

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council - Integrated Impact Assessment

(Includes Well-being of Future Generations, Protected Characteristics, Welsh Language, Socio-economic Disadvantage, Sustainability and Biodiversity, Consultation/Engagement and Data/Evidence)



Before completing this Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), please refer to the corresponding **guidance document**, which provides essential background information.

An IIA MUST be completed for:

- Any Council / Cabinet report.
- Any strategic decisions being taken where due regard is required to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage.
- Any project (i.e. something that has a start and end date and is different from day to day business).
- Where you are implementing significant change e.g. service provision.

This IIA helps to support the Council in making informed and effective decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation. This IIA must be completed at the start of any project or proposal.

Title of Report / Project:	Responding to Audit Wales Report - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns – May 2021					
Officer completing IIA:	Ellis Cooper					
Lead Officer / Project Manager:	Ellis Cooper					
Service:	Council-wide					
IIA completion date:	07/05/2021					
Type of proposal: (please place an X in the relevant box)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Procedure
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please identify):				
Give a brief description of the proposal including the aims, and any links to relevant reports or documents:	<p>In May 2019, Audit Wales issued a letter to the Council outlining four concerns. These concerns being: financial situation; service pressures; leadership and capacity; and governance.</p> <p>After setting a balanced budget for 2019/20, and considering future financial challenges, the Council took a proactive step and asked Welsh Government (WG) for support. WG appointed John Gilbert to carry out a review of the Council's position. Following this the Minister for Housing and Local Government then appointed an external Improvement and Assurance Board (IAB). The IAB carried out a rapid assessment exercise outlining areas of focus for the Council.</p>					

	<p>To address the outcomes from the Audit Wales letter, the review conducted by John Gilbert and the rapid assessment exercise, the Council began to develop a 'Transformation and Improvement Plan', with external support provided by Welsh Government. As this was taking place, the Country entered lockdown following the onset of the Coronavirus Pandemic. As such the Council worked with the same support to consider high level recovery as part of the plan. The RTI Plan has been discussed at various Elected Member, Scrutiny Member and Officer workshops. Members will recall that this has been incorporated into the Council's Corporate Plan (approved in April 2021).</p> <p>In the Council meeting held in April 2021, the Council received the audit report 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns' from Audit Wales.</p> <p>This plan sets out the recommendations from the Audit Wales report and the actions the Council has done, and will undertake, to address them.</p>
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1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives					
Does your proposal help to deliver any of the Council's Well-being Objectives?					
How does your proposal help to deliver any or all of the Council's Well-being Objectives?					
Well-being Objectives	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on the Council's Well-being Objectives? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Best Start to Life - Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.	X			There will be a positive impact on all the Well-being objectives as the Council will be able to further improve against the recommendations, hence leading to better outcomes.	An annual performance report is published and sets out (including evidence) achievements against each well-being objective. The Corporate self-evaluation approach will also assist. An action plan will be developed by Officers and Elected Members (to be approved by Council) to address Audit Wales recommendations.
Working Life -	X			As above.	As above.

1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives

Does your proposal help to deliver any of the Council's Well-being Objectives?

How does your proposal help to deliver any or all of the Council's Well-being Objectives?

Well-being Objectives	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on the Council's Well-being Objectives? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses with a developing, safe infrastructure making Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination.					
Environmental Well-being - Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside.	X			As above.	As above.
Living Well - People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they feel safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.	X			As above.	As above.

Sources of evidence to support the above (please use this information when completing the section 'Data and Evidence'):

Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.

Council Report (May 2021) - Responding to Audit Wales Report – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns.

2. Sustainable Development Principles (The Five Ways of Working)

Does your proposal demonstrate you have met the sustainable development principles (five ways of working)?

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to consider how any proposals improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being, whilst also looking to the future, planning for the long term and ensuring that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Please consider the national well-being goals when completing this section.

Five Ways of Working	How does your proposal demonstrate you have met the five ways of working when developing the proposal?	Are there any additional actions to be taken to better contribute to the five ways of working and/or mitigate any negative impacts? How will you know when this has been achieved?
Long Term - Thinking and planning for the long term, balancing short term and long term needs.	Recommendations have been developed with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as a foundation. Likewise, any actions plans will consider the 5 ways of working.	The annual performance report is published which sets out the achievements against each of the well-being objectives and how the 5 ways of working have been used, also linking to the national well-being goals. An action plan will be developed by Officers and Elected Members (to be approved by Council) to address Audit Wales recommendations.
Prevention - Preventing problems occurring or getting worse.	As above.	As above.
Integration - Impact on our well-being objectives, national well-being goals and the well-being objectives of other public bodies.	As above.	As above.
Collaboration - Acting in collaboration with others inside and outside the Council.	As above.	As above.
Involvement - Involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and who reflect the diversity of our communities.	As above.	As above.

