

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER 2023/24 – QUARTER 3 (TO 31st DECEMBER 2023)

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	1
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	Living within Our Means
Responsible Officer	Barrie Davies

Risk Description: If the Council's medium term financial planning arrangements do not support the development of sufficient and timely proposals to address forecasted reductions in funding levels and increased demand and cost of services, this may lead to unplanned reductions in service delivery and an inability to meet Corporate Plan priority outcomes.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Budget and Policy Framework in place, as part of the Council's Constitution, covering budget setting arrangements. Budget planning and management arrangements set out as part of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules. Arrangements for the public reporting and scrutiny / engagement of annual budget setting, in-year budget monitoring updates, medium term financial plan (MTFP) updates, year-end statements of account, Treasury Management / Capital Strategy updates and Council Tax setting. 	5	4	20	5	4	20

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
<p>A Council wide and on-going programme of work, led by the Senior Leadership Team, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the MTFP to inform service planning and annual budget setting, and the publication of updates on an annual basis; 	<p>An updated Medium Term Financial Plan (2023/24 to 2026/27) (MTFP) was published and reported to Cabinet, full Council and the School Budget Forum in September and October 2023, that set out a significant forecasted budget gap facing the Council for financial year 2024/25 through to 2026/27 i.e. £35M for 2024/25 and £85M in total over the 3-year period. This forecast follows on from the biggest ever budget gap faced and successful addressed by the Council for the current year, that amounted to £38M.</p> <p>The Council's MTFP arrangements has consistently (year-on-year) provided an early and clear forecast of the financial outlook facing the Council to support a track record of setting balanced budgets. Notwithstanding the scale of the financial challenges facing the Council for 2024/25, the</p>

CONTROLS AND ACTIONS - the Council's risk response is to 'Treat' each strategic risk through taking positive actions to mitigate, as far as is practicable, adverse implications on the delivery of objectives.

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
	<p>arrangements has positioned the Council well in its preparations to develop a proposed balanced revenue budget strategy for next year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and assess budget saving options, in line with MTFP forecasts, and implement those that are approved (including early deliver wherever possible); 	<p>The Council has established processes in place to continually review service provision across the organisation and, in light of the MTFP outlook, this process necessitates an on-going focus on the identification and delivery of significant budget reduction measures. The process is led by the Senior Leadership (SLT) Team and covers all service areas.</p> <p>The outcome of the latest organisation wide programme of work over a number of months was reported to Cabinet on 20th November 2023, and set out early budget reduction measures of £8.2M that would ensure frontline services are protected. The budget reduction measures will contribute to closing the budget gap for next year.</p> <p>Work will continue to identify further budget reduction measures as part of SLT preparing a proposed Revenue Budget Strategy for 2024/25, this being reported to Cabinet in January 2024.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust in-year budget monitoring and reporting arrangements and compilation of year-end statements of account (including public reporting and scrutiny); 	<p>The Council has a year-on-year track record of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing annual expenditure in line with approved resources (budget and earmarked reserves) that has supported service delivery alongside maintaining the Council's financial stability (as demonstrated through maintaining General Fund Balances in line with the minimum level deemed required). Robust budget monitoring arrangements, with effective working between Finance Officers and Service Managers, have been integral to achieving these outcomes. As at Quarter 3 of the current year (to 31st December 2023), the revenue budget position is projected to be £2.45M overspent for the full year, with work underway to bring the position closer in line with budget by year-end. Clean (i.e. unqualified) external audit opinion on the Council's Statement of Accounts along with clean audit opinions on other Statements of Account / Annual Return the Council is responsible for preparing / coordinating (i.e. Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund; Central South Consortium Joint Education Service Joint Committee; Llwydcoed Crematorium Joint Committee; and Welsh Church Act Fund). These outcomes provide assurance around the effectiveness of the financial management arrangements in place within the Council. <p>The Council's robust monitoring arrangements have also enabled budget reduction measures to be delivered early during the year i.e. £2.1M as at 31st December 2023, with the savings allocated to the</p>

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
	<p>Medium Term Financial and Service Transformation Reserve, that has been used sensibly and sustainably over a number of years to support the setting of balanced Revenue Budgets.</p> <p>Updates on the above areas are publicly reported to designated Committees of the Council to support transparency, scrutiny and accountability around the Authority's financial management arrangements and financial performance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess reserve levels to underpin the Council's financial stability and support one-off additional investment in Corporate Plan priority areas 	<p>The Council has kept its reserves under on-going review during the year and has taken opportunities, where available, to re-align some reserves to provide additional one-off investment to support Corporate Plan priorities. This work has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed overview of the Council's reserves presented to full Council in September 2023, as part of providing elected Members with the updated MTFP. On-going review of reserves (alongside resources already set aside and external funding) that enabled £7.7M of additional one-off investment into Corporate Plan priorities, this being agreed by full Council in September 2023. Review work around the Council's reserves will continue as part of identifying additional resources to support an updated draft 3-year Capital Programme (2024/25 – 2026/27) to be reported to Cabinet in February 2024 and thereafter to full Council in March 2024 for approval.
<p>Support to develop, implement and monitor service transformation strategies and initiatives, in line with the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.</p>	<p>The Council's MTFP arrangements are integrated with the transformation strategies being delivered across the organisation and include workforce planning, digitisation, office accommodation, social services transformation and climate change. The Council's quarterly Performance Reports publicly demonstrate the sound progress, impacts and risks as these strategies are delivered, underpinned by effective working arrangements across all service areas.</p>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	2
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PEOPLE
Responsible Officer	Annabel Lloyd

Risk Description: If Children's Services are not able to recruit sufficient numbers of experienced qualified social workers and are unable to access sufficient numbers of registered children's homes places that are close to home (whilst supporting the Welsh Government's ambitions to eliminate profit from this sector), then the Council's capacity to prevent escalation of need, and safeguard children as required by the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act may be compromised.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing priorities: Demand and key features of safe practice are monitored through Children Services Management Team via bi-monthly performance and quality assurance meetings. • Recruitment and Retention - A workforce strategy and steering group has been established to address the wider issues in relation to attraction, skills, workforce planning, staff engagement and staff well-being. • In addition to staff supervision, through the Council's well-being offer staff are supported by psychology led reflective spaces and can request 1:1 support. • Developing Registered Children's Homes that meet need: In February, Cabinet approved the Children's Services Residential Transformation Strategy that outlines plans to develop sufficient not for profit children's homes close to home over the next 3-5 years. 	5	3	15	5	3	15

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Dip sampling, quality assurance, and further evaluation or remedial work is carried out in response to early alert of a problem.	Dip sampling of decision making at the front door is continuing with oversight by the Head of Service. The result of this work is reported to the Safeguarding and Prevention Quality Assurance Panel. The most recent report was 09.02.24 and this provided positive assurance of sound decision making. Any learning that is being identified is shared with practitioners.
Additional capacity has been made available via agency supply where it can be accessed (it is scarce and mixed quality) and additional capacity has been created via Assessor Care Manager and support worker roles	As at Dec 2023 there were 40 social worker vacancies. There were 22 Assessor Care Managers, 10.5 Support Workers and 7 agency Social Workers appointed to manage the current vacancy position.

