

Annual Review of Performance 2022/23



Annual Self-assessment and Well-being Report 2022/23



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Introduction

The Council's Corporate Plan 2022/23 *Delivering a Successful and Sustainable Swansea* described our 6 key priorities (Well-being Objectives) and our organisation values and principles that will underpin the delivery of our priorities and overall strategy; this discharges our duties under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the 'Act') to set Well-being Objectives.

Our Well-being Objectives show the Council's contribution to Wales 7 national goals described within the Act and describes how we will maximise this contribution to the national goals and to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Swansea by working in line with the sustainability principles set out within the Act.

The Corporate Plan sets out the steps being undertaken to meet our Well-being Objectives and contribute to the seven national well-being goals outlined in the Act. The Plan also sets out how we are maximising our contribution to our well-being objectives and national goals through the way in which we work, which is in

line with sustainable principles as follows:

- Looking ahead to the medium and long-term challenges.
- Preventing problems from occurring or from getting worse.
- Ensuring our objectives do not contradict each other and complement those of other public bodies.
- Working in partnership with others.
- Involving local people.

Our ambitions and commitments to residents – our Well-being Objectives 2022/23

To meet these challenges, we prioritised six Well-being Objectives in 2022/23. These were:

- **Safeguarding people from harm** – so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- **Improving Education and Skills** – so that every child and young person in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- **Transforming our Economy and Infrastructure** – so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City

Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.

- **Tackling Poverty** – so that every person in Swansea can achieve his or her potential.
- **Transformation and Future Council development** – so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.
- **Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity** - so that we maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and benefit health and well-being.

This Annual Review of Performance 2022/23 (the 'Review') is the Council's Annual Well-being Report required under the Act on its progress undertaking the steps to meet its Well-being Objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan to maximise its contribution to the national goals by applying the sustainable development principle. This report also discharges our duty under Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) Act 2021 to publish an annual Self-

assessment Report. In doing so, the Review seeks to describe the extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively, using its resources well when meeting its well-being objectives by working in line with the requirements set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Section 6 Biodiversity Duty

The information detailed under the *Delivering on nature recovery and climate change* Objective in this report will be used as the basis for the Council's Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Report to Welsh Government.

How can you get involved?

You can get involved and have your say. <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/haveyoursay> where you can make your opinions known by filling in surveys or consultations. You can get involved through the Council's Scrutiny panels, where you can find out what scrutiny is, how it works, and be added to the newsletter mailing list: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny>. You can contact the Council at improvement@swansea.gov.uk Telephone 01792 637570.

Section 1 - Self-Assessment

This Review represents a report on the progress the Council has made undertaking the steps it set out in its Corporate Plan 2022/23 to work towards meeting each Well-being Objective.

The Well-being Objectives agreed for 2022/23 were:

- **Safeguarding people from harm** – so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- **Improving Education & Skills** – so that everyone in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- **Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure** – so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.
- **Tackling Poverty** – so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential.
- **Delivering on Nature Recovery and Climate Change** – so that we maintain and enhance nature and biodiversity in Swansea, reduce our carbon footprint and tackle climate change.
- **Transformation & Future Council development** – so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.

In doing so, this Review seeks to describe the extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively, using its resources well when meeting its well-being objectives by working in line with the requirements set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The effectiveness of governance is assessed in the Council's Annual Governance Statement, which is published in the Councils Statement of Accounts.

The Self-reflection Tools were completed in conjunction with the quarter 2 and end of year 2022/23 performance monitoring reports. The Council's performance monitoring report for 2022/23 showed that 56.4% of performance indicators showed improving or maintaining performance trends when compared to 2021/22 and 69.4% met or bettered their targets. This Review uses the Self-Reflection Tools and supporting evidence, including the performance monitoring reports, to support an integrated approach to gather evidence to determine progress against the Council's Well-being Objectives and to fulfil its new self-assessment responsibilities.

Benchmarking performance data at a service level is done through membership of Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) performance networks. Opportunities for other national comparisons are limited

following the removal of the Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) by Welsh Government. Data Cymru are currently working with local authorities in Wales to produce a self-assessment performance dataset to help try and plug this gap. The initial data set formed part of the evidence considered during the development of the Review.

This Review assesses the Council's effectiveness in 2022/23 in exercising its functions and using its resources through:

- Progress meeting the steps set out in the Corporate Plan to achieve its Well-being Objectives.
- Resources (budgets, workforce, and assets) used when delivering its Well-being Objectives.
- The contribution of its Well-being Objectives to the National Goals.
- Working sustainably (in line with the 5 ways of working – the sustainable development principle – set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act).

For each Well-being Objective, Section 5 of this Review sets out for 2022/23:

- The progress made meeting the steps to achieve the Well-being Objective.
- Use of resources.
- Strengths and challenges.

- Delivering the sustainable development principle.
- Maximising our contribution to the well being goals.
- Overall assessment.

The overall assessment on progress meeting each Well-being Objective in 2022/23 and prospects for improvement is made against the following criteria:

- **'Limited'** little or no evidence of effective use, application or delivery.
- **'Mixed'** some good evidence and some gaps in use, application or delivery.
- **'Strong'** clear evidence of effective use, application or delivery.
- **'Embedded'** clear evidence of effective and embedded use, application or delivery.

Each self-assessment and this Review was checked and challenged during the process by a Strategic Governance Group. The membership of the Strategic Governance Group was expanded to include the Corporate Management Team and includes the Strategic Delivery and Performance Manager and a representative from the Governance & Audit Committee; the Chief Auditor attended each meeting as an observer.

Improvements made following the 2021/22 assessment.

Audit Wales undertook in 2022 a review of the Council’s self-assessment arrangements. They identified several positive attributes, which were reported to the Governance & Audit Committee on 27th September 2022. They also identified the need to try and improve the response rate to the public consultation on the self-assessment, which was included within the Review as an area for continued improvement.

The Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel and the Governance & Audit Committee met to discuss the Annual Review of Performance 2021/22 on 8th November 2022 and 14th December 2022 respectively. The Governance & Audit Committee proposed the following, which have been implemented in the 2022/23 Review.

- Consider the methods and methodologies for 2022/23.

The self-reflection tools were improved following the first round of self-assessments undertaken in 2021/22. A consistent methodology and scoring criteria were adopted in the tools for assessing performance and the use of resources. The effectiveness of governance is already assessed in the

Council’s Annual Governance Statement, which is published in the Councils Statement of Accounts, and so this was removed from the process. The format of the Review was also evaluated with the intention of making it more succinct and easier for the public to read.

- Linking the performance and risk assessments for 2022/23.

A new section on corporate risk and performance has been included within this Review, to demonstrate the links between the performance and risk assessments; the corporate risks formed part of the evidence considered during the development of this Review.

- Recognizing improvements that would need to be articulated within the report around stronger analysis.

An assessment of strengths and challenges and a more evaluative overall assessment have been included in this 2022/23 Review.

- Improving the links between consultation engagement / stakeholder reference.

After a poor consultation response in 2021/22, a number of ‘digital citizens panels’ were established and piloted to improve consultation and to facilitate face-to-face engagement with the public, including with other stakeholders, such

as council staff and the trade unions. The pilots proved successful and the outcome from the panels formed part of the evidence considered during the Review. This is set out in more detail in Section 2.

Summary of 2022/23 self-assessment

The following represents a summary of the overall assessment made in Section 5 on the extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively and using its resources well when meeting its well-being objectives by working in line with the requirements set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act:

Objective	Progress	Prospects for improvement
Safeguarding	Strong	Mixed
Education & Skills	Strong	Strong
Economy & Infrastructure	Strong	Strong
Poverty	Strong	Strong
Nature & Climate Change	Strong	Strong
Transformation & Future Council	Strong	Mixed

Section 2 - Involvement and Self-assessment

Experience based evidence

Involvement underpins all we do at Swansea Council. This means that in addition to the robust internal and regulatory/inspection-based evidence we also consider the impacts on and perceptions of our diverse stakeholders.

Consultation and engagement

This work is guided by our Consultation and Engagement Strategy, which was updated in 2022. Feedback from both specific consultations relating our Corporate Plan's well-being objectives and responses related to service based and corporate activity, such as the budget, have informed the self-assessment process.

An additional perspective on the Council's activity in the context of partnership working to improve well-being was provided by engagement work carried out as part of Swansea Public Services Board's work.

Self-assessment engagement pilot

In addition to evidence collated through existing practice and sources above, we have commenced a process of reaching out to specifically engage via a one-year pilot as part of our self-assessment process. This has enabled us to begin the journey of understanding better how the Council is performing as a whole and can improve holistically as well as in relation to its component services.

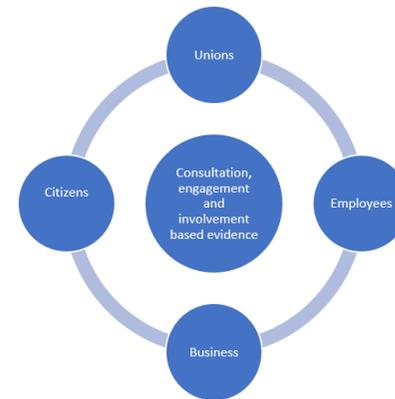
Swansea Council Digital Citizens Panel

A Digital Citizens' Panel aims to enable an ongoing dialogue based around broad self-assessment and improvement issues rather than attract one off input relating to a specific service, about which participants have strong feelings. Initial small scale pilot activity has enabled us to test baseline attitudes in relation to the Council's performance, use of resources and governance, as well as capturing ideas for Corporate Improvement.



Participation

This process focuses on the following stakeholders below. In relation to this self-assessment period, three 90-minute pilot sessions have been held with the public, two employee sessions and a session for trade unions. In addition, face to face opportunities to participate were piloted at Ageing Well and LGBTQIA+ participation team run events.



The opportunity to help assess how Swansea Council works and can improve was promoted via our website [Self-assessment and improvement at Swansea Council - Swansea](#) and via existing officer communication channels and databases to engage with the public across all directorates. We piggybacked on existing relationships to also encourage participation via our partners, such as community councils and Swansea Public Services Board. To ensure we reached seldom heard from voices, people who are socio-economically disadvantaged or who have protected characteristics, we invited participation via existing relationships built by officers on our Strategic Equality Plan's engagement group, Poverty Forum, Community Cohesion and Equality and Diversity Forums and Networks.

Business was encouraged to attend via the Councils business networks and links with Regeneration Swansea and the Business Improvement District.

Employees were targeted via staff intranet pages which featured on the Intranet landing page headlines for over a week. Both the Citizen and Employee sessions were featured

in the Chief Exec's Blog and weekly newsletter. Offline staff were contacted via team leaders.

A presentation was made to union representatives at our monthly meeting and a follow up session was arranged.

Feedback and learning from participants in the small-scale pilot is being used to evolve our approach as participation snowballs.

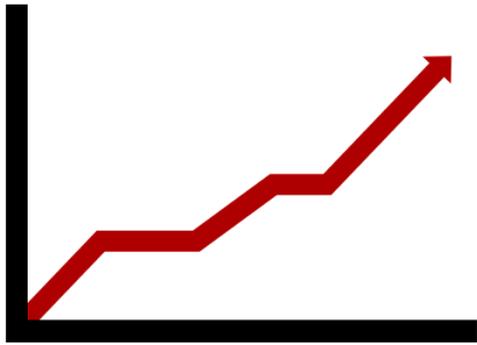
Temperature Check

Our small-scale pilot asked respondents to instinctively score the Council against three key questions:

Source	Agree a lot	Agree a little	Disagree a little	Disagree a lot	Don't know
Is Swansea Council is doing a good job?	☺	☺	☹	☹	☹
Does the Council spend money wisely?		☺			☹
Is the Council well run?		☺			

Performance

Does Swansea Council do a good job? Overall responses tended towards the positive with the largest number of responses agreeing a little when looking at the broad spectrum of council work towards its objectives. Respondents expressed good and bad experiences with many acknowledging 'no council is perfect' and numerous responses taking account of the scale of challenges facing Swansea beyond Council control. Where comparisons were made to other areas it was generally in terms of the Council's relative competence, for example in relation to libraries, inclusion, and recycling. A common theme was digital exclusion and limited physical access to services and staff.



Resources

Does the Council spend money wisely? The most common response was 'I don't know' perhaps reflecting the scale of the question. This was followed by disagreeing 'a little' with a spread of remaining responses. Feedback was generally more qualified taking account of the limitations and many requirements and restrictions impacting resource allocation. There was a common frustration with the quality of contractors and rising costs. The efficient and effective use of resource was often subjective; for example, while some saw investment in building sustainable housing as prudent others felt Net Zero was unaffordable.



Governance



Is the Council well run? Responses tended to agree 'a little' overall although there was much more divergent opinions on both sides than in relation to other questions. Respondents commented on the Council both as an elected body as well as a public service. The lack of obvious failure rather than specific successes was a common rational expressed by respondents. It was felt that our successes were not always communicated effectively as they could be and that it could be difficult to access information or face-to-face services since the pandemic. Lack of enforcement was seen as an issue across some services. There was a demand for deeper and more meaningful consultation and engagement and greater clarity in the decision-making process.

Improvement ideas

Ideas included methods to improve consultation employing focus groups and simple polls to test ideas. Communications and volunteering opportunities were identified. Other suggestions ranged from ways to improve the efficacy of impact assessments and decision-making processes

to the use of talent identification to retain staff and practical investments in specific projects and infrastructure.

Feedback



All participants welcomed the opportunity to contribute their views and wished to be informed of future sessions. It was suggested that a greater focus on specific themes would be useful in future and that we continue to strive to attract a greater diversity of participants in particular young people.

Section 3 - Risk and Performance Self-assessment

Corporate Plan

The five-year Corporate Plan 2017/22 was refreshed and rolled forward for a further year into 2022/23 until after the local government elections. A new 5-year Corporate Plan has been produced for the 2023/28 period, which was developed during 2022/23 and was adopted at Council on 30th March 2023. The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's values and principles underpinning the delivery of its six well-being objectives.

The Councils Corporate Risks were reviewed and revised starting in 2022/23 as part of the development of the new Corporate Plan.



Review of Corporate Risks

The Council started to review its corporate risks in August 2022 during the initial stages of the development of the new corporate plan.

This entailed a review of the strategic challenges facing the Council, their alignment with the Councils Well-being Objectives and where there might be some gaps.

The review sought to identify whether the Councils corporate risks captured all the strategic challenges facing the council, whether all the risks associated with delivering our wellbeing objectives had been sufficiently captured or if new risks were needed and whether some risks should be amended, de-escalated, or closed.

This review continued into 2023 during the development of the Corporate Plan, involving Corporate Management Team, Cabinet, and the wider Leadership Team.

The Corporate Risks were finalised alongside the budget and the Corporate Plan by the first week of March 2023.



Joint Regulators Assurance and Risk Assessment 2022/23.

Audit Wales, Estyn and CiW recently provided feedback to the Council through a Joint Regulators Assurance and Risk Assessment 2022/23 workshop, which was delivered to the Council's Corporate Management Team on 11th January 2023. More information on

the outcome of this workshop is available in the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23.

An exercise mapping the Councils corporate risks to those identified by the Audit Wales was undertaken in the early part of 2023/24 and there was clear coherence between them meaning that the Council and its regulators broadly agree on the assurances and risks facing the Council.



Relationship between risk and performance assessment.

The Councils corporate risks formed part of the evidence considered during the development of this Review. Corporate risk and performance assessment and monitoring will be done in conjunction with each other in 2023/24.

Corporate risks will be assessed each quarter, including their impact on performance, to determine if new risks should be captured and existing risks closed, escalated, or de-escalated. Whether anything has changed that might mean reassessing the likelihood of the risks occurring and their impact and reflections on the effectiveness of the controls to reduce residual risk will also be assessed.

Review of Risk Management Policy and Framework

The Councils Risk Management Policy and Framework was last reviewed in 2017. The Council has made a lot of progress since then improving its risk management arrangements.

Another review is timely to ensure that the Council continues to improve and is delivering best practice through its risk management processes and procedures. This review will commence in 2023/24.

More information on the Councils Risk Management can be found in the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23.

Corporate Risks and Well-being Objectives

The table below shows the Council's corporate risks mapped against the Councils Well-being Objectives. This review was undertaken in 2022/23 and completed alongside the budget and the Corporate Plan by the first week of March 2023.

Corporate Risks	Well-being Objectives
Safeguarding.	Safeguarding people from harm
Pupil attainment and achievement.	Improving education & skills
Impact of poverty.	Tackling poverty & enabling communities
Cost of living crisis	
Social cohesion.	
Local Economy & Infrastructure.	Transforming our economy & infrastructure
Net Zero 2030 target.	Delivering on nature recovery and climate change
Financial Control - MTFP Delivery.	Transformation and financial resilience
Workforce recruitment and retention.	
Mandatory training.	
Cyber, data and digital security.	
Successful and Sustainable Swansea Corporate Transformation Plan.	
Health & Safety.	
Emergency Planning, Resilience and Business Continuity	

Section 4 - How we did meeting 2021/22 Areas for Improvement

The table below summarises how we did implementing the improvements identified in last year's Annual Review of Performance.