Sources of evidence to support the above (please use this information when completing the section 'Data and Evidence'):

Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.
Council Report (May 2021) - Responding to Audit Wales Report – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns.

3. Protected Characteristics (including Welsh Language)

Does your proposal directly impact on service users, employees and/or the wider community, including the nine protected characteristic groups and Welsh language as identified below?

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. Please note that an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

Protected Characteristics	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on service users, employees and/or the wider community, including the nine protected characteristic groups and Welsh language? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Age - People of all ages.			X	Recommendations have been developed to improve service delivery and do not impact on the 9 protected characteristic groups or the Councils ability to deliver services in line with the Welsh language standards.	Any action plan(s) will have its own IIA which will identify any potential impacts.
Disability - People with disabilities/long term conditions.			X	As above.	As above.
Gender Reassignment - People whose gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth.			X	As above.	As above.
Marriage and Civil Partnership - People who are married or in a civil partnership.			X	As above.	As above.
Pregnancy and Maternity - Women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave.			X	As above.	As above.

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Protected Characteristics	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on service users, employees and/or the wider community, including the nine protected characteristic groups and Welsh language? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Race - People from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds.			X	As above.	As above.
Religion or Belief - People with different religions and beliefs including people with no beliefs.			X	As above.	As above.
Sex (Gender) - Women and men, girls and boys and those who self-identify their gender.			X	As above.	As above.
Sexual Orientation - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual.			X	As above.	As above.
Welsh Language					
The Welsh Language Wales Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have 'due regard' for the positive or negative impact a proposal may have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and ensuring the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.					
Welsh Language - Opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh language, treating the Welsh language no less favourably			X	There is a neutral impact on Welsh Language. There will be no discrimination for people to use the Welsh language and the Welsh and English languages treated equally and	As above.

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Protected Characteristics	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on service users, employees and/or the wider community, including the nine protected characteristic groups and Welsh language? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
than the English language, compliance with Welsh Language Standards, links with internal and external Welsh Language strategies.				fairly. The Standards have and will continue to be adhered to in communicating, developing, reviewing and publishing the plan.	

Sources of evidence to support the above (please use this information when completing the section 'Data and Evidence'):

Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.

Council Report (May 2021) - Responding to Audit Wales Report – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns.

4. Socio-economic Disadvantage (Strategic Decisions)

Does your proposal impact/deliver better outcomes for those who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?

The Socio-economic Duty places a responsibility on the Council to have 'due regard' to how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. This duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality at the heart of key decision-making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider: Single parents and vulnerable families, pensioners, carers, looked after children, single adult households, armed forces community, people with low literacy/numeracy, people who are homeless, people who have experienced the asylum system, students, people of all ages leaving a care setting, people living in the most deprived areas of Wales, people misusing substances, people involved in the criminal justice system, people who are not in education, employment or training. Please see the guidance document for more information.

Socio-economic Disadvantage	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on socio-economic disadvantage for service users, employees and/or the wider community? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? What steps will be taken to reduce inequalities of outcome? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Low Income/Income Poverty - Unable to afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport, other essential items etc.	X			There will be a positive impact on socio-economic disadvantage. The recommendations, and associated action plan(s), will enable the Council to better deliver it's corporate well-being plan (including its well-being objectives). Tackling poverty is a cross-cutting theme within the corporate well-being plan and identifies contributors to tackling poverty and the help available, which contributes to the well-being goals. The coronavirus pandemic has had a big impact on groups and communities, and the plan reflects the work which will be done to prevent further problems arising. The plan focuses on well-being in our community	An action plan will be developed by Officers and Elected Members (to be approved by Council) to address Audit Wales recommendations. This will be reviewed and any socio-economic impacts addressed (including any cumulative impacts). Delivering better outcomes for people is paramount and is a strong focus.

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Please consider: Single parents and vulnerable families, pensioners, carers, looked after children, single adult households, armed forces community, people with low literacy/numeracy, people who are homeless, people who have experienced the asylum system, students, people of all ages leaving a care setting, people living in the most deprived areas of Wales, people misusing substances, people involved in the criminal justice system, people who are not in education, employment or training. Please see the guidance document for more information.