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Recruitment and Retention - an attraction campaign is in development with a revised website. Workforce Strategy is subject to review following 18 months of implementation; focus in phase 2 will be retention of experienced staff and 'grow our own' whilst maintaining attraction campaigns.	All aspects of the workforce strategy are in implementation with a particular emphasis on retention. The attraction web pages are being updated with some new short videos by RCT staff highlighting their positive experiences. All staff are invited to join Involve and Inform sessions 3 times per year to take part in service developments. Staff can access psychology led reflective Spaces to support with the impact for their lives of working with trauma. The Model of Social Practice and potential of developing a Social Work Academy from the Grown our Own Scheme offer strong opportunities for marketing. Work is under way to determine what more can be done to support staffing challenges in the Intensive Intervention part of the services where the difficulties are greatest.
Undertake exit survey analysis whereby information about 'push' factors is collated.	Workforce strategy retention sub-group has been established to focus on developing opportunities that address the areas for retention improvement highlighted in the Practitioners' Voice Report and exit interviews. These include but are not limited to, workload, working patterns (inc. flexi implementation), induction/training provision and office space. All aspects of the action plan are in implementation but the full complement of work will take time.
Staff have ability to get involved in service developments via practitioner forum, inform updates, inform and involve face-to-face sessions, and staff surveys.	Communication cycle is working well e.g. staff bulletins, Inform and Involve sessions and Reflective Spaces are established and working well.
Additional resources have been made available to Children's Services staff to implement the strategy which will lead to developing not for profit registered children's homes that meet need.	Good progress has been made around the Children's Services Residential Transformation Strategy which is now entering phase 2 which focuses on stabilising new provision to RISCA standard, develop the staff, reducing cost and ending reliance on OWR. Numbers of OWR have reduced. Independent work will commence in February to inform next steps in ending reliance on OWR.
Work is underway in line with Foster Wales to increase the numbers of foster carers that are available.	We continue to work with Foster Wales to implement our Foster Wales Recruitment & Retention Strategy (2022-25) which illustrates our approach to improving the sufficiency of inhouse foster carers to meet the needs of children looked after locally. As at 31st December 2023, there were a total of 269 RCT Foster Carers (125 Mainstream and 144 Kinship). This compares to 284 on 31st December 2022 (134 Mainstream and 150 Kinship).
Work has commenced with therapy provider and staff to reduce escalation of need from foster care to children's homes, and progress reunification where that is in line with children and families' needs.	The RCT Children's Services Therapeutic Approach rooted in the Trauma Recovery Model is nearing completion. All children looked after can access the commissioned therapeutic service called MAPPS which is positively appraised. The service also provides skills transfer sessions for staff and support for foster carers. As the Regional Partnership Board grant funding comes to an end, managers are working on identifying a future funding stream given the importance of this work.

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	3
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PEOPLE
Responsible Officer	Neil Elliott

Risk Description: If the Council does not continue to modernise and work with health colleagues to develop and deliver an integrated model of community services, then our ability to deliver these critical (key) services could be hindered resulting in a potential failure to support some of our most vulnerable residents which in turn could increase demand on our services.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency working in place at a Leadership level through the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board and its infrastructure. The community services model is agreed between partners alongside the key pathways of care and funding has been made available from Welsh Government to support implementation. The Hospital discharge Board is in place for CTM and the D2RA process is operational - including the pathways of care reporting process. Regional Social Care Workforce Development Board in place to oversee training and development activity, including development and implementation of Annual social workforce development plan to target funding on key priorities. Regional steering groups are in place for CTM with responsibility for the Learning Disability transformation and the implementation of the Welsh Dementia standards. 	5	3	15	5	3	15

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Agreed implementation plans to progress the integrated community model.	<p>We continue to work with our partners to implement an integrated health and social care model. The agreed regional model is based on two priority pathways of integrated care:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The urgent pathway of care: unscheduled community response for intensive, wrap around multidisciplinary team support that is time limited. The population health management: a multidisciplinary response to population segmentation to embed a preventative ethos across all levels of need. <p>The aim of delivering integrated services is to improve health, care and wellbeing including prevention through a proactive approach and ensuring people will spend more time at home, with improved individual and population outcomes.</p>

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
	Following the agreement, we have been working with regional health and social partners to agree a new governance structure, workforce plan and fully costed commissioning intent to deliver the new integrated community services model. This work is taking longer than anticipated but a regional director has now been appointed to manage the integration of the new regional model to provide the necessary programme management support
Work with Health to complete redesign of Community mental health services to provide responsive access and effective mental health support.	Our work to review and redesign Community Mental Health Services with Health is ongoing. As part of this we will complete a review of current Community Mental Health Services and develop options to redesign our joint service offer to meet current and future long-term need and demand pressures. A new work programme and timescales have been agreed with Health for 2023/24. A contract has been awarded to the third sector to deliver the new dementia care connector role across Cwm Taf Morgannwg.
Continue to deliver Learning Disability Transformation Programme, including redesign of day services offer.	We continue the transformation of day services so that people with a learning disability have access to meaningful activity and opportunities in their own communities, including employment to achieve their personal goals and live ordinary lives. The draft day services strategy was presented to Cabinet in May 2023 and it was agreed that targeted consultation would take place with people who use day services, their families and carers, staff and other associated stakeholders. Taking into account the outcome of the consultation, which was informed by what people told us through the “My Day My Way” engagement Cabinet agreed the implementation of the proposed co-produced Day Services Strategy and operating model for people with a learning disability in November 2023. This remodelling of the Council’s day service provision to a new East and West structure, including smaller community-based groups, will ensure that services are delivered in a way that achieves the best possible individual outcomes for people, based on need and demand, whilst making the best use of Council resources.
Implement with partners all Wales dementia standards.	We continue to work with our regional partners to make improvements to dementia services and considerable opportunities for engagement and consultation has been a feature in this area. Much of the regional work is driven by the Welsh Government Dementia Standards but a key development is the local design of the Dementia connector which is a new role intended to assist in the navigation of the health and social care system . The role was informed through engagement with people living with dementia, and following a procurement process, the contract for delivery across CTM has been awarded to Age Connects Morgannwg who are currently recruiting and setting up the service with a view to a start date in the new financial year.

