



FULL COUNCIL REPORT

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Service Area	Change & Performance
Exempt/Non-Exempt	Non-Exempt
Committee Date	2 nd March 2022

To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

Statement of Well-being and Focus on the Future: Well-being in our Community

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Prior to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Council produced a Corporate Plan that was aligned to the regional Single Integrated Plan (SIP). The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 changed this to focus on the Wales We Want which is emphasised in 7 Well-being Goals that have been passed by Welsh Government into legislation.
- 1.2 Together with this, the Act states the ways in which we should work to achieve the goals (sustainable development principle). These are known as the 5 ways of working i.e. long term; preventative; involvement; integration; collaboration. To embed this change, MTCBC's 'Shared Vision' document makes the connections from the 7 national Well-being Goals through to the local well-being objectives and priorities.
- 1.3 This Corporate Well-being Plan has developed year on year as a result of lessons learned. Over the years we have become more focused on our 4 well-being themes and objectives, namely: Best Start to Life; Working Life; Living Well; and Environmental Well-being. This has helped us remove some of the naturally occurring siloes, whilst also sharpening governance arrangements.
- 1.4 The Council's Statement of Well-being reaffirms our 4 local Well-being Objectives for the community over a 5-year period, 2017 to 2022. In other words, this is why we are doing what's been set out in the Focus on the Future Plan. The Focus on the Future Plan goes into the detail of how and what we will do to achieve our well-being objectives. In readiness for 2022 implementation, there has been no evidence to

indicate there is a need to change or amend the 4 themes and corresponding well-being objectives.

1.5 To ensure that consideration is given to how the Council can help tackle poverty in all service areas, and to positively respond to the feedback received during scrutiny meetings, last year we have integrated the Tackling Poverty Strategy into the Corporate Well-being Plan. Interestingly this point was also identified as a barrier in workshops conducted by Audit Wales as part of their work testing progress against the Working Life - Skills and Employment and Best Start - Flying Start themes (between 2017 to 2019). This theme has remained in the plan this year as we build on the work done.

1.6 This year we continue to integrate our Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RTI Plan) into our Corporate Well-being Plan. Our RTI Plan focuses on 3 areas that we need to address to better deliver our well-being objectives. These 3 priorities are: Improving our Education Standards; Increasing our Resilience in Social Care; and Economic Recovery. We have also integrated our performance management and quality assurance framework into our corporate well-being plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION that

2.1 The 'Statement of Well-being' and 'Focus on the Future: Well-being in our Community' documents be approved.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

3.1 Prior to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Council produced a Corporate Plan that was aligned to the regional Single Integrated Plan (SIP). However, Councils, or indeed regions across Wales, were not necessarily working towards a common goal.

3.2 The Act sets out for the first time in legislation, that public bodies are working towards the same purpose. The Act puts in place 7 national well-being goals which represent the shared vision for Wales. These 7 national goals are:



A Prosperous Wales



A Resilient Wales



A Healthier Wales



A More Equal Wales



A Wales of Cohesive Communities



Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language



A Globally Responsible Wales

3.3 The Act states the ways in which we should work to achieve the goals by placing a duty on public bodies to work using the sustainable development principle, also known as the 5 ways of working:



Long Term



Prevention



Integration



Collaboration



Involvement

The 5 ways of working should also be used to test what is being done within service areas and offer the challenge around doing different things. This methodology has been used as part of the Council's corporate self-evaluation process and integrated impact assessments that accompany each report that is presented to Cabinet and Council.

- 3.4 The Act requires each Public Service Board (PSB) and Council to work with their communities. As a core member of the Cwm Taf PSB, the Council undertook substantial involvement and engagement activities with our communities to identify community need and developed a joint needs assessment. This assessment provided the core evidence that supported the Council to develop its well-being objectives. Our regional plan is also being reviewed and renewed. Needs assessments have recently been carried out across the region. Although the data is not fully available for this plan, it will be used to inform our reviewed plan later this year.
- 3.5 As the Statement of Well-being and Focus on the Future documents were being developed, the Council's 'Our Shared Vision' document was revised and refocused to reflect the changed position.
- The Statement of Well-being sets out our local Well-being Objectives for the community; i.e. **why** we are doing this.
 - The Focus on the Future document goes into the detail of **how** and **what** we will do to achieve our well-being objectives.
 - The Shared Vision document outlines how the Council's well-being objectives align and complement the PSB's objectives and the priorities for improvement.
- 3.6 The first iteration of the Statement of Well-being and Focus on the Future was approved by Council on 11th July 2017, with subsequent refocussed iterations approved annually.

