

**Focus on the Future: wellbeing in our community**

**Working Life review 2017-2021**

2016-2017

**Planning & Development Stage**

- Corporate Performance Team members actively support the development of Joint Needs Assessment for the Cwm Taf region (including public engagement)
  - Officers across the Council work to identify corporate well-being objectives / priorities introducing the ‘five ways of working’ as laid out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
  - Engagement with Elected Members took place to review the DRAFT Corporate Well-being Plan; testing the proposed objectives validity; reviewing the proposed governance arrangements supporting delivery of the Plan etc.
  - The DRAFT Corporate Wellbeing Plan taken to Governance Scrutiny for review and challenge
  - DRAFT Corporate Wellbeing Plan (Focus on the future: wellbeing in our community) presented to Full Council for review, challenge
- Approval secured 26 July 2017** (within required timescales); and Plan goes ‘live’.

	WORKING LIFE	LESSONS LEARNED
<p><b>Year 1: 2017-2018</b></p> <p><b>Accountable Officer:</b> Chief Officer: Community Regeneration</p>	<p><b>Two wellbeing objectives set</b></p> <p><b>WL1</b> – Making skills work for Merthyr Tydfil: developing a workforce for the future</p> <p><b>WL2</b> – Developing the environment and infrastructure for business to flourish</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Making skills work for Merthyr Tydfil: developing a workforce for the future</li> <li>2. Developing the environment and infrastructure for business to flourish</li> <li>3. Communities protect, enhance and promote our heritage and cultural assets</li> <li>4. Developing safer communities</li> <li>5. Supporting and accommodating those most disadvantaged in the housing market.</li> </ol> <p><b>Wellbeing Champions appointed:</b></p> <p><b>WL1</b> – Mark Thomas</p> <p><b>WL2</b> - Annabel Lloyd</p> <p><b>Scrutiny:</b> Reports on progress against the objectives were reviewed by the Regeneration &amp; Public Protection scrutiny at every meeting from September onwards.</p>	<p>The following lessons learned led to refocusing of the approach for Year 2:</p> <p><b>There was a need to streamline the process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manageability - multiple attendance by the same officers to numerous committees;</li> <li>• Congested agendas- potentially reducing the ability for members to effectively scrutinise;</li> <li>• Objectives are integrated across broad service areas which are misaligned with the existing committee structures; or</li> <li>• Objectives are integrated and cover broad topics which are do not always align with the area of focus of committees.</li> </ul> <p><u>Performance Team observations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content – To date, there appears to be a large variation in the content and style of the Wellbeing scrutiny reports;</li> <li>• The Service Improvement Framework (SIF) needs to be applied and used across all wellbeing objectives to ensure a consistent methodology for judging progress and performance.</li> </ul> <p><b>There was a need to review how data was being used to support delivery decisions::</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent approach to target setting;</li> <li>• Lack of comparative or trend data;</li> <li>• Limited options for presenting data;</li> <li>• Need for numerator and denominators;</li> <li>• Inconsistent use of data from both officers and Members (e.g.) KPIs not measuring impact</li> </ul> <p><b>There was a need for clearer reporting and information sharing::</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lines of enquiry can be limited because objectives are presented one at time- not enough integration</li> <li>• Opportunities to share and generate business intelligence and knowledge are reduced because scrutiny is by objective</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application of the SD principle (five ways of working) is often limited to wellbeing objectives where it needs to be applied across all Council functions.</li> <li>• The Council’s Champion role (occupied by elected Members) could be more effectively used if they were aligned with the role with the Wellbeing Champion (occupied by senior officers).</li> </ul> <p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having several wellbeing objectives under each wellbeing theme led to some silo working occurring; and on occasion made scrutiny of reporting/processes more challenging</li> <li>• The role of the Wellbeing Champions yielded minimum advantages; and as such would be better removed</li> <li>• The scrutiny and performance monitoring roles were initially confused and required amendment to provide greater clarity, supporting their effectiveness</li> <li>• Performance recording/ reporting of against multiple objectives proved challenging - multiple scrutiny reports required for each objective</li> <li>• The frequent update reports on progress against the well-being objectives was found to congest scrutiny agenda and did add a significant burden to officers writing the reports – it was deemed beneficial to review the frequency of reporting for the future years.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Year 2: 2018-2019</b></p> <p><b>Accountable Officer:</b> Chief Officer: Community Regeneration &amp; Housing</p>	<p><b>The two wellbeing objectives were merged into one:</b></p> <p>People feel supported to develop their skills to meet the needs of both established and new businesses, with a developing, safe, attractive infrastructure that establishes Merthyr Tydfil as a ‘must visit’ destination</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Making skills work for Merthyr Tydfil: developing a workforce for the future</li> <li>2. Developing the environment and infrastructure for business to flourish</li> <li>3. Communities protect, enhance and promote our heritage and cultural assets</li> <li>4. Developing safer communities</li> <li>5. Supporting and accommodating those most disadvantaged in the housing market.</li> </ol> <p><b>Scrutiny:</b> Agreement was secured that an annual thematic report would be taken to the Governance; Performance, Business Change and Corporate Performance scrutiny committee.</p>	<p>The following lessons learned led to refocusing of the approach for Year 3:</p> <p><b>There was a need to streamline and broaden the outcome statements to maximise opportunities to contribute to these:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work undertaken to improve collaborative planning, services delivery etc. highlighted that having 5 service-specific outcome statements was a barrier to some of the opportunities cross-Council taking place; streamlining and updating the outcome descriptors would act as a catalyst to greater degrees of collaborative working.</li> </ul> <p><b>There was a continuing need to review data collected to ensure it enabled impact to be measured effectively:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a number of local metrics were being used; it was noted there was a lack of comparative or trend data which meant it was difficult to measure impact other than against a target that had been locally set;</li> <li>• Limited options for presenting data were in place which could act as a barrier to both officer and democratic scrutiny;</li> <li>• The use of numerator and denominators remained inconsistent when reporting</li> </ul> <p><b>The use of the sustainable development principle to delivery services/activities had developed and showed improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback received from Welsh Audit Office showed the positive outcomes arising as a result of using the 5 ways of working were clearly evidenced and could be strengthened further. This approach would now be used for all services, projects and programmes delivered by the team</li> </ul>