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	6
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS
Responsible Officer	Tim Jones

Risk Description: If the Council does not manage its information assets in accordance with requirements set down within legislation, then it may be faced with financial penalties and possible sanctions that hinder service delivery and damage its reputation.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance structures are in place and the Council has a designated SIRO. Policies and Procedures are in place. E.g. Data Protection Policy, Data Protection Impact Assessment, Information Security, Subject Access Requests (SAR). Designated Data Protection Officer and team in place that provides on-going support and training. External Reviews & Accreditation e.g. PSN, PCI, Audit Wales. Mandatory Data Protection training in place. 	4	3	12	5	2	10

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Continue to review and as required refresh policies and procedures.	Policies continue to be created and reviewed in accordance with the service delivery plan and as part of the response to events and incidents.
Undertake data protection impact assessments of new projects and process.	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIAs) have been created for new services and existing DPIAs amended to reflect new processes.
Support development of Information Sharing Agreements.	Information Sharing Agreements have been created for new services and as required existing agreements amended to reflect any change.
Prepare for and support external reviews and accreditations.	PSN compliance approval gained from the Cabinet Office. BACs Bureau compliance approved. Cyber Essentials & PCI being prepared.
Implement recommendations from external review / accreditation.	The Information Management team (IM) continues to implement recommended remedial actions as outcome of external review & accreditation. The Information Management Board (IMB) continues to monitor progress

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Investigate and learn from information management incidents implementing remedial action plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Information Management (IM) team continue to monitor information breaches and ensure corrective actions and reporting requirements are completed. • Information Management Board (IMB) continue to monitor performance and action progress. Improvement plan for Subject Access Requests agreed. • Best practice and any learning from the result of breaches has been shared via Authority wide Information Management bulletins.
Ensure information rights requests are processed in line with legislation e.g. SARs.	The Engagement, Feedback and Complaints team continue to process SARs line with legislation. The IMB continues to monitor performance.
Raise awareness and train staff.	A new mandatory data protection training module has been created and agreed to be implemented by the Information Management Board.

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	11
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Simon Gale

Risk Description: If projects aimed at regenerating the local communities through the Council's investment programme are not planned, procured and managed effectively by the Council, then delivery could be severely compromised, with the intended benefits associated with prosperity and growth being lost. This is compounded by the continued uncertain commercial environment and tight external funding programme periods from Welsh and UK Governments.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
Robust service delivery arrangements and governance structures are in place to ensure the successful delivery of key strategic regeneration projects. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing effective business cases for individual projects to ensure they are viable and cost effective. • Involving stakeholders to support the delivery of key interventions from across the Council including Estates, Strategic Projects, Procurement and Legal, other public Bodies, Welsh Government and the private sector. • Establishing project boards responsible for overseeing the delivery of individual projects. • A Project Protocol which is made available for project development and implementation that identifies the mechanisms needed to structure successful project delivery. • Update reports considered by SLT and the Council's Cabinet 	4	3	12	5	2	10

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
To ensure that all projects adhere to the project protocol procedures the completion of which is overseen by Officers from Regeneration and Finance.	The key major projects that the Council is currently delivering which fall into this category include the Bingo Hall, M&S redevelopment, and the Muni all of which are in Pontypridd. In addition to this, it also includes projects that are being delivered in partnership with the private sector such as the Rates Building in Aberdare. All projects have established robust service delivery arrangements and governance structures in line with the project protocol framework, which is ensuring the successful management of these schemes.
To ensure that all such funding bids are compliant with funding terms and conditions and take maximum advantage of the funding available.	Project Officers are in place and have carried out monitoring and compliance exercises to ensure that all projects are adhering to the terms and conditions of all external grants. In Qtr 3 the Council was successful in its application for Welsh Governments Transforming Towns funding to redevelop the Bingo Hall site in Pontypridd. The Council has fully maximised all external funding opportunities available to deliver this scheme.

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	13	
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PEOPLE	
Responsible Officer	Louise Davies	

Risk Description: If the Council does not target its resources to effectively support communities affected by the cost-of-living crisis and the longer-term requirement to tackle the root causes of poverty, then those that are most vulnerable within our communities will suffer disproportionately which will result in added pressures being put on Council Services.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<p>The following controls have been put in place to manage risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated team in place to manage risk. Regular monitoring of tackling poverty grants, <u>community and children's grant and housing support grant</u>* to ensure compliance, impact and value for money. Regular meetings with Welsh Government as part of the Building Resilient Communities national work programme. Liaising with Cabinet Members to provide regular updates. 	5	2	10	5	4	20

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
<p>To develop and deliver services that focus on building more involved and resilient communities to tackle poverty and promote well-being. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing the recommendations following a review into all Families First Commissioned services, with a focus on prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement (5 ways of working). 	<p>No exceptions to report during quarter 3 in respect of Housing Support Grant and the Children & Communities Grant (CCG). Good progress is being made with delivering the projects included in the expenditure plans although risk is being managed within the existing programmes due to escalating costs of commissioned providers and uplifts in grants not being provided to keep pace with rising inflation. In addition, the 2024/25 indicative grant allocation for CCG issued by WG in Q3 identifies a reduction. Work will commence in Q4 to review CCG, under the direction of a new oversight Board, to mitigate the impact of the cut on initiatives that address poverty and community resilience. No changes to HSG proposed by WG but static award means risks will need to be managed in Q4.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of <u>Resilient Families</u>* and Team around the Family review recommendations in order to improve the <u>resilience and</u>* long-term prospects of the family and prevent problems from escalating. 	<p>Pressures on particular services continues to increase as a consequence of the impact of the cost of living pressures with housing (homelessness) and children's services (resilient families contacts) experiencing particularly high demands. Risk to sustainability of some third sector partners who provide community services is increasing and the impact of the Council's budget pressures on our ability to continue to commission third sector providers is being actively kept under review as the 2024/25 Budget Strategy is developed.</p>