Areas for continued Improvement – Annual Review of Performance 2021/22	
Safeguarding People from Harm	
Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn the lessons of these new ways of working to inform future delivery models that ensure that we are the best that we can be in meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are continually learning lessons around new ways of working to inform future delivery models that ensure that we are the best that we can be in meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. Swansea Council are working in partnerships both regionally and locally to coproduce and commission innovative service models, building on committee work undertaken with elected members. Commissioning Review update report - Scrutiny May 2023.pdf (swansea.gov.uk) Examples set out above include services to young carers and regional carers strategy published this year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative approaches, for example by pooling direct payments have helped to ensure availability of care at home. By coproducing with service users and working closely with providers we are able to commission more flexible service offers in areas such as day services and respite care. Child and Family Services are also working closely with 3rd sector to enhance service offers in support of children with disabilities, looked after children and care leavers. Further evidence on how people are helping to shape services in Swansea will be set out in the Director of Social Services Annual report due to be presented to Council in October 2023.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain our focus on prevention / early help across the whole system, and at the same time safeguarding and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We retain our focus on prevention / early help across the whole system, and at the same time safeguarding and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. Swansea Council takes a whole system, and targeted approach to wellbeing. We are aiming to ensure that prevention and early help resources are aimed at the right people at the right time in ways that promote personal and community resilience. Our longstanding commitment to Local Area Coordination in Swansea is central to this approach, and a full evaluation is being undertaken by Swansea University. Appendix A - LAC Impact Report 2022.pdf (swansea.gov.uk) Early help continue to offer help on 'what matters most' to Swansea citizens, including children and families to ensure speedy access to support when needed. Building on the success in Child and Family Services, work is underway to achieve a cross directorate approach to Early Help focus on providing support and early intervention to individuals when required with the aim to avoid statutory services for as long as possible. AS - Early Help - Staff portal (swansea.gov.uk)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new, imaginative approaches in attracting new qualified and unqualified workers to want to work in the health and social care sector, and in retaining their loyalty and commitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are developing new, imaginative approaches in attracting new qualified and unqualified workers to want to work in the health and social care sector, and in retaining their loyalty and commitment. Since the pandemic the focus has also been on promoting the wellbeing of our current social care workforce, and to support our workers to be the best that they can be. Social Services Workforce Wellbeing - Staff portal (swansea.gov.uk) The Councils Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty Corporate Delivery Committee has supporting implementation of social services workforce development strategy: This presentation outlined the scope and range of activities being carried out within the social services workforce programme, to ensure that, looking ahead, Swansea has a high-quality, skilled and professional social care workforce: Item No (swansea.gov.uk):report on work programme Swansea Council is also working closely with Swansea Council for Voluntary Services (Swansea CVS) to coproduce a Volunteer Policy and Strategy. Item No (swansea.gov.uk) Volunteering

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
Improving Education & Skills	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further analyse with schools the impact on learner outcomes because of the pandemic, including basic skills in the early years and pre-school, Welsh language skills, mental health and wellbeing, curriculum design, teaching and learning, and assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Improvement work has continued to analyse the impact on learner outcomes – this has been further supported by the work of Estyn in some of our schools. This has helped develop the School Improvement Team’s work going forwards and us also being used to shape the work and the professional learning offer of Partneriaeth.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a strategy to promote the inclusion to support vulnerable groups of learners and to ensure that the Local Authority has oversight of individualised tracking on learner progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Strategy developed and will be presented to Cabinet in June 2023 for consideration and approval for delivery. A range of strategies are in place or in development which include person-centred approaches, appropriate plans depending on nature of need, which are tracked where appropriate. Cross-directorate processes are being strengthened and a creative solutions group will be established to strengthen this area of work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Inclusion for Learners Strategy, focus on the few elements of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) strategy where further progress is required and finalise the revision of the accessibility strategy and plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Strategy developed and will be presented to Cabinet in June 2023 for consideration and approval for delivery. A new ALN strategy has been developed to draw together the final elements on the previous strategy and includes four new areas including early years, post-16, schools and collaboration. A working group is in place to develop a new Accessibility Strategy, to be launched later in the year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop further sufficient specialist places for learners with ALN, including Specialist Teaching Facilities (STFs) and special schools, and support schools to build capacity to meet the needs of learners with Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) to prevent exclusion or referral to Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) and embed universal strategies for all areas of ALN. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change programme has begun to remodel provision of suitable specialist places for learners with ALN. There has been a wide-ranging training offer for ALN for schools, including the Social Communication Champions project which trained up at least one member of staff in every school. The developmental phase of the Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places programme is in its final stages, which will inform the modelling of future provision.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a coherent strategy to support literacy and numeracy outcomes in schools and further assess the impact of increased Welsh-medium provision and falling birth rates within the English medium sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy and numeracy audits were undertaken and action plans were developed including training and support to schools. Identify funding to continue the work and deliver against the action plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate provision within schools that have smaller numbers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This work is ongoing as part of the Right School in Right Places programme. Further work is to be undertaken to look at schools with smaller number specifically.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In terms of provision (services), continue and enhance the effectiveness of Member/Officer engagement to inform next stage development of longer-term capital investment and school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key officer workshops have taken place to review the whole school stock in Swansea. An options appraisal was undertaken to provide a potential shortlist of options that were taken to workshops with Elected Members and Officers. This will be used to inform the school organisation plan that will need to be submitted to Welsh Government by March 2024.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of the Abertawe 2027 strategic plan to succeed Abertawe 2023 for education improvement in Swansea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abertawe 2028 has been drafted and developed following engagement with headteachers and refined with the School Improvement Partnership. The plan will be launched in Autumn 2023.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustain the quality of leadership across the education system (school leaders, governors, members, and officers) and embed a consistent and high quality new regional improvement partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new leadership strategy will be delivered under the aims of the new Corporate Plan. Leadership development and policy has been discussed in detail with the Corporate Delivery Committee. A new senior leaders' handbook and further training has been shared with schools in addition to the wider offer and a new governor strategy is in development. There are clearly set out governance arrangements with the new partnership, Partneriaeth and continue to enhance the quality of the partnership's services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish more effective collaboration with the Local Health Board to ensure the statutory requirement of Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (ALNET) are met to ensure vulnerable learners achieve good outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are strengthening links with the local health board, however health board resources remain a challenge. Regular discussion takes place with the Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer around these challenges and the risk register is updated monthly. The Local Authority now has representation on the Health Board ALN strategic group to increase opportunities for effective collaboration.
Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and implement a Covid-19 Economic Recovery Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regeneration Swansea Partnership has been effective in delivering strategic initiatives such as Covid Recovery Action Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the preparation of the South West Wales Economic Delivery Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Wales Economic Delivery Plan prepared and adopted.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take advantage of the opportunities presented by the City Deal and continue the regeneration of the city centre and work with partners to implement the City Deal to invest in digital infrastructure and support investment, innovation, growth, jobs, skills and productivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment Plan prepared and SPF secured for the Region. Delivery underway.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and enhance a diverse and sustainable local economy. For example, work collaboratively through the Regeneration Swansea Partnership to progress Swansea's economic regeneration agenda including delivery of the Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme, and through the implementation of the local development plan (LDP) that supports the regeneration of Swansea and promotes sustainable communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business support officers have continued to support local businesses. Economic Recovery Funding has been deployed and further assistance will be provided via SPF. Urban Splash partnership secured and good progress is being made in developing concept designs for the first phase of sites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create employment & training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in contracts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's Beyond Bricks & Mortar initiative continues to deliver to targeted recruitment and training and supply chain opportunities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve, expand and diversify leisure, cultural and heritage facilities and infrastructure to help boost the economy, promote tourism, improve well-being, promote community cohesion and provide economic benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have been awarded funding to enable the regeneration of parts of the Hafod copperworks, Tawe and Swansea Museum. Led by Regeneration colleagues this will result in better facilities at the Museum, for participation, dwell time, learning and family friendly activity. Swansea Libraries Service is now working with the Swansea City of Sanctuary team to make Swansea central library a library of sanctuary, aiming for accredited status in Autumn 2023. In doing so we are building new links with local organisations and individuals and participating in other related meetings and opportunities. This work informs the development of the new Community Hub in Oxford St. – Y Storfa, which will have a new children's library, friendly welcoming spaces and a new 'creative hub' for wider community use on the first floor, alongside a new Archive and Miner's Library facility. Unifying these services with others providing advice and guidance to the community will improve the overall offer to our customers and increase awareness and access in a city centre location. The Special Events team also amplify the range of new public spaces, use of parks for events and attractiveness of buildings such as the Arena through digital lighting and diverse programming from live music to markets and pop-ups e.g. young entrepreneurs in the city centre.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to enhance our leisure and cultural facilities such as the partnership with Swansea University for an international sport village and centre of sporting excellence; lifestyle attractions such as Skyline, Gondola & Luge facilities; complete the riverside corridor works; and oversee the management and development of the City Centre evening and night-time economy, including the retention of the Purple Flag, to ensure Swansea is a safe, clean and welcoming place to work and visit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion and work with Skyline continued and planning application due to be submitted. Purple flag status retained.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on the legacy of Swansea's bid to be UK City of Culture by delivering the City Centre Arts Strategy and implementing the outcomes of our participation in the Culture 21 European Pilot programme by embedding the nine policy commitments for Culture in Sustainable Cities and the Diversity Pledge for Culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress is ongoing via a range of initiatives such as the street arts plan and festival.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve and develop our Leisure facilities in partnership with our delivery partners Freedom Leisure and Parkwood, and secure the of our 'in house' Cultural services developing strategies for investment and innovative delivery models for Special Events, Libraries, Archives, Theatres, Galleries and Museums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work continues on improving the leisure estate with Partners, with significant improvement to Cefn Hengoed due to complete by Q3 in 23/4, with new a Leisure Centre, Sports Barn and additional community hub funding bringing the scheme above £7m in total. The wider leisure centres continue to receive investment through the partnership, with energy saving schemes and grant funding opportunities being explored to further these improvements, focussing on facilities with pools. Parkwood Leisure continue to invest in and maintain Plantasia under the contract, with investments into the roof structure, and wider structural and ventilation systems being delivered or scoped through the period. Wider investments within Cultural Services were delivered under the ERF scheme, with future investment through Levelling Up, SPF and City Centre regeneration schemes planned over the next 2 financial years. The Shared Prosperity Funding will support the establishment of a Swansea Creative Network, secure investment in our 'brand' as a cultural, tourism and leisure service provider and build new events, projects and partnerships as well as sustain existing ones.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress strategic housing and mixed development sites to meet housing need and provide employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More Homes delivery and apprentice programme.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect and promote the health, wellbeing, safety and consumer interests of people living in or visiting Swansea by working with others to maintain public safety across the range of regulatory services such as pollution, scams and unfair trading, public health and housing issues, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health Teams are ensuring private rented properties and Homes in Multiple Occupation are safe for tenants and rogue traders are prosecuted.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following adoption of the Climate Change Charter by Council in November 2020, deliver the Energy Strategy to reduce costs, provide cheaper energy and reduce our carbon footprint such as work with others to provide sustainable and low carbon transport and infrastructure providing improved and cheaper connectivity and mobility and associated economic benefits at reduced environmental cost and improved air quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Energy Strategy and Carbon Management Plan 2020 to 2030 is being implemented and has been built upon with the development of complementary Climate Change Report and Plan in 2021.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage and protect Swansea's green spaces, coastline and parks for recreation and play, to promote health and well-being, improved bathing water quality and maintain Blue Flag status at Swansea's beaches to encourage tourism, protect the environment and support well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Flag status was achieved at Caswell Bay Langland Bay and Port Eynon. Six of our parks Clyne Gardens, Singleton Botanical Gardens, Brynmill Park, Parc Llewelyn, Cwmdonkin Park and Victoria Park have maintained the Green Flag City parks flying the green flag for excellence - Swansea in addition to community awards being achieved across Swansea green spaces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and the three other regional Councils to develop a Metro solution which will improve connectivity to, and across the City and the wider region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the Swansea Bay & West Wales Metro continued through 2022/23 supported by the four South West Wales local authorities, building on the various business cases for future investment in transport interventions across the region. Separately, Welsh Government continued to fund the business case development of rail options for the Swansea Bay & West Wales options, however this work is led by Transport for Wales, with local authorities remaining a key stakeholder in its development. The Swansea Bay & West Wales Metro seeks to deliver an integrated transport system across South West Wales, supporting travel needs across the region with a sustainable transport system for those living, working and travelling through the region, with continued funding for the 2023/24 programme due to be announced by the Welsh Government shortly.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
Tackling Poverty	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify aims and objectives in relation to tackling poverty and improve the ways in which it monitored and measured the outcomes of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the national review conducted by Audit Wales relating to tackling poverty, a number of recommendations have been made for Welsh Government and Local Authority action relating to tackling poverty objectives and outcomes. The Council's efforts to date were reflected positively in the Audit Wales 'Time for Change' report published in November 2022 and we will continue to take action to improve strategic planning, monitoring and implementation of our tackling poverty agenda. This will include developing a Performance Framework for Tackling Poverty that defines the outcomes and measures across the revised Corporate Priority of 'tackling poverty and enabling communities'.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the reliance on grant funding to tackle poverty and look for greater flexibility in relation to using funding in a way which best meets local needs in a sustainable way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the revision of the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The revision of the Corporate Tackling Poverty Strategy is now underway. A coproductive approach is being taken and conversations with stakeholders are now taking place. It is expected that the revised strategy will be ready for the approval process before the end of 2023.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and implement the Review of Employability and the Review of Financial Inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities For Work Plus will continue to support Swansea residents into employment or training. The 2023-24 CFW+ Delivery Plan and new structure will be implemented in 2023-24. Into work and Engagements targets set by Welsh Government will be monitored and reported. The CfW+ team will work across Swansea with a focus on individuals who are Economically Inactive, Short-term Unemployed, L-TU, 16–24-year-olds and NEET. The customer characteristics outlined in the framework will be part of an ongoing plan to increase engagement and support the priority cohorts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled People. Black, Asian, Ethnic Minorities. 16 – 24-year-old and NEET. People over 50 years old. People with low or no skills. Women (especially lone parents). Carers. Delivery and alignment with the <i>Welsh Government Employability and Skills Plan</i> will include projects identified to target a number of the cohorts.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement the Corporate Volunteering Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of this policy is one of the priorities of the Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty Corporate Delivery Committee. A cross departmental officer working group has been established with representation from SCVS. A draft policy has been produced that aims to provide a consistent approach to managing volunteers hosted by the Council. The next step is to develop a 'toolkit' of resources that will ensure the successful implementation of the draft policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review food poverty and community cooking and growing activities, employment support and access to Lifelong learning, developing evidence-based outcome models for projects and developing a quality / satisfaction framework for services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tackling Poverty Service administers annual Welsh Government funding to tackle food poverty and food insecurity. During the 2022/23 financial year, over £300,000 has been awarded between more than 150 successful applications. The grant monitoring process for 2022/23 is currently underway. The Swansea Food Poverty Network continues to meet every other month. Partners are engaged in the opportunities and grant processes are co-designed to meet local needs. Communities for Work Plus will continue to work collaboratively with the joint aim of supporting local unemployed people to find training, work experience placements, volunteering opportunities and sustainable employment in Swansea. Working in key locations across Swansea, the team help individuals to break down any barriers they may face, which are preventing them from finding training and employment. The team will deliver support at the City Centre and local hubs, accessible to all community members, where we will offer support to existing, as well as potential new clients. Working in partnership with many organisations at key 'hub' locations (e.g. the City Centre Hub, Jac Lewis Foundation, Welfare Rights, Financial Inclusion, Local Area Coordinators and BAME Mental Health), we will ensure that residents receive the best and most diverse support available in the county. The success of this collaborative approach will be based on having a joined-up focus. The Lifelong Learning Service will continue to deliver the Service Delivery Plan (SDP) submitted to Welsh Government annually, this outlines the schedule of courses planned for each academic year. The programme of delivery is finalised by LLS management team based on a number of factors including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand from local partner organisations, employers and learners for courses. Liaison with partners within the Swansea Learning Partnership to ensure progression pathways exist across Swansea for community learning opportunities, avoiding duplication of provision wherever possible. Welsh Government priorities outlined annually. The Adult Learning Framework. Digital 2030 Framework. Courses are evaluated and reviewed regularly as regard learner numbers, satisfaction levels, quality and numbers.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the delivery of the Section 6 Corporate Biodiversity Plan, the Nature Recovery Action Plan and the Resilient Wales goal through annual business planning and reporting mechanisms up to 2027. We will report to WG every 3 years in line with our Biodiversity Duty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swansea Council's second Section 6 Biodiversity Report (2020-22) was approved by Cabinet on the 15th December 2022 and submitted to Welsh Government. Still awaiting any feedback from Welsh Government. Nature Recovery Action Plan being prepared in conjunction with Swansea Nature Partnership. Initial framework agreed, detailed draft plan developed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed a Climate Change and Nature Strategy and monitor the delivery of respective Action Plans up to 2027 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change & Nature Recovery Strategy approved at December 2022 Cabinet. 30 actions by 2030 Action plan approved at December 2022 Cabinet. More detailed delivery plan now being developed. 5 new PI's created to monitor progress in all areas from 23-24 onwards.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor air, water and soil quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a range of activities carried out by the Pollution Control & Private Sector Housing Division: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) function, collecting and reporting upon pollutant concentrations recorded. Collaborative air quality research projects are currently ongoing, funded by Welsh Government grants with external partners, with the aim of testing potential interventions for their effectiveness in reducing exposure. To protect public health and avoid a detrimental effect on tourism, the Pollution Control team participated in a multi-agency, EU-funded project called 'Smart Coasts' which was a Wales/Ireland cross border programme. During the summer bathing water quality information for Swansea Bay is displayed on signs by the Slip. Results are updated hourly between 8am and 8pm. The water quality can change throughout the day depending on sunlight, wind direction, river flows and the tide. The aeration system, within the River Tawe, during the summer months, which assists mixing within the water column for dissolved oxygen and salinity concentrations. Officers carry out risk assessments and monitoring of private drinking water supplies (supply of water not from a water undertaker or licensed supplier) in line with The Private Water Supplies (Wales) Regulations 2017. There are approximately 125 known private water supplies in the council's area. Participate in the Drought Liaison Group meetings, chaired by Welsh Government, called last summer due to prolonged dry spells and the potential for impact upon insufficiency of water supplies. Through the Planning Application process, the team assess the requirement for conditions to be attached to approvals to ensure that land contamination is identified and remediated in order to minimise the risk to public health in accordance with the required guidelines. Investigations also take place if complaints are received about potential contamination to land via emergency incidents or accidents and deliberate releases.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the delivery the Energy Action plan targets proposed to 2027. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and Energy & Fleet actions are now included in the 30 actions by 2030 Action Plan approved at Cabinet December 22 as per below diagram. <p style="text-align: center;">Swansea Council Net Zero – 30 Actions by 2030</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Buildings & Energy</th> <th style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Fleet & Mobile Equipment</th> <th style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Land Use</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9ead3;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonise our public estate by reviewing our asset management strategy. Reduce the energy consumed across the council's buildings and estate. 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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set out new measures for monitoring the impact of our Procurement of goods and services in line with eth emerging WG carbon measurement toolkit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Socially Responsible and Sustainability in Procurement Policy – this will be developed in line with/to support new procurement legislation that is being developed for implementation in late 2023/early 2024 (namely updated UK Public Contract Regulations and a new Social Partnership and Public Procurement Bill (Wales)). Commencement of a Social Value pilot programme and development of a Social Value Recording Tool designed to facilitate and enhance focus on social value in contracts and provide a format for capturing and recording good practice and to deliver commitments made in the Council's Net Carbon Zero plan. There are three pilot projects currently testing the social value tool, namely – the Parks Service framework for playground equipment; Corporate Building Services' project for Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg, Bryn Tawe - a school refurb and new build project, and Social Services housing support programme / framework renewal. 												