4.0 WHERE WE WERE

- 4.1 At the end of the first year of implementation a number of lessons were learned. Evidence demonstrated that the 4 themes contained within the plan were working well however, there were some elements which required refocusing to ensure improved deliverability and reduction of duplication. The areas identified are listed below:
- 4.1.1 Evidence and stakeholder feedback suggested operating with 9 well-being objectives had been a barrier to the ways in which teams worked on occasions. Review showed evidence of Officers were having to report on activities at multiple meetings where they were contributing to more than one well-being objective; this took them away from delivering their projects, services and activities and this needed to be addressed and the situation improved.

As such our well-being themes and objectives were refocused to better meet the response to the Act but not diminish meeting the identified needs of our communities. This resulted in 4 themes and well-being objectives being approved by Council in year 2 of the plan (2018).

4.1.2 Each well-being objective has been taken to a related scrutiny committee on a rolling basis. The committees received updates on each of the well-being objectives and self-evaluation against them. In the first year, this frequency of reporting added additional pressure to delivery as well as adding items to already congested Committee Work Programmes. Following discussion and review with key stakeholders, it was agreed that moving forward thematic reports on the well-being objectives would be presented.

4.1.3 When presenting the refocused Statement of Well-being and Focus on the Future documents for review and approval at Council (17th April 2018), these proposed amendments to governance arrangements were outlined and all were approved. The changes to governance arrangements were actioned with immediate effect. This process has then been followed, although hampered during 2020 due to some Committee meetings being suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic.

4.2 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. The Minister for Housing and Local Government appointed an external Improvement and Assurance Board (IAB). The IAB carried out a rapid assessment exercise outlining areas of focus for the Council. To address these outcomes, we began to develop a 'Transformation and Improvement Plan' in early 2020/21, with external support provided by Welsh Government. As this started, the Country entered lockdown following the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. As such we worked with the same support to consider high level recovery as part of the plan, forming our 'Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan'.

4.3 A key focus of the RTI Plan is to ensure that we can economically, efficiently and effectively deliver our strategies, well-being objectives, corporate plan and priorities to provide better outcomes for the residents of Merthyr Tydfil.






4.4 This plan considers 3 essential elements, namely:

- our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic (including how we can learn from our experiences to shape our way forward);
- our transformation (the things we need to change to increase sustainability and improve);
- all leading to our improvement (addressing the key performance issues to improve outcomes for our residents).

5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

5.1 The Council is completing its fifth year of implementing the Corporate Well-being Plan. As expected, the well-being themes, objectives and priority outcomes remain unchanged from the fourth year of the Plan. These are set out below:

Well-being Theme	Objective	Priority Outcome
 Best Start	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.	Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people
 Working Life	People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure which makes Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination.	Developing the environment and infrastructure for businesses to flourish
 Environmental Well-being	Communities protect, enhance, and promote our environment and countryside.	Maximise the amount of material and resources reused and recycled in line with the waste hierarchy
 Living Well	People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.	Ensure people are able to live independently and safely within their communities

5.2 Streamlined governance arrangements have been implemented with each well-being objective being monitored through annual thematic reports to the Governance Scrutiny Committee. This Committee is made-up of the Chairs of all scrutiny committees which has enhanced the ability to ask diverse and sector-specific questions to provide assurance to scrutineers across the scrutiny function. This provides assurance that the plan is being implemented appropriately and progress is being made against the outcomes within it.

5.3 Our quarterly performance and improvement reviews (QPIRs) provide an officer led challenge that complements our scrutiny function. The QPIRs allow the senior leadership team and Cabinet to challenge performance (and other aspects of governance) and testing the impact on our outcomes. This fits alongside our monthly Budget Board (finance monitoring) that focuses on our financial position and our Corporate Risk Register. Our QPIR reports include data and context regarding performance, HR data, Finance data, Compliments and Complaints, Risk, progress against delivering our RTI Plan, audit recommendations and general data of the County Borough.

5.4 This year we have developed a performance management and quality assurance framework as part of our corporate well-being plan. This Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework sets out robust approaches so that we can manage our performance and assure quality.