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community and third sector to provide Warm Hub provision during the winter, ensuring support, access to a warm venue and additional resources (warm pack) can be provided to the most vulnerable. 	<p>81 Warm Welcome Hubs have been funded in the community and will operate in Q3 and 4 of this year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council support scheme with funding put in place for Winter 23-24 to support families with children, vulnerable groups and community organisations. 	<p>Cabinet Approved the Cost of Living Support package of measures in September 23 and work was undertaken in Q3 to implement the decision, including allocation of grants to food banks, community organisations, staff payments and payments to families with school age children in particular. In addition, Community Grants funded by Shared Prosperity Funding support community resilience and tackling poverty projects across RCT. These continued to be monitored in Q3 and the opportunity to apply for 24/25 funding was opened in Q3.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Review the operation of community resilience hubs to ensure they meet the needs of communities across RCT and align with the new WG model for Community and Integrated Community and Well-being Hubs.*</u> 	<p><u>A contract to undertake a review of the new integrated community services model agreed by the RPB was awarded and work commenced across CTM in Q3 with a final report expected in June 2024. The findings of a separate internal review of RCT Community Resilience Hubs was completed in Q2 and SLT accepted the findings in Q3. Further work to align the RCT Hub model will be undertaken to compliment the outcome of the integrated model review.</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the work programme for the new Health Determinants Research Collaboration being established for RCT. 	<p>In Q3, the Council was successful in obtaining new funding to support it to become a research active organisation to enable us to tackle the underlying causes of poverty by tackling the wider determinants of health. The contact from the National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR) is for 5 years and will establish a collaboration of partners from the community, third sector, academia and health to work together to improve the health outcomes of our residents. Work to establish the HDRC will continue in Q4.</p>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	14
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Gaynor Davies

Risk Description: If individual school budgets are not appropriately managed, then schools will be required to deliver budget recovery plans and efficiencies at a time when support for learners should be at the forefront of planning, this could impact on the overall achievement of grades across the Council.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and regular communication with Head teachers. Termly budget deficit meetings in line with the Council's budget deficit monitoring protocol. Continued support provided by key officers from within the Council. 	4	3	12	4	3	12

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Liaise with all Head teachers to communicate the financial pressures that the Council is facing and reinforce their involvement in aiming to realise more efficient working practices.	The current forecast of schools using £10M of their balances in 2023/24 is not sustainable into future years. Early planning has commenced for 2024/25 budget setting with Headteachers being informed of the financially challenging environment. In addition, schools with significantly reducing pupil numbers have been informed that this will lead to a reduction in the number of teachers funded in the formula funding.
Work with schools in order to identify possible areas to increase efficiency.	Schools are well supported by governor support, finance and HR officers to explore all options to make efficiencies, develop management of change documents and to implement proposals.
Ensure that schools comply with budget recovery plans and are supported to make efficiencies that do not have an adverse impact on school improvement and learner outcomes.	<p>The majority of the £15.248M balances as at 31st March 2023 have been used to set balanced budgets for 2023/24 with balances estimated to reduce to £4.9M by 31st March 2024. 1 All through, 2 secondary and 7 primary schools set deficit budgets for 2023/24.</p> <p>Current estimates are for 20 primary schools to end the financial year with a deficit with 6 forecast to be greater than £50k invoking the requirement for support and challenge meetings as defined by the School Deficit Protocol. 1 All-through, 1 secondary and 1 special school are also forecast to end the financial year in a deficit position, none of which currently reach the threshold for support and challenge meetings.</p>
Ensure robust budget monitoring processes.	For primary and special schools, the Finance SLA ensures schools receive monthly budget monitoring information with bi-monthly meetings held between schools and finance officers. All

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
	headteachers and chair of governors of schools that meet the threshold for the implementation of the budget deficit protocol have to attend termly meetings with the Director of Education and senior LA officers where appropriate support and challenge is provided.
Ensure budget pressures are incorporated into Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) updates	This is routinely reported to Cabinet.

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	15
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PLACES
Responsible Officer	Steve Williams

Risk Description: If the Council does not monitor and invest in its ageing highways assets, then the chance of structural failure, emergency closures and therefore disruption to communities and the local economy increases which will result in additional financial (unplanned) costs for the Council along with reputational damage.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine monitoring of the entire highways network. Regular reports to SLT & Cabinet. We have appointed additional staff; this means we have appropriate in-house capability to manage this complex and significant asset. 	4	2	8	4	2	8

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Invest additional monies in road, highways infrastructure and pavement networks over the next four years, on top of the previous investment since 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At end of Qtr 3, 75% of named schemes had been completed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carriageway schemes – 87 total; 71 complete (81%) Footway schemes – 46 total; 29 complete (63%) Unadopted roads – 11 total; 9 complete (81%)
Provide an update on the impact of key investment projects through the investment programme.	Update provided through HIS Project Board November 21 st on highways spend, parks structures spend and Storm Dennis projects.
Provide an update to Scrutiny Committee on delivery of the Highways / Transportation infrastructure investment programme.	Planned for Qtr 4
Review and update the Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) to ensure that the principal assets have been identified and form part of the Plan, and relevant document and service standards agreed.	The asset management Annual Status Reports for 2022/23 are currently being prepared for reporting to Scrutiny Committee. Programme for development and updates to HAMP being agreed with relevant service areas.

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	18
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS
Responsible Officer	Richard Evans

Risk Description: If the Council does not put in place robust workforce planning arrangements, including plans for monitoring and supporting the wellbeing of existing staff, then the ability to retain and attract the best staff could be hindered which will have a direct impact on the quality of services that it can deliver.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's workforce planning arrangements are underpinned by the new Human Resources Strategy and Council Workforce Plan 2023-2028, this will help ensure the appropriate deployment and development of staff. Progress towards the key ambitions within the workforce plan will be reported alongside delivery plan monitoring and reported back, alongside related progress within the HR strategy to SLT and cabinet on an annual basis. Staff consultation and communication is undertaken on a regular basis to ensure that staff have the opportunity to shape people practices in light of on-going changes. 	4	3	12	5	4	20

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Specific recruitment strategies, such as graduate and apprenticeship programmes are in place to ensure the Council is adequately resourced to mitigate risks around wellbeing and attrition.	<p>LinkedIn and social media posts have been utilised to target hard to fill posts.</p> <p>Careers fair on the 27th of September had 1,105 attendees.</p> <p>Other key updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduates – 12 commenced employment in September. Apprentices – 49 posts commenced employment in September 2023. Step in the Right direction – 9 Trainees on programme Care2Work – 45 Access to Employment – 1 individual. Gateway to Employment – 7 supported interns commenced supported employment on the 18th September. Green Light programme – 120 YP