Socio-economic Disadvantage	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on socio-economic disadvantage for service users, employees and/or the wider community? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? What steps will be taken to reduce inequalities of outcome? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
				and how we can deliver better outcomes for people. Our RTI Plan has a priority focus on Economic Recovery, that will help address socio-economic disadvantage. Any action plan(s) will have their own IIA which will identify any specific impacts on socio-economic disadvantage.	
Low and/or No Wealth - Enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.	X			As above.	As above.

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Please consider: Single parents and vulnerable families, pensioners, carers, looked after children, single adult households, armed forces community, people with low literacy/numeracy, people who are homeless, people who have experienced the asylum system, students, people of all ages leaving a care setting, people living in the most deprived areas of Wales, people misusing substances, people involved in the criminal justice system, people who are not in education, employment or training. Please see the guidance document for more information.

Socio-economic Disadvantage	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on socio-economic disadvantage for service users, employees and/or the wider community? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? What steps will be taken to reduce inequalities of outcome? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Material Deprivation - Unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies etc.	X			As above.	As above.
Area Deprivation - Where you live e.g. rural areas, and where you work e.g. accessibility of public transport.	X			As above.	As above.
Socio-economic Background - Social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income.	X			As above.	As above.
Socio-economic Disadvantage - What	X			As above.	As above.

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Please consider: Single parents and vulnerable families, pensioners, carers, looked after children, single adult households, armed forces community, people with low literacy/numeracy, people who are homeless, people who have experienced the asylum system, students, people of all ages leaving a care setting, people living in the most deprived areas of Wales, people misusing substances, people involved in the criminal justice system, people who are not in education, employment or training. Please see the guidance document for more information.

Socio-economic Disadvantage	Does your proposal have a positive or negative impact on socio-economic disadvantage for service users, employees and/or the wider community? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts? What steps will be taken to reduce inequalities of outcome? How will you know when this has been achieved?
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged?					

Sources of evidence to support the above (please use this information when completing the section 'Data and Evidence'):

Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.
Council Report (May 2021) - Responding to Audit Wales Report – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns.

5. Consultation and Engagement

What consultation and/or engagement has been undertaken to inform the development of the proposal?

There may be a legal requirement to consult in some instances, or a legitimate expectation that consultation will take place. Where it has been determined that consultation is required, the Gunning Principles must be adhered to.

- The proposals are still at a formative stage.
- There is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'.
- There is adequate time for consideration and response.
- 'Conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.

Please consider: Protected Characteristic groups, those who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, communities and places of interest, other stakeholders, forums, community groups and community councils. Please see the guidance document for more information.

Consultation and Engagement	Has consultation and/or engagement been undertaken on the proposal? Please place an X in the relevant box.			Briefly describe any recent or planned consultation and/or engagement exercises, paying particular attention to evidencing the Gunning Principles. Please identify when the consultation and/or engagement took place or will take place, or why it is not required.	Who was consulted/engaged with? Was sufficient information provided to allow an informed decision on the proposal to be made? What were the key findings of the consultation and/or engagement? Have these findings been taken into account? Is further consultation and/or engagement required?
	Undertaken	Due to be undertaken	Not required		
Requirement for consultation and/or engagement to be undertaken, or a legitimate expectation that it will take place.	X			Consultation with Council Staff has been undertaken when developing the Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.	Officers and Elected Members will work together to develop an action plan responding to the recommendations in the Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'. Any consultation resulting from the action plan will be carried as required.

Sources of evidence to support the above (please use this information when completing the section 'Data and Evidence'):

Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.
Council Report (May 2021) - Responding to Audit Wales Report – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns.

6. Data and Evidence

What data or other evidence has been used to inform the development of the proposal?

Evidence may include the outcome of previous consultation or engagement exercises, existing databases, pilot projects, review of customer complaints and compliments and other service user feedback, national and regional data, academic publications and reports, future trends, horizon scanning, business plans etc. Consider the sources of evidence from all of the sections in your explanation.

Data and Evidence	Has data and evidence been used in order to inform the proposal? Please place an X in the relevant box.		What data or other evidence has been used to inform the development of the proposal? What have been the key findings of this data and evidence? Has this data and evidence helped to inform the proposal?	How has the data and evidence helped to inform the proposal? If the data and evidence did not support the proposal, why was this? Have there been any gaps identified? If so, what steps will be taken to cover the identified gaps?
	Yes	No		
Data and evidence used in order to inform the proposal.	X		Reports produced by the IAB, along with previous Audit Wales findings, have been used to develop the recommendations in the Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.	Recommendations have been formed from this.

