



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Corporate Plan 2024/2027 : *Working towards a more prosperous, fairer and greener NPT*

Annual Report 2024/2025

**Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Cymraeg
This document is also available in Welsh**

www.npt.gov.uk

**If you require this information in larger print or in an alternative format, please
contact the Corporate Policy Team on 07805 771506 or email: policy@npt.gov.uk¹**

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Foreword

Welcome to the Neath Port Talbot Council Corporate Plan Annual Report for 2024/2027. This document encapsulates our unwavering commitment to fostering a prosperous, fairer, and greener Neath Port Talbot. Over the past year, we have made significant strides in various strategic priorities, all aimed at enhancing the well-being of our community.

Our efforts have been concentrated on ensuring that all children have the best start in life, creating thriving and sustainable communities, preserving our local environment, culture, and heritage, and promoting economic growth and skills development. Through initiatives like the Flying Start programme, education reforms, and robust support for children with additional learning needs and those in our care, we have laid a strong foundation for the future success of our young residents.

We have also focused on improving housing, social services, and community safety, ensuring that our residents have access to quality, affordable housing and comprehensive support systems. Our active travel and regeneration projects have made substantial progress, enhancing connectivity and promoting sustainable development.

In our pursuit of a greener future, we have implemented strategies to reduce carbon emissions, promote renewable energy, and enhance biodiversity. Our cultural and heritage initiatives have fostered a sense of pride and identity within the community, attracting visitors and boosting the local economy.

Economic growth and skills development remain at the forefront of our agenda. Through the establishment of the Celtic Freeport, progression of City Deal projects, and various employability initiatives, we are creating sustainable job opportunities and supporting local businesses.

This report highlights our achievements and the progress made towards our well-being objectives. It reflects our dedication to creating a nurturing and supportive environment where every resident can thrive and achieve their full potential. We believe that investing in our community's future is the most important investment we can make.

Lastly, we extend our gratitude to all our partners, stakeholders, and community members for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we will continue to build a more prosperous, fairer and greener Neath Port Talbot.



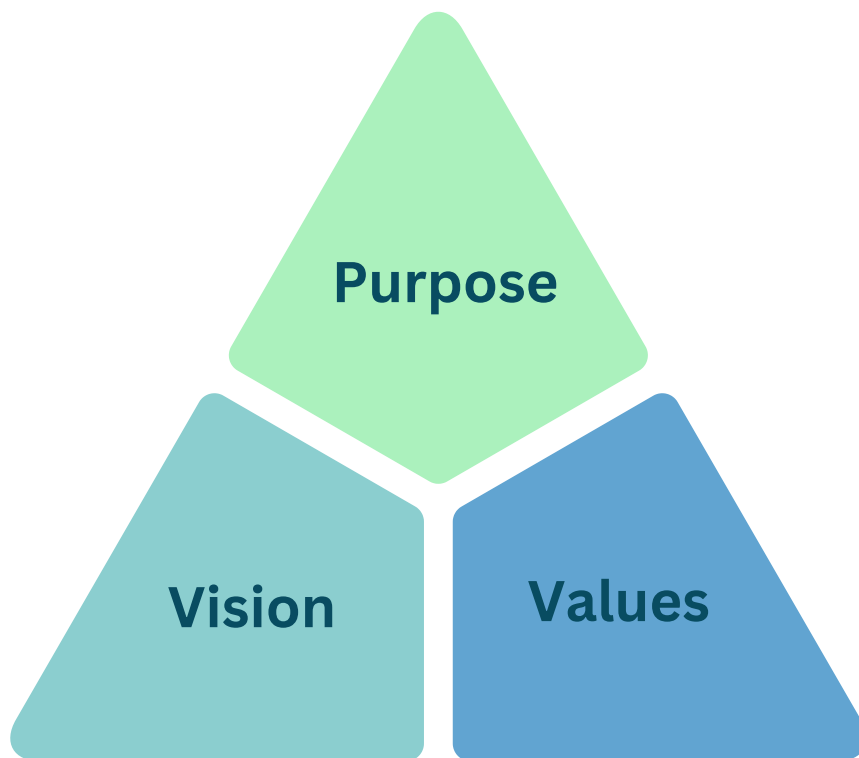
**Cllr S K Hunt,
Leader of Council**



**Frances O'Brien,
Chief Executive**

Purpose, Vision and Values

During 2024/2025, our Strategic Leadership Team made the decision to transition from a Corporate Plan to a Corporate Strategy. Whilst undertaking this work, we have tested our existing purpose, vision and values as part of our review process and have concluded that they remain relevant.



The council's **purpose** is to help Neath Port Talbot residents live good lives.

Our **vision** is to give every child the best start in life; that every community is thriving and sustainable; that our environment, heritage and culture can be enjoyed by future generations; and that local people have the skills to access well paid, sustainable jobs in the local green economy.

In carrying out our work we hold the following **values**:

Connected – what matters to you matters to us

Caring - we care about you, your life and the future of our county borough

Collaborative – we work with our citizens and partners because together we can achieve more

Confident – we are optimistic and confident about the future

Financial Position 2024/2025

£

The council's net revenue budget for 2024/25 was £376.599m. The actual net expenditure, resulted in a net underspend of £2.1m after accounting for ring-fenced reserves. This underspend is mainly due to unexpected additional grant income received from the Welsh Government

£

The reserves had an opening balance of £74.1m on 1st April 2024. £12.7m was spent in 2024/25, leaving a closing balance of £61.4m.

£

The delegated schools' budget for 2024/25 is £106.458m. Any under or overspends in relation to this budget are funded via contributions to/from the delegated school reserves.

