme for Castle Street on an interim basis allowing data to be gathered that would inform a permanent scheme. The scheme reflects the original proposal approved by Welsh Government's independent expert panel and signed off by Ministers in December 2019. Officers are continuing to engage with Welsh Government to ensure that the delivery timetable and funding arrangements for a permanent option can be agreed and that air quality objectives are achieved.

- Strategic Transport Projects: The programme of future Metro improvements, as well as public transport network improvements, is subject to securing funding through the preparation of business cases with key partners. Additionally, the nationwide shortage of construction materials has the potential to affect the delivery of all strategic, capital transport projects. Ensuring scheme delivery is a key priority moving forward; programmes and projects are being prioritised and the Council is closely engaging with key stakeholders and partners.
- Rollout of the E-bike Fleet: Whilst six sites were installed in September 2021, and planning is underway for the installation of an additional nine sites subject to suitability, the September target date, of delivering 125 bikes in up to 15 rental stations, has not been met. This is due to Covid-19 impacting on contractor availability and the ability to complete this type of work on street. The e-bike scheme has also been temporarily suspended as damaged bikes are repaired, stolen bikes replaced and learning from other cities which have experienced similar issues is reviewed. Work is ongoing with partners, including South Wales Police, to target hotspots areas, strengthen bike security arrangements and review routes to safeguard the scheme.

Flood risk

- Managing Flood Risk in Cardiff: The frequency and severity of floods is increasing and is expected to further increase as a result of climate change. Welsh Government have recently released updated TAN 15 (technical advice note 15) guidance on planning for flood and coastal erosion, which recognises the varying degrees of flood risk, now and in the future. The guidance includes maps for planning which divide areas into flood zones and highlight the type of future development permitted. Welsh Government plan to implement the guidance in June 2023 after further consultation. The requirement for an effective approach to flood defence to mitigate the exposure to flooding and ensure as many new development sites as possible fall within areas of permitted developments represents a strategic priority.
- Coastal Defence Improvements in Cardiff East: Whilst a draft Full Business Case (FBC) has been submitted to Welsh Government, issues remain with the marine licence and getting full permissions from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to work in the river and sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) within specified timescales. Meetings are ongoing with NRW, with the support of Welsh Government, to achieve the granting of licenses within time to allow commencement of construction in 2022.

Waste and street scene

- Achieving Statutory Recycling Targets: The result for Quarter 2 was 57.74%, which is below the 64% statutory recycling performance target. Meeting the target remains a significant performance challenge for the Council and continues to pose a financial risk. A new Recycling Strategy is currently under development to demonstrate commitment to achieving the target, and a programme of work to address under-performance is being developed in partnership with Welsh Government, WRAP and the WLGA. As part of this, the Council has implemented a new service model for waste and recycling

collections in the city, including re-modelled collections rounds and embedding a four-day working week across the service.

- Transforming Delivery within Waste Services: The shift to the four-day working week model has represented a significant operational challenge. Whilst the approach will deliver an improved service as well as productivity gains there has been disruption as over 500 collection rounds were redesigned. This disruption also accounted for an increase in the number of complaints received in relation to waste. However, as the new model becomes embedded, it is anticipated that any further missed collections will be minimal.
- Shortage of HGV Drivers: The national shortage of HGV drivers is impacting the delivery of recycling and waste collection services. A media campaign has been designed to promote working for the service, and internal training of Officers wanting to become HGV drivers is ongoing.
- Education and Enforcement Actions: The number of education and enforcement actions per month, relating to improving recycling behaviour by citizens, is currently significantly below target. Activity has been limited because of some of the constraints associated with managing the pandemic, but it is anticipated that education and enforcement action will increase over the next two quarters.
- Variation in standards of street cleanliness across the city: The number of wards in Cardiff where 90% of the highways land inspected is of a 'high' or 'acceptable' standard of cleanliness is currently below target; the Quarter 2 target was 29 but the result was 21. Wards that did not meet high or acceptable standards include:
 - Butetown, Ely, Grangetown, Pentwyn, Penylan, Plasnewydd, Splott and Trowbridge in July 2021.
 - Butetown, Caerau, Ely, Grangetown, Pentwyn, Penylan and Plasnewydd in August 2021, and
 - Llanrumney and Trowbridge in September 2021.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