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Introduction of wellbeing and development initiatives to support staff well-being.	<p>Staff consultation exercise complete and update reported.</p> <p>Managers briefings have taken place in September with @455 managers booked to attend. The wellbeing topic was around cardiac disease and know your number blood pressure clinics were run at the face-to-face briefings. Wellbeing bitesize sessions continue to run monthly on a range of different topics. Flu campaign launches October 2023</p>
Progress against actions in the workforce plan will be reported by respective service areas within the delivery plan monitoring arrangements.	<p>Workforce planning training undertaken with HoS and above in June and July.</p> <p>Monitoring of progress against the workforce plan has been integrated into delivery plan monitoring.</p>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	20
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS
Responsible Officer	Tim Jones

Risk Description: If the Council does not maintain a high level of Cyber Assurance (people, process & technology) and ensure that infrastructure is fit for business use and secure, then access to information and systems could be hindered, by for example cyber risk / attack, resulting in interruption to service delivery, potential breaches and reputational damage.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cyber Assurance Governance Structure in place. Designated team in place that provides support for ongoing work programme. Policies and Procedures in place e.g. patch management, data backup, change control. Cyber Incident Response and Disaster Recovery Plans in place should an interruption be experienced. Technical controls in place for protection e.g. anti-ransomware, phishing, next generation firewalls with advanced threat protection. External Reviews & Accreditation e.g. PSN, Cyber Essentials, PCI, WAO, BABs, 3rd party suppliers. Mandatory Cyber Awareness Training in place. 	5	3	15	5	4	20

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Implement & maintain technical mitigation measures.	Patching policies being reviewed in light of market forces and application moves to cloud/hybrid infrastructures. Cyber Security team continues to maintain the technical measures in place, opportunities for improvement are researched and implemented.
Refresh & upgrade end of life infrastructure & software.	Continued focus on replacing systems, with project underway for next wave of end-of-life systems.
Prepare for and support external reviews and accreditations.	PSN compliance approval gained from the Cabinet Office. BACs Bureau compliance approved. Cyber Essentials & PCI being prepared.
Early warning network via NCSC and Cymru Security Operations Centre.	Risk unchanged and continues to be elevated due to increased Cyber activity by external threat factors. Risk of international Cyber-attack remains high and international tensions also increase the risk (Ukraine).

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
	Cyber security team continues to receive and act upon threat intelligence from NCSC. Welsh Government SOC is nearing end of procurement process and projected to be live 2024/25 Q1, this will provide further intelligence.
Strengthen cyber posture with Cyber Assessment Framework	National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) CAF reviewed and action plan for improvement developed. Action plan to be consulted at Cyber Security Board Q4.
Monitor and measure Infrastructure Availability & Performance.	ICT Operations continue to monitor and measure infrastructure availability & performance. Local performance indicators are on target and reported to Performance Management.
Implement recommendations from external review / accreditation.	ICT Operations continues to implement recommended remedial actions as outcome of external review & accreditation. The Cyber Security Board continues to monitor progress
Monitor for cyber threats and remediate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team continues to pro-actively monitor for Cyber threats and remediate/mitigate where appropriate. • Firewall replacement completed, preparations for testing Disaster Recovery underway and scheduled for Q4.
Raise awareness and train staff.	Mandatory cyber training for all staff using IT has been released and undertaken, staff who have not completed reduces with remaining in final escalation to complete

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	23
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Gaynor Davies

Risk Description: If Band B projects of the Sustainable Communities for Learning are not delivered on time and/or projects are deferred, then the Council will not deliver its ambitions of having in place first class school environments for learners.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational board will be put in place to oversee the delivery of the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning programme. Regular updates are reported to Welsh Government and Cabinet. Individual projects are managed using PRINCE2 methodology. Experienced team in place that provide regular and well-informed Cabinet updates. Regular dialogue and engagement with Welsh Government. 	5	4	20	4	3	12

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Submission and approval of all business cases within Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.	<p>Positive quarterly meetings regarding capital projects continue with Welsh Government. These meetings keep Welsh Government updated on current and forthcoming capital projects and associated financial expenditure.</p> <p>Positive monthly meetings continue to be held with Welsh Government to update on the Mutual Investment Model (MIM) schools and the Sustainable Schools Challenge project (which is providing a new primary school in Glyncoch). Meetings have commenced with Welsh Government and other LAs involved in the SSC (namely Neath Port Talbot and Gwynedd). Welsh Government also attended one of the MIM sites (Llanilltud Faerdref) in early February to see on site progress (handover of this first MIM school will be April 2024) and to meet with RCT and the Facilities Management contractor to discuss the operational phase of the MIM contracts.</p> <p>Feasibility and research has been undertaken in relation to the Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme which requires resubmission to Welsh Government by March 2024 to reflect a nine-year rolling programme as required by WG. Meetings were held with the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education ,Youth Participation and Welsh Language to explore possible options.</p>

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
	<p>Business Case submissions to Welsh Government are ongoing and submitted in accordance with project programmes. Business case for the new school in Glyncoch was submitted to Welsh Government in November in line with current programme. The Business Case for the new special school is near completion and will be submitted in due course.</p> <p>Regular project progress updates are provided in monthly meetings with the Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation and Welsh Language and the Service Director for 21st Century Schools and Transformation.</p> <p>Feasibility and technical surveys are ongoing on the Clydach Vale site in preparation for the new 3-19 special school and master planning is making good progress to replace YG Cwm Rhondda.</p> <p>The new Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Awel Taf, Ysgol Bro Taf, Ysgol Afon Wen projects are on programme to accept pupils from the start of term in September 24. Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School construction of new teaching block, new sixth form facilities and gymnasium block making good progress and on programme.</p> <p>The construction of a new net zero carbon in operation school for YGG Llyn y Forwen is on programme for occupation in the new academic year.</p>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	24
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PEOPLE, PLACES & PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Dave Powell

Risk Description:

If all staff, managers and elected Members do not embed carbon reduction into their 'business as usual' activities, then we will not achieve the carbon reduction benefits and will not become a carbon neutral Council by 2030 which will result in reputational damage for the Council.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<p>Strengthened the reporting arrangements on climate change and carbon reduction related items by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding Carbon Reduction into Delivery and Priority planning, monitoring and reporting as part of regular performance management reports. • Putting in place robust and regular reporting on the Council's Carbon Footprint through quarterly reports to Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee (CCCSC) and Cabinet. • Increasing visibility of Carbon Reduction in all Council reports. 	5	4	20	5	3	15