<p><b>Year 3: 2019-2020</b></p> <p><b>Accountable Officer:</b> Chief Officer: Community Regeneration, Public Protection &amp; Housing</p>	<p><b>Delivery against a single wellbeing objective continues</b></p> <p>People feel supported to develop their skills to meet the needs of both established and new businesses, with a developing, safe, attractive infrastructure that establishes Merthyr Tydfil as a 'must visit' destination</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Merthyr Tydfil realises its full economic potential, with a skilled workforce and better employment opportunities</li> <li>2. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment, protecting and enhancing our heritage and cultural assets for current and future generations</li> <li>3. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how this affects others</li> </ol> <p><b>Scrutiny:</b> Annual thematic report to be drafted and to be taken before the Governance; Performance, Business Change and Corporate Performance scrutiny committee.</p>	<p>The following lessons learned led to refocusing of the approach for Year 4:</p> <p><b>The move to work in a more integrated manner across the team had led to improvements; and focus should now be placed on developing more integrated ways of working across all services within the Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work undertaken to improve collaborative planning was seen to improve collaboration across more teams across the directorate; with joined up working improving officer understanding of all elements of the Chief Officer's services (e.g.) bringing all leads together to offer updates on services changes and challenges at the Community Regeneration, Public Protection and Housing Board).</li> <li>• Work would be undertaken to strengthen the working arrangements between these services and Education, Social Services, Neighbourhood Services/Planning and Estates with a view to developing integrated project/service planning</li> </ul> <p><b>The work to focus on developing more integrated ways of working across all services within the Council and with key partners and stakeholders was showing improving outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The refocusing of MTCBC's Community Regeneration; Public Protection and Housing Board (CRPPH) meant that regular discussions were proving meaningful; with improved information sharing supporting more effective discussions and decision-making</li> <li>• Large scale developing regeneration projects were now planned collaboratively; supporting a wider understanding of processes and priorities; and the development of clear roles and responsibilities when assessing who would deliver aspects of the plans.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Year 4: 2020-2021</b></p> <p><b>Accountable Officer:</b> Chief Officer: Community Regeneration &amp; Housing</p>	<p><b>Delivery against a single wellbeing objective continues</b></p> <p>People feel supported to develop their skills to meet the needs of both established and new businesses, with a developing, safe, attractive infrastructure that establishes Merthyr Tydfil as a 'must visit' destination</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Merthyr Tydfil realises its full economic potential, with a skilled workforce and better employment opportunities</li> <li>2. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment, protecting and enhancing our heritage and cultural assets for current and future generations</li> <li>3. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how this affects others</li> </ol>	<p>The following lessons learned led to refocusing of the approach for Year 5:</p> <p><b>Performance data outlining progress against the corporate well-being objectives in the Council's Corporate Well-being Plan clearly showed the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance against the key performance indicators over the past 5 years has in general, been sustained or improved. However, over 2020-2021; the impact on the delivery of services affected by the ongoing pandemic can be clearly seen. (<b>Appendix 2</b> offers a visual representation of the changes in performance over 5 years)</li> <li>• The Working Life Strategy on a Page shows this impact quite starkly in some areas (e.g.) the decrease in visitor numbers to the town as a result of ongoing restrictions/lockdowns.</li> <li>• Other services have been disrupted but, through design and development of different ways to deliver services; good progress has still been made (e.g.) employability services providing digital options for training and development opportunities.</li> <li>• Through the work undertaken in the development of the Council's RTI Plan; the validity of the key themes for improvement can be measured.</li> </ul>