Delivering One Planet Cardiff to decarbonise the city and lead a green recovery

- As the final One Planet Cardiff strategy and action plan has been approved by Cabinet, moving forward, an annual monitoring report will be produced to document progress and to highlight the contribution of new projects and initiatives as they emerge. Work will be undertaken with corporate partners to map next steps, and focus will be placed on organisational development and staff engagement.
- The Taxi Lease Scheme is due to be launched in December 2021. The scheme, funded by Welsh Government, has involved the Council purchasing 5 Wheelchair Accessible, fully electric taxis, which will be leased to existing, licensed Hackney taxi drivers on a long-term basis. The scheme will support drivers to move towards using EV taxis, thus

helping improve the emission standard of the Cardiff taxi fleet. If the initial 5 vehicles show high demand, the Council has the opportunity to acquire a further 10 vehicles to enhance the scheme.

Transforming Cardiff's public transport and active travel systems

- Work will continue to progress the completion of cycleways:
 - Hailey Park: The Scheme is awaiting tender following consultation outcome.
 - Cycleway 5: The Scheme is out to consultation and awaiting tender launch. It is scheduled to be on site in Quarter 4.
 - Cycleway 1: The Controlled Parking Scheme is to follow in early 2022.
- In relation to rolling-out 20mph speed limits in Whitchurch & Tongwynlais, Llandaff North, Rhiwbina, and Heath, the Traffic Regulation Orders for the Welsh Government Phase 1 Pilot scheme are due to be sealed in early December 2021.
- Stakeholder and Member Engagement sessions to develop Boulevard De Nantes, as part of the City Centre (Loop) Network Improvements Upgrade, will be held in Quarter 3 and Quarter 4.
- A planning submission for the bridge crossing scheme at Llanrumney is expected in Quarter 3; final designs and consultation are being undertaken.
- The next five School Streets schemes are due to be implemented in Quarter 3 and further schemes will commence in Quarter 4.
- The Intelligent Transport System (ITS) Strategy is planned to be reported to Cabinet in 2022.

Putting sustainability and well-being at the heart of the city's growth

- Replacement Local Development Plan: A 10-week consultation on strategic options for the Local Development Plan (LDP) will be held between 30th November 2021 and 8th February 2022. The consultation will seek feedback on options for housing and jobs growth to 2036 and the possible ways for meeting this growth. Additional targeted consultation will be undertaken through focused workshops, public drop in face to face events and engagement with stakeholder groups and networks
- Strategic Development Plan: Dialogue is ongoing with Welsh Government regarding new regional strategic planning arrangements, under which Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) will oversee the preparation of the new Strategic Development Plan.

Enhancing Cardiff's flood defences

- The construction of coastal defence improvements in Cardiff East is planned to commence in 2022. A Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) has been issued, with

returns requested by mid-October 2021. This will form the basis for the contract tendering process for Quarter 3.

- Following Welsh Government's announcement that the proposed revision to TAN 15 has been delayed until June 2023, Local Authorities are preparing Strategic Flood Consequences Assessments (SFCAs) to inform the revised TAN 15, including flood risk "maps". Work is also being undertaken with Welsh Government officials on the wording of any revised policy. Cardiff, along with all other Local Authorities in the south-east Wales region, have commissioned a SFCA which is due to be completed in the summer of 2022 to inform the review of the Local Development Plan as well as the emerging Strategic Development Plan for the Cardiff City Region.

Making Cardiff a world-leading recycling city

- The Recycling Services Strategy will be presented to Cabinet in December. The glass bottles and jars collection proposal has been modified following work with WRAP as part of business case development work. The recycling collection model will incorporate a separate collection of bottles and jars, alongside containers and fibres, and will be delivered in 2022/23.

Working as one team to keep our streets clean

- In terms of delivering a comprehensive programme of improvement to the Council's Street Scene services, consultation with trade unions regarding the new model is planned for Quarter 3.
- A review meeting with community groups, to share best practice regarding 'Love Where you Live' and to identify opportunities to improve support, is planned for Quarter 3.