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Using and analysing the Council's Carbon Footprint to continue to identify short term and long-term actions to change and challenge the way we work, procure and deliver our services, whilst highlighting those changes that will have the greatest effect on reducing the Council's carbon footprint.	The Council's Carbon Footprint calculation data for 2022/23 was presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee at its meeting on 21 December . The calculation meets the requirements of the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Reporting Scheme . The 2022/23 footprint data is being used to refresh the Council's Carbon Footprint Dashboard which is tracking our progress to meeting our 2030 target for a Carbon Neutral Council. We continue to see a reduction in carbon emissions annually which is as a result of the investment in carbon reduction projects and behavioural change. Work in this area is on-going.
Providing information, awareness raising and opportunity for training across the Council including Induction, and development needs emerging from Personal Development Reviews.	Climate Change e learning has been made available to all staff and elected Members. We are continuing to include Climate Change in the corporate staff induction programme. The most recent induction held on 13 December, was attended by 71 staff. The Personal Development reviews are ongoing.
Implementing the Climate Engagement Plan with associated comms that raises the profile of local, regional and national projects that will	Climate specific engagement has drawn to a close and the findings are being reviewed. In the meantime Climate and Environmental issues are being embedded into the new Corporate Plan which is currently subject to wide ranging engagement. During Q3 we promoted 6 national campaigns

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
<p>address the WG declared Climate and Nature Emergencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. No Disposable Cup Day ii. WG comms on workplace recycling guidance iii. WG sustainable messages on Daily choices, Energy Choices, and Food Choices iv. WG comms on ban of single-use plastics v. Keep Wales Tidy's (KWT) nature/food growing packages vi. Climate Week 2023: Thanking our Recycling Stars, promoting Climate Action in the Community, information on Heat and Save and promoting the SHED further information about local projects can be found in the Q3 Climate Update
<p>Inclusion of detailed actions within quarterly reports to Cabinet as part of the Priority updates aligned with the three corporate priorities People, Places, and Prosperity and as part of the Work Programme for CCCSC.</p>	<p>We continue to increase the visibility of carbon reduction and progress in respect of the Climate Change Strategy through quarterly Performance Reports to Cabinet and regular reports to Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee and Climate Change, Frontline Services and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee and in subject specific reports. The Quarter 2 update of activity across the Climate Change Strategy was presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Sub Committee at its meeting on 21 December.</p>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	26
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes:	PEOPLE, PLACES & PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer:	Steve Williams

Risk Description: If the Council does not plan and invest resources into mitigating the physical impacts of climate change, then the effects of extreme weather events on our residents and businesses will be heightened.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine monitoring of infrastructure including bridges, retaining walls, culverts, highway drainage and former coal tips. • SUDs Regulations introduced to reduce surface water run-off from new developments, RCT has established a SAB to robustly manage the SUDs process. • New Bylaws for Ordinary Watercourses introduced, together with a new enforcement team and an awareness officer to raise the profile of flood risk and to support recovery. • Additional resources for structures, drainage management and maintenance, Regular reports to SLT & Cabinet. • S19 Reports for flood incidents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work through the multi-agency Flood Board for a joined-up approach to flood risk in RCT. • Work with WG to review our Flood Risk Management Strategy and Flood Risk Action Plan in line with WG's Flood Risk Strategy. • Work with WG Coal Tips Task Force and Coal Tips Safety Working Group to develop updated baseline data on tips, standardised inspection regimes and risk ratings, legislation, risk mitigation and remediation/reclamation. • 	5	3	15	5	4	20

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Invest additional monies in our infrastructure over the next four years to reduce the impact of flooding on our infrastructure, communities and businesses.	<p>The Structures General Inspection programme continues and 116 structures have been inspected covering bridges and culverts on the highway and parks/countryside network.</p> <p>The tip inspection programme continues with 79 inspections undertaken in Qtr 3. Major works on Tylorstown Landslip are progressing.</p> <p>Liaison with the WG Coal Tip Safety Task Force continues to align RCTCBC data with WG data. Maintenance of coal tips continued in Qtr 3 funded from Coal Tip Safety Grant.</p>

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Provide an up-date to Scrutiny Committee on delivery of the Highways / Transportation infrastructure investment programme.	Update scheduled for 1 st February 2024 to Climate Change, Frontline Services and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Review and update the Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) to ensure that the principal assets have been identified and form part of the Plan, and relevant document and service standards agreed.	The asset management Annual Status Reports for 2022/23 are currently being prepared for reporting to Scrutiny Committee. Programme for development and updates to HAMP being agreed with relevant service areas.
Work with WG to ensure all repairs to infrastructure arising from Storm Dennis is fully funded and undertaken in a timely manner.	<p>Programme of works arising from Storm Dennis continues with many projects currently on site including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Inn Footbridge • Berw Road Bridge (White Bridge) • Gelligaled Park Footbridge • Hopkinstown R/Wall • Gyfeillion Wall Scour Repairs <p>Resources – currently 2 vacancies with Tip Safety Team and 2 in Structures Team, recruitment has been unsuccessful to date.</p>
Work with WG to develop our pipeline of Flood Risk Management works to secure grant funding and deliver improvements to our flood assets.	<p>Flood Risk Management Works</p> <p>The 13 Projects approved under the WG FCERM Small Scale Schemes Grant valued at £1.15m have progressed well with 2 completed and 2 on site. The £1m that has been secured from the WG Resilient Roads Fund is funding a further 13 project stages and progressing well with 1 completed and 3 on site. So far £1.83m has been drawn down from the original FCERM AIP pot of £3.9m reported in Q1, a further 3 applications for next stage funding have been submitted to WG totalling £1.9m. The major £1.4m project at Glenboi Mt Ash has been completed within budget and is operational. Major Glenboi pumping station upgrade now brought into use (rctcbc.gov.uk) and the construction of a new flood wall at Cwmaman started in September Construction of the Cwmaman Flood Alleviation Scheme to begin (rctcbc.gov.uk). Work continues on another 11 FCERM funded project stages.</p> <p>Preparation for 2024/25 works is underway with applications being submitted for the Projects/Stages for consideration for AIP on the WG Flood and Costal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) pipeline, applications totalling £3m and Small-Scale Schemes, 14 applications totalling £1.1m.</p>