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed and deliver a Sustainable Transport strategy to 2027. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft document presented to the Climate Change & Nature Recovery CDC December 2022, final draft to form part of new Service Transformation Board workplan for 2023-24.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to report the number of new homes constructed to net carbon zero standards and set out new measures of recording the decarbonisation of our existing stock in line with emerging WG guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is a long-term programme to improve the condition, thermal performance, security and affordability of social housing owned by the Council in Swansea. On completion of the original WHQS on 31st December 2021, the Council had invested more than £546m over 18 years to make its housing stock compliant with the Standard. From the beginning of this current financial year 2022/23, WHQS passed from a compliance target stage to a maintenance phase. The investment for this year's capital programme is revised to £38.8m with WHQS delivering £27.4m across the financial year and £11.4m completed for the More Homes new build and acquisition programme. The Housing Service has secured £2.6m of Welsh Government Optimised Retrofit Programme grant funding to support schemes contributing towards affordable warmth and carbon reduction targets. £770,000 of grant has also been secured from Welsh Government's Building Safety programme to support the installation of sprinklers at Griffith John Street. Welsh Government has consulted with social housing providers in Wales about a new standard they intend to introduce which is now planned for the latter part of 2023. The new Standard, WHQS2023, will build on the achievements of the earlier standards with a major policy objective of making all social housing in Wales net zero carbon by the mid-2030's. Large scale investment programmes will be required to meet the future statutory duties that will also increase fire and safety standards and environmental improvements and water saving measures. The Council's More Homes Programme has set a ten-year delivery ambition of 1,000 new affordable homes to be directly delivered by the Council, along with a further 4,000 properties delivered by Registered Social Landlords (RSL) in Swansea. The Council has developed a high specification for the properties it is building - the "Swansea Standard". The aim is to deliver energy, efficient, environmentally conscious homes that exceed current regulatory performance standards to achieve net zero carbon buildings, providing a positive contribution towards the drive to eradicate fuel-poverty through the installation of renewable technology. The Swansea Standard will be reviewed in 2023/24 to ensure that it takes into account recent changes in Building Regulations and continues to provide the required performance uplift, in preparation for the next tranche of schemes currently in development.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the More Homes programme has delivered the following to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed to date = 222 • (New build/conversion= 97 Acquisitions = 125) • Conversions under construction = 12 – completing in summer 2023 • Plans are in development to deliver the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline to start in 4-year programme = 534 • (New build = 321 Acquisitions = 213) • Pipeline to start in 10-year programme = 263 • In addition to the Council’s own building programme, we continue to work closely with RSL partners to ensure we maximise the delivery of affordable housing through the allocation of Welsh Government Social Housing Grant (SHG) through the Programme Development Plan, which is managed by the Council. Swansea’s allocation of SHG from Welsh Government was £23.7m for 2022/23. • Work also continues in conjunction with the Planning Department to maximise the number of planning applications approved by the Council that achieve the stated % threshold of mixed-use tenure affordable homes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the delivery of a Waste Reduction strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling work is being undertaken with WG consultants to inform options for the Waste Strategy 2025 onward. The modelling will conclude in May 2023 with a draft strategy report prepared for approval later in 2023.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure grants and other external funding to help deliver the above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is ongoing to look for grant funding, 2 applications in for SPF at present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of Energy Awareness Hub The creation of an Adaptation and Mitigation Plan Salix funding for Re:fit programmes also live.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
Transformation & Future Council development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to contain, reduce, defer and delay spending as far as possible, having due regard to the existing agreed budget and political priorities to nonetheless seek to limit service overspending and take corrective action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following were in place during 2022/23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify uncontrollable inflation pressures as variances in the monthly PFM budget reporting cycles and quarterly through to Cabinet. Compliance within Financial Procedure rules so that spend remains within budget, including permitted virements. Services to ensure that inflation pressures are managed and contained within cash limits agreed at the time the budget and MFTP are set. Extant spending restrictions published to all staff and reviewed and many controls continue to be directly exercised by CMT in relation to filling vacant posts, restructures, regrades and committing contract sums. Agreed and well-established quarterly reporting plan in place to document and record at Cabinet all actions or non actions in services to contain spending. PFM (Performance and Financial Management/Monitoring) process monthly is well established and understood by all officers with appropriate escalation mechanism to S151 Officer, Chief Executive and Cabinet if non-compliance. Spending and recruitment restrictions were imposed in 2022/23 which contributed to a NOMINAL final outturn of £524.463m, which represents an overspend of 0.0 %. This relied on a near £8m draw from schools reserves and near £2m from council earmarked reserves so remains unsustainable in the longer term.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-establish tracking (suspended as a result of Covid) to ensure that savings targets are monitored and reviewed at the Reshaping and Budget Setting Board established as part of the Council's Achieving Better Together transformation strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New savings monitoring arrangements now in place as part of Directorate monthly DMT / PFM arrangements.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Inquiry into procurement - including a focus on enhanced social value considerations in procurement in line with new legislation that the UK and Welsh Governments are developing (once that legislation is published and its impact becomes known), to include considerations of sustainable development, development of the local supplier base and co-production activity, i.e. involving citizens in decision-making, and also a focus on any areas of non-compliance in procurement activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet responded to the Scrutiny Inquiry recommendations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Asset Management Plan 2021/25 and monitor and report on progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and review to be reported to Cabinet Summer 2023.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the key messages from engagement exercises and finalise the Workforce Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet approved the Workforce Strategy in October 2022.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to improve the number of responses to the staff survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work underway to improve staff engagement e.g. Lets Talk sessions with the Chief Executive. No staff survey in 2022/23.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the current suite of corporate performance indicators for continued relevance for 2022/23 reporting and set annual targets for end-of-year reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Corporate Plan KPIs were reviewed in 2022/23 to ensure continued relevance pending a fuller review on the development of the new Corporate Plan in readiness for 2023/28. Whilst targets for performance were not set during 2021/22 because of the uncertainty caused by the pandemic at that time, annual targets were prepared for 2022/23 - and in the meantime, performance continued to be appropriately compared each quarter to the same periods in the previous financial year.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Corporate Plan and associated performance indicators for 2023/27. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2022/23, the Council has sought during the development of its new Corporate Plan 2023/28 to identify performance measures for each well-being objective that would allow progress to be measured, taking account of the need for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMT oversight – to allow CMT to oversee the delivery of the well-being objectives. Public accountability / reputation – measures of interest to the public and for inclusion in public reports to Cabinet. Management information - measures more appropriate for P&FMs / DMTs to supervise (with an appropriate escalation pathway to CMT). These include indicators that measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> preventative benefits, such as numbers of children and families supported by early help hubs; long-term benefits, such as reductions in numbers of looked after children, children in need of care and children on the child protection register; collaborative benefits, such as the number of projects delivered annually through the Environmental Partners Framework to support ambition of Swansea Net Zero 2050 (data development); integration and involvement benefits, such as projects containing community benefit clauses in contracts. Work continued in 2022/23 and into 2023/24 to define each measure within the well-being objectives to ensure measures can provide regular, robust and consistent data as at Q1 2023/24 reporting, or have the potential to be candidates for further data development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for ways to improve the consultation and engagement process and improve the response rate for the annual self-assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New consultation and engagement strategy approved by Council in May 2023. A number of ‘digital citizens panels’ were established and piloted in 2023/24 to improve consultation and to facilitate face-to-face engagement with the public, including with other stakeholders, such as council staff and the trade unions. The pilots proved successful and the outcome from the panels formed part of the evidence considered during the Review. This is set out in more detail in the ‘Involvement and Self-assessment’ section of this Review.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and work to improve the amount of review, scrutiny and challenge to the self-assessment process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council established an Annual Governance Group for the purpose of challenging the Senior Management Assurance Statements on their governance arrangements and assisting and overseeing the development of the Annual Governance Statement. The Group is chaired by the Interim Director of Corporate Services and members include the Council's Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, as well as the Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager and a member of the Governance & Audit Committee; the Chief Internal Auditor attends in an advisory capacity. Following a review, it was decided that the Annual Governance Group (to be renamed Strategic Governance Group) would also review and challenge the self-reflection tools completed for each of the Council's well-being objectives, which are the means of self-assessment and are a key source of evidence and information for the development of the Annual Review of Performance (annual well-being and self-assessment report). The End of Year 2022/23 self-reflection tools were reviewed and challenged at a meeting of the Strategic Governance Group on 24th May 2023, prior to the development of the Annual Review of Performance 2022/23. In addition, the Annual Review of Performance will be challenged by the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Panel before being considered by the Governance & Audit Committee prior to approval by Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement remaining Governance and Audit Committee recommendations for improvement to the Annual Review of Performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel and the Governance & Audit Committee met to discuss the Annual Review of Performance 2021/22 on 8th November 2022 and 14th December 2022 respectively. More information and the Council's response to this is set out in the 'Self-assessment' section of this Review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put arrangements in place to ensure that Audit Wales recommendations are recorded and tracked in a consistent way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dedicated email inbox has been established where all published Audit Wales reports are sent. The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee, Director of Corporate Services, Section 151 Officer, Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager, Head of Internal Audit and Scrutiny Team Leader all have access; the Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee is copied in. This is to ensure that all reports are actioned and proceed to Scrutiny / Governance & Audit Committee. A record of receipt for each report is kept and maintained. Work will be undertaken in 2023/24 to improve how we record and track Audit Wales recommendations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the development of a Public Participation Strategy, as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy completed and approved.

Areas for continued improvement 2021/22	Update @ 2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations from 2021/22 Internal Audit Report on risk management to continue regular updates and ensure control measures remain SMART. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the annual review of risk in 2022/23, the Council undertook an assessment of inherent and residual risk on the risks recorded in the risk register, i.e., the level of risk before and after Control Measures are applied. This work was completed in Q4, and modifications have been made to the Council's risk register to allow responsible officers to record inherent risk and monthly changes to residual risk scores. Risk Impact and Likelihood ranges from 1 (low) to 5 (very high). Residual and Inherent Risk Scores are calculated as the likelihood score multiplied by the impact score, so ranges from 1-very low to 25-very high. This will help monitor that control measures are effective in mitigating risks. In addition, CMT and Cabinet will meet to review the Corporate Risks each quarter during 2023/24, which will be focussed on reviewing the risk likelihood / impact and residual risk and the continued use / effectiveness of control measures. More information on this can be found in the 'Risk and self-assessment' section of this Review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue work to address all proposals for improvement to the operation of the Public Service Board made by the Scrutiny Programme Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with PSB partners to develop action plans to implement the steps in the PSB Well-being Plan began in 2023/24, which includes work to develop PSB performance management / population indicator arrangements; this is one of the principal areas for improvement cited by the Scrutiny Programme Committee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue work to address all recommendations in the Audit Wales report 'Raising our Game - Tackling Fraud in Wales'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work continuing including development of an e-learning module.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce staff sickness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff sickness saw an improvement in 2022/23, reducing from 12.66 days / shifts per full time equivalent days in 2021/22 to 12.28 days in 2022/23. This is to be expected as we emerge from the pandemic and see lower levels of absence attributed to Covid-19. Work has commenced on a review of our approach to managing absence and occupational health provision, which aims to explore ways to further reduce levels of absence towards our target of maximum 10 days per FTE.

Section 5 – Our Well-being Objectives

Why our well-being objectives are priorities

- Our Corporate Plan 2022/23 describes a number of challenges facing Swansea in the years ahead, which include:
- Population changes – a growing, ageing and more diverse Swansea.
- Economic changes – attracting investment, high quality jobs and new technology into Swansea while addressing the skills gap.
- Climate change and nature emergencies – risks from flooding, air and water quality, dangers to ecosystems and biodiversity and energy security.
- Social and cultural changes – addressing inequalities in health, education, employment and life chances.
- Covid-19 – helping Swansea to recover and transforming the Council to meet the changes and the new challenges ahead.
- In order to meet these challenges, we have prioritised six well-being objectives. These are:
- **Safeguarding people from harm** – so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- **Improving Education & Skills** – so that everyone in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- **Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure** – so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.

- **Tackling Poverty** – so that every person in Swansea can achieve their potential.
- **Delivering on Nature Recovery and Climate Change** – so that we maintain and enhance nature and biodiversity in Swansea, reduce our carbon footprint and tackle climate change.
- **Transformation & Future Council development** – so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.
- The following outlines why these well-being objectives are priorities and help deal with the longer-term challenges the Council must address.

Safeguarding People from Harm.

- Swansea is a fair and equal city in which children can have the best start in life to be the best they can be, safe within their families.
- Swansea is a vibrant city in which all people can together live happy, healthy, fulfilling lives, achieve their own wellbeing outcomes and age well.
- We are committed to enhancing the health, wellbeing, safety and to promoting the rights of vulnerable adults, children and families.
- We aim to prevent and intervene early, where a person or child is at risk of harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation, and to ensure the right care and support at the right time.
- We will continue to promote safeguarding vulnerable people as everyone's business, across the Council, through a skilled and professional workforce, our elected members and any organisation or person who undertakes work on our behalf.

Improving Education & Skills.

We want:

- all children and young people in Swansea to be ambitious, capable enterprising learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives and be creative contributors to life and work;
- all children and young people to attend school regularly, to be safe, to be resilient and to be healthy;
- all children and young people with additional learning needs to have timely and effective support to enable them to reach their full potential;
- to encourage and support vulnerable learners and their families to be engaged in learning;
- as corporate parents of Looked After Children, we want our Looked After Children to succeed in school and to have opportunities for further education, higher education, employment or training;
- our children and young people to be aware of their rights and responsibilities in Swansea and as global citizens;
- our children and young people to have good Welsh language skills.

Transforming our Economy and Infrastructure.

We want:

- to raise economic performance to create wealth and employment opportunities to improve the economic well-being of Swansea's citizens;
- to lever all investment and funding opportunities in realising this objective including UK Government City Deal,

Levelling Up and Shared Prosperity Fund, Welsh Government Transforming Towns, Economy and Creative Wales and other major funders;

- to ensure our local economies are supported to achieve resilience in the face of future global, national and regional challenges, in particular the city centre and our small independent businesses and organisations that are the fabric of our communities large and small;
- to provide an enabling approach to support individuals, businesses and communities through our employment and business support, regeneration activities, cultural assets, transport connectivity, planning and other support and regulatory frameworks in delivering these practical measures;
- to ensure Swansea is a place characterised by sustainable communities with sufficient good quality housing and places for work and leisure;
- to continue to forge strong, hard-working networks with our external partners who are co-delivering with the Council;
- to take advantage of untapped growth potential to generate sustainable energy, deliver on net zero commitments, protect the environment and boost the economy.

Tackling Poverty.