Well-being Objective 7: Modernising and Integrating Our Public Services – Summary

- Developing a comprehensive programme of organisational recovery and renewal
- Building upon our digital agenda, incorporating technology into service delivery and exploiting data to drive performance
- Delivering fewer and better Council buildings
- Supporting a highly skilled, productive and committed workforce with the well-being of staff as its core
- Using the power of the public purse to support the city's recovery
- Making sure that we are a Council that better talks to and listen to the city that we serve

Key Successes

Developing a comprehensive programme of organisational recovery and renewal

- Organisational Recovery: The Council is continuing to adapt to the challenges and opportunities of its new operating environment as the city emerges from the current phase of the pandemic. Progress is ongoing in respect of organisational recovery, with focus placed on reshaping the Council's service model under the themes of People, Accommodation, Customer and Technology.
- Adopting a Hybrid Working Model: The Council is continuing to progress the development of a 'hybrid' working model for staff, which seeks to maintain the benefits of increased home and flexible working arrangements experienced since the onset of the pandemic, whilst mitigating risks identified, such as ensuring home environments are both safe and appropriate for work.
- Hybrid Working Staff Survey: A comprehensive programme of engagement was undertaken with staff as part of the work to develop a Hybrid Working model. The survey was launched in the summer, with a video setting out the rationale and principles for developing a Hybrid Working approach. The survey received 2,851 responses, with good representation from across the Council. Focus groups were also convened in October to engage with younger members of staff (particularly apprentices and new starters), Parents and Carers, those identifying as disabled, those living alone and managers. The focus groups were all fully subscribed, with good representation from across service areas.

The majority of respondents to the survey (80%) were either working hybrid or working from home. For those working from home there were high levels of satisfaction, circa 90%, whilst those working on site reported 75% satisfaction levels. The benefits of working from home included no commuting, increased flexibility, improved work-life balance, whilst the drawbacks primarily related to missing colleagues; finding it harder to differentiate home and work and IT problems. For those working from home:

- 70% reported increased productivity (70%),
- 63% a higher workload (63%),
- 66% improved wellbeing (66%),
- 57% less stress,
- 80% felt supported by their manager,
- 88% of managers felt they have had sufficient contact with their team,
- 80% of managers reported that they had been able to support their staff.

The majority (90%) of those working on site felt very “happy or happy/neutral” about colleagues working remotely, however 30% felt that it had made their job harder.

Additionally, Audit Wales have provided the Council with a positive assessment regarding the shift to hybrid working and organisational recovering, noting that, *“the Council is harnessing the positive change in working practice arising from the pandemic to inform its future operating model for its workforce.”*

Building upon our digital agenda, incorporating technology into service delivery and exploiting data to drive performance

- Digital Media Footprint: Residents are increasingly connecting with the Council through digital media channels: the Council now has 45,500 followers on Facebook and over 9,000 followers on Instagram. Additionally, the number of residents viewing the Council’s webcasts (the Council’s streams Full Council, Planning Committee, Scrutiny Committees, Audit Committee and Cabinet meetings) is increasing; the Council had just over 7,700 total hits in Quarter 2.
- Cardiff Gov App: Cardiff Gov App downloads have exceeded 45,000. The Council has continued to see a high take up of new services introduced through apps, with 75% of address look-ups for missed waste collections taking place via the App and web.

Delivering fewer and better Council buildings

- Property Strategy: All targets within the Corporate Property Strategy 2015-20 were achieved, with capital receipts amounting to over £35.8m and a reduction of over £20.5m in total running costs secured. An interim plan was adopted in 2020/21, given the disruptive impact of Covid-19 on long-term planning, which will be reported to Cabinet in December. The development of a new five-year Property Strategy will also be considered by Cabinet in December.
- City Hall: Property condition information has been collated to understand urgent and priority works. A detailed conditions survey has also been undertaken to inform proposals for the future of the building, aligned with the Council’s post-Covid workforce planning and One Planet Cardiff carbon reduction initiatives.