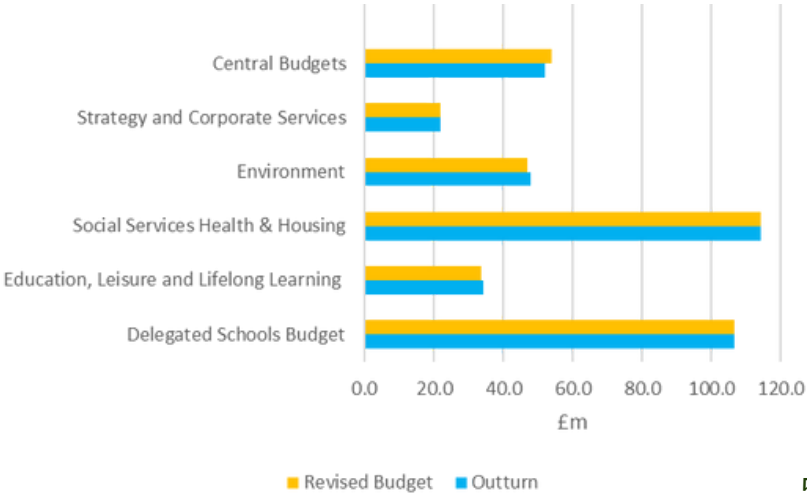
At the start of the year, delegated school reserves were in a deficit position of £17k. By the end of the year, the reserves had increased to a total deficit of £2.57m, representing a movement of £2.55m. This is significantly less than the £7.63m movement that was forecast at the start of the year.

£

The in-year Council tax collection rate for 2024/2025 was 97.9%, which is slightly below the budgeted figure of 98%. However, the team successfully recovered income from previous years. Additionally, there has been an increase in the council tax base, leading to an overall surplus of £1.19 million.

The graph below presents a comparative analysis of the outturn and revised budget for various service areas within the council for the fiscal year 2024/25.

- Some of the key points, include:
- Delegated Schools Budget: The outturn matched the revised budget at £106.458 million.
 - Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning: The outturn was slightly higher at £34.262 million compared to the revised budget of £33.467 million.
 - Social Services Health & Housing: The outturn was £114.244 million, closely aligning with the revised budget of £114.248 million.
 - Environment: The outturn was £47.986 million, exceeding the revised budget of £46.976 million.
 - Strategy and Corporate Services: The outturn was £21.697 million, nearly matching the revised budget of £21.698 million.
 - Central Budgets: The outturn was £51.952 million, slightly below the revised budget of £53.752 million.



Enabling Programme

The work of Financial Services, in addition to the services provided by Digital Services, Legal and Democratic Services, People and Organisational Development, make up the 'Enabling Programme'. The Enabling Programme plays a vital role in equipping directorates with the strategic capabilities, operational support, and cross-cutting services needed to adapt, transform, and deliver high-quality council services that align with the Corporate Plan's well-being objectives and meet the evolving needs of our communities. The sections below provide an overview of each service area, full details can be found in appendix 1.

Legal & Democratic Services

Legal and Democratic Services have provided critical support across a range of council functions, ensuring legal compliance, safeguarding public interests, and enabling effective service delivery.

The service has played a key role in supporting Transport colleagues with procurement advice for home-to-school transport contracts, and has overseen legal aspects of new school builds. Their work also includes prosecuting cases of school non-attendance, with 36 prosecutions actioned in the past year, reinforcing the council's commitment to educational standards.

Legal support has extended to Housing and Community Safety, particularly around housing obligations and conveyancing, as well as to Social Services, where the team has advised on adult safeguarding and childcare legal matters.

Digital Services

Digital Services have delivered a comprehensive programme of transformation and support, underpinning the council's strategic priorities through technology and innovation.

The team has focused on enhancing digital infrastructure, improving cyber resilience, and streamlining service delivery across departments, all aligned to the council's Digital Data and Technology Strategy.

Key achievements include the rollout of new digital platforms to enhance service delivery, including the new Social Care Case Management Platform 'Mosaic'; further supporting remote working and collaboration; strengthening the use of data to support service delivery; and the implementation of 'myNPT' a user-friendly system that will improve access to services for residents and staff alike. The service has also played a vital role in supporting digital inclusion initiatives, ensuring that communities are not left behind in the shift to online services.

People & Organisational Development

The People and Organisational Services teams have delivered a wide-ranging programme of work focused on workforce development, employee well-being, and organisational resilience.

Employee turnover and retention were closely monitored, providing insights into workforce stability and identifying areas for improvement. The team also led efforts to strengthen business continuity, with the proportion of accountable managers maintaining up-to-date continuity plans rising from 23% in Quarter 1 to 52% by Quarter 4.

Mandatory training completion rates across key areas such as GDPR, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, and Welsh Language Awareness showed consistent progress. In support of inclusivity and bilingual service delivery, over 600 employees self-reported fluency in Welsh, while nearly 770 identified as Welsh learners.⁶

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2024-2028

Neath Port Talbot Council's Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-2028 has been produced to reflect and deliver on our determination to promote genuine equality of opportunity, tackle discrimination and create a fairer and more equitable Neath Port Talbot.

Some of the key developments of the SEP throughout 2024-2025 include:

- Work to reduce the council's gender pay gap continued during 2024-2025 through actions set out in our Gender Equality Action Plan. Overall, our gender pay gap data shows a positive trend in reducing the mean gender pay gap over the last three years, which is a good sign of progress towards pay equality
- The launch of the LGBTQ+ Staff Network in May 2024
- The launch of the Disability Staff Network in March 2025
- Employee Network and Anti-Racism Action Plan information included in Corporate Induction sessions
- An Intersectionality Guide is being produced by our Social Services, Health and Housing Directorate (with input and support from the Corporate Policy Officer for Equality and Welsh Language). This will be a useful resource for officers' council wide.
- Trans Equality Guidance - in 2024-25, as part of our 'Future of Work' Strategic Workforce Plan, Delivery Plan, our Trans Equality Guidance was updated to be more user friendly and less prescriptive to users
- A successful Armed Forces Day festival in October 2024
- Successful events held by the Ethnic Employee Network, including Black History 365
- A number of wellbeing initiatives have been supported, including Time to Talk Day, Mental Health Awareness Week and "Brew Monday"

How Neath Port Talbot is working together to fight racism

Neath Port Talbot Council is reinforcing its commitment to combating racism, as highlighted during the UNISON Anti-racism Charter and Allyship meeting at Neath Civic Centre on May 23rd, 2024. The council's efforts, along with those of NPT UNISON and the NPT Ethnic Network Group, were commended for their dedication to anti-racism.



How Neath Port Talbot is working together to fight racism

Welsh Language

The focus is on actively offering language choice, i.e. providing services in Welsh without service users or employees having to request them. We have been taking action to fulfil our commitment to complying with the standards, whilst preparing to welcome Eisteddfod yr Urdd Dur a Môr in May 2025.