- Swansea Council is committed to reducing poverty and the impacts that poverty has upon its citizens. Poverty can limit aspirations, damage relationships and ensure a loss of life chances.

We want:

- a Swansea where having poverty is not a barrier to doing well at school, having a healthy and vibrant life, developing skills and qualifications and having a good job and income;
- to ensure equitable access to necessary services of good quality by targeting resources where they have the most effect, with decisions about that made in conjunction with service users;
- all of our residents to have the opportunity and resources to join in with social, cultural and leisure activities and decision-making.
- We want people to maximise their income and get the most out of the money that they have;
- people to avoid paying the 'Poverty Premium', the extra costs people on low incomes must pay for essentials such as fuel and transport;
- to ensure removal of barriers to employment;
- to ensure inclusion of people from Swansea's most disadvantaged communities so that we reduce inequalities between and within communities.

Delivering on Nature Recovery and Climate Change.

- Following Welsh Government declarations for Wales, the Council has declared both a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and a Nature Emergency in November 2021.
- Using the Welsh Government Route map to net zero, Swansea Council will align with its principles, knowing what needs to be done now, by 2022-26 Low Carbon becoming the norm and by 2030 where choosing carbon zero is routine.
- Sound governance has been established within the council to act on such challenges

and all activity will be driven within the parameters of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, the Environment Act (Wales) 2016, the Strategic Equality Plan and the Corporate Plan and the Swansea (PSB) Well Being Plan.

- To ensure that in addition to achieving net zero 2030 for Swansea Council, we will work with partners, organisations, schools, businesses to support Swansea as a whole county and citizens in its efforts to become net zero by 2050, aligning with the Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget (2) 2022/2025. Establishing both Climate and Nature Charters and a Pledge Wall to encourage active participation and help build a healthier, more prosperous and biodiverse/ecologically resilient Swansea.
- Swansea is one of the most ecologically rich and diverse counties in the UK. Its unique variety of habitats and species and wonderful range of parks, greenspaces, nature reserves, beaches and landscapes needs to be maintained, enhanced and sustainably managed for the benefit of everyone now and into the future.
- Our natural environment and biodiversity is under threat and in decline due to unsustainable human activities. Habitats and species are being lost at an alarming and unsustainable rate. We need to raise awareness of the impacts of biodiversity loss and climate change at the local level and provide information, advice, and practical support and incentives to encourage others to take action and collaborate to deliver positive solutions to these challenges.
- We want everyone to have access to, understand, appreciate and benefit from Swansea's outstanding natural

environment and to play their part in looking after and enhancing it, resulting in a healthier, greener and more prosperous Swansea.

- Our future survival and quality of life is dependent on healthy resilient natural environment, the multiple benefits it provides to society and on reducing our carbon emissions to net zero.
- We have a moral responsibility to look after biodiversity for its own intrinsic value.

Transformation and Future Council Development.

- We want to implement the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and work with other members of the 'local government family' on regional collaboration.
- We want to modernise and transform the Council through our Achieving Better Together Transformation programme. In the medium to long-term the programme will build on what has changed as a result of the pandemic and how we can deliver services in different ways to help tackle rising demand and reducing revenue budgets.
- We want a sustainable organisation with improved efficiency in the future that ensures costs and savings are considered over the medium to longer term and have due regard to the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- We want to provide effective meaningful engagement with our stakeholders including our staff, citizens of Swansea and our partner organisations, so the Council can make informed decisions that improve the access, quality and delivery of services.

- We want to embed equality, diversity and integrated thinking across the Council.
- We want to ensure the Council's priorities, objectives and themes are embedded into all that we do and that the organisation culture is aligned and attracts the right talent for the future.
- We want to develop and maintain the approach where residents are able to use online channels first while ensuring all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to online services.
- We want the public to play their part by co-producing and helping to run services, with more people involved in the Council's business and in making decisions on things that affect them and their families and communities.
- We want to continue reviewing all of our services to ensure they are delivered in the best way working with partners and preventing the need for people to access complex statutory services.

Safeguarding people from harm

Performance - Progress made

- Safeguarding our most vulnerable people is seen as “Everyone’s business” in Swansea by working together, prioritising services and making contact with citizens and families. Our community presence was vital during the Covid-19 pandemic and remains so during the cost-of-living crisis.
- Our transformation journey towards is achieving a sustainable model of social care by working closely in partnership within the Council, with the Local Health Board and third sector partners to coproduce the vast range of wellbeing services available locally and regionally.
- Children and young people in Swansea have a voice on all issues affecting their lives in Swansea and be heard on all decisions impacting them.
- Back in 2014, Swansea Council committed to ensuring that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the forefront of all decisions that affect children and young people. The Children and Young People’s Rights Scheme sets out how we achieve this.
- In December 2022, Swansea was declared as Wales’s first Human Rights City, reflecting our ambition, and vision of a vibrant, diverse, fair, and safe communities built on the foundations of universal human rights. Human rights underpin our approach to social care and safeguarding.
- An effective corporate safeguarding culture requires strong, visible, leadership

presence, ensuring that senior officer and their workforce receives positive, professional and consistent backing in carrying out Council activities. This has been evident during this most difficult, challenging period, and though the vast range of actions taken in keeping people safe and well.

- This positive leadership and culture driving Corporate Safeguarding has been the subject of external praise (Estyn). Social Services has continued to benefit from strong support from Cabinet and elected members within the Council, and through the constructive support and challenge offered by scrutiny performance panels.
- A team of named safeguarding officers are working effectively together under the direction of a Corporate Safeguarding group, which meets quarterly, and is jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services David Howes and the Cabinet Member for Care Services – Cllr. Louise Gibbard
- The Council’s statutory social services provide vital frontline, protection and care and support services to children, families, and vulnerable adults.
- Swansea Council places the rights of adults and children by using ‘what matters most’ to them as citizens, by placing them at the centre of their own care and support and by coproducing services to achieve better well-being outcomes.
- The Council is also committed to ensuring citizens have access to high quality and resilient statutory social services, and to ensure that Adult and Child & Family Services are robust, resilient and effective.
- Swansea Council’s Director of Social Services publishes an Annual Report giving a full account of how well we are delivering

statutory social services and improving our care and support to citizens. It also details yearly activity, performance results, corporate and service developments.

- We continue to ensure that safeguarding is ‘everyone’s business’ across the Whole Council, within schools, in our communities, in our work with providers and through partnerships including West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board and Safer Swansea.
- During National Safeguarding week (W/c 31st October 2022), we delivered an annual report, detailing how we achieved a significant impact on our most vulnerable citizens and progress made in year.



- Swansea Social Services has been actively involved in the development of a Regional Carers Strategy recently launched by West Glamorgan Carers Partnership Board. This joined up strategy centres on the lived experiences of carers and their own wellbeing; setting out how we intend improve the support available to carers.
- We are looking at new sustainable models to improve health and wellbeing outcomes. Considerable work is being focused on prevention and early help is progressing well., building on the excellent response to

the recent pandemic. Our work with partners also addresses complex issues such as violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, social isolation, rough sleeping, and adverse childhood experiences.

- By extending local area coordination, offering support to families in need and promoting well-being opportunities to enhance our quality of life in supportive communities and within Swansea as a Healthier City.
- Swansea has a Local Area Coordination team covering the whole city to help people find the right help and support, now working in all areas, helping people to 'Get a life not a service'. A Local Area Coordinator can help anyone build relationships within their community.



- Swansea Council has a strong track record of applying evidence-based Practice Frameworks to drive social work improvements, such as Signs of Safety and Collaborative Communication: a ‘What matters to you’ conversation is now central to how we work, across social services. Through a ‘warm’ front door we can help promote wellbeing and prevent rapid escalation of needs.
- Our multi-agency approach to Information, Advice and Assistance, whether accessed directly, via Early Help or at the social

services front door help citizens get the right help, in the right place, at the right time- when they need it most.

- Child & Family Services are responsible for the provision of statutory and preventative social services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and families.
- Our vision is "Doing what matters to make things better for children, young people and families".
- The Council are continually improving outcomes for children and young people - by promoting rights of, and opportunities for children and young people, and toward better life chances for looked after children and care leavers. Our leadership team remains focused on delivering our vision and developing a culture committed to continual learning and development of our staff.
- Child and Family Services Improvement Programme looks across the whole system, so that the focus remains on what matters to children, young people and families; creating plans that they are fully involved in that are reviewed regularly with their natural support network and any professionals that may help them.
- We are implementing a new 'Supporting children and young people to be safe with family' strategy taking action to reduce the number of children and young people who need to be looked after by Swansea Council, where safe alternatives can be identified.
- Our statutory Social Services received **7,072** contacts on behalf of children during the past year (last year =8,119).

- We helped **2,387** children and young people by providing advice or assistance (-).
- We completed new assessments of **2,576** children during the year (602).
- We completed **607** assessments of children, who were born at the time the assessment concluded (547).
- At the end of March 2023, we were supporting **983** children and young people in Swansea in need of care and support (886).
- Through the year 2022/23, there were **463** children in Swansea on the Child Protection Register.
- At the end of March 2023, there were **203** children on the child protection register (200).
- During 2022/23, **109** children become looked after (108).
- At the end of March 2023, we were supporting **481** looked after children and young people in Swansea in need of care and support (488).
- Swansea is embedding innovative approaches how we work with communities through 'Contextual Safeguarding'. This means better understanding and responding to harm that young people face beyond their family homes.
- Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to harm that adolescents face beyond their family homes, this type of harm is referred to as Extra familial harm and can include CSE, CCE, youth violence and peer on peer abuse.
- In the first year since it was formed, our new Contextual, Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (CMET) panel considered **50** referrals and around 25 agencies have been in attendance.

- More information and stories about Swansea's Child and Family Services, is included within the Director of Social Services Annual Report.
- Adults Services are responsible for the provision of statutory and preventative social services to the most vulnerable adults in Swansea.
- Our Vision for Adult Services is: 'Working alongside you to live well and safely in our community'.
- Adult Services is supporting more people in innovative ways, and the Council has remodelled more of its service delivery to people with complex needs who require care and support. Our Adult Services Service model continues to focus upon early intervention, prevention and reablement and integrated care pathways with Swansea Bay University Health Board.
- Adult Services Transformation programme has again needed to focus on the care and support available to our most vulnerable adults, through the recovery and stabilisation of health and social care services both locally and regionally.
- Our transformational ambition for Adult Services is based on our vision to ensure best possible support is available for people and their carers by making best use of community resources available; supported by our highly skilled and valued workforce.
- We achieve this by ensuring that co-production underpins our planning and commissioning, we are delivering services with people, rather than for them.
- There is high demand for social care assistance at the front door, and for social care assessments completed by frontline social work teams, with people receiving

ongoing care and support, including support to carers as a result.

- We are challenging historic ways of working by embedding a practice model, 'Collaborative Communication', which focuses on the rights of citizens, building on the voice, choice and control of individuals, their strengths, support networks and their own wellbeing outcomes.
- Our statutory Adult social services received **11,522** contacts during the year (Last year = 4,830).
- Of this number, **3,635** people were helped through information or advice provided (4,298).
- Adult Services completed **3,551** new assessments during the year (3,859).
- We completed **518** carers assessments for adults in year (348).
- At the end of March 2023, we were supporting **5,652** adults with a care and support plan (5,323).
- We also completed **3,324** reviews of Care and Support plans (2,345)
- We received **709** reports of an adult suspected of being at risk this year (959), carrying out **107** investigations (85).
- **1,418** Adults started to receive social services during the year (1,309).
- **450** vulnerable adults in Swansea, with a care and support plan. had their needs met through a direct payment (399).
- **Activity and Performance Data taken from Director of Social Services Annual Report 2022/23 - to be published in October 2023.**

Resources

- **Workforce**- We have continued to support and develop our social care workforce and managers to be the best they can be, and to provide the highest quality services. As we move away from Covid-19 restrictions, our focus is now on our workforce and making sure we have the capacity in teams to do what you want and need to do. We need to reinforce our workforce with the range of skills, passion, humanity and creativity to achieve what matters to people in our communities. We need to support their wellbeing and professional development.
- We have an ambitious Workforce and Workforce Wellbeing strategic programme to help us do all we can to make Swansea Social Services a place to be proud of and a place of choice. Swansea Council has shown a commitment to achieving the Real Living Wage, as well as embarking on a transformation and investment in workforce development and a workforce focused on preventative services to positively impacting those needing care and support and our communities.
- Social Services Workforce strategy is implemented within the Child and Family Services Improvement programme and within the Adult Services Transformation programme.
- **Commissioning** - Swansea Council's approach to commissioning and procurement has coproduction at its centre; aiming to ensure the vulnerable person is enabled to live their best lives.
- We commission services people want and need to build resilience. By looking across local population needs across the whole

directorate is helping to maximise opportunities, to join up partnership work, secure grant income and putting service user involvement and lived experience at the centre of what we do.

- **Budget** – Social Services has a track record of financial efficacy; achieving delivery of high-quality service within agreed financial resources. Our approach for the years ahead is set out within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.
- **Income and Charges**- Swansea Council demonstrates best practice by carrying out an annual review of social care charges, reported to Cabinet, supporting principles of fairness and transparency, as well as Council's budgetary.
- **Public Information:** Swansea citizens, including children and young people, have the right to reliable public information about what help is available, and clear arrangements to access the help they need. It is important, as early as possible in our processes to provide as much up to date information about services and resource as we can to adults, children and young people.
- Swansea Family Information Service works in partnership with the private, voluntary, independent, community and maintained sector –to shape and secure a range of high-quality children's and childcare services.
- Dewis Cymru is a national wellbeing directory providing an online library of community assets. There are currently 578 different organisations and groups listed across these platforms. Swansea has increased the number of local resources published to **986** (833).

- **Assets** - The council has an asset management strategy and plan and manages care sites and administrative buildings in line with this plan. The council has approved a pandemic working model which builds on the council's agile working policy.

Engagement



- In March 2023 we celebrated the great work of our Early Years, Childcare and Play sector (**63** awards to people and organisations).
- Swansea Young Carers forum has been set up to help lead on local and regional developments.
- Swansea Parent Carer Forum has a shared vision: "Swansea is a place where voices of families are valued and effectively used to achieve an equitable and inclusive quality of life for our children of all ages", and their aim is to make sure that local services meet the needs of disabled children, young people, adults and their families.

Strengths

Swansea Council are working in partnerships both regionally and locally to coproduce and commission innovative service models, building on committee work undertaken with elected members.

Despite high demand at the statutory front door in safeguarding and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens, social services retain a strong focus on prevention / early help across the whole system.

Swansea Council's longstanding commitment to Local Area Coordination is central to this approach, and a full evaluation is being undertaken by Swansea University.

We are developing new, imaginative approaches in attracting new qualified and unqualified workers to want to work in the health and social care sector, and in retaining their loyalty and commitment through Child & Family Services' Academi.

We are developing a volunteer strategy and new models of delivery in areas where traditional providers struggle to operate and to support to unpaid carers.

Challenges

To continue to reduce demand and waiting times for adult social care, and to build resilience in the provider market both locally and regionally.

To work alongside citizens and partners to coproduce plans to enhance services offers to children and adults with complex needs in areas such as day services respite care and support to carers

DELIVERING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

Long term - implementing a corporate transformation plan and programmes to ensure that the Council's operating model, technology, processes, service delivery and resources are best placed to meet future demand and challenges.

Prevention Continued focus on prevention, early help and self-service, remodelling of whole system including services to meet increased demand and complex needs.

Collaboration – in collaboration with partners across the public, private and third sectors via Swansea Public Services Board, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board and Regional Safeguarding Board.

Involvement - through how we practice social work and social care, how coproduce plans and strategies, within our transformation programmes, by sharing best practice across all services, by skilled leadership and learning culture.

Integration –through population assessment and Regional Area Plans, by working towards shared strategic goals and outcomes to improve patient journey and access to high quality care and support delivered by a motivated, skilled and professional workforce.

MAXIMIZING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL BEING GOALS

A More Prosperous Wales: *ensuring that the workforce, communities and individuals have the skills and experience to make the most from the opportunities that are emerging from digital technologies. Developing the right skills, technical expertise, leadership for transformation.*

A Resilient Wales: *rationalising our operational estate and implementing a post pandemic working model with hybrid and home working arrangements to reduce travel time and carbon emissions.*

A Wales of Cohesive Communities: *working towards Swansea becoming a Human Rights city and embedding equality and diversity and rights-based approach in all that we do. Supporting cohesive, inclusive and diverse communities.*

A Globally Responsible Wales: *developing an approach to ethical procurement, creating social and community benefits and reducing low carbon emissions will have a positive impact on global well-being.*

OVERALL ASSESSMENT 2022/23

Progress in meeting this objective is **Strong** and prospects for improvement are **Mixed**.

We are continuing to build upon our approach to transformation through our corporate transformation plan and service transformation programmes to ensure our organisation, people and assets are fit for the future.

Health and Social Care is currently challenged with a growing demand. Both Adult Services Transformation and Child and Family Services Improvement programmes, together with cross cutting commissioning reviews and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board work programme set out meet the needs of a changing population by building integrated pathways in health and social care and transforming our service offers in moving away from traditional models of service delivery.