Supporting a highly skilled, productive and committed workforce with the well-being of staff as its core

- Support Staff Wellbeing: Work to support staff mental wellbeing is ongoing:
 - Wellbeing information is provided to staff on a weekly basis.
 - The Health and Wellbeing Intranet set has been updated to be more user-friendly.
 - Virtual Awareness sessions are regularly held for staff, including sepsis and screening talks. Wellbeing sessions are also regularly held on topics such as improving sleep, anxiety and returning to work.
 - A Neurodiversity Guide has been created.
 - Carefirst support continues to be promoted, including webinars.
 - I-Act training is being provided to managers and employees.
 - One-to-one support is provided for employees suffering with anxiety, bereavement reaction, as well as depression.
- Gold Level Corporate Health Standard Award: Work to achieve the Gold Standard is also ongoing with monthly newsletters shared with staff and extensive engagement work with employee networks to ensure that information relevant to the networks is promoted. Healthy Travel information continues to be provided to support the delivery of the Healthy Travel Charter and to ensure that Cardiff meets its targets by April 2022.
- Addressing Barriers to Recruitment: Work has been undertaken with the Council's Employee Networks to understand the potential barriers and challenges to recruitment. As part of this, a Joint Employee Network Survey has been created, to establish a benchmark of membership and to understand the lived experiences of employees working for the Council. A specific survey has also been undertaken with the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network, as well as the Women's Network, to identify barriers to recruitment and develop appropriate interventions. A programme of additional HR support has also been established to support Network members.
- Independent Recruitment Panel Process: The principle of an independent recruitment panel process has been agreed and the processes for implementation are being worked through.
- Cardiff Work Staff: Cardiff Works staff, who have been in long-term placements – of 4+ years – are now in permanent roles. Managers across the Local Authority have also been notified of their long-term placements' entitlements; long-term placements are being reviewed and managers are being challenged to advertise roles that are regular and continuous.

Using the power of the public purse to support the city's recovery

- Contract Management: Cardiff Council spends circa £450m each year on a diverse range of goods, services and works. In addition to controls within the ordering and payments process, spend data is extracted, cleansed and analysed to allow a quarterly report to be developed and presented to the Senior Management Team (SMT). These reports

provide SMT with an overview of all procurement spend and provide assurance in terms of adherence to the Council Contract Standing Orders and Procurement Rules. Over the past 12 months the Council has been developing and implementing improved contract management arrangements which will provide improved oversight of contract performance against six key performance themes. In addition, the quarterly updates are used as an opportunity to report progress against wider policy priorities including decarbonisation and social value.

- **Socially Responsible Procurement:** At the end of Quarter 2, 49.2% of Council spend is with Cardiff-based organisations, against an annual target of 52%, whilst 65.3% of its spend is with Cardiff Capital Region based organisations and 69.3% is with Welsh-based organisations, alongside this 6.10% of those new contracts also include social value commitments.

Work is ongoing to accelerate the TOMs (Themes, Outcomes, Measures) 'Social Value' Portal (SVP) approach. The Contract Forward Plan is currently being utilised to identify tenders where TOMs/ SVP can be included within tender documentation. TOMs and SVP training has also been provided to Procurement staff, as well as to suppliers on the SEWSCAP Framework.

A review of the Socially Responsible Procurement Policy has been undertaken. A detailed analysis of spend data has been completed and work is ongoing to analyse organisations registered to supply Cardiff Council on the PROACTIS tool. This analysis will be used to finalise a Social Enterprise/ Third Sector action plan. The Council's 'Selling to the Council' Guide has also been updated and re-advertised to Cardiff's Third Sector organisations.

- **Increasing Opportunities for Social Enterprises:** A project with C3SC has commenced to identify options for increasing opportunities for social enterprises to secure council contracts.
- **Procurement Strategy:** A draft strategy, that promotes fair work, the Foundational Economy and One Planet Cardiff objectives, has been developed and targeted consultation has begun.

Making sure that we are a Council that better talks to and listen to the city that we serve