**Scrutiny:** Annual thematic report to be drafted and to be taken before the Governance; Performance, Business Change and Corporate Performance scrutiny committee.

**Changes made to manage and deliver services as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic provided initial challenges but when these were addressed, services were sustained and developed to meet new/emerging needs**

- The service areas upon which this report focuses; and indeed Council as a whole, has been able to positively respond and work differently. Accessing the support available as part of the Council's digital agenda (e.g. through the purchase of Microsoft Teams licenses), officers have been able to work remotely; stay securely connected; and limited risk from the pandemic whilst also ensuring continued service delivery to the public.
- Public Protection services such as Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing have had to reprioritise workloads to commit to the new additional statutory duties relating to business opening and COVID-19 measures
- In order to meet the demands of the pandemic many of the day to day services such as food inspections have had to be scaled right back but support has been provided to food business virtually so that they can produce and deliver food safely, particularly as many have changed their business models.
- Protection & Safety Services and Environmental Health have had to react and incorporate new emergency powers and carry out enforcement work whilst ensuring staff are protected in what could be high risk environments. Together with Trading Standards and Licensing Officers, Environmental Health Officers have played a critical role in enforcing the new emergency legislation.
- Partnership working has been key. Integration and collaboration have been the cornerstone of the work undertaken by the service areas producing this report. We have changed the way we work across the organisation in many cases further developing working relationships to achieve unforeseen benefits (e.g.) closer working arrangements between our service areas and the Revenues and Benefits team has enabled us to more effectively meet the needs of local businesses. We plan to sustain and continue to develop this work.
- The well-developed working relationships with key external partners and stakeholders have enhanced the teams' responsiveness to the challenges faced. The breadth of work undertaken linked to managing the requirements the pandemic response introduced has been on a huge scale and largely reactive at the start of the process
- Officers' adaptability to meet complex, emerging needs arising from the pandemic was critical; roles varied between enforcement and advice/support. The initial stage was to engage and explain and to support residents to remain safe; and support businesses to manage the major challenge lockdowns brought; many methods were utilised including the corporate website and social media – these proved vital tools for connecting with communities and keeping updated guidance available at all times.
- A clear focus of delivery over this period was the support provided to local businesses that were forced to close, to ensure they could remain sustainable when unable to trade. The strong working relationships developed across the Council enabled local businesses to