Sources of evidence to support the above:

Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.
Council Report (May 2021) - Responding to Audit Wales Report – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns.

7. Biodiversity and resilience of Ecosystems

How does your proposal impact on Biodiversity and therefore the resilience of Ecosystems?

Under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 we must seek to maintain and enhance Biodiversity within the proper exercise of our functions. In doing so, we must also seek to promote the resilience of Ecosystems.

Biodiversity and resilience of Ecosystems	What is the expected impact on Biodiversity? Please place an X in the relevant box.				Why have you come to this decision? Please provide an explanation.	What actions have been/will be taken to better contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of Biodiversity? How do you know when this has been achieved?
	Maintained	Enhanced	Reduced	Neutral		
To maintain and enhance Biodiversity (and therefore promote the resilience of Ecosystems).				X	The Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns' concerns corporate wide change that have a neutral impact on biodiversity. However, if the recommendations are addressed, it could positively impact how all services are delivered.	No further actions required at this stage. Any action plan(s) IIA will identify potential impacts and actions to mitigate, if any are identified.

Sources of evidence to support the above (please use this information when completing the section 'Data and Evidence'):

Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns'.
Council Report (May 2021) - Responding to Audit Wales Report – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns.

8. Summary

As a result of completing this IIA, please identify below;

- The number of positive, negative or neutral scores for the Council's Well-being objectives, the sustainable development principles, protected characteristics including Welsh Language and Socio-economic disadvantage.
- If consultation and/or engagement has been undertaken, is due to take place or is not required.
- If data and evidence has been used in order to inform the proposal.
- If the proposal maintains, enhances or reduces the resilience of ecosystems.

The table below should then be included in the related Council/Cabinet report.

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Neutral/Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term • Prevention • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement 	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
3. Protected Characteristics (including Welsh Language)	0 of 10	0 of 10	10 of 10
4. Socio-economic Disadvantage	6 of 6	0 of 6	0 of 6
5. Consultation and Engagement	Undertaken	Due to be Undertaken	Not Required
	1 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1
6. Data and Evidence to inform the proposal	Yes		No
	1 of 1		0 of 1
7. Biodiversity and the resilience of Ecosystems	Maintained	Enhanced	Reduced
	0 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1
Summary			
The main positive impacts are:	By addressing the recommendations in the Audit Wales Report (March 2021) - 'Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Assessment of Progress to Address Key Concerns', the Council will be better placed to deliver its corporate well-being plan (including its well-being objectives).		
The main negative impacts are:	No negative impacts have been identified.		

9. Actions

Based on the summary of your positive and negative impacts identified in the Summary section above, will you need to make changes to your proposal to better contribute to positive impacts and/or mitigate any negative impacts?

Please identify any further actions you will need to undertake to better inform this proposal e.g. whether further consultation is required or more data and evidence is required to better inform the proposal.

What are you going to do?	Estimated completion date	Who will be responsible?	Timelines/Milestones e.g. 6 months/over a year, etc.	Progress
Monitor delivery of action plans	On-going	Corporate Management Team Cabinet Members Elected Members	On-going	Recommendations to be presented by Audit Wales to Council in April 2021 and responded to in May 2021

10. Version Control

The IIA should be used at the earliest stages of the development of the proposal and decision making process, and then honed and refined throughout to strengthen and shape the proposal. This section will act as an audit trail to evidence how the IIA has been developed over time.

Please use the table below to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have delivered the sustainable development principles.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1.0	Council	April 2021	Audit Wales presented findings and recommendations to Council - Complete
2.0	Council	May 2021	MTCBC responding to the findings and recommendations in the Audit Wales report

11. Monitoring and Review

The implementation and the impact of the proposal should be monitored and reviewed throughout the development of the proposal.
Please identify how the proposal will be monitored and reviewed as it progresses, including the implementation of any amendments identified.

How will the implementation and the impact of the proposal and any amendments be monitored?	To form part of the action plan and/or associated report. Audit Wales will monitor delivery of recommendations as per their protocols.
When will the proposal be reviewed? How frequently will this take place?	To form part of the action plan and/or associated report. Audit Wales will monitor delivery of recommendations as per their protocols.
Who is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the proposal?	Council and Audit Wales

12. IIA Approval

IIA Approved by:	A Mogford	Job Title:	Head of Corporate Services	IIA Approval date:	07/05/2021
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