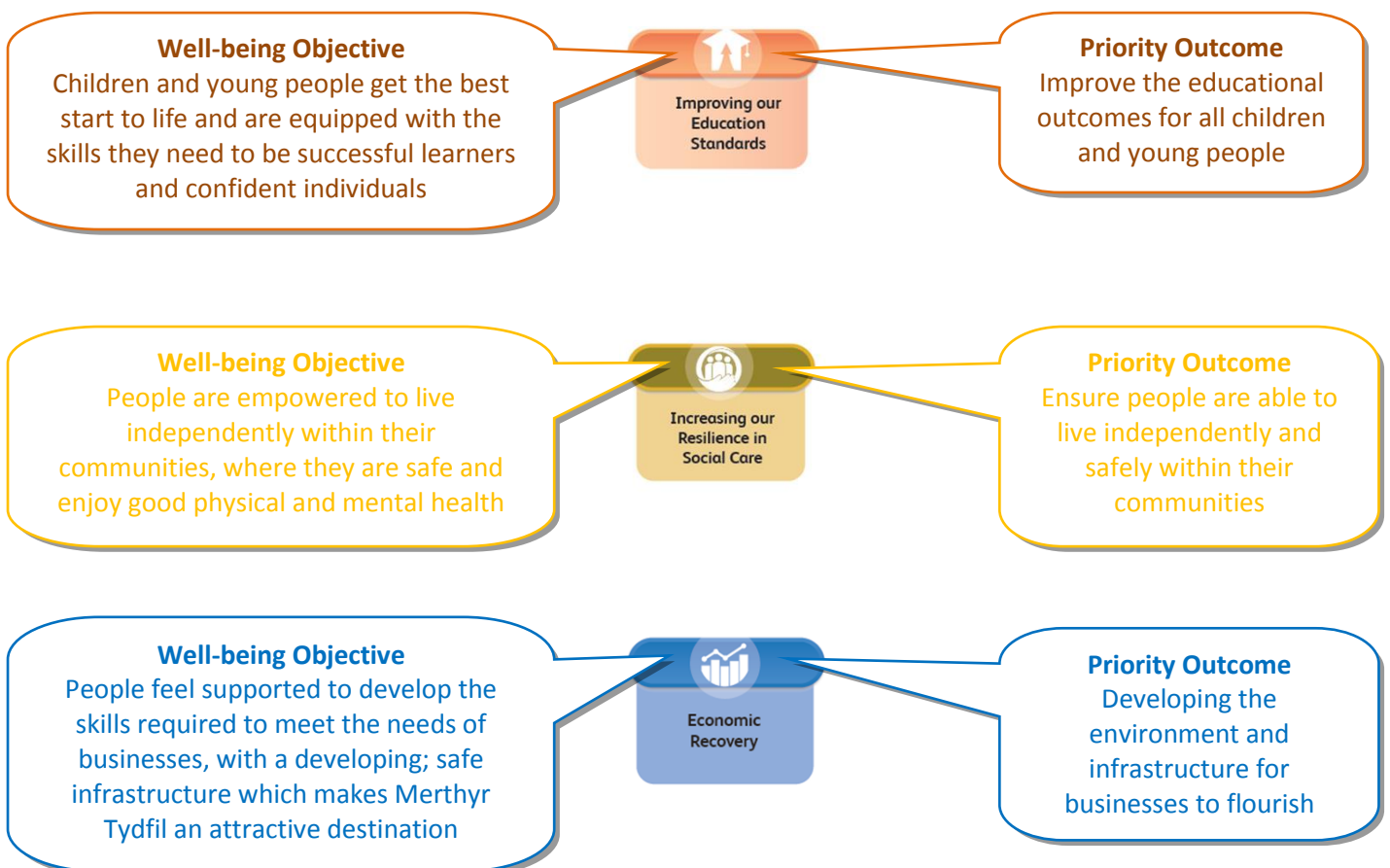
5.5 Findings from the Council's self-evaluation process has been used as a source of evidence when developing the plan going forward. Additionally, the plan will now be used as a tool to ensure that service priorities continue to align with Council objectives and priorities.

5.6 The Focus on the Future Plan and Statement of Well-being have been reviewed this year with key considerations to the coronavirus pandemic. As such the RTI Plan remains integrated within the plan. To recap, our RTI Plan has 3 priority areas (see below). These have been tested with Elected Members and Scrutiny Members as part of a series of workshops. This extra focus will help us to deliver our well-being objectives.