With our revised Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan now in their second and third years, respectively, we are beginning to see progress. Feedback from the compliance monitoring exercise undertaken by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Officer for the period was encouraging, and a number of the measures in this report show a gradual but positive trend.

We know that supporting and encouraging Welsh speakers and learners to use their language skills at work is key to our compliance journey. Linked to this, work continued to ensure that employees completed the mandatory Welsh Language in NPT eLearning course, as a result 2859 staff had completed the course by 31st March 2025, an increase of 1,179 since the end of the previous year.

In addition, a number of new initiatives and training opportunities were introduced for council employees during the year. Whilst adhering to the standards continues to be challenging, it is something that the council remains passionate about. We look forward to working with colleagues and partners to build on our progress to date.

Committee hears 'good progress' being made on promoting Welsh across Neath Port Talbot

The Neath Port Talbot Council's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy Annual Report (2023-2024) highlights significant progress in promoting the Welsh language. Key achievements include the announcement that Margam Country Park will host the 2025 Urdd National Eisteddfod, the appointment of the first Welsh Language Champion by the Youth Council, and a notable increase in engagement with the council's 'Learning and Using Welsh' webpage.



[Promoting Welsh across
Neath Port Talbot](#)



Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board (PSB)

The second Neath Port Talbot Well-being Plan was published on 4th May 2023 following extensive consultation with stakeholders. Implementation of the Plan is in its second year, with the 2024/2025 Annual Report published in July 2025. The Public Service Board governance structure consists of a series of partnerships that sit underneath the Board and drive the work of the Well-being Plan. A summary of progress made during 2024/2025 is included below, more information can be found in the NPTPSB Annual Report.

All our children have the best start in life

The Children and Young People's leadership group continues to coordinate the implementation of the Early Years, Children and Young People's Plan.

Five multi-agency Priority Outcome groups have been established to address identified strategic priorities. Work is currently ongoing to develop action plans to achieve the identified priority areas, including Early Years. It is anticipated that this phase of the work will be completed during quarter 1 of 2025/2026.

In addition to this work, the Health Board has worked with NPT and Swansea Local Authorities on behalf of the PSB to develop a set of Principles to support regional working across the Health Board footprint.

All our communities will be thriving and sustainable

The Cost of Living and Poverty Prevention Partnership Steering Group made the decision to focus their action plan on child poverty (ages 0-25). Recognising the importance of making the biggest impact with the limited time and resource available they have agreed four targeted actions:

- Maximising income
- Reducing Living Costs
- Financial Inclusion
- Holistic support for children and families

The LIFT (Low Income Family Tracker) database has been used successfully in 2024 to undertake a series of targeted campaigns framed around maximising income, reducing living costs and identifying cohorts of low-income households and individuals eligible for financial support they are not yet receiving.

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Partners are working towards completing a Climate Change Risk Assessment for NPT using the framework developed by Natural Resources Wales. The PSB have agreed on six priority risks in relation to climate change to streamline the process, these are:

- River and surface water flooding risk to infrastructure
- Flooding risk to people communities and buildings
- Food availability, safety and quality
- Heat risk to health and well-being
- Summer and winter temperature changes risk to household energy demand
- Changing climatic conditions risk to terrestrial species and habitats.

There are more secure, green and well paid jobs and skills across the area are improved

The Local Economic Partnership is overseeing the development of a Local Regeneration and Economic Strategy for Neath Port Talbot. The Strategy is in the process of being finalised and the commissioners have engaged with representatives of the Local Economic Partnership and mapped the strategies, plans and activities of partner organisations. This will be a partnership document and will set out a more coordinated approach to supporting our local economy through the changes ahead.

The PSB has worked in collaboration with Swansea and Cwm Taf Morgannwg PSBs and Data Cymru to develop a Well-being Data Portal which will reflect key indicators around health and well-being plus some demographic information for the borough.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 & Well-being Statement

Our purpose, vision and values show how the council contributes to the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Neath Port Talbot and to the seven national well-being goals contained in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. We are able to clearly demonstrate through the key areas of work set out in this Corporate Plan that we are able to contribute to the well-being goals at a national level.



Neath Port Talbot Council's Well-being Objectives / 2024-2027

WBO 1 - Best start in life

WBO 2 - All communities are thriving and sustainable

WBO 3 - Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

WBO 4 - Jobs and skills

7 National Well-being Goals

	WBO 1	WBO 2	WBO 3	WBO 4
A Prosperous Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Resilient Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A healthier Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A more equal Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of cohesive communities	✓	✓	✓	✓
A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language	✓	✓	✓	✓
A globally responsible Wales	✓	✓	✓	✓

Sustainable Development Principle

The priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2024/2027 clearly defined how under each well-being objective we will focus our efforts in the short, medium and longer term.

The contribution to the seven well-being goals is made through the way in which we work, in accordance with the sustainable development principle contained within the Act, by considering the following 5 ways of working that show we have applied the sustainable development principle:



Looking ahead to the medium and longer term – We are focused on several strategic priorities to ensure sustainable growth and development. The council aims to create thriving and sustainable communities by enhancing housing, social services, and community safety. This includes delivering quality, affordable, and low-carbon housing, preventing homelessness, and reducing the number of people in emergency and temporary accommodation through early intervention and better support systems. We have also documented our progress in bringing empty properties back into use and empowering individuals to develop local solutions that address their unique needs.

In addition, the council is dedicated to supporting people with disabilities and complex needs by developing a wider range of community services. This includes improving digital connectivity and combating digital exclusion to ensure more people can access high-speed internet and develop digital skills. The council's regeneration and active travel projects aim to enhance routes and accessibility, encouraging walking and cycling.



Preventing problems from occurring or getting worse. This annual report documents a number of initiatives which are being implemented. Through the provision of our Children's Services' early intervention, we are addressing issues before they escalate and providing essential services like part-time funded childcare, parenting support, and enhanced health visiting to thousands of children and their families. This also includes revising family support services to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Bringing the supported lodging services inhouse allows us to expand options and improve outcomes for young people transitioning to independence.

Within the council, further work is being undertaken to review and implement strategies and deliver sufficient training to enhance emergency preparedness and resilience, ensuring we are prepared for various risks. We are making in-roads in the decarbonisation of our fleet and property assets, reducing the council's carbon footprint.