We have continued to support and develop our social care workforce and managers to be the best they can be, and to provide the highest quality services. As we move away from Covid-19 restrictions, our focus is now on our workforce and making sure we have the capacity in teams to do what you want and what we need to do. We are trying to reinforce our workforce with the range of skills, passion, humanity and creativity to achieve what matters to people in our communities. We need to support their wellbeing and professional development.

We are focused on quality assurance and improvement, to avoid increasing service costs, duplication of efforts and getting the right skill mix in place to ensure services are both high-quality, yet sustainable for the future. To achieve, coproduction and effective collaboration with partners are central to how we work, so that shared capacity, pooling resources, by integrating pathways, by sharing expertise, we are extending the contributions to improved citizen well-being, saving time, resources, and working in a more efficient and effective ways.

There is continued pressures on Social Care funding, set to continue in future years. Already there is increasing demand for social care, higher service costs including the increased costs of externally commissioned care, and limits placed on public sector funding. Facing such unprecedented challenge requires the Council to accelerate the transformation of social care services, to become more sustainable, net zero carbon, to meet future population needs and rising demand, in the most effective and efficient ways through our Medium-Term Final Plan.

In support of the corporate objective safeguarding our most vulnerable people, and the Council's policy commitments our efforts are continually focused on three key areas: Placement Sufficiency, Prevention/Early Intervention and Workforce We are continuing to transform our service offers, to ensure there is placement and care sufficiency, by focusing on prevention and early intervention and by implementing our workforce strategy. However, there are resource uncertainties in relation accessing grant funding, demand and workforce capacity which have a greater impact when there is increased demand for social care provision.

Improving Education and Skills

Performance - Progress made

- Highly successful Estyn inspection of local education services in 2022. Many strengths and notable features, particularly in relation to support for school improvement and quality of support in mainstream education for pupils at risk of disengagement.
- No secondary schools are currently in Estyn monitoring.
- Post pandemic, Welsh Government no longer collects end of key stage assessment information. However, local analysis of data shows Swansea had above Wales average learner outcomes at AS, A-Level and GCSE level.



- Post pandemic, there has been a national decline in school attendance. However, it is slowly improving and Swansea's overall school attendance for 5-16yrs is currently above the national average rate of attendance.

- Schools in challenging contexts, have lower attendance compared to schools in less deprived areas of Swansea.
- Developed a holistic attendance action plan to ensure there are consistent policies across all schools and clear processes for the Education Welfare Service.



- Produced a strategy to support literacy and numeracy outcomes in schools by undertaking an audit of provision, strategies and training for literacy and numeracy, developing action plans and identifying key target areas for training and support.
- Delivering Education's Digital Strategy through the Welsh Government's Hwb EdTech capital funding programme and provided digital devices and audio-visual solutions across our schools.
- Implementing the Vulnerable Learners Inclusion Strategy 2023-2028, endorsed by Cabinet.
- Developing a programme of safeguarding audits and the upskilling of peer auditors to keep learners safe.
- Supporting looked after children with an emphasis on listening to young voices. Developed e-PEP (personal education plan) and a virtual school model IT solution.

- Remodelling provision of suitable specialist places for learners with additional learning needs, in addition to providing training on additional learning needs for staff within mainstream schools and the development of a Social Communications Champions network.
- Developed a 'Cost of living help – school costs' page on the Council's website to provide advice and support for families about free school meals, uniform costs, breakfast clubs, free period products, access to library services including Wi-Fi, books (electronic and print) and homework clubs.
- Delivering universal free school meals for all Reception aged children and freezing the price of paid school meals.
- Approved Swansea's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) which outlines a ten-year vision, for increasing and improving planning for Welsh-medium.
- Continued to make improvements to the increase the percentage of year 11 pupils entered to sit a GCSE in Welsh (first language).



- Trialed a centre for primary latecomers (Welsh Medium) based at YGG Tan-y-lan.

with a view to developing a similar model in Welsh-medium secondary schools

- Continued our Siarter Iaith journey with a number of schools recently receiving accreditations to promote the Welsh language, develop a Welsh ethos and encourage pupils to improve their Welsh language skills.



- Learner representatives delivered and presented a Pupil Voice Manifesto to full Council on the 7 July 2022.
- Established a Votes at 16 Ambassadors project with Democratic Service and schools, supporting young people to vote.
- Developed a post-16 curriculum collaboration strategy with key partners including Swansea City and County Association of Secondary Headteachers, Gower College Swansea, Careers Wales, Partneriaeth and Welsh Government.
- Conducted an extensive learner voice survey with sixth form learners to better understand their experiences of the provision on offer, the transition process, and their understanding of employability skills and pathways.
- Developed a memorandum of understanding for the successful transition

of all school leavers in Swansea for the 2023-2024 academic year for use between schools, post-16 providers of education and Careers Wales.



- Tracked all school leavers and their known destination, aiming to reducing the number of young people not in education, employment of training (NEETs)
- Worked to improve the school estate. Continued to deliver an annual capital maintenance programme, alongside larger projects, such as the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, that included the completion of new builds for YG Tan-y-Lan, YGG Tirdeunaw, YGG Bryniago and Y G Gŵyr.
- All capital building works undertaken in Band A, B and Sustainable Communities for Learning programmes have achieved Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) Good or Excellent and/or an Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) 'A' rating.
- A range of other capital maintenance works have been undertaken to support carbon efficiency. Electrical vehicle workplace charging points have been

installed at YGG Tan-y-lan and YGG Tirdeunaw.

- Developing a carbon reduction strategy to capture a range of workstreams aimed to ensure the schools' estate is more environmentally friendly.
- Established a School Climate Change Forum. All schools have been enrolled on an online tool 'Energy Sparks', which provides a school-specific energy analysis tool and education programme. Schools with particularly high energy usage identified through the Energy Sparks work received bespoke guidance and support.
- Continuing to support school leadership through a school leadership programme. Developed a new senior leaders handbook including support for distributed leadership, mentoring and secondments.
- Reviewed school governance arrangements and developing an action plan to improve arrangements to best support school governance and school leadership in the future.
- Developed Abertawe 2028 with headteachers and refined with the School Improvement Partnership and ready to launch fully in Autumn 2023.



Resources

- **Budget** - Continued effective delivery of a coherent and consistent Medium Term Financial Plan, capital investment, maintenance and school organisation programme.
- The School Budget Forum provides challenge to planned school budget arrangements. The Forum also formally responds to the Council's budget setting process each year.
- The bulk of procurement is undertaken by schools through their delegated budgets and comprehensive guidance and training is provided to support them in this task.
- Close monitoring of budgets and regular budget review sessions are in place to highlight budget concerns.
- **Workforce** - The Directorate's workforce is allocated strategically utilising the available financial resource to ensure that statutory requirements are met and to support key corporate priorities. A restructure of the senior leadership team took place in 2022 to reflect the changing context, including legislative changes and the impact of the pandemic.
- **Assets** - long-term capital investment, structural maintenance and school organisation programmes, set out clearly within Council Budget papers.
- A Quality in Education (QEd) programme ensures clear governance around planning and delivery of both the maintenance of the current estate and planning around transformation to meet current and future needs.

Strengths

Overall, good quality local education services and outcomes for learners – as demonstrated by Estyn inspection 2022.

Strong school improvement, preparing for the new curriculum and working collaboratively between schools and the region. Focus on supporting and developing school leadership.

Enabling learners' voices, building upon participation mechanisms, embedding a rights-based approach.

Good partnership working and collaboration with other teams across the Council such as Child and Family services, parents/carers and other consultative partnerships.

Challenges

Budget pressures, inflationary impacts and rising costs. Legacy issues, savings targets and grant funding.

Future funding uncertainty and lack of coherence between implications of national expectations of education and funding to deliver.

Attendance levels – impact of the pandemic and increased levels of anxiety, mental health issues, challenging behaviours.

Rising poverty levels and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on learning.

Retaining key staff and sickness in key areas.

Demographic pressures in year groups affecting admissions and subsequent appeals.

DELIVERING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

Long term - identifying longer-term skill requirements and employment opportunities arising from the Swansea Bay City Deal. Increasing the provision and use of the Welsh Language. Improving and creating learning environments which are fit for the future.

Prevention - taking preventative actions in addition to making swift intervention where problems occur. Early identification of need will support learners access education and support learners who are at risk of becoming NEET.

Collaboration - building on established relationships and working with other Directorates and teams across the Council, Elected Members, parents and carers, learners, other consultative partnership groups that have been developed to work together to plan and deliver key objectives.

Involvement - ensuring that stakeholder engagement mechanisms are used at the earliest opportunity and providing guidance and advice across the Directorate. Ensuring staff who have specialist knowledge of key areas have sight of plans and development of work at an early stage to ensure that the right areas are involved. Supporting learners voices and the Pupil manifesto.

Integration - continuing to integrate national requirements and expectations into local arrangements, programmes, plans and strategies which enables all learners to have access to good quality education which suits their needs with the opportunity to realise their potential.

MAXIMIZING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL BEING GOALS

A More Prosperous Wales: ensuring that learners have the skills and experience to make the most from the opportunities that are emerging from the Swansea Bay City Deal and digital technologies.

A Healthier Wales: supporting learners access personal support, advice, guidance, advocacy and school-based counselling services to address issues such as anxiety, neuro-developmental difficulties, ALN, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and sensory processing difficulties.

A Wales of Cohesive Communities: embedding equality and diversity and a rights-based approach in learning experiences, outcomes and environments.

A Globally Responsible Wales: Capital Work adheres to the Council's sustainable procurement standards and commitment to ethical employment in supply chains. Support learners' sustainable behaviour and using resources sustainably.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT 2022/23

Progress in meeting this objective is **Strong** and prospects for improvement are **Strong**.

We are continuing to provide good quality local education services with above Wales average learner outcomes. The quality of our provision and our approach to curriculum development, leadership and school improvement is strong. Working with our partners we are developing a range of post 16 pathways and supporting learners at risk of disengagement and becoming NEET.

The pandemic had a significant impact upon our learners. Post pandemic, challenges remain in relation to attendance, exclusions, anxiety and mental health problems and challenging behaviour. Increasing poverty and the cost-of-living crisis is also presenting a challenge to learners' outcomes and well-being. We are building on our collaborative work with a range of partners to support vulnerable learners and provide a holistic approach to the learning and well-being of our learners.

There has been an increase in the number of learners with additional learning needs. As part of our inclusion approach, we are working to increase the number of places within specialist facilities, increase support and capacity within mainstream provision and develop alternative pathways to meet the needs of individual learners. Challenges remain in relation to meeting needs, national expectations and requirements, within existing budgets resources.

Budget pressures, inflation and rising costs, in addition to legacy issues and savings targets have resulted in pressure on resources and future planned resources. Short term grant funding has enabled us to mitigate some aspects of poverty such as freezing school meals, however there are risks related to the sustainability to these initiatives if revenue funding is required in the future. Working with our School Budget Forum, we are identifying ways in which can respond the budget pressures and make the most effective use of resources.

We are supporting schools leadership through the development of a programme to retain and encourage senior staff to adopt leadership roles. Working with Partneraieth and the Welsh Government we have produced a programme of training and support, including mentoring and secondment opportunities to develop and sustain our leadership capacity and capability.

We are continuing to build upon and improve our school estate, including the provision of new special school facilities and our annual capital maintenance programme. However, there are pressures in relation accessing capital funding due to increased construction costs and demographic pressures resulting in an increased demand for provision.

Transforming our economy and infrastructure

Performance - Progress made

- Led on the implementation of the South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan in Swansea, securing UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Welsh Government funding, helping to create thousands of new jobs for the people of Swansea aiming for high quality and secure employment.
- Initiated discussions for a new Swansea Bay Strategy.
- Commenced work on the replacement Swansea Local Development Plan to provide an up-to-date planning and placemaking framework for guiding decisions on development proposals.



- Designed process to produce a Local Economic Delivery Plan to deliver economic prosperity for Swansea that has strategic fit with broader agendas and that will contribute to the aims of partners at the national, regional and local levels.
- Leveraged funding from the private sector to bring premises back to life, to support the local economy and provide additional residential accommodation.

- Prepared consultation and discussion responses to progress work with Welsh Government on TAN15 to find a solution that supports appropriate development.
- Secured ownership of the vacant Debenhams store and are in discussions to deliver a major new tenant.
- Established £750 million 20-year strategic partnership with Urban Splash to implement a strategic regeneration programme initially focusing on a new waterfront district including Copr Bay Phase 2, the Civic Centre and St Thomas sites.
- Secured our historical buildings for future generations on site at the Palace Theatre and Albert Hall private sector Transforming Towns supported developments.
- Developed commercial 'meanwhile' uses in the city centre working with Regeneration Swansea.
- Promoted and developed city living, retail office and food and drink facilities via the Transforming Towns grant programme.



- Secured planning permission for new Castle Square Gardens Project. The scheme will add more trees, greenery, a new water feature, and band stand type facility while generating revenue from new pavilion buildings.

- Completed £3m improvement of Wind Street including new paving, seating and greenery, with dedicated outdoor spaces for hospitality dining areas.



- Started work on new City Centre Community Hub project transforming the former BHS building including a new home for central library and archives development.
- Constructed 71-72 The Kingsway up to first floor level. The sustainable landmark building which will provide office accommodation for 600 employees is part funded by £1.3 city deal.
- Demolished Ty Dewi Sant to make way for development.
- Paved way for the Skyline Park attraction on Kilvey Hill planning application by carrying out land assembly and technical surveys.
- Facilitated international consortium to develop a renewable energy transport hub in SA1 including electric and hydrogen charging facilities.
- Secured loan on Copr Bay hotel project.
- Advanced Hafod construction work enabling new whisky distillery attraction at Landore. Activated iconic clock tower at the Copperworks' regenerated

powerhouse.



- £2m Levelling up bid project to develop and re-open the River Tawe corridor including new pontoons and an extension at Swansea Museum is underway.
- New promenade improvements commenced as part of flood prevention work at Mumbles.
- Continued discussions to deliver new interactive Aquarium, offering visitors an immersive experience.
- Commenced talks regarding a new ferry service linking Wales with South West of England.
- Commenced £1million local road upgrade programme.
- Planned investment in new infrastructure to progress the roll-out of free public Wi-Fi.
- Supported business (both start up and existing) through the Business Swansea provision. Funded more than 50 start-up businesses with grants of up to £1,000. Business improvement Grants subsidised improvements to business exteriors.
- Created a range of employment and training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive via 22 community benefit clauses in contracts.

This has created 4034 targeted recruitment and training weeks.

- Reported Copr Bay project secured over 8,000 person weeks of employment, apprenticeships and trainee placements throughout the build, with a 41.5% supply chain spend in the Swansea Bay City Region, and 64% of the spend staying in Wales.
- Supported partners to provide a strong and resilient creative network embedded across City Centre, District and local centres.
- 125 years lease renewal of the Dylan Thomas Theatre to Swansea Little Theatre Company



- Delivered an events programme including the biggest and busiest Christmas Parade and a range of new and exciting immersive attractions, summer concerts and a new phase of Arena shows.
- The annual Wales National Air Show has been held, bringing tens of thousands of visitors to the City and introduced the Iron Man and World Para Triathlon Championship event.
- Promoted sustainable use of sports pitches for local sports clubs. Ongoing delivery of all-weather pitches and investment in parks and play area upgrades.

- Completed Llynderw Skate Park and improved other facilities.
- Furthered discussions with partners regarding International Sport Science Village.
- Managed the Welsh Government Social Housing Grant of £23.7m to enable Registered Social Landlords and Swansea Council to enable delivery of affordable housing during 2022/23



- Refurbished and upgraded tower blocks.
- Acquired 53 properties during 2022/23 to increase social housing stock as part of on-going Acquisition Programme.
- Prepared for future development of two large schemes part of a plan to deliver 300 homes over four years.
- Implemented the maintenance phase of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) with £7m invested in wind and weatherproofing and renewable energy systems helping residents heat their homes affordably and reducing emissions.
- Helped ensure businesses are run in line with relevant legislation, with public health team support for sectors from hospitality and catering to the licensed taxi sector.
- Ensured private rented properties and Homes in Multiple Occupation are safe for tenants and rouge traders are prosecuted

protecting the public from unsafe and counterfeit goods.

Resources

- **Budget** - Revenue budgets, the Economic Recovery Fund, and Capital Funding are all being used where possible to secure additional external funding sources to maximise impact.
 - Many of the planning and city regeneration services and initiatives are externally funded with strict timelines and this adds complexity when responding to financial pressures and changes.
 - Additional staff have been secured through externally funding programmes to take forward specific programmes of work.
 - **Workforce** - The workforce has continued to rise to a number of challenges including the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The well-being of staff has been a key priority for management across services and adjustments to ways of working have been taken forward in close collaboration with all staff.
 - Hybrid working arrangements have been assisting productivity gains, reducing sickness levels and improving delivery. Staff are encouraged to keep training and knowledge up to date through the Council's training portal.
 - **Assets** - Our long-term regeneration partnership with Urban Splash utilises our strategic assets to maximise regeneration investment and impact.
- Close partnership working with members of the Regeneration Swansea partnership has been key to driving forward regeneration schemes, securing funding

e.g., Shared Prosperity Funding and maximising resources and outputs.

Strengths

Agile, committed, professional and vocational workforce.

A dedicated team which focuses on external funding bids has helped reduce some of the duplication around application processes.