		<p>successfully access Welsh Government grants in order to do this, with approximately <b>£40m</b> of funding being secured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some areas of service delivery had to be temporarily put on hold (e.g.) employability services could not deliver their usual services at the initial stages due to restrictions around face to face meetings. To ensure participants continued to receive the support they required around their training and development; officers developed a raft of online learning opportunities which were successfully delivered.</li><li>• The Authority implemented an enforcement campaign to ensure only businesses that were permitted to open were doing so and that these premises implemented social distancing measures to protect customers. The Council worked with local businesses and South Wales Police to deliver a number of actions to support the Town Centre to return to trade safely (e.g.) to allocate PPE; implement signage and floor markings to support social distancing and pedestrian flow; and to remove barriers in the former central Bus Station (again to support more effective social distancing). Review of these measures demonstrated that this had had a positive impact on safety levels in the Town Centre.</li><li>• Environmental Health Officers were at the forefront of 'Test, Trace and Protect' acting as professional leads first for the local contact tracing service and then as members of the regional Cwm Taf Morgannwg team. The demands on the service have been significant with a small team working evenings, weekends and throughout bank holidays to try to keep our residents safe.</li></ul> <p><b>There was a need to ensure that the planning to develop priorities for recovery and improvement ties directly back to support delivery of Council's wellbeing objectives in Focus on the Future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• During 2020-2021, MTCBC identified it needed to improve the effectiveness of services delivering programmes/projects to meet identified need; and due regard must be given to this when refocusing the corporate plan.</li><li>• The Council developed a Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan which had four key themes have been identified in relation to the <b>Working Life / Economic Recovery</b> element of the RTI Plan:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Create a 15-year Vision for the economy of Merthyr Tydfil;</li><li>– Realign the Economic Growth Strategy and create an Economic Recovery Board;</li><li>– Undertake detailed analysis of business activities and services; and</li><li>– Develop and grow connections between the business sector and Merthyr Tydfil's education provision.</li></ul></li></ul>
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**Reflecting on the service's status through completion of the Corporate Self-Evaluation Process showed positive progress around provision and service delivery**

- Following completion of the self-evaluation process; officer challenge sessions took place. The summary findings report was presented to the Regeneration and Public Protection scrutiny committee on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021 where the following self-evaluative judgements were agreed and confirmed by Committee Members:

Outcomes:	<b>Adequate</b> Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Provision and Service Delivery:	<b>Adequate</b> Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Leadership & Management:	<b>Good</b> Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement

- Activity showed further development was required in both the 'Outcomes' and 'Provision and Service Delivery' areas; whilst the positive outcomes noted linked to 'Leadership and Management' areas must be sustained

**Year 5: 2021-2022**

**Accountable Officer:**  
Chief Officer:  
Community Regeneration & Housing

**Delivery against a single wellbeing objective continues**

People feel supported to develop their skills to meet the needs of both established and new businesses, with a developing, safe, attractive infrastructure that establishes Merthyr Tydfil as a 'must visit' destination

**Outcomes:**

- Merthyr Tydfil realises its full economic potential, with a skilled workforce and better employment opportunities
- We value and enjoy our built and natural environment, protecting and enhancing our heritage and cultural assets for current and future generations
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how this affects others

**Progress made against the Council's well-being objectives laid out in the Council's Corporate Well-being Plan continued to show some improvement; despite the impact of Covid-19**

- Performance against the key performance indicators over 2021-2022 has shown sustained progress being made against targets set in most of the areas noted in the Corporate Plan – **Appendix 2** offers an overview of year on year progress
- The increased integration across the Council has led to some of these services operating more effectively, efficiently and economically. Joint planning continued to show positive results (e.g.) several medium term delivery plans which had been collaboratively developed received approval from Full council (e.g.) Town Centre Master Plan; the Cyfarthfa Plan; and the Economic Recovery Plan and 15-year economic vision

**Reflection on service status through completion of the Corporate Self-Evaluation Process showed clear improvement in relation to the Provision and Service Delivery element**

- Following completion of the self-evaluation process; the summary findings report is scheduled to be received by Members of the Regeneration and Public Protection scrutiny Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