Ensuring our well-being objectives interact with each other demonstrates the integration and collaboration are key components of Neath Port Talbot Council's initiatives. Through education reforms, the Curriculum for Wales involves collaboration with schools, headteachers, and Education Support Officers. This ensures that the curriculum meets the diverse needs of all pupils.

Many of our economic and regeneration projects require extensive collaboration. The development of the Celtic Freeport involves collaboration with multiple stakeholders, including landowners and government bodies, to attract investment and create sustainable jobs. Similarly, the Swansea Bay City Deal projects include several interlinked projects that require collaboration between the council, local businesses, and educational institutions to drive economic growth.



Working in partnership with others – Partnership working is key for Neath Port Talbot Council. Some key examples include work with housing developers to deliver quality, affordable, and low-carbon housing. Through our work and partnerships with the Regional Partnership Board, Public Services Board, Corporate Joint Committee and Local Nature Partnership, we demonstrate the council's commitment to working collaboratively across various sectors to achieve its strategic objectives and improve the well-being of its residents.



Involving local people – Our work has significantly involved local people through various community-focused initiatives and projects. For instance, the Trem Y Glyn and Afan Valley Place-based initiatives have fostered community involvement and support, empowering individuals to develop local solutions that address their unique needs. The Trem Y Glyn Project, in particular, has seen substantial progress, including successful engagement events for residents, families, and the community, which received positive feedback and support. Similarly, the Afan Valley Place-based project has identified several workstreams such as Ageing Well, Transport, Children and Young People, and Education and Employment, with active participation from local stakeholders. These efforts have been instrumental in ensuring that the projects reflect the needs and aspirations of the local communities.

Additionally, our commitment to supporting people with disabilities and complex needs has led to the development of a wider range of community services, enabling them to enjoy and contribute to community life. Projects like the Fy Mywed Pilot Project have scaled up to provide strengths-based support to individuals, enhancing their capacity and resilience. The introduction of new models of care and the expansion of services like B'spoked have significantly increased attendance and engagement. Furthermore, our regeneration and active travel projects have made substantial progress, with Place Plans for various towns incorporating community feedback to ensure they reflect local needs and aspirations. These initiatives demonstrate our dedication to involving local people in shaping the services and support they receive, fostering a sense of ownership and community spirit.



Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act (Wales) 2023

The **Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act (Wales) 2023**, which came into force on 1st April 2024, mandates that we reach consensus or compromise with recognised trade unions when setting and delivering our well-being objectives.

Social partnership has been a cornerstone of our organisation since the council's inception. We have consistently consulted and involved our recognised trade unions in our corporate planning processes. Moving forward, we will adjust these arrangements to fully comply with the new legal duties. When reviewing our Corporate Plan for 2024/2027, we held a consultation with the trade unions, which resulted in an amendment to the Corporate Plan and some additional comments which were noted and fed back to Directors. Their feedback has also resulted in the creation of a sub-group of our Local Government Services Forum to further develop actions on how we work together to deliver outcomes relating to 'Green and Sustainable Practices'. The Chair of the Joint Trade Unions confirmed consensus had been reached in this process.

In parallel with the Act, we will reform our procurement processes to emphasise socially responsible public procurement. As a local authority, we are now duty-bound to enhance the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of our area through socially responsible public procurement. This duty will be developed through our procurement strategy and the establishment of socially responsible procurement objectives.

The council's Procurement Strategy sets out how we are changing procurement within the council, to enhance our contract management arrangements and set out the vision and strategic direction necessary to deliver better outcomes for our communities. In February 2025, the Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders were updated and approved by Full Council, to incorporate amendments to procurement legislation (Procurement Act 2023). A training programme for officers has commenced, along with ongoing support to ensure compliance with procurement rules and processes. A dedicated section of the council's intranet has provided standard documents and processes for officers to follow.



Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 / Self-Assessment

The **Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021** is a substantial piece of legislation covering electoral reform, public participation, governance, performance and collaborative working.

The council has completed four self-assessments in accordance with the Act. The self-assessment is a reporting framework to measure:

- The extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements (exercising our functions effectively;
- If we are using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- If our governance arrangements are effective in order to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of our communities.

The self-assessment has informed the priorities set out within this Plan and working in partnership with other Welsh councils we will be externally benchmarking our progress. Our progress will also be measured when we undertake our panel performance assessment, an additional requirement set out in the Act.

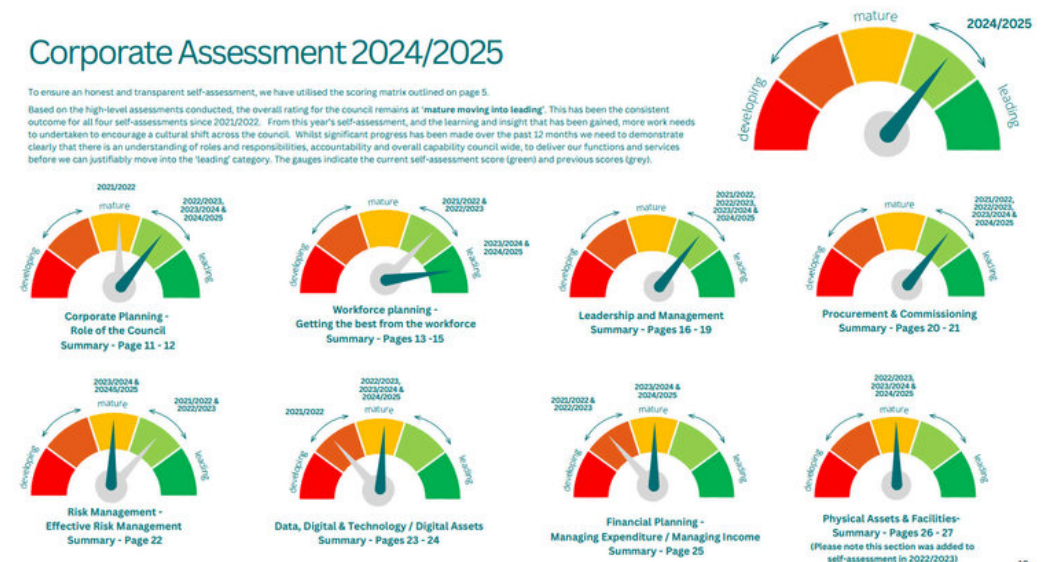
We are evolving our corporate planning and performance management arrangements to both fully recover from the pandemic period and also to respond to new duties under this legislation.