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
	<p>Recruitment – Restructure of FRM completed. Apprentice moved into permanent role and a new apprentice taken on from Sept 23. Commencing recruitment in Q4 of Graduate for Sept 24 start.</p> <p>Flood Response and events: no S19 reports in preparation or required in Q3. 17Nr number of adverse weather protocol has been initiated and 233 customer contacts in 2023/24 to date.</p> <p>Flood Strategy and action plan Review: Preparations commenced for full review by March 2024 (Revised WG deadline). Initial public engagement on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy commenced from December 13th and ran for six weeks until January 24th. The results and feedback provided via the initial public engagement exercise was presented to the CCFSP Scrutiny Committee on 22nd March 2023. This provided Members the opportunity to consider the responses and enable them to help shape and inform the drafting of the revised LFRMS and Action Plan. The CCFSP Scrutiny report and ‘Initial Public Engagement Report’ can be found on the Council’s website. Welsh Government has revised the required by date to March 24 so an update paper has been presented to Cabinet on 15 May 2023. The Draft Strategy was presented to Cabinet on 17 July 2023 and consultation commenced on 21 August 23 for 6 weeks and ended on 2nd October 23. Consultation report taken to CCFSP on 22nd November 23</p> <p>Flood Board - continues to meet and provide high level engagement and agreement on key issues with the last meeting on 22 November 23.</p> <p>FRM Development Control: LLFA continue to be a consultee for Planning Permissions to ensure compliance with TAN15. 329 Observations on planning Applications completed in 2023/24 so far. SAB continues to consider and determine applications for Sustainable Drainage Systems.45 applications have been submitted and 24 pre applications in 23/24. 274 Structures to watercourses requiring Ordinary Watercourse consent (OWC) have been determined.</p>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	27
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PEOPLE, PLACES & PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Louise Davies

Risk Description: If the Council does not have a coordinated response to the growing need for accommodation for our most vulnerable people, including the homeless, refugees/asylum seekers and children and adults with complex specialist needs, then the ability to provide appropriate support will be limited which could result in increased pressures being put on Council services and risk legal action being taken by regulators for failure to meet statutory obligations.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Support Programme Strategy. Extra Care Strategy & Residential Care Modernisation. CLA reduction strategy. Elimination of profit risk report and property acquisition plan. Private Rented Sector Strategy 	5	3	15	5	4	20

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Establish a project board to develop a strategic medium-term plan to meet the accommodation needs for vulnerable people.	The RCT Accommodation Programme Board continued to meet in Q3 to ensure the cross-cutting objectives of all strategic plans for adults, children's and general housing needs are aligned into a cohesive, corporate delivery programme to meet the accommodation needs of vulnerable people over the next 5 years. Notable progress to meet emerging needs in Children's Services was acknowledged by the Board although pressure on availability of registered placements for children looked after especially those with complex needs remains high. New targeted actions were agreed to understand the actions required to implement our strategic intent to reduce reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation.
Focus on delivery of the Rapid Rehousing Plan and provide regular updates to the Housing Support Programme Board.	Work continues to understand the impact of the cost of living crisis and pressures in the housing market on our ability to move homeless people on from temporary accommodation; this includes the cohort of Ukraine Nationals and Asylum Seekers now living in the County Borough. Q3 has continued to see an increase in asylum seeker dispersal accommodation being secured by UK Government in RCT with Clear springs Ready homes actively working to assign this accommodation to appropriate households. A pause on Clear Springs securing anymore accommodation in RCT has been agreed.

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Provide regular updates to Cabinet on the Adult Services Accommodation Strategy.	Progress with the Strategy is routinely monitored via the Adult Social Care Senior Management Team with oversight of achievement scrutinised by the Community and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee. Reports to Cabinet are provided regularly.
Establish a new partnership working with Crisis (a housing charity) to reduce homelessness among the prison leaver population	In Q3, a new partnership has been established to work with Crisis (a housing charity) to tackle homelessness among the prison leaver population and reduce it to "zero". RCT is one of 3 LAs involved in this innovative initiative and learning will be applied to other cohorts facing accommodation challenges.

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	28
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PEOPLE & PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Gaynor Davies

Risk Description: If a joined-up and effective approach between schools and the Council is not in place to help support those learners that have become dis-engaged during the pandemic, then there is a risk that these learners could be disadvantaged in the longer term which could put a strain on Council Services in the future.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	Original			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
CONTROLS Range of LIVE data reports available to Attendance and Wellbeing service (AWS) allowing analysis and identification at pupil level of attendance for any period from daily up to full academic year. Comparisons are available over successive academic years, differentiated by cohort in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorised / Unauthorised Absence • Age / National Curriculum Year Groups • Monitoring absence rates by school • Overall Additional Vulnerability / characteristic of a child (Additional Learning Needs, Children Looked After, eligible for Free School Meals etc) <p>Response by the service is based on assessed risk relative to % attendance (Currently threshold set to 60% or below)</p> <p>Additional response on individual cases based on School Referrals based on wellbeing concerns.</p> <p>Corroborating Information / Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt of live births in RCT every month enabling identification at school age those children who have not applied for a school place. • RCT Elective Home Education (EHE) service maintains data related to children educated at home, monitoring the trend. • AWS maintains identified Children Missing from Education coming into or leaving the authority on the Capita system 	5	2	10	5	2	10

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
<p>Enhance the use of data reports amongst AWS staff to ensure that non-attenders or poor-attenders are closely monitored by schools and AWS where necessary with effective interventions put in place.</p>	<p>Team Around the School approach is now embedded to provide effective support and challenge to schools where there are concerns in relation to rates of school attendance/exclusion.</p> <p>Low rates of attendance and high exclusion rates continue to be a pressure for schools and the local authority during this post pandemic phase, and both areas are recommendations for improvement following our recent Estyn inspection. Welsh Government have also recognised the impact on attendance as a national concern and funding has been provided (circa £200k) to support Education Welfare in RCT this financial year. This has been utilised to employ additional Attendance and Wellbeing Officers, Targeted Support Officers and support slots with Educational Psychologists to explore some of the most entrenched attendance cases.</p> <p>We continue to see improvements in attendance rates across RCT when compared to the previous academic year but these are still well below pre-pandemic rates.</p> <p>At the end of Autumn Term attendance is as follows:</p> <p>Primary phase inc. special – 92.3% (up 2.0% on 22/23 Autumn Term) Secondary phase inc. special – 87.3% (up 1.8% on 22/23 Autumn Term)</p> <p>Overall, RCT attendance is up 1.9% for statutory age learners. This is outperforming the Welsh average increase of 1.6%.</p>
<p>Utilising approaches and tools designed by our Education Psychology Service e.g. PERMA wellbeing tool (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Achievement) to triangulate the wellbeing interventions of schools, AWS and Educational Psychology Service to better support pupils where low attendance is often a symptom of poor wellbeing.</p>	<p>Joint work is ongoing.</p>
<p>Continued rollout of Family Engagement Officers (FEO) amongst schools and development of Community Focused Schools to ensure effective engagement with learners, their families and communities.</p>	<p>Welsh Government grant funding has allowed us to extend the match-funding on offer within the FEO pilot from 50% to 80%. This has mitigated risks associated with budget constraints to a degree and ensured the 29 schools engaged are able to continue to employ FEOs up to August 2024. We are awaiting further information from Welsh Government whether this grant will be continuing and at what funding level in 24/25.</p>
<p>Ensure that improving learner wellbeing remains a clear focus for improvement in our delivery plans</p>	<p>Improving learner and staff wellbeing remains a strategic focus in our Directorate delivery plan with multiple strategic, group and individual interventions implemented and routinely evaluated.</p>