Clear 'placemaking' agenda emphasises future development must accord with overarching aims of enhancing quality of life and well-being.

Partner relationships stronger than ever with support from business, sectoral networks, third sector and community groups.

Challenges

The revised Welsh Housing Quality Standard and cost of decarbonising housing stock is estimated at over £875 over 30 years currently unaffordable without government assistance.

Sustainability of some strategic private sector delivery partners such as those in Leisure.

Ageing facilities & building asset maintenance.

The post covid landscape and time taken for recovery.

Capacity issues impact on efficiency of decision making.

DELIVERING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

Long term - Transformed the city and county's infrastructure to support a strong and resilient economy and environment by focussing on key developments and enhancing key assets. The Shaping Swansea procurement maximised the use of the council's land ownership to secure a long-term strategic development partner in Urban Splash.

Prevention – Proactive role supported the revitalisation of the City Centre as a place to live, play, work and socialise as well as shop following challenging times and trends placing pressure on the tradition retail model.

Collaboration – Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea council worked closely together to produce the Regional Investment Plan which aimed to improve urban and rural communities, support small business, boost skills, lead on renewable energy leader and grow the visitor economy securing Shared Prosperity Fund worth 138m over 3 years.

Involvement – Many services are front facing with high levels of engagement with a diversity of the population. New forms of involvement embraced include co-production, for example the Dylan Thomas Centre's work with West Glamorgan People First which was shortlisted for the Museums Association's Museums Change Lives Awards.

Integration – Promote and enhanced a diverse and sustainable local economy through a robust policy framework which connects National expectations via Planning Policy Wales etc., aligning jobs with environment, housing and infrastructure, regional aims via the Regional Economic Delivery Plan, local context via the Local Development Plan and Public Services Board's Local Well-being Plan and specific local plans, policies and strategies. All plans are developed in consultation with stakeholders.

MAXIMISING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL-BEING GOALS

A More Prosperous Wales: *increasing productivity and sustainable economic growth, that support the creation and safeguarding of more, better paid jobs, opportunities for business starts and growth, and further links between the knowledge base and industry.*

A Resilient Wales: *Applying circular economy principles and sustainable approaches to development improving green infrastructure wherever possible.*

A more equal Wales: *recognising the need to apply an 'inclusive growth' model via efforts to support skills outcomes, resilience to automation, and mechanisms to support greater wealth retention within the community.*

A Wales of vibrant culture and Welsh language: *Supporting the growth of the creative economy (including that associated with the Welsh language) is an important part of the Swansea investment proposition and essential to repurpose the City Centre.*

OVERALL ASSESSMENT 2022/23

Progress in meeting this objective is **Strong** and prospects for improvement are **Strong**.

Continued strength meeting this objective is anticipated despite uncertainty in markets and global outlook as this is balanced with a clear future forward workplan and programme funding secured to date. Significant progress has been made providing a firm foundation for the future. The Council has worked closely with stakeholders and regeneration partners to drive forward economic and infrastructure. Such collaboration has helped inform the design of programmes and initiatives to ensure they closely meet the needs of stakeholders from employability projects to business grant schemes, etc.

We have been successful in securing funding streams to support our work and lever in additional funds from the private sector. There has been investment in housing and communities to ensure Swansea continues to be a good place to live, work and visit. The sustainability of private sector support for ambitious local and regional economic regeneration plans although remaining strong, is a potential risk in the current economic climate.

Governance for this objective is well-established due to accountability at multiple levels and due diligence requirements so is felt to be successfully embedded in all our processes and governance mechanisms. Decision making is in line with CIPFA principles of good governance across elected member committee processes and delegated decision-making frameworks in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2014 and Environment (Wales) Act 2015.

The establishment of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee has enabled local authorities to exercise joint functions relating to strategic planning, transport and economic well-being providing ownership and oversight of the 'Regional Economic Delivery Plan'. Concerns over progress on some of the largest Swansea Bay City deal projects such as "homes as power stations" have been reviewed.

Budgetary pressures and recruitment policies have generated resilience issues, with a contracting, ageing workforce and reliance on a small number of individual officers in key specialist fields. The Authority is increasingly having to "buy in" services to address specialism gaps. The backlog in many public facing services from the pandemic such as public protection is reducing, enabling an increased return to 'business as usual' response rates. Cost of living and inflation issues impact constrain income generation, for example, service costs increase yet planning fees are set at national level and while destination costs rise, the squeeze on disposable incomes impacts ability to raise prices. However, continued investment in new systems has reduced bureaucracy and improved efficiency in many areas.



- Increased our temporary accommodation stock by refurbishing long term voids (34), making more acquisitions and converting existing property such as former Penlan and Eastside housing offices units of accommodation.
- Continued to prevent rent arrears and sustain Council tenancies - in 2022/23 there were 4 evictions for rent arrears, compared to 57 in 19/20.
- Continued to support rough sleepers with advice and assistance. Rough sleeping still remains very low and this year rough sleeping has fallen to below an average of 10 people per night, which is less than half what we were seeing in 2017-18
- During 2022-23, 270 properties benefitted from renewed windows, insulated attics and insulated walls. 300 properties benefitted from new gas boilers with more efficient systems.
- Spent over £800k on purchasing solar panels and battery storage ready improvement schemes and piloted a small programme of installing environmental sensors to monitor the internal room temperature, humidity levels and carbon dioxide levels.

- Installed over 200 Drimasters this year (900 in total) to reduce the risk of damp and mould forming.
- Completed 25 new homes at Hill View Crescent in Clase and 6 new Bungalows at West Cross
- Converted four 1-bedroom flats and commissioned 4 passivhaus pods at Bryn House, a former social services property in Gorseinon into two 3-bedroom homes and converted two District Housing Offices (Penlan and Eastside) to create 10 one-bed and two-bed flats (due to be completed in July 2023).



- Continuing to produce new homes through the demolition of the former District Housing Offices Gorseinon Business Park.

Resources

- **Budget** - Performance within budget constraints has been successful despite the challenges relating to the Cost-of-Living crisis and ongoing economic pressures within services. Many of the tackling poverty services and initiatives are grant funded and this adds complexity when responding to financial pressures and changes.
- Some budgets such as Housing Support Grant (HSG) and Regional Integrated Fund (RIF) are provided at flat rates which increase the risks of constraining performance.
- **Workforce** -The workforce has continued to rise to a number of challenges including the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Wellbeing of staff has been a key priority for management across services and adjustments to ways of working have been taken forward in close collaboration with all staff.
- **Assets** – We have introduced new assets to support our tackling poverty efforts such as the Employment Hub in the Quadrant Shopping Centre. We have continued to use our existing community-based assets as effectively as possible, maintaining premises and exploring opportunities to share assets with other teams and services where possible. We continue to work collaboratively with partners to use other local assets effectively including Local Area Coordinators connecting with local hubs, community groups and privately owned assets.

Strengths

Strong internal and external partnership working and networks.

Good reach of services across the county and a relatively high number of people accessing support and services.

Supports wider infrastructure enabling the Third sector and other partners to sustain and extend the reach of services.

Clear housing support pathways and the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping.

Long term programme of new energy efficient house building, retro fitting, decommissioning and converting buildings.

Embeds co-production and the voices of people with lived experience of poverty in service design, delivery and review.

Challenges

Reliance on grant funding and a risk related to funding meeting local needs and long-term sustainability of services.

Need to develop a performance management framework with clear measurable outcomes.

Demand for good quality affordable housing, continues to outstrip supply.

Need for new energy efficiency measures in private housing stock, particularly in the private rented sector.

Continuing cost of living crisis means that demand for support and services is likely to increase significantly in the future.

DELIVERING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

Long term - Striking a balance between the short-term needs of people in poverty (such as the need for housing and essential resources like food and clothes) with helping people to improve their personal prosperity and long-term aspirations for the future. Adopting a person-centred, strengths-based to our services to ensure that we consider the short and long-term needs of the individual, family or community with whom we are working.

Prevention - Using early interventions, strategic partnerships and community-led initiatives to take a preventative approach to not only poverty but the wider impacts of poverty to ensure that escalating needs are addressed before service interventions are required. Aiming to resolve issues through preventative action instead of relying on crisis support, reducing demand on important services by identifying and addressing the core issues of poverty early and effectively.

Collaboration - Working with partners and stakeholders on a 'whole systems approach' to tackling poverty and enabling communities including communities themselves to reflect the diversity of our population and the opportunities available from collaboration and service integration.

Involvement - Embedding the principles of human rights and co-production across our tackling poverty and enabling communities programmes and initiatives, mapping the experiences and capturing the voices of people with lived experience of poverty.

Integration - Developing a framework for linking our national, regional and local outcomes that demonstrates the contributions of our services and transformation programmes to public body strategies, policies and objectives.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT 2022/23

Progress in meeting this objective is **Strong** and prospects for improvement are **Strong**.

We have continued to build upon partnership working and strong networks so that tackling poverty is seen as 'everybody's business'. This has enabled the Council to respond effectively and innovatively in the ways in which resources are used to create capacity and extend the reach and sustainability of services for people experiencing, or at risk of poverty.

The evidence shows that there are a relatively large number of people accessing support and benefitting from employability services, lifelong learning, local area co-ordination and welfare rights and debt support. We have embedded people's lived experience and co-production across our service planning, delivery and reviews.

However, there is no single performance framework which measures the difference in outcomes for people before and after they have received the service/support. Although some services have commissioned external evaluations, there is no plan to evaluate all individual services. Services do not routinely collect data to show why some people choose *not* to take up services and/or drop out of support, or collect data in relation to protected characteristics or other vulnerability criteria. This challenge has been identified as an area for improvement.

Although we are maximizing the way in which we make the best use of grant funding and reviewing the reliance on grant funding to look for greater flexibility in relation, many of our services are supported by grant funding which raises challenges in terms of the long-term sustainability of services.

We have continued to develop clear pathways for people at risk of homelessness and to provide housing support for vulnerable people with complex needs.

This year we have continued to build a number of new homes, convert existing buildings and acquire additional property/land, providing a range of new affordable and energy efficient homes. However, the demand for affordable homes continues to outstrip supply. The demand for homes in the private sector has increased, whilst the supply has reduced, resulting in a shortage of homes within this sector. Rents in the private sector have increased significantly in recent years and people living within the private rented sector pay much higher rents than other tenants.

We have installed a range of energy efficiency measures in our new homes, converting existing buildings and retro-fitting our existing housing stock, fewer homes aiming to reduce fuel poverty. However fewer homes in the privately owned sector have benefitted from new energy efficiency measures. People living within the private rented sector are most likely to live in the least energy efficient homes paying more for rent and energy.

MAXIMIZING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL BEING GOALS

A More Prosperous Wales: *ensuring people can secure decent work, Skills fit for the future and procuring goods and services in ways that support economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.*

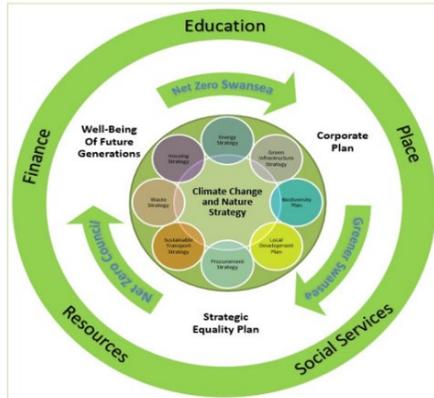
A Healthier Wales: *supporting people to act with compassion, supporting place-making and designing-in community health and well-being.*

A Wales of Cohesive Communities: *Creating the conditions where people and communities can do the things that matter to them, supporting communities to be well-connected and safe, ensuring everyone has access to key services and valuing the role that potential community anchor organisations can play in building cohesive communities.*

Delivering on nature recovery and climate change

Performance - Progress made

- Adopted a Climate Change and Nature Recovery Strategy in December 2022.



- Launched Swansea Council Net Zero - 30 Actions by 2030 Action Plan with robust governance and reporting processes.
- Reporting of emissions information to Welsh Government in September 2022.
- Accredited as the first UK Council to achieve Bronze One Planet Standard recognising corporate wide efforts to reduce our ecological footprint.
- Submitted our second Section 6 Biodiversity Report (2020-2022) to Welsh Government in line with the 3-year planning and reporting cycle. Evidence has been collected to feed into development of the 2023-2025 Action Plan.
- Worked as a member of Swansea Local Nature Partnership to draft an initial draft outline Local Nature Recovery Action Plan.

- Formed the Climate Change and Nature Action Signatories Group of key partners to lead on Swansea Project Zero 2050 agenda.



- Celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee as a designated 'Queen's Green Canopy Champion City' in recognition of our tree planting efforts to improve the city's green infrastructure and natural environment.
- Delivered Welsh Government Local Places for Nature grant funded works on habitat restoration, wildflowers, tree planting and community food growing with Local Nature Partnership partner organisation support.
- Opened temporary pop-up park at Swansea Central North development site with 40 planters improving the area's biodiversity.
- Sowed ten acres of wildflowers across approximately 190 sites and introduced native varieties which will bloom year after year.
- Achieved Green Flag status for six Swansea Parks and 14 'community awards' recognising our high-quality green spaces.
- Expanded 'cut and collect' trial of a less and later, two-cut approach to grassed areas to encourage biodiversity in our green spaces.
- Completed programmed aeration of River Tawe linked to water quality and ecology of river.

- Reported on Local Air Quality Management in relation to pollution concentrations. Collaborated with external partners to test the effectiveness of potential interventions.
- Exceeded Welsh Government recycling target of 64%
- Undertook modelling work to inform options for our post 2025 Waste Reduction Strategy to minimise use of non-recyclables, recycle more waste and promote a circular economy.
- Explored scope for a Swansea Council Sustainable Food Policy and potential ways to support county wide action with partners.
- Work began on a Social Responsibility and Sustainability in Procurement policy to support forthcoming legislation.
- Commenced a Social Value pilot programme and development of a Social Value Recording Tool being tested with 3 pilot projects reducing our carbon footprint.
- Created an Environmental Partners procurement framework to enable wider project delivery.



- Drafted and reviewed a Sustainable Transport Strategy structure with work ongoing on the Strategy and Action Plan.
- Signed Swansea Bay Sustainable Travel Charter.



- Invested in 35 additional electric cars and vans so 10% of the Council's fleet now consists of green vehicles. This includes an electric refuse collection vehicle and two electric compact road sweepers.
- Installed 48 charge points across 13 Council sites. A network of over 80 charging points now spans 25 Council sites. £1 million of Welsh Government grants has been secured to enable the green transition.
- Trained 16 fitters at the Central Transport Unit to enable them to work on electric vehicles and to ensure service support is resilient for this new technology.
- A brand-new special school and refurbishment of Bryntawe Welsh Medium school are being designed in line with Net Zero carbon targets. As part of 21st Century Schools programme, contractors produce carbon reduction plans for both operation and materials chosen.
- Maximised opportunities to lower carbon input into maintenance and renovation of

our public buildings using local workforces, apprentices, and suppliers where possible.

- Improved roofing and insulation levels in 33 schools and 14 buildings including the Brangwyn Hall, we have made heating and boiler systems more energy efficient in 17 schools and public buildings and upgraded the electrical supply, rewiring and lighting to more energy efficient systems in over 21 schools and public buildings since 2021.
- Our Energy Action Plan Re:Fit Programme resulted in
 - 379 tonnes of CO₂ saved per year.
 - 12.1% reduction in energy cost of the sites improved.
- Large 100kW Solar panels installed by Egni Co-op at two Swansea schools and over 500kW of rooftop solar at others.



- Fitted 1426 LEDs in 2022/23 saving 263,384 kWh which equates to a saving of 50,933 kg of CO₂ per kWh.
- The “Swansea Standard” continues to set a high specification for the building of energy efficient, environmentally conscious homes that exceed current regulatory standards to achieve Net Zero and reduce fuel poverty.
- Our ‘fabric first’ approach to construction achieves at least a 25% improvement above the thermal performance prescribed

in current Building Regulations. Highly insulated timber-frames with high-performance doors & triple glazed windows – ensure homes retain heat in the winter and stay cool in the summer.

- The ‘More Homes’ new build programme has added dozens of sustainable, energy efficient properties to our council housing stock in addition to 4 passivhaus pods used as temporary accommodation at Bryn House.
- Addressed the Energy Crisis by working with Swansea Environment Centre to set up an Energy Awareness Hub to support the public across Swansea.
- Launched two toolbox talks for front line staff and the first of several e-learning modules.
- Provided free Net Zero training for SMEs in saving energy, reducing waste and cutting carbon emissions and biodiversity sessions on nature-based solutions.
- Hosted the Green Recovery Business Conference in June to help build the green economy.
- Protected Mumbles coastline and 130 properties from flood risk by commencing major sea defence work as part of climate adaptation.