Corporate Assessment 2024/2025

To ensure an honest and transparent self-assessment, we have utilised the scoring matrix outlined on page 5.

Based on the high-level assessments conducted, the overall rating for the council remains at 'mature moving into leading'. This has been the consistent outcome for all four self-assessments since 2021/2022. From this year's self-assessment, and the learning and insight that has been gained, more work needs to be undertaken to encourage a cultural shift across the council. Whilst significant progress has been made over the past 12 months we need to demonstrate clearly that there is an understanding of roles and responsibilities, accountability and overall capability council wide, to deliver our functions and services before we can justifiably move into the 'leading' category. The gauges indicate the current self-assessment score (green) and previous scores (grey).



Annual Performance Summary 2024/2025



Well-being Objective 1
All children have the best in life



Well-being Objective 2
All communities are thriving and sustainable



Well-being Objective 3
Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations



Well-being Objective 4
Local people are skilled and access, high quality, green jobs

Total Number of Strategic Priorities: 12

- 11 on-track
- 1 off-track
- 0 not started

Total Number of Performance Measures: 17

- 16 on-track
- 1 off-track
- 0 not started

Total Number of Strategic Priorities: 12

- 11 on-track
- 1 off-track
- 0 not started

Total Number of Performance Measures: 25

- 19 on-track
- 3 off-track
- 2 not started
- 1 for monitoring

Total Number of Strategic Priorities: 13

- 11 on-track
- 2 off-track
- 0 not started

Total Number of Performance Measures: 20

- 14 on-track
- 4 off-track
- 0 not started
- 2 data not available/to follow

Total Number of Strategic Priorities: 12

- 11 on-track
- 0 off-track
- 1 not started

Total Number of Performance Measures: 15

- 11 on-track
- 0 off-track
- 1 not started
- 3 data not available/to follow

1

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 1

All children get the best start in life

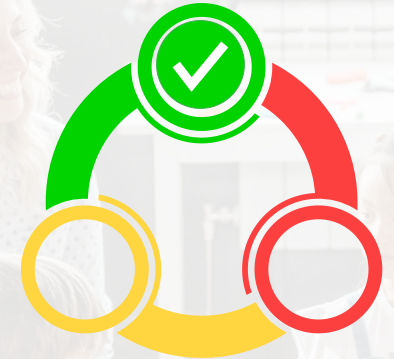
Executive Summary

At the heart of our commitment to the community is the well-being of our children. Our objective is to ensure that all children have the best start in life, laying a strong foundation for their future success and well-being. Over the past year, we have made significant strides in various areas to support this goal. Our efforts have focused on enhancing early childhood education, improving support for children with additional learning needs, and ensuring that all children have access to high-quality learning environments. Through initiatives like the Flying Start programme, we have provided essential services to thousands of children and their families, including part-time funded childcare, parenting support, and enhanced health visiting.

We have also made substantial progress in implementing education reforms aligned with the Curriculum for Wales, ensuring that our educational system meets the diverse needs of all pupils. Our support for pupils with additional learning needs has been robust, with comprehensive transition support and the development of Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to ensure every child receives the support they need. Furthermore, we have worked diligently to reduce school exclusions, improve attendance, and promote Welsh-medium education. In addition, we currently have the lowest number of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in Wales, at 1.1% which equates to 18 young people. This is the lowest figure for Neath Port Talbot to date and reflects the range of support offered to our school leavers.

Reflected in our work is the commitment to safeguarding children and young people and providing them with the care and support they need to thrive. Our Children's Services are dedicated to safeguarding and supporting young people through a range of initiatives. We have revised our response to external risks, prioritized early intervention, and reviewed family support services to enhance efficiency. The Supported Lodgings Service is being brought in-house to expand options and improve outcomes, while the Care Leavers Project will provide a new home for care leavers transitioning to independence. Foster care recruitment has increased, reducing reliance on residential care and generating significant savings. Additionally, proposals for new children's residential homes are being developed, and active workstreams are in place to ensure smooth transitional pathways for young people.

Through these concerted efforts, we aim to create a nurturing and supportive environment where every child can thrive and achieve their full potential. Our dedication to this well-being objective reflects our belief that investing in our children's future is the most important investment we can make.



Number of Strategic Priorities: 12

 11 on-track

 1 off-track

 0 not started

Number of Performance Measures: 17

 16 on-track

 1 off-track

 0 not started

Neath Port Talbot Celebrates its Foster Carers

Eighteen foster carers were honoured for their service, ranging from one to 35 years.

David and Anne Jenkins received special recognition for over 35 years of fostering, during which they cared for about 74 children.

[Neath Port Talbot Celebrates its Foster Carers - NPT News](#)



1 Well-being Objective 1

All children have the best start in life

Corporate Plan 2024/2027 - 3 Year Aims	Annual Progress	Transformation Programme								
		TP 1	TP 2	TP 3	TP 4	TP 5	TP 6	TP 7	TP 8	TP 9
More Work with our partners to ensure our youngest children are better prepared for the transition into education	On-track	✓								
Progress our strategic schools improvement programme to develop our learning and teaching environments	On-track	✓								
Continue roll out of educational reform to support all pupils, including Additional Learning Needs legislation and the Curriculum for Wales to raise standards across our schools for all learners	On-track	✓								
Provide opportunities for all to benefit from the opportunity to learn, appreciate and shape their lives through the medium of Welsh	On-track	✓								
Provide high quality support for teaching that supports the evolution of pedagogy and how to plan for progression in the Curriculum for Wales	On-track	✓								
Provide high quality responsive support for leadership at all levels including induction, support staff, leadership training, etc	On-track	✓								
Support schools to secure an improvement in pupil attendance rates across all NPT schools	On-track	✓								
Support schools to reduce the number of pupils subject to an exclusion (both fixed-term and permanent)	On-track	✓								
Work with Sports Wales to ensure a smooth transition for the Physical Activity Sport Service (PASS) to the regional partnership model	On-track	✓						✓		
Enable our young people to develop independent, safe travel skills	On-track	✓								
Expand the foster care provision, supporting children with the most complex needs	On-track		✓							
Support young carers, those leaving care and minority groups to access opportunities	On-track		✓							
Enhanced facilities, improved play and leisure services for children and young people	On-track	✓				✓				
Develop a co-ordinated approach to meet the well-being needs of our children and young people and ensure there are strong safeguarding and support procedures in place.	On-track	✓	✓							