- **Mid-Year Complaints and Compliments report:** The Council has formally presented data on complaints and compliments, responding to the requirement to produce a half-yearly report, which has been considered by the Governance and Audit Committee. The number of complaints has increased, with the number received during Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 (2,248 complaints) suggesting the end of year position will be higher than the position reported in previous year (2,537). The majority of complaints received relate to the Council's Waste, Housing and Highways, Traffic and Transport services.
- **Scrutiny Committee Recommendations:** The Council's scrutiny committees have played a full role in informing Council policy and service improvement. A number of steps have

been undertaken to strengthen the role of the scrutiny committees, including the introduction of a 'tracker' approach to monitoring scrutiny recommendations. During the first 6 months of the 2021/22 financial year, the Council's scrutiny committees made 30 recommendations. Of these recommendations 56% have been accepted or partially accepted and none have been rejected, though a decision is awaited on 13 recommendations. Engagement with the scrutiny process has also been high, with 100% attendance by officers and almost 98% attendance by Cabinet members invited to attend over the past 6 months. Further refinements in recording the output (recommendations) of scrutiny committees are planned and will enable effective annual comparison of the quality of output, and continued strengthening of governance arrangements, to support the self-assessment requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Challenges and Risks

- **Financial Resilience:** The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic continues to have a significant financial impact on the Council. This is being evidenced through both additional expenditure pressures and reduced income generation across services. These additional expenditure pressures have varied in nature but have included both the need to change the way services are delivered and also the requirement to react to additional and different demand pressures being faced. In relation to income, losses have been experienced in a number of directorates and as the year progresses, there will be a need to track how those services are delivering against the income levels budgeted for in year.

In response to these financial pressures, Welsh Government has continued to support Covid-19 impacts, through the Covid-19 Hardship Fund, and has committed to continue funding arrangements across Wales for 2021/22 in areas where the pandemic continues to demand an additional expenditure or result in lost income.

Over and above the Covid-19 crisis, certain directorates continue to face long-standing and significant financial pressures, with ongoing challenges relating to the planning and delivery of departmental efficiency savings. There are particular pressures evident in Children's Services, Economic Development and Education & Lifelong Learning, with smaller, but not insignificant, overspends within Planning, Transport and Environment, and Governance and Legal Services. Enhanced service planning and tight budget monitoring is needed to ensure clear accountabilities, metrics and targets.

Moving forward, there is also a need to ensure that demand pressures are picked up early, as well as where demand for services does not return to anticipated levels, particularly with respect to income generating services. Additionally, a sharper focus will need to continue to be placed on the capital position, as increases in costs and supply pressures are beginning to have consequences in terms of the delivery of the capital programme.

- **Maintenance Backlog:** The Council is facing a maintenance backlog for the city's most historic venues and buildings. A new approach has been outlined for Old Library and

the Norwegian Church and the Council has been exploring new and inventive ways of safeguarding the future of other historic venues. This includes exploring new delivery arrangements with third party operators who respect and value the heritage of the venues, are committed to delivering social value and help limit the Council's financial risks and commitments.

- **Sickness Absence:** Significant improvements were seen in sickness absence levels throughout 2020/21, with the increase in sickness absences correlating with the easing of pandemic restrictions. The Quarter 2 sickness absence result shows that the Council is currently above target, at 10.76 working days/ shifts lost, per full-time equivalent (FTE) Local Authority employee, against a target of 9.5. Much of this increase relates to a large number of staff absent due to Covid-19, with the forecasted result dropping to 9.77 FTE days if Covid sicknesses are removed, only slightly above target.

Sickness absence is not uniform across the Council, with sickness particularly high in Street Scene, Adult Services and Housing and Communities. A targeted approach will continue to be applied to improve performance. Furthermore, a continued focus is being placed on reducing long term sickness absence, with additional corporate support being provided for complex cases. Emphasis is being placed on active ongoing management action to improve performance in this area.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

- Hybrid working: The Council will continue to develop its model for hybrid working, including assessing how a shift to hybrid and agile working will be managed in each service area and the office and technology requirements needed to support this new approach. With the requirement to work from home for many staff likely to stay in place over the winter month a continued focus will be placed on supporting staff wellbeing.
- The Council will continue to deliver the current year (2021/22) Budget Strategy, with a focus on key risk areas, including Social Care and general income achievability. The Council will also continue to develop the Budget Strategy for 2022/23 and a robust Medium Term Financial Plan (MTPF), including:
 - Budget Strategy agreement by March 2022
 - Financial sustainability beyond 1 April 2022, as well as beyond Covid Hardship support.
 - Focus on future capital plans in addition to revenue MTPF
- The Council's Planning and Performance Framework- which respond to the new performance requirements of the Local Government and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2021- and Data Strategy will be considered by Cabinet in Quarter 4.
- The Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26 will be considered by Cabinet in December and will include an update on the interim Annual Property Plan set for 2021/22. The

new Corporate Property Strategy will set out the approach for managing the Operational, Non-Operational and Investment Portfolios. It will set the strategic direction, performance targets, key processes and governance relating to the management of the Council's land and property estate over the next five years. The strategy will focus on the modernisation of the operational estate to support service delivery and the transition to hybrid working. It will also support delivery of the One Planet Cardiff strategy by reducing the carbon impact of the Council's estate as part of the move to net zero by 2030.