	<p><b>Scrutiny:</b> Annual thematic report to be drafted and to be taken before the Transformation, Commercialisation &amp; Corporate Services scrutiny committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The following self-evaluative judgements are scheduled to be presented at Regeneration &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022; with a view to these self-assessed judgements being confirmed/agreed by Committee Members:</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="1131 236 2047 632"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1131 236 1395 368">Outcomes:</td> <td data-bbox="1395 236 2047 368"> <b>Adequate</b>  Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1131 368 1395 501">Provision and Service Delivery:</td> <td data-bbox="1395 368 2047 501"> <b>Good</b>  Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1131 501 1395 632">Leadership &amp; Management:</td> <td data-bbox="1395 501 2047 632"> <b>Good</b>  Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement </td> </tr> </table>	Outcomes:	<b>Adequate</b> Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement	Provision and Service Delivery:	<b>Good</b> Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement	Leadership & Management:	<b>Good</b> Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
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Leadership & Management:	<b>Good</b> Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement							
<p>Year 5: 2021-2022</p> <p><b>Accountable Officer:</b> Deputy Chief Executive</p>	<p><b>Delivery against a single wellbeing objective continues</b></p> <p>People feel supported to develop their skills to meet the needs of both established and new businesses, with a developing, safe, attractive infrastructure that establishes Merthyr Tydfil as a 'must visit' destination</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merthyr Tydfil realises its full economic potential, with a skilled workforce and better employment opportunities</li> <li>We value and enjoy our built and natural environment, protecting and enhancing our heritage and cultural assets for current and future generations</li> <li>We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how this affects others</li> </ol> <p><b>Scrutiny:</b> Annual thematic report to be drafted and to be taken before the Transformation, Commercialisation and Corporate Services scrutiny committee.</p>	<p>Lessons on each of the Recovery and Improvement priorities in the RTI Plan are listed below</p> <p><b>Positive progress was achieved in relation to the development of a 15-year Economic Vision Merthyr Tydfil and subsequent Economic Recovery Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pandemic did impact on the ability to undertake the consultation and engagement element of the Vision development; and this did impact on original timescales set down for specific tasks and actions to be completed.</li> <li>Engagement did secure evidence for the development of key themes which could be built into the proposals for the Vision / Recovery Plan - consultation with key stakeholders to 'test' possible themes was critical to the development of a DRAFT Vision and Recovery Plan documents;</li> <li>At the stage where a draft was available; there was further testing via follow-up consultation and engagement activities; intelligence gathered was used to finalise the documentation; the Economic Vision and Recovery Plan were presented and approved by Full Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021.</li> </ul> <p><b>Realigning the Economic Growth Strategy and create an Economic Recovery Board has strengthened the governance in relation to key projects and programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using new and developed evidence bases; engagement with the Economic Growth Partnership (EGP) supported the review of key findings of Vision and Recovery Plan; and enabled the impact it would have on the Economic Growth Strategy (EGS).</li> </ul>						

- Key stakeholders were identified to sit on MTCBC's Economic Recovery Board and using the evidence and intelligence available, this has ensured the Board Members were involved in the development and shaping of the Economic Vision and Recovery Plan.
- Developing an architecture for the Board; ensuring sound governance and performance management arrangements are in place; and developing a Work Programme has supported the Board to contribute to (and maintain oversight of) the preparation of the Economic Recovery activities. The Board is developing a Work Programme outlining key work-streams.

**A detailed analysis of business activities and services enabled Council services to provide targeted support residents and local businesses**

- Officers developed a model to be used to capture all relevant data and information with a specific focus on identifying the impact of Covid-19 on businesses. Analysis of the Covid-19 related data enabled officers to identify the scale of support to date; and to use this intelligence to inform future support offer, as well as adding context to wider service priorities.
- Early steps were taken to explore the introduction of a Customer Relationships Management (CRM) to review options and opportunities arising from securing a system to improve the collection; co-ordination and management of customer data. Through this work; the opportunity to transfer this work-stream to sit with the developing Commercialisation theme was identified and this has now taken place.

**A clear plan is now in place to develop and grow connections between the business sector and Merthyr Tydfil's education provision**

- A work-stream to enable children and young people to have the opportunity to experience wider employment opportunities has been developed working closely with colleagues in Education; and relevant key stakeholders.
- The Business and Education Together Partnership was collaboratively initiated to develop an action plan designed to meet the needs of children and young people as they prepare to enter further/higher education; volunteering or work opportunities – this has helped identify wider employment opportunities through engagement with HEs, Businesses & Careers Wales (through BETP).
- The activities to be delivered by the BETP member organisations are aligned to the priorities contained within the Raising Aspirations, Raising Standards Strategy (RARS) and Economic Recovery Plan. As part of this; opportunities to secure intelligence on learner aspirations has been developed so these can be encompassed in future planning.