1 Well-being Objective 1

All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
More children are better prepared for school.	On-track	During the year: • Around 2000 children have accessed the Flying Start programme. • 1415 children have accessed Flying Start part-time funded childcare. • 205 children have accessed the Outreach element of the Flying Start programme. These are children from outside Flying Start areas accessed support including enhanced Health Visiting support, childcare or support for an additional learning need. • 478 parents/careers have accessed Flying Start parenting support, including Play and Stay sessions, Family links Nurture support sessions and Baby Massage. Nearly all feedback from families is positive and demonstrates a positive impact in relation to the support received. • 1537 applications for part-time funded childcare for three to four year olds have been approved. Processes to support children's transition in the early years include: • The Early Years Training & Transition Officer continues to work with childcare providers to support the transition of children and families into childcare settings and schools effectively. • The 'Early Years Passport' continues to be implemented by all Flying Start childcare providers. In line with Curriculum for Wales, the passport is being used as a transition document into settings, and subsequently as a working document during the child's time in childcare and for transition to school. • 11 childcare settings and 26 schools attended the 'Cuppa with your Cluster' network sessions. As a result, the network meetings have had a positive impact upon relationships between childcare providers and school staff, which supports the transition process for children, families and professionals.	Education
We will have increased the number of 21st Century learning and teaching environments.	On-track	NPT Sustainable Communities for Learning received Welsh Government approval for Ysgol Maes y Coed Special School extension Strategic Outline Case and Pre-vocational Skills Centre Strategic Outline Case. Outline Business Cases have been submitted to Welsh Government for YGG Rhosafan new build and Llangatwg Community School new build, and are awaiting approval.	

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Well-being Objective 1 All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Education reforms related to the curriculum and support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs are embedded and these changes will raise standards across our education system. Continued...	On-track	Neath Port Talbot has made significant progress in implementing education reforms related to the curriculum and support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). These reforms are designed to raise educational standards and ensure that all pupils receive the support they need to succeed. We have developed a vision for curriculum and continued to support schools to develop their curriculum in line with the local authority's vision, and interpretation of the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. Headteachers value the local authority's support for clusters of schools to engage in discussions about curriculum design and progression. We continue to provide a range of professional learning opportunities, including for governors. Education Support Officers, who are research-informed, offer valuable support to headteachers, allowing them to plan their own curriculum approaches. Support for Pupils with Additional Learning Needs: • Early Years Multi-Agency Panel (EYMAP): Since its implementation in February 2021, 756 children have been discussed at EYMAP, with all receiving a level of support. As of 31st March 2025, 191 children have been provided with local authority-maintained Individual Development Plans (IDPs), with no appeals lodged to the Education Tribunal Wales for pre-school children, highlighting the robustness of the decision-making process. • Transition Support: 287 children have been supported to transition into school, and 60 pre-school children into childcare. Early years multi-agency 'school starters' cluster planning meetings have been embedded across school clusters, with 667 children discussed across 53 schools. Feedback indicates that 100% of attendees found these sessions useful for planning and preparing provision ahead of the children's transition to school. • Conversion of Statements to IDPs: As at 31.03.2025, 404 LA Maintained IDPs have been agreed: ◦ 35 IDPs have been directed back to schools to maintain ◦ in 2 cases, it was determined that there was no ALN, and ◦ in 13 cases, further information was needed before panel could make an informed decision.	Education

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Well-being Objective 1 All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... Education reforms related to the curriculum and support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs are embedded and these changes will raise standards across our education system.		- Over the duration of this period, 3 appeals have been lodged to ETW; two of these were withdrawn following successful mediation and 1 was upheld only in part following the Tribunal Process. - This low number evidences that the decision-making process ALN Inclusion Panel performs is robust and that the plans produced are high quality, as well as evidences the LA's commitment to early dispute resolution. - To date, many learners (81%) who were identified as being in the mandated cohorts for conversion of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to IDPs over the three year implementation timeline, have been successfully transferred to the ALN system. This is in part attributed to the effective support provided by ALNSS and Inclusion staff through regular school visits, professional learning and the ALN 'Plan and Review' sessions. The Inclusion Service has identified those schools who will benefit from enhanced support in the term ahead, to ensure they adhere to the statutory timescales provided by Welsh Government. - Quality Assurance: The Inclusion Service undertakes the quality assurance of all local authority-maintained IDPs and supports schools in implementing robust monitoring processes to review the impact of the plans. Person Centred Practice (PCP) is embedded in nearly all schools, supported by 8 accredited PCP trainers. - Outreach Support Programme: Coordinated by the council from Ysgol Maes Y Coed Special School, this programme supports mainstream schools in meeting the needs of learners with complex ALN. Professional Learning and Collaboration: - National Support Programme: 15 schools have enrolled in the national support programme, participating in online workshops and follow-up visits. NPT is the best-represented local authority in this programme. - Teaching and Learning Programme: We are working with our fourth and fifth cohorts, each comprising around 25 teachers, significantly impacting teaching in the Curriculum for Wales. - Subject Network Meetings: 14 subject network groups at secondary level meet termly to discuss pedagogy, curriculum, and qualifications, supporting progress in learning. - Camau Workshops: Several NPT schools have participated in phase three and presented at the national event in Cardiff, contributing to research on supporting the Curriculum for Wales.	Education Scrutiny Committee

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Well-being Objective 1 All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... Education reforms related to the curriculum and support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs are embedded and these changes will raise standards across our education system.		- Leadership Workshops and Training: All leadership workshops, foundation learning training, and training for newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants include significant elements around the Curriculum for Wales. - These comprehensive reforms and support mechanisms are designed to elevate educational standards and ensure that all pupils, including those with ALN, receive the best possible education in Neath Port Talbot.	Education
The number of children and young people excluded from school will have reduced.	On-track	During the 2024/2025 academic year, Neath Port Talbot has seen a significant reduction in the number of children and young people excluded from schools. The number of permanent exclusions has successfully fallen over the past two years, reflecting the positive impact of our ongoing efforts to create a supportive and inclusive educational environment. All measures of exclusion from schools are lower than the previous year. These improvements highlight our commitment to addressing the underlying issues that lead to exclusions and ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed in a supportive school environment.	
Home to school transport is remodelled with an emphasis on helping young people to develop independent, safe travel skills;	Off-track	During the past year, the council has continued to prioritise the development of a more sustainable and learner-centred approach to home to school transport. In February 2025, a decision was taken to withdraw from the contract with an external organisation who was supporting the council. This has enabled the council to reassess delivery mechanisms and ensure alignment with our broader service objectives. Our commitment remains unchanged: ensuring that home to school transport is both cost-effective and efficient, while meeting the diverse needs of our learners, and this is set out in the Corporate Strategy 2025/2028. We continue to explore innovative approaches that support young people in developing the confidence and skills necessary for independent travel, where appropriate, and we are working closely with partners and stakeholders to deliver a service that is responsive, inclusive, and future-ready.	