- Cardiff Works' application process, including assessments, is to be placed completely online by introducing an online portal. This will significantly speed up the application process and ensure that candidates do not need to attend in-person to register. The job matching ICT solution is currently in the prototype phase with the software developer.
- The draft Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy is to be finalised and approved.

Well-being Objective 8: Managing the Covid-19 pandemic – Summary

Despite the success of the vaccination programme and the lifting of social distancing restrictions, there is a need to remain cautious, which has been highlighted by the recent emergence of the Omicron variant. The national policy position is cautiously recognising Covid-19 as a vaccine-preventable disease, where immunisation is the most critical first line of defence, complemented by isolation and testing of symptomatic individuals; surveillance and risk-based response to incidents and outbreaks of the infection.

The ongoing monitoring of new variants – most notably the Omicron variant - will remain critical and the Council will need to respond to any changes in national policy in order to keep citizens and staff safe, and continue to adapt and delivery local services, particularly to the city's most vulnerable people.

Key Successes

- Delivery of the Mass Vaccination Programme: Delivery of the Mass Vaccination Programme continues, with the Council providing logistical support at vaccine centres. As of 9 November 2021, 841,332 vaccinations have been given in total² in the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board area.
- Outbreak Management: The Council continues to investigate and manage sporadic cases and incidents of Covid-19, as well as other communicable diseases, in care homes and domiciliary care providers across the region. Multi-agency Covid-19 management meetings are continuing fortnightly, and provider meetings continue to be held monthly.
- Work of Cardiff's Ethnic Minority Sub-Group: The Sub-Group has completed their initial work plan and are now focusing on long-term work, particularly improving health outcomes for ethnic minority groups. A new full-time role has been created, with funding from the University Health Board, to deliver community engagement on issues such as immunisation and screening services. Work has continued to engage with communities and demographic groups with lower vaccine uptake. As part of this, leaflets, regarding Covid-19 vaccination in various community languages, have been produced and disseminated.
- Covid-19 Homeless Task Group: A Covid-19 Homeless Task Group has been established, for providers to share best practice regarding reopening services, as well as risk management. Meetings are also utilised to review Covid-related matters such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), vaccinations and testing.
- Corporate Covid-19 Policy: Corporate Covid-19 guidance continues to be updated in line with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales advice. More recently, the guidance

² The total is made up of 1st dose (395,438), 2nd dose (359,855), 3rd dose (5,490) and boosters (78,310).

has been updated to reflect the move to level ‘zero’, with information and support provided regarding the revised Covid-19 risk assessment, which now determines reasonable measures a service should implement to reduce transmission of the virus. When the corporate Covid-19 risk assessment is updated, a communication email is sent to all managers, requiring them to complete it.

- Staff Testing: Arrangements for council and partner staff to access PCR and Lateral Flow testing are in place and working well. The Covid-19 testing mailbox is monitored 7 days a week, with referrals sent to the University Health Board testing service as soon as all of the required information has been received.
- Covid-19 Pass: Discussions are underway with Welsh Government to support venues with Covid-pass/ Lateral Flow testing following the announcement relating to nightclub and event access. The Council will act as a local distributor where necessary.
- Enforcing Compliance with Covid-19 Regulations: The work of Covid-19 Enforcement Teams continues to ensure compliance with regulations, with detailed advice being given to individual businesses to support them in operating safely. The team issued 2 Premises Improvement Notices to businesses in Cardiff during Quarter 2.