NEW RISKS FOR 2023/24

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	30
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Gaynor Davies

Risk Description: If short and long term arrangements are not put in place to increase the capacity of specialist placements for pupils with highly complex and significant Additional Learning Needs the Council will not meet its statutory duty to provide appropriate additional learning provision to pupils and there will be additional costs incurred by the Council for costly out of county specialist placements.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	New Risk 2023/24			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued implementation of clear LA ALN Panel processes and criteria to ensure appropriate allocation of specialist placements. Regular data analysis to monitor capacity and sufficiency of specialist placements and identify appropriate actions to address identified concerns. Regular updates on the sufficiency of specialist Additional Learning Provision provided and proposals for reconfiguration and / or enhancement of specialist provision submitted to Cabinet. 	4	4	16	4	4	16

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Progress with proposals to open new Learning Support Class (LSC) provision in RCT following a comprehensive consultation process in 2023.	Following a successful consultation in 2023, Cabinet approved proposals to enhance Learning Support Class provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf in December 2023. This will provide additional specialist provision capacity for Early Years pupils with Additional Learning Needs and for secondary phase pupils with social communication difficulties, including autism from September 2024. The first Welsh medium primary phase Learning Support Class provision will also be established from September 2024.
Progress with the submission of an appropriate business case to Welsh Government in relation to the building of a new special school thus ensuring that there is sufficient special school capacity to meet current and future demand.	As a result of a successful statutory consultation process during 2023, on the 24 th January 2024, Cabinet resolved to approve the proposal to open a new 3-19 special school and introduce catchment areas for 3 to 19 special schools. No objections were received during the statutory notice period and the proposal will be implemented on the Clydach Vale site. A draft business case has been developed and is near completion

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
<p>Explore interim options to increase special school capacity through the alternative use of current building assets or through the creation of new in-house special school satellite provision.</p>	<p>Further work is still required to address capacity pressures on special school sites in the period learning up to the opening of a new school and this work is ongoing.</p> <p>Two mobile classrooms have been established on Park Lane.</p> <p>Following successful meetings with professionals in Coleg y Cymoedd in June 2023 and with the Governing Body of Park Lane School, special school satellite bases on college campuses have increased from 3 to 4, with a new base for Park Lane Special School established on the Aberdare campus in September 2023.</p> <p>Design and site surveys are in progress to provide 3 additional new classrooms at Maesgwyn School to assist with accommodation and capacity pressures.</p> <p>Coleg y Cymoedd have also agreed to explore additional capacity for Ysgol Ty Coch on the Nantgarw Campus and discussions are ongoing.</p> <p>Further interim solutions to be sought to address special school capacity pressures during the building of a new special school.</p>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REF:	31
Alignment with Corporate Plan Priorities / Cross-Cutting Themes	PEOPLE, PLACES & PROSPERITY
Responsible Officer	Louise Davies

Risk Description: A future pandemic where the Council has not learnt from its experiences from the Covid-19 pandemic and have in place robust contingency plans that results in a lack of preparedness could adversely impact service continuity, health protection system responses and the delivery of support to residents, businesses and communities.

CONTROLS	Risk Ratings					
	New Risk 2023/24			Qtr 3 2023/24		
	I	L	Rating	I	L	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established Emergency Planning and Response arrangements in place across the Council, supported by an ongoing training programme for staff at all tiers of response (Gold, Silver, Bronze) Regional Local Resilience Forum Network in Place Established surveillance systems in place by Public Health Wales and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) with links to Regional and Local Health protection arrangements Wales Communicable Disease Outbreak Control Plan in place (under review by October 2023) Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Protection Oversight and Readiness Group established and meeting regularly. 	5	3	15	5	3	15

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Review existing pandemic plan in context of WG Framework for Pandemic Planning (once published).	WG are drafting a new National Health Protection System Framework with the help of system partners and this will provide the context in which to further develop regional and local health protection plans. Due to delays by WG, this is expected by Quarter 4 of the year. No details from WG have emerged in relation to the new Pandemic Plan framework that is to be prepared.
Reflect on good practice in RCT and CTM from the COVID 19 pandemic and review lessons learned as they emerge from National learning opportunities including the COVID Inquiry; embed good and emerging new practice in Council plans and preparedness training.	<p>The work of the COVID 19 Public Inquiry continues and evidence is being submitted as required by the Council. 1 new request for information was received in Q3 in relation to the social care module.</p> <p>Work has not yet commenced to consider how to collate the learning and experience from the pandemic period from across the Council to ensure any existing emergency planning arrangements and business continuity plans reflect good practice and lessons learned. It is expected this work to reflect on the Council's experiences will be started in Q4.</p>

ACTIONS	Update Qtr 3 2023/24
Adopt Pandemic Plan and put in place measures to implement the actions identified to ensure it can be mobilised effectively across the Council.	No details from WG have emerged in relation to the new Pandemic Plan framework that is to be prepared. The Council's existing Response Plan remains in place pending a review in lieu of a new National Pandemic Framework being issued.
Establish effective training procedures for key personnel to ensure they can fulfil roles and responsibilities required of the Plan.	No details from WG have emerged in relation to the new Pandemic Plan framework that is to be prepared. As part of business continuity arrangements, key services ensure training and ongoing maintenance of capability is provided to mobilise additional capacity if required, for example, in Registrar Services.
CTM UHB to approve the Regional Health Protection System Plan and partners in the Region to establish the actions required to implement the Plan.	In Q3, WG confirmed funding for 2024/25 to the CTM UHB to support a regional health protection system and partners including RCTCBC are working with the UHB to ensure a new plan is being developed by March 2024 for the CTM area
Procedures to monitor the implementation of the CTM Health Protection System Plan are established in CTM and relevant actions for RCT Council are identified and implemented.	The CTM Health Protection and Operational Readiness (HPOR) Group continued to meet in Q3 to ensure ongoing partnership working in CTM, linked to PHW as required. This group is Chaired by the Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services and oversees current health protection activity in the Region, aligned to WG 23-24 grant funding requirements and expectations. Regional surveillance of COVID and respiratory infection risk in care homes was put in place for the Winter of 2023/24.
Ensure resilient business continuity plans are in place for essential services.	All services are required to ensure business continuity plans are in place as directed by Senior Leadership Team.

* - Updates to Controls and Mitigating actions