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Well-being Objective 1 All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Attendance across all school settings will have improved.	On-track	In the past year, the efforts of council officers and schools have been highly commended, particularly following an extended Local Authority Link Inspector visit by Estyn. Despite a year-on-year increase in pupil attendance recovery rates, Neath Port Talbot has not seen the same acceleration in recovery as some other councils in Wales. Holistic support services and work to increase attendance and performance has included: • Families First and Early Help Services: These services have been instrumental in supporting children and young people with low school attendance by addressing issues impacting their ability to attend school, especially concerning emotional well-being. • Community Counsellor: The counsellor has provided essential counselling and therapy to help children and young people engage or re-engage in education, working closely with schools, families, and other supporting agencies. • Parenting Services: These services have offered advice and guidance to parents in both group settings and on a one-to-one basis, focusing on building routines, boundaries, and relationships to support children's school attendance. • Pupil Attendance: There has been a consistent year-on-year increase in pupil attendance following the pandemic. The primary sector has shown notable improvement compared to the previous year, while secondary attendance has also improved, albeit at a slower pace. • School Rankings: Secondary schools have improved their ranking from 21st to 15th place across Wales for the 2023/2024 academic year. The primary sector is currently ranked 19th. Overall, the combined efforts of the local authority officers, schools, and support services have led to a positive trend in pupil attendance and school performance, contributing to the well-being and educational engagement of children and young people in the area.	Education

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Well-being Objective 1 All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
More pupils are educated in Welsh medium schools and more learners, families and carers are able to engage and benefit from the medium of Welsh.	On-track	During the year, there has been a slight increase in the percentage of pupils being educated in Welsh-medium schools have increased from 17% in 2024 to 17.7% in 2025. In addition, the percentage of Nursery 1 pupils starting in Welsh-medium education has increased from 19.9% in 2024 to 23.1% in 2025. Transition rates from Welsh-medium primary to Welsh-medium secondary was 111.8% in 2025. A set of 6 promotional videos on the benefits of bilingualism and Welsh-medium education have been created and promotion is under way. A promotional campaign has been developed in line with Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to showcase Welsh Medium opportunities for families, children and young people, including website development and promotional videos detailing the benefits of bilingualism, and the broad range of childcare, schools and family support services. Additional Welsh or bilingual settings opened 2024/2025: • Cylch Trebannws in YGG Trebannws opened September 2024. • Welsh medium provision at Aberavon ICC was reintroduced in September 2024. • YGG Pontardawe, YGG Rhosafan, YGG Treges and Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera-Bro Dur Ti a Fi sessions are successful with good engagement and parents/carers are building links with the schools and childcare providers. Currently there are 295 Welsh medium/bilingual childcare places in Neath Port Talbot. The number of places has reduced due to the closure of a childcare provider.	Education
All young people will progress to work, further education or training at the end of their statutory education. <i>Continued...</i>	On-track	Through our Families First programme, we have funded the Youth Service to deliver the School and Transition Project, which targets pupils in Year 11 who are most at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). This project provides a combination of group work and one-to-one support within schools and local community projects, aiming to prepare and support young people into positive post-16 destinations such as college, work-based learning, and more. Interventions include classroom support, home visits, and partnership work with education welfare officers, teachers, Careers Wales, and work-based learning providers.	



Well-being Objective 1

All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... All young people will progress to work, further education or training at the end of their statutory education.		Some of the key achievements include: • Legacy Youth Workers: By the end of Quarter 4, Legacy Youth Workers had successfully supported 225 Year 11 leavers into positive Employment, Education, or Training (EET) destinations. Since returning to schools in November, they have allocated new caseloads, with 270 young people already receiving support. • Keeping in Touch (KIT) Programme: Funded by the Youth Support Grant, the KIT programme provides similar services to Year 11 Electively Home Educated young people. It supported 53 Year 11 leavers, with 43 (90.5%) transitioning into positive post-16 destinations. • NPT Skills & Training Unit: This unit, supported by the youth service, has been conducting roadshows at each NPT comprehensive school to promote post-16 opportunities such as Jobs Growth Wales+ (JGW+) and Apprenticeship programmes. They have been working closely with Careers Advisors to ensure that referrals for post-16 work-based learning are completed and submitted in readiness for the end of the school academic year. It is anticipated that approximately 50 Year 11 leavers will be supported onto the JGW+ project over the summer months. These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that young people in Neath Port Talbot have the support and opportunities they need to successfully transition from statutory education to further education, training, or employment.	Education



Well-being Objective 1

All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
All young people leaving care will have access to sustainable and appropriate accommodation.	On-track	Bringing Supported Lodgings Service In-house The business case to bring the Supported Lodgings Service in-house, which follows a family-based model of supported accommodation, was completed and approved by the Children’s Services Management Group in June 2024. This initiative aims to expand service options and achieve better outcomes for young people. Cabinet permission has been received to proceed with bringing the service in-house. This project is expected to generate savings of £6.5k. Key Timeline: • January to March 2025: Mobilisation • April 2025: Project completion Care Leavers Project In collaboration with commissioning, we have identified a suitable home for care leavers aged 18 and above. This initiative is designed to support care leavers in transitioning to independent living. The provision is projected to open in December 2024. These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that all young people leaving care have access to sustainable and appropriate accommodation. By expanding service options and providing targeted support, we aim to facilitate smoother transitions to independent living and improve overall outcomes for care leavers.	Social Services