Challenges and Risks

- Variants of concern: The ongoing monitoring of new variants – most notably the Omicron variant – will remain critical and the Council will need to respond to any changes in national policy in order to keep citizens and staff safe, and continue to adapt and deliver local services, particularly to the city’s most vulnerable people.
- Test, Trace, Protect: Cases increased significantly in Quarter 2, particularly in schools, with numbers similar to case rates experienced in December 2020, putting pressure on the TTP service, which had no additional staff resource or service delivery tools to manage the increase. Significant challenges remain with timely recruitment, and retention, of temporary staff from agencies. The service is working with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales on the modelling of a new contact tracing service.
- Shared Regulatory Services: Public Protection services are under increasing pressure. The need to respond to the Coronavirus outbreak has created pressure on the service, not least through the secondment of significant Public Protection resource into the wider public health arena. That requirement is ongoing and has impacted business-as-usual given that aspects of Public Protection work have been suspended or adapted.

There are challenges relating to service delivery going forward. Much of the pandemic work is funded by Welsh Government and will end in March 2022. Existing staff levels and demographics also present concerns about future resilience, including a decline in specialist skills and knowledge not readily available within local government, or in the wider labour market. It is also becoming increasingly difficult to systematically recruit and train new environmental health and trading standards officers. A national report – “Public Protection Services in Wales Building for the Future” – published in November

2021 by the Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW) makes a series of recommendations to support the sustainability of the service.

- International Travellers: With increased volumes of international travellers, follow-up calls have ceased. Investigations are being undertaken into updating the customer relationship management (CRM) system, so that follow-up calls can be replaced by an automated text message. 'Red' list arrivals are managed via quarantine facilities, and 'Amber' and 'Green' list arrivals are prioritised through two levels: Level 1 is based on full vaccination and Level 2 is based on the positivity rate of the country the individual is arriving from.
- Cases in Schools: The Council continues to minimise disruption to education and childcare, whilst ensuring the safety of staff, pupils, and their families. All schools have been risk assessed and have reasonable Health and Safety measures in place and, whilst under-18s do not need to self-isolate if a close contact tests positive for Covid-19, robust testing arrangements are in place as a means of assurance, enabling children to stay in school.
- Cases in Care Homes and the Domiciliary Care Sector: Cases in care homes, as well as within the domiciliary care sector, are increasing. During Quarter 2, Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) managed 541 escalated referrals of confirmed cases of Covid-19 in care homes and the domiciliary care sector in the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board Area. The Service also managed 136 outbreaks of communicable disease in care settings across the SRS region.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in Social Care: A Demand Compliance Assessment Tool has been completed for Social Care; the tool looks at supply to settings over an eight-week period and models safe usage of PPE. Following scrutiny of the results, concerns have been raised regarding PPE compliance within Social Care. A survey has therefore been issued to all external care homes and domiciliary care providers, and results are being considered by the Contracts Team.

Forward Look: Areas of Focus

- The arrival of the more contagious Omicron variant is an increased threat to the wellbeing of communities. Key messaging on the overriding importance of the vaccine and the booster will continue to be emphasised, as well as compliance with all preventative measures such as adhering to social distancing guidelines, wearing a mask where required and continuing to maintain good hand hygiene. The variant will be monitored closely and, as evidence emerges and national policy changes, the Council will work with partners, to ensure appropriate response arrangements are in place.
- More broadly, the Council will continue to prevent the spread of Covid-19, ensuring the health and safety of staff, service users and citizens. Coronavirus continues to present challenges to society and the emphasis on vaccination, testing and good workplace risk assessments should help limit the impact of the virus this winter.

- The Council is undertaking a body of work, including modelling and sensitivity analysis, to project the level and type of PPE that will be required over the short and medium term. Whilst there is an inherently high level of uncertainty associated with any work of this kind, the assessment will help the Council ensure the continued availability of PPE as appropriate and its associated budgetary impact.
- Continue home-working wherever possible.
- Ensure key frontline service continue to function effectively in the face of urging and pressing workforce challenges.
- Ensure the sufficiency and effectiveness of contact tracing capacity with the Cardiff and Vale Test, Trace, Protect service, including working with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales to develop a new contact tracing service.
- Continue to mobilise Council workforce, assets and processes in support of the mass vaccination programme (Covid-19 boosters and Influenza).
- Continue to support schools to manage Covid-19 risks and ensure minimal disruption to education and learning.
- Develop options to progress the recommendations of the Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW) report to support the sustainability of the service, where considered appropriate.