Our 3 priority areas:



To illustrate this, we have focused on how the 3 RTI Plan priorities fit with our well-being objectives and priority outcomes (from our corporate plan). In other words, if we deliver the RTI Plan, there is a greater likelihood that our outcomes will improve.



Although not an improvement priority in the RTI Plan, by including the key elements of our Environmental Well-being objective, we will also address longer-term ambitions and sustainability. As we've continued to become more focus, this can be summarised into 2 key elements. Our RTI Plan focuses on decarbonisation and how we support reuse and recycling (you may have seen this being referred to as the 'Waste Hierarchy'). This has been developed into our supporting Environmental Well-being programme.



The RTI Plan is underpinned by 4 council-wide programmes. These help us consider our digital opportunities, become more commercially aware, have the right resources (a Healthy Organisation) and good governance (the way we work).

5.7 As required by the Act, MTCBC must fulfil its statutory duty and publish a Statement of Well-being and the Focus on the Future Plan. As in previous years and expected through continuous improvement, we have used feedback from Committee Meetings and workshops to review the plan. The key findings from the exercise (mainly incorporating ideas on the RTI Plan) are incorporated. The Statement of Well-being can be found in **Appendix 1** and the Focus on the Future: well-being in our community document in **Appendix 2**.

5.8 A workshop was held with all Elected Members and co-opted members on the 16th of February 2022. This workshop updated all on the content of this report and how it links to the Annual Performance Report (and how this is changing to a self-assessment report later this year) and the Council's RTI Plan. This also included discussion and challenge regarding the Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework. Below are some of the key points from the workshop and what is being done regarding them.

- To emphasise the importance of the work regarding homelessness – This is being highlighted in the Corporate Well-being Plan.
- Corporate planning to be included in the Councillor induction – This is being included.
- Operational discussions are to increase to ensure all Elected Members are briefed. This will also include how the scrutiny function will enable this.
- The work done on our engagement and participation will support the points made regarding updating our residents and Elected Members.

6.0 NEXT STEPS

6.1 If approved, the 'Statement of Well-being' and 'Focus on the Future: Well-being in our Community' documents will be published in both Welsh and English and submitted to our regulators. These include the Audit Wales and Future Generations Commissioners Office.

6.2 The 'Focus on the Future: Well-being in our Community' document will form the basis for service delivery and enable prioritisation. Appropriate internal governance arrangements will continue to be delivered, monitored and assessed.

- 6.3 Work with Elected Members and Scrutiny Members to deliver our RTI Plan, meaning we can better achieve our well-being objectives and outcomes for our residents.
- 6.4 Things are changing slightly in 2022. We will review and renew our Corporate Well-being Plan to make sure we are still meeting the needs of our communities. We will use the findings from engagement and consultation done within our region and build on this. Our approach will use best practice from the Well-being of Future Generations Commissioner and Audit Wales (both have already been engaged with regarding this). The approach was also challenged at scrutiny earlier this financial year. We will also be producing our first 'Self-Assessment Report' to meet our duties under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This report will replace our Annual Performance Report.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications identified in this report. Any financial implications arising from the delivery of the plan will be reported to Cabinet/Council as appropriate, including potential options for funding.

8.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1	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	Neutral/Not Applicable
	0 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
Summary				
The main positive impacts are:	<p>The statement and plan ensure that we are working towards our well-being objectives in the work that we are delivering. Also demonstrating that in doing this work we are continually thinking about the long term, preventing further problems from arising, integrating with other strategies and plans, and external duties placed upon us, whilst collaborating and involving people and communities who have an interest.</p> <p>The plan includes the cross-cutting theme of tackling poverty and this has a positive impact on those who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, which will assist in delivering better outcomes for people.</p> <p>Our RTI Plan integrates with the plan, helping us respond to the coronavirus pandemic, transition to recovery, together with our transformation to improvement.</p> <p>The plan provides us with a focus to sustainably delivery our services to meet the needs of our residents and support the wider regional plan. The plan enables us to continue to build connections between people and empower communities in improving well-being.</p>			
The main negative impacts are:	No negative impacts have been identified.			

ELLIS COOPER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COUNCILLOR LISA MYTTON
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.