Resources

- **Budget** – ‘budgets to deliver this priority are fully integrated within services, however successful delivery in the medium to long term is likely to be dependent upon sufficient external funding being provided’.
- Delivery of Nature Recovery work is wholly reliant on grants and some of the wider 2050 projects are reliant on external budgets too.
- A new procurement framework now has three key partners sharing some of the 2050 work programme and the £50k budget has seen the successful delivery of eight projects.
- **Workforce** – The agenda is currently being delivered as business as usual by services, with officers working on specific strategies for example, the Fleet Manager delivering the ULEV Strategy and Energy Manager leading on the Re:Fit programme. While this ensures that our response is embedded across the organisation, this has resulted in resourcing and prioritisation issues.
- Climate Change and Nature Recovery projects are led by a small number of lead officers who leverage support for implementation from across services and external partners.
- **Assets** – The vast majority of Council built assets generate carbon emissions, therefore as contributors to climate change, cannot be considered to be “assets”. However, for reporting purposes the council’s considerable green spaces and established woodland (hectares) has a net benefit of circa 5000 tonnes of CO₂.

Strengths

Effective collaborative working to make best use of resources via the Public Services Board. Framework delivery partners, Local Nature Partnership, Signatories Group and Regeneration Swansea, etc.

Increasing involvement of individuals, businesses, and community groups with contacts and informal networks established.

Innovative future focused piloting of new technologies and approaches from smart bins, green roofed bus shelters and apprentice built green homes.

Two online training modules established with the ability to add future modules.

Challenges

Need for further cultural and behavioural change amongst staff, our suppliers, partners, and the wider population.

Fast moving regulatory and legislative requirements and public expectations.

Limited supply and rising costs of sustainable materials, issues with decarbonisation technologies/digitisation, and green technical skills shortage

Significant lobbying of both Welsh and UK governments will be necessary to secure the resources necessary to meet our aims.

Unintended consequences and impacts of green transition.

Limited internal capacity means external funding bids must provide both capital and revenue monies to be viable in future.

DELIVERING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

Long term - Swansea Council values and seeks to manage ecosystem services for the long-term, employing nature-based solutions where possible. Climate change mitigation and adaptation and nature recovery feature increasingly prominently across all our services' plans and strategies considering the impact future trends.

Prevention - Early identification of issues of challenges help us mitigate the severity of issues. For example, the scarce availability of green technology skills was identified early and action has been taken to build skills in-house. This resilience building investment is challenging as suitable training is in limited supply and retaining trained staff is an issue as private sector rates tend to be higher. Adaptation as well as mitigation is increasingly our focus as the impacts of climate change are already happening or are unavoidable.

Collaboration - Improved regional working with Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire & Pembrokeshire on the energy agenda. Effective utilisation of environmental partners to reach out to businesses, organisations, and community groups.

Involvement - Swansea Council is taking wide ranging action to tackle climate change as an organisation but we recognise it is imperative citizens, businesses, community, voluntary and our partner organisations will need to all play their part. As choices become more difficult understanding the diversity of our population's lived experiences, public expectations and motivations is critical to decision making. Climate change will impact the most vulnerable disproportionately, so we increasingly invest in participation to ensure these voices are heard.

Integration - Our approach to this priority is built around key cross cutting Council policies that impact every directorate. We consider national, regional, and local requirements as well as linkages with key council initiatives such as Human Rights City work.

MAXIMISING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL-BEING GOALS

A More Prosperous Wales: Swansea has been named one of the UK's top 5 green cities to invest in by Banking Group BNP Paribas. A greener Swansea not only improves well-being but attracts private sector funding and creates employment opportunities.

A More equal Wales: The Switched on Energy Awareness hub and roadshow offered free, independent, unbiased support and information for all householders on how to improve energy efficiency, switch providers and access support. Access to knowledge enables people to participate effectively in energy markets and find help during the national Energy Crisis and Climate Emergency addressing socio-economic and other inequalities.

A healthier Wales: Access to local good quality green spaces improve mental and physical well-being while clean air, safe water and good soils underpin population health.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT 2022/23

'Progress in meeting this objective and prospects for improvement are **Strong**; although there is uncertainty due to good governance of well used but potentially limited resources'.

This new objective has enabled us to focus on our declared Net Zero 2030, Swansea Net Zero 2050 and Nature Recovery ambitions. We have comprehensively set out how we aim to maintain and enhance nature and biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint and tackle climate change at a policy and strategic level. Commendable progress has been made on transformational cross cutting and major projects. More detailed delivery plans are now being developed and five new key performance indicators are in development.

Overall significant progress has been made on this agenda, not just from a performance but a governance perspective with robust and comprehensive arrangements in place at every level specifically addressing Nature Recovery and climate change.

However, we recognise that the challenge facing not just Swansea, but Wales grows more difficult despite our successes to date. Audit Wales has found 'uncertainty that the collective ambition for a net zero by 2030 will be met due to significant, common barriers across Wales's (Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030 Report 2022). This has been logged as a corporate risk and is monitored monthly.

In response, Swansea Council was the first Council in Wales to produce a Net Zero 2030 costed delivery plan as requested by Audit Wales. The plan could cost around £187m over the next eight years although the estimate does not identify the funding and resources required to deliver all identified activity. Having refocused our organisation, the continued realisation of our aspirations increasingly requires external funding at scale.

The increased pressures and additional workload on a reducing workforce are significant. A sustainable workforce supported by corporate services is essential to enable continued effective delivery of major projects, corporate strategies, and financial performance. Inflation has reduced value for money and created unfunded budget pressures which services are struggling to circumvent.

The nature and extent of societal change necessary to achieve this objective is acknowledged so collaboration, integration and involvement approaches have been prioritised. A collaborative route has been established with public bodies on the 2050 programme building on existing good practice applied to nature recovery.

Communications currently focus on showcasing 'green' projects providing a foundation for the objective to be integrated into the wider corporate narrative moving forward. While engagement has improved significantly, a wider diversity of people need to be engaged. This includes increasingly reaching out to people, organisations and services not currently involved in or prioritising action on nature recovery and climate change.

Transformation and Future Council Development

Performance - Progress made

- Developed a Corporate Transformation Plan which aims to transform adult and children's services, meet additional learning needs, develop a community hub model, address the challenges of net zero, outline a future waste strategy, develop the workforce and digital transformation.
- Approved a Workforce Strategy 2022-27 and developed a Workforce transformation plan.



- Implemented the Oracle Fusion project to support recruitment, HR and payroll functions, learning and development opportunities.
- Reviewed our accommodation strategy, recruitment and retention policies and staff rewards and recognition schemes.
- Commenced a review of values and behaviours and trained our first cohort of employees as coaches aiming to embed a professional coaching culture within the organisation.



- Established a Post Pandemic working model which provides services with the flexibility to develop service models in accordance with operational requirements, customer standards and workforce needs and well-being.
- Re-confirmed our commitment to the Dying to work charter, provided support through the appointment of Management of Absence advisors and continued to provide wellbeing support to employees through our Heling Hand project.
- Approved a Digital Strategy 2023-28 and a Digital Transformation Business Case.
- Completed 53 major digital projects including One Drive migration to ensure data is resilient, secure and accessible. 7000 accounts with 18TB data.
- Ensured user satisfaction with the ICT help desk consistently above 85%.
- Continued to embed a "Digital First" strategy, ensuring that citizens who want to can access more Council services and information on-line, while promoting Digital Inclusion and access to online services.

- Processed 3,000 more on-line payments with almost 2000 more online transactions into back office systems, compared to the previous year.
- Our contact centre dealt with 15,000 call and 6,000 emails on average, each month.
- Continued to implement our Digital First Training programme delivering a wide range of digital skills such as PC for Beginners, Tablets for Beginners, IT Skills for Work and Life to more than 400 people.
- Developed a Corporate Plan 2022/28 and managed performance and risk.
- Published Medium Term Financial plan 2023/24 to 25/26.
- Conducted a corporate self-assessment of the Council's effectiveness, use of resources and governance.
- Declared Swansea as a Human Rights City 10th Dec 2022
- Developed a Rights in your pocket guide and provided training by the British Institute of Human Rights to Council employees and its partners.



- Updated our Annual Review of Equality and Diversity 2021-22 and commenced

preparations for the development of our new Strategic Equality Plan.

- Completed an assessment of local well-being and published Swansea Public Service Board's local well-being plan for 2023/28.



- Produced Swansea Public Service Board's annual progress report.
- Revised the Council's Consultation and Engagement strategy.
- Commissioned a co-production and involvement project.
- Adopted a Public Participation strategy aiming to encourage public participation in Council business and local democracy.
- Ensured good governance and internal controls to provide high levels of assurance including risk management.
- Established a Local petitions scheme and rolled out multi-locations and broadcasting of meetings.
- Continued to comply with the Welsh Language Standards by embedding the Welsh Language in our IIA process,

reviewing promotional material and employing a Standards Officer.

- Delivered safe and successful Elections within the Pandemic and provided Councillor Induction following the Council Elections in May 2022.



- Revised the guidelines for the Community Budgets scheme which supported more than £1m of small improvements such as donations to community groups, sport clubs, food banks and minor works.
- Administered over £260 million in grants and reliefs delivered to Swansea citizens and businesses at pace.
- Developed an app to efficiently manage and distribute more than 127,000 cost of living payments to individuals, distributing over £14 million.
- Awarded more than £1.7m of grant funding to Third Sector organisations through a Compact agreement.
- Supported key strategic partnerships, including the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC), West Glamorgan Regional Health and Social Care Partnership, Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD); and Partneriaeth (school improvement partnership).

- Worked with the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee to develop, approve and deliver the Shared Prosperity Regional Investment Plan, the Transforming Towns Regeneration Programme, the Regional Energy Strategy and the Regional Transport Plan.

- Continued to investigate any complaints in line with the Council's Complaints Policy. 88% of complaints received by the Corporate Complaints team were satisfactorily resolved at stage 1 of the process.

- Developed our approach to procurement with regards to social value, localism, biodiversity, the natural environment and capturing carbon footprints within contracts. Major impact noted on S106 agreements.

- Drafted a schools guide to assist schools in understanding Procurement rules and regulations and the best practice when undertaking procurement.

- Continued to work with partners, communities, organisations and 'friends' groups to encourage and sustain greater community ownership of assets and services.



Resources

- **Budget** - Medium Term Financial Plan agreed and approved within the statutory deadline. Statement of accounts 2021-22 produced and audited in accordance with agreed timetable. Proven track record of high-quality delivery in both timeliness and quality. Managing Swansea Bay City Region Deal Funding.

- Innovative deployment of Capital Equalisation Reserve and self-borrowing. Disinvestment of surplus cash effectively stretching original financing or new debt at sub 2% and deferring new borrowing and financing until rates reduce ensuring greater capital spend can be financed for a constant amount of revenue itself deferred by use of reserves.

- Limited available budgets for Corporate and Financial services to develop proactive interventions. Although some development work was funded through ERF, the absence of longer-term funding will be challenging to embed long term interventions.

- **Workforce** - there have been a number of workforce challenges in relation to *recruitment* e.g. the impact of staff working on implementation of the Oracle Fusion Project, *capacity* e.g. the HR workforce and staff ratios in terms of professional advice and *succession* e.g. customer services and revenue and benefits in relation to an aging working force and nearing retirement age.

- **Assets** - The council has an asset management strategy and plan and manages its operational and administrative buildings in line with this plan. The Council has approved a pandemic working model which builds on the council's agile working policy.

Strengths

Robust performance management, risk assessment, governance and financial management.

Experienced, knowledgeable, skilled, resilient and flexible workforce - embracing new ways of working and meeting increasing and complex demands.

Proven track record, reputation and high-quality outputs - good relationships with Councillors, regulators and external partners.

Robust strategies, policies, processes and procedures / systems.

Increasing automation and digitalisation is resulting in efficiency gains.

Challenges

Recruitment and retention difficulties in some service areas e.g. the implementation of Oracle Fusion,

An aging workforce, key staff nearing retirement age, risks related to succession planning.

Staff capacity and resource issues in some service areas – over stretched and limited capacity for service improvements.

Increasing demands, expectations and complex regulatory and policy environment.

Need to make budget savings and at the same time, invest in digitalisation, new technologies and the workforce.

Current staffing structure and composition requires review and restructure to implement new strategies.

DELIVERING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

Long term - implementing a corporate transformation plan and programmes to ensure that the Council's operating model, technology, processes, service delivery and resources are best developed to meet future demand and challenges.

Prevention - identifying and managing current and future risks, preparing for future challenges, flex and responding to challenges. Continued focus on prevention, early intervention and self-service, completion of digital projects, further automation and the remodelling of services/processes to manage customer demand.

Collaboration - improving internal collaboration by leveraging technology, our workforce strategy and training. Fostering improved external collaboration with partners across the public, private and third sectors via Swansea Public Services Board, the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee, the West Glamorgan Partnership and Partneriaeth.

Involvement - developing our capability across the spectrum of involvement from consultation through to the development of coproduction capability and capacity through pilot projects and sharing best practice. Implementing our public participation strategy.

Integration – developing a framework for linking our national, regional and local outcomes that demonstrates the contributions of our services and transformation programmes to public body strategies, policies and objectives.

MAXIMIZING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL BEING GOALS

A More Prosperous Wales: *ensuring that the workforce, communities and individuals have the skills and experience to make the most from the opportunities that are emerging from digital technologies. Developing the right skills, technical expertise, leadership for transformation.*

A Resilient Wales: *rationalising our operational estate and implementing a post pandemic working model with hybrid and home working arrangements to reduce travel time and carbon emissions.*

A Wales of Cohesive Communities: *working towards Swansea becoming a Human Rights city and embedding equality and diversity and rights-based approach in all that we do. Supporting cohesive, inclusive and diverse communities*

A Globally Responsible Wales: *developing an approach to ethical procurement, creating social and community benefits and reducing low carbon emissions will have a positive impact on global well-being.*

OVERALL ASSESSMENT 2022/23

Progress in meeting this objective is **Strong** and prospects for improvement are **Mixed**.

We are continuing to build upon our approach to transformation through our corporate transformation plan and service transformation programmes to ensure our organisation, people and assets are fit for the future.

However, there have been some significant risks and issues in relation to staff capacity, the ability to attract and retain experienced and skilled members of staff, increasing demand and an increasingly complex policy and regulatory environment, coupled with reducing budgets and the requirement to make savings.

Although our workforce is one of our greatest assets and many have proven themselves to be knowledgeable, skilled, flexible, resilient and open to embracing change and new ways of working, capacity and succession planning, continues to be at risk with the requirement to make savings. The current structure and composition of workforce requires review and restructure in order to deliver key workforce and organisational strategies.

The quality of our performance management, risk assessment, governance, financial management and other corporate support functions and related outputs is high – as demonstrated by feedback from our external regulators and customers. However, capacity is stretched in many service areas and there is limited opportunity for service improvement with a risk to the long-term sustainability of high-quality services.

Good progress has been made with the implementation of Oracle Fusion and the completion of other digital projects. Our digitalisation and automation approach has resulted in some key efficiency gains. However, the pace of implementation, has also been impacted by the difficulties associated with recruiting and retaining staff. Further investment is required to fully realise these efficiencies at pace.

We have developed excellent relationships with Councillors and other services across the council. However, the role that corporate services play in relation to supporting services effectively deliver services across the council is not always fully understood or recognised.

We lead on and/or make a significant contribution to a range of regional partnerships and collaborations such as the South West Wales Joint Corporate Committee, the West Glamorgan Health and Social Care Partnership, Partneriaeth and Swansea's Public Services Board. However, the return on investment is unclear and greater clarity is needed in relation to the outcomes from these partnership and collaborations, the contribution required from partners and the return on investment.

Section 6 – Case studies

The following represents case studies to help illustrate examples of the impact of the well-being objectives and the effectiveness of their delivery.

City in 'strong position' to continue support for young people

Swansea is in a strong position to continue to improve children's lives by preventing harm and exploitation, not just in their homes but in other places where they spend time, according to experts.

The council is pioneering a new approach for Wales called Contextual Safeguarding so that children and young people get the right help they need from the right people, in the right place, and at the right time for them.

As well as increasing its youth work with five additional staff and increasing youth club provision, the council has worked with others - for example police and businesses - to reach into areas such as parks, the promenade, beach, and other community spaces where young people tend to gather and to make these places safer.



There are also now processes and practices in place to listen to young people, residents, and people in the community when there is a concern about the safety of young people and work together to make it safer place and space for all.

These concerns help inform part of the work of a multi-agency panel established last year which has actively considered 50 referrals and taken a range of actions from street lighting and help signage to outreach youth work, training in schools, and supporting community groups and businesses to help keep places safe.

This new Contextual Safeguarding approach is led by Swansea Council's Child and Family Services in partnership with more than 25 agencies from police and health to the third sector and local business.

It's the result of work that started two years ago when Swansea became one of just five test sites across England and Wales to successfully bid for Durham University and the University of Bedfordshire to work with them to develop a Contextual Safeguarding approach.

It offers new approaches and learning about safeguarding young people who come to harm and are at risk of exploitation beyond their family home.

Researchers say this has placed Swansea in a strong position to continue to improve the way it looks out for all its young people in the years ahead.

The programme also seen the council develop its single point of contact for Child and Family Services so that it now has a wide range of expertise and services to help families.

It provides information, advice and assistance and has staff with expertise in domestic abuse, safeguarding, intensive family support and specialist child sexual abuse and criminal exploitation services. Its Practice Lead for Safeguarding Children at Risk of Exploitation is also based there.

Dr Rachael Owens, Social Work Practice Advisor at Durham University, said at the heart of this Contextual Safeguarding approach is the importance of listening to young people, residents, and people in communities when there is a concern about the safety of young people.

"There are new partnerships with agencies who reach into, and have responsibility for, contexts and places where young people spend their time. Alongside these new partnerships, there are now processes to co-ordinate welfare-oriented responses to a child's situation. The idea is to target the social conditions of harm so that social care partners with the most appropriate agency or agencies can make the changes needed to keep the child safe.

"In terms of practice changes, Swansea Children's Services has increased its detached youth work provision. It means that alongside changing the environments, there is a commitment to building trusting relationships which increases the guardianship of young people in outdoor spaces, addresses their needs and supports them to learn from each other.

"This has all been possible because the team leading the Contextual Safeguarding at Swansea have engaged wholeheartedly with the process.

"They have executed a vision for making radical changes to the structure and offer of services, in order to increase safety for young people and are now in a strong positive to embed this into their 'practice as usual.'

"We look forward seeing how this learning develops and can support approaches to safeguarding young people outside the home across Wales."

Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Elliott King, said: "I'm pleased that the council's determination and commitment to ensure all our young people are as safe as they can be, has been recognised.

"There has been a lot of work in recent years changing and improving the way we and our partners work and this would not have been possible with the commitment and professionalism of our staff and partners.

"We will always look to improve on what we do but I would like to recognise and thank all involved for the progress to date."

Managed Moves

Estyn in 2022, recognised the quality of support between the Local Authority and mainstream schools for pupils at risk of disengagement. The Managed Moves process was described as being "managed well by the Local Authority to support pupils who might benefit from a change of school environment... a highly successful strategy, with most pupils either settling well in their new placements or reintegrating successfully into their original school".

The process was developed following concerns from secondary school leadership teams around the levels of pupil mobility particularly due to applications for pupils arriving mid-term, often at critical points in pupils' education, such as the end of Year 9 or in examination years. As well as the high mobility due to families moving into the area there was also a culture of school moves to avoid interventions and exclusions. In a few cases schools were not in receipt of relevant information until school transfers were completed and often these pupils had complex backgrounds and needed high levels of support. There was a detrimental impact for pupils as it would take longer than should be needed to identify and implement strategies to support and integrate them into new settings. The same approach to mid-year admissions was in place irrespective of the reason for the school move so support was not reflective of need.

In response to these concerns, education officers undertook an analysis of mid-year transfers. It was clear that many pupils transferring had poor attendance and higher than average fixed term exclusions. A number were also identified as being school action or school action plus. Strategies or multi-agency support and interventions may have been in place but were not shared or transferred as part of a school move. A working group was established between education officers and secondary headteachers to seek solutions with a focus on improving outcomes for learners and a managed move protocol and strategy was agreed and implemented.

The managed move protocol is now established, and it clearly outlines the parameters for a managed move and is accompanied by a suite of documentation including communications for parents, managed move contracts and review documentation. Key guidance is in place in relation to protocol but also practicalities such as uniform, transportation and school meals. The protocol and accompanying guidance were developed jointly with headteachers and pastoral leads to ensure it was able to be implemented operationally and consistently. An Inclusion Officer post now exists with a specific remit to co-ordinate managed moves.



In the first year of the strategy's implementation, approximately 70% of managed moves were successful as the pupils either settled into a new school or returned to their original school with improved behaviours and attendance. The remaining 30% were not successful as pupils were not able to maintain the behaviours required. In these cases, the commitment of the managed move protocol was that they would return to their originating schools but with a clearer understanding of the underlying needs which may then result in an EOTAS referral. It has been identified that since the managed move protocol has been implemented the referrals to EOTAS services from mainstream schools are almost always appropriate referrals which can evidence all available school-based support strategies having been exhausted. Of those learners whose moves were

successfully concluded the local authority has been able to track their progress and confirm that they have progressed and achieved desired outcomes.

Beyond Bricks and Mortar – Community Benefit Clauses

Working closely the appointed contractor John Weaver (Contractors) Limited on the Hafod-Morfa Copperworks development, the Council's Beyond Brick & Mortar team have been delivering additional value through community benefits clauses. In particular, the targeted recruitment & training clauses have created several new job and apprenticeship opportunities, including an apprenticeship opportunity for Kim Smitham.

Kim, who is passionate about construction joined John Weaver Contractors in 2019 as a NVQ level 2 Apprentice Carpenter. Kim had already completed a level 1 course at Gower College which she had arranged herself due to her interest of the industry.

Kim was prepared to volunteer as a labourer at our Hafod-Morfa Copperworks site, to be able to get her foot on the construction industry ladder and gain further experience within the industry.



The project is a major refurbishment and conservation of listed buildings. There will be a visitors centre and linked walkway to form a new Penderyn Whiskey making distillery.

Kim impressed our board of directors and was quickly offered an apprenticeship with us, starting her career with the opportunity made at the Hafod Copperworks site, which has provided new work opportunities for apprentices, work experience and employment for the unemployed.

Kim had previously had a career in the caring and retail industries however left these behind due to her eagerness to join the construction industry as a Carpenter. Being a mother with two young boys to support this was not an easy decision however her ambition drove her to take the opportunity of an apprenticeship to which she has excelled. We, as her employers, were very impressed with Kim's decision as a career change is not easy, especially when you are the bread winner. Kim has excelled at every level since starting her apprenticeship and working with us.



She has won Gower College Student of the Year not once, but twice! Kim was also John Weaver's Apprentice Winner in 2021 due to her dedication, desire to learn, can do attitude and fantastic feedback from our site managers, mentors and her college tutors.

Kim's tutor, Dai John, has said, "Kim is keen to learn and picks things up fast. She is a forward thinker who needs little supervision."



Whilst working on the Hafod-Morfa Copperworks project she has been able to enhance her traditional building and carpentry skills, working on listed buildings.

Poverty and prevention – Lola’s Story

The Early Help Hub, who at the time were supporting Lola’s daughter, introduced her to Beth, her Local Area Coordinator. Lola was struggling with anxiety and isolation and was facing extreme financial hardship. She lives with severe anxiety; it influenced her life so much that she barely felt comfortable leaving her house, let alone holding down a job. She suffered financially as she was unable to work. As she didn’t have a physical disability, she didn’t realise she would be entitled to further financial help/benefits.



Beth spent time building up a trusting relationship with Lola; she eventually felt safe talking openly about her financial hardships. This was clearly contributing hugely to her anxiety. Lola ended up falling into substantial debt, taking out multiple loans, falling into rent arrears and needing food banks on a regular basis. Lola didn’t feel able to pursue or even think about her ‘good life’ with Beth; she was just living day-to-day in fear and distress, hoping she had enough money at the end of each month.



Beth requested support from Sheila from the Welfare Rights Team. She initially supported Lola with successful DAF applications to address the immediate hardship. Lola was claiming the bare minimum, but over time, Sheila supported her to access Personal Independence Payments (PIP). She now receives £659.30 in PIP and a monthly increase in her Universal Credit (UC) of £343.63. Overall, Lola’s monthly income increased by £1,002.93. Sheila was also able to access some back payments, which enabled Lola to have treats with her children, bringing both her and them pleasure.

Lola feels more relaxed knowing she can not only afford the essentials for her children, but she has enough to spend on fun family activities outside the home. She doesn’t have to worry that one bus or taxi trip to the seaside with her kids will leave her with nothing.



Swansea named one of the UK's top five green cities to invest in.



According to expert-led independent research, Swansea scored excellently in areas including the number of environmentally friendly office buildings.

Factors including CO2 emissions and roadside air pollutants were also considered by international banking group BNP Paribas as part of a real estate study called Next X that focussed on environmental data.

Swansea is the only Welsh city to feature in the study's top ten environmental scores.

Cllr Rob Stewart, Swansea Council Leader, said: "We are facing a climate crisis so the council and our partners are doing a huge amount of work for Swansea to become a net zero city by 2050.

"We also need to create a greener Swansea to attract more private sector investment and employment opportunities which include zero carbon office developments, the introduction of far more greenery across the city, and the installation of more and more charging points for electric vehicles.

"This will continue to cut our carbon footprint and make the city more biodiverse, and it will also raise Swansea's profile as a place to invest while opening up jobs for local people. That's why it's so pleasing to be named as one of the UK's top five green cities to invest in."

Examples of recent work led by the council include lots more greenery being introduced on The Kingsway and Wind Street as part of multi-million pound improvement schemes, along with green walls and green roofs at several buildings and a new, temporary pop-up park at the former St David's Shopping Centre site.

A revamped Castle Square Gardens with far more greenery is also in the pipeline, following-on from schemes including the 1.1-acre coastal park next to Swansea Arena.

The new office development providing space for 600 jobs at the former Oceana nightclub site on The Kingsway will be carbon zero in operation, with construction work now well under way. The development will feature trees on each level and a green roof.

Very close to the Kingsway development will be a 'living building' scheme, led by Swansea-based Hacer Developments.

Earmarked for completion by the end of 2023, the scheme - one of the first of its kind in the UK - will include green walls and green roofs, an educational facility, retail, offices, a landscaped courtyard, rooftop solar panels, battery storage and gardens.

Pobl Group will manage 50 affordable apartments forming part of the scheme.

Further scheme features include an urban farm-style greenhouse set over four floors. Plants and vegetables will be grown in water and fed by waste pumped from fish tanks at the bottom of the building.

Other cities featured in the UK's top five greenest cities to invest in include Cambridge, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Milton Keynes.

Application Development – Cost of Living Grant

In 2022, the Application Development Team at Swansea Council was tasked with a vital initiative: the development of a comprehensive system to efficiently manage and distribute the Cost of Living Grant. This project required the development of a control panel, reporting tools, and various methods of payment. Our aim was to deliver a solution that would seamlessly integrate with existing infrastructure and offer robust security, all while effectively serving the needs of our community.

The specifications from the Welsh Government arrived in mid-April 2022, which required a rapid turnaround time. The first payment was due in early May, leaving us with less than a month to develop a robust, secure, and efficient system. The project's complexity was further increased by the requirement for integrating multiple eligibility criteria checks, duplicate application verification, and diverse payment methods - all while ensuring the system could be accessed by anyone.

We built an application form that would collect initial information regarding the resident's application and run those details through an algorithm that checked eligibility based on various criteria. We also added a feature to check for duplicate applications.



Beyond traditional BACs payments, we also integrated alternative payment methods, including email vouchers, text message payments, and options for allocating the payment directly to rent or council tax accounts. These payment methods extended access to the grant to those who did not have traditional banking means.

We successfully deployed the system in record time. To date, we have made 127,971 payments to individuals, distributing over £14 million pounds to those in need in our

community. The system's streamlined process and improved security measures have significantly enhanced our capacity to manage the Cost of Living Grant efficiently.



"Without the development of the application and payment system that was completed to tight deadlines by our IT colleagues, we would not have been able to deliver the Cost-of-Living Payment (and other grants) as efficiently and effectively as we did. As partners in the process, we could not have asked for better. Their tasks were completed on time, in the face of evolving guidance and increasing demands from us to enable us in turn to respond to the demands of Welsh Government. This particular payment was one of many similar projects completed during the Covid period and now the cost-of-living crisis which enabled us to deliver hundreds of millions of pounds financial support to Swansea residents and businesses. I can also see that the functionality we now know to be available, gives us further opportunities in respect of business improvement and I look forward to working with IT colleagues on that, in the future." Julian Morgans, Head of Revenues and Benefits

Section 7 - Areas for Continued Improvement

The table below summarises areas for continued improvement identified during self-assessment in preparation for this Review. This is in addition to the steps set out in the Corporate Plan 2023/28 [Corporate plan - Swansea](#)

Areas for continued Improvement – what can we do better?		
No.	Improvement Action	Completion date
Safeguarding People from Harm		
1.	Focus on the next step actions to safeguard our most vulnerable people as set out in revised Swansea Council Corporate Plan 2023-28.	By 2028
2.	Through the Council’s Wellbeing Plan, Adult Services Transformation programme and Child and Family Services Improvement programme continue to modernise statutory social services, preventative and wellbeing offers.	
3.	Contribute towards achieving carbon net zero targets across the whole health and social care system.	By 2030
Improving Education & Skills		
4.	Further collaboration with Partneriaeth and other literacy/numeracy specialists to develop strategies, research and networks moving forward, led by a new Literacy Performance Specialist secondment.	December 2023.
5.	Review and further develop learner voice mechanisms, working with the Partnership & Involvement Team on the priorities set out by Children and Young People – including LGBTQIA+; supporting disabled children; protecting the environment and green spaces; young women’s safety and gender-based violence. Continue to develop mechanisms that enables the listening to all learners, including quiet voices.	Autumn 2023.
6.	Use findings of post-16 survey to inform future provision outlined in the Post-16 and Vocational Strategies. Establish working group as part of Partneriaeth Sgiliau Abertawe (Swansea Skills Partnership) to ensure a breadth of offer at post-16.	
7.	Publish a new Digital Strategy and deliver against the proposed action plan agreed with the Education Digital Strategy Board.	
8.	Delivery of final Inclusion Strategy, including the delivery of a new attendance policy. Attendance policy and accompanying action plan to be taken forward by Education Welfare Service. Continue to develop the Inclusion Strategy action plan ensuring delivery arrangements in place across all elements. Continue delivery of the Supporting Sufficient Specialist Places programme.	Attendance policy Summer 2023. Inclusion strategy 2023-2028.
9.	Delivery of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, including the planning of future provision; increasing the number of schools on their Siarter Iaith journey; and the professional learning offer for staff across all schools.	Individual workstream deadlines over the ten-year strategy
10.	Continue to deliver robust monitoring of budgets with new Education Senior Leadership Team management structure, in particular through quarterly budget monitoring meetings and regular updates at management meetings and PFM.	This is an action that takes place on a continuous basis

Areas for continued Improvement – what can we do better?		
No.	Improvement Action	Completion date
11.	Development of a Strategic Outline Programme for future capital requirements, with input from a wide range of officers across the council through workshops and meetings. Political approval of the plan will be sought from Cabinet.	2024.
12.	Develop governor strategy and deliver against an agreed action plan to support new and existing governors.	December 2023.
Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure		
13.	Agents appointed to market the Debenhams unit and expressions of interest are being collated including costs to secure tenants.	Ongoing.
14.	Commence construction works on Castle Square project - Q1 2024.	Q1 2024/25.
15.	Commence demolition of redundant multi-storey car park at Copr Bay.	
16.	Complete construction of 71/72 Kingsway.	Q2 2024/25.
17.	Complete Palace Theatre works	Q1 2024/25.
Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities		
18.	Develop a Performance Framework for Tackling Poverty that defines the outcomes and measures across the revised Corporate Priority of 'tackling poverty and enabling communities'.	By March 2024
19.	Review the reliance on grant funding to tackle poverty and look for greater flexibility in relation to using funding in a way which best meets local needs in a sustainable way.	
20.	Complete the revision of the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy.	
21.	Develop and implement the Corporate Volunteering Policy.	
Delivering on nature recovery and climate change		
22.	Develop focus on bidding for grant monies and seeking government finances to support the agenda.	By March 2024
23.	Behaviour change and education on this priority to continue across the council and county wide. Improve communication messaging on success stories and continue to develop both intranet and internet website information	
24.	Provide additional resource to support service areas to reduce emissions within the 2030 boundary, i.e. fleet, waste, procurement	
25.	Provide dedicated Pm resource to phase 2 of the public buildings retrofit programme to ensure improvements made from phase 1, following a lessons learnt exercise.	

Areas for continued Improvement – what can we do better?		
No.	Improvement Action	Completion date
26.	Embed robust governance on the wider 2050 agenda to ensure strong collaborative working relationships with climate charter signatories and Public Service Board are truly effective and delivering outputs.	
27.	Continue to add modules to the series of Climate Change and Nature Recovery e-training to support training gaps as required.	
Transformation and financial resilience		
28.	Strengthen the connection between the Council's Corporate Transformation Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.	March 2024
29.	Produce a staff engagement strategy.	December 2023
30.	Conduct a residents' survey to inform the 2023-24 budget planning process and annual review of performance.	December 2023
31.	Review the corporate risk management arrangements to enhance the council's understanding and management of risks and issues.	March 2024
32.	Review and update Corporate Services' workforce plans to address recruitment and retention challenges and build resilience.	March 2024
33.	Develop Swansea Council Human Rights City Action Plan.	November 2023
34.	Review the Petitions Scheme and report to Council.	March 2024
35.	Lead the development of a Performance Management Framework for Swansea Public Service Board, to include outcomes.	March 2024

Further information

Strategies, plans and policies

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/policies>

Performance and statistics

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/statistics>

Finance and Council budget

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/financeandbudget>

Scrutiny

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny>

Well-being of Future Generations Act

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/wellbeingfuturegenerations>

Safeguarding

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/safeguarding>

Schools and learning

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/schoolsandlearning>

Children and Young People's Rights – UNCRC

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/uncrc>

Swansea Bay City Deal

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/swanseabaycitydeal>

Regeneration and development plans and policies

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/regenerationplans>

West Glamorgan Regional Partnership

<http://www.westernbay.org.uk/>

Partneriaeth (formerly Education through Regional Working (ERW))

<https://www.partneriaeth.cymru/>

Poverty and Prevention Strategies

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/povertyandpreventionstrategies>

Climate change and nature

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/climatechange>

Have Your Say – consultations

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/haveyoursay>

Strategic Equality Plan

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/sep>

Welsh Language

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/cymraeg>