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Well-being Objective 1 All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
There will be a wider range of foster carer placements available which will include opportunities for paid carers to support children with the most complex needs.	On-track	Development of Foster Plus Step Down Carers: Since the commencement of the project, significant progress has been made in fostering recruitment and assessments. We have increased recruitment efforts through enhanced community outreach, and social media presence has boosted general interest in fostering. The campaign aimed at recruiting Foster Plus Step Down Carers has also generated broader interest in fostering. Two new mainstream fostering households have been approved at the fostering panel, transferring from independent fostering agencies (IFAs), with eight additional assessments actively progressing. The number of young people placed in residential care has decreased by two, with these individuals successfully rehabilitated home to their parents' care. Two young people have transitioned from residential provision to these new placements, resulting in savings of £80k for the current financial year. The full-year savings for these arrangements are projected to be approximately £530k. These efforts demonstrate our commitment to providing sustainable and appropriate accommodation for young people leaving care. By expanding our fostering capacity and reducing reliance on residential placements, we aim to achieve better outcomes for young people and significant financial savings. Development of a new children's residential home: The proposal for creating a new children's residential home has been presented to senior management for agreement, and is due to be presented to Members imminently. The decision on whether to build a 3 or 4 bed home is under consideration, with cost savings varying based on this decision. Internal Residential Home: A scoping exercise has been completed and a draft business case has been compiled. The project has been paused at this time, to explore further options, including short breaks. Regional Based Residential Home: Via the Regional Partnership Board discussions are also taking place in respect of developing a regional project for children and young people with diagnosed complex neurodiversity and learning disabilities. Social Services and Health currently have a working group in place and a Statement of Purpose is being drafted along with a project brief. This progress is being monitored via the Children and Young People's Board, which then reports to the Steering and Advisory Board.	Social Services

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Well-being Objective 1

All children have the best start in life

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Young people identified as needing support to transition to adulthood will be supported appropriately.	On-track	Active workstreams are in place both regionally and locally to scope transitional pathways for young people. A set of principles has been agreed upon to ensure clearer processes for transitions. A dedicated working group comprising of Children's Services, Adults Services, Housing, and Commissioning is currently reviewing all supported housing provisions for young people in Neath Port Talbot. This comprehensive review aims to ensure that supported accommodations meet the needs of young people effectively. An established forum is in place to discuss transition cases, allowing for earlier identification and joint working on cases prior to transition. This proactive approach ensures that young people receive coordinated support as they move through different stages of care.	Social Services
All children and young people will be safeguarded effectively.	On-track	A revision of our response to Risk Outside the Home has been undertaken during the year, with a pathway now agreed. This will be operationalised as the council migrates to the new MOSAIC system. We continue to prioritise early intervention and prevention through to high risk cases. A review has been undertaken of Family Support Services to consider the current service demands and gaps in services. The review considers efficiencies and how we can most appropriately and effectively meet the needs of our families, in order to safeguard Children and Young People. We will continue to invest in early intervention and prevention, to ensure we are supporting families at the right time and preventing cases from escalating into more costly packages of care.	

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Well-being Objective 1 All children have the best in life

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr. 1 & 2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
£350k savings on home to school transport in 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 (£750k in total)	Off-track	N/A	A decision was taken to withdraw from the contract with an external organisation who were supporting the council - See action page 21.			Education
Deliver a new school for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan by end 2026. We will also deliver the actions set out in our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	On-track	N/A	Outline Business Case has been submitted to Welsh Government for Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhosafan new build.			
Progress proposals to build additional capacity to support young people with complex needs; develop a skills based vocational skills provision; further progress the proposal to build a new English medium primary school in the Swansea Valley; progress a replacement facility for Llangatwg Comprehensive School; progress a replacement for Tywyn Primary School, incorporating a 48 place facility for young people with severe learning difficulties; further develop proposals for a new Welsh medium primary school in the east of the county borough; progress proposals to develop a St Joseph’s 7-18 Middle School	On-track	N/A	NPT Sustainable Communities for Learning received Welsh Government approval for: -Ysgol Maes y Coed Special School extension Strategic Outline Case -Pre-vocational Skills Centre Strategic Outline Case · Outline Business Cases have been submitted to Welsh Government for YGG Rhosafan new build and Llangatwg Community School new build and are awaiting approval.			
Increase attendance level over the next 3 years (reported in academic years)	On-track	Primary - 90.97% Secondary - 85.38%	Primary is 92.08% / Secondary is 88.53% (provisional**)			
			**Provisional figures provided as academic year has not finished			
Reduce exclusions levels (reported in academic years)	On-track	Fixed - 717 Permanent - 37 (26 male/ 11 female)	Fixed Exclusions - 1676 Permanent Exclusions - 17 5 male / 12 female			
Education Support Officers will monitor schools through regular evaluation processes and support visits, these visits are logged and reviewed	On-track	N/A	All schools continue to be supported, monitored and reviewed			
% year 11 leavers who are NEET	On-track	1.3%	1.1% - 18 young people (figure correct as of 03/07/2025)			

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Well-being Objective 1

All children have the best in life

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
			6 monthly update (Qtr. 1 & 2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Percentage of care leavers provided with appropriate accommodation	On-track	93%	94.1%	97.1%	97.5%	Social Services
Percentage of young adults who have transitioned appropriately	On-track	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Number of children in residential care	On-track	20	17	18	18	
Number of children who are in the care of Neath Port Talbot Council	On-track	249	247	243	246	
Number of children stepped down to professional foster carers from residential care	On-track	0	0	0	2	
Number of professional foster carers recruited	On-track	0	0	2	2	
Number of mainstream foster carers recruited	On-track	1	0	4	7	
Number of children with a disability who have received residential respite	On-track	34	0	28	28	
Number of children deregistered from the Child Protection register	On-track	109	0	43	72	
Number of children re-registered within 1 year	On-track	0	0	1	1	

2

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE**All communities are thriving and sustainable*****Executive Summary***

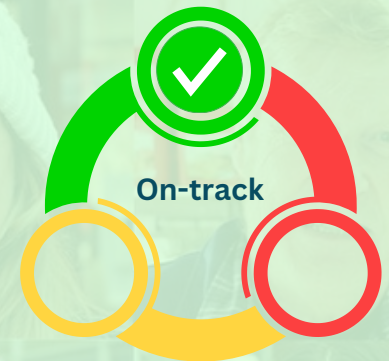
In the pursuit of creating thriving and sustainable communities, our strategic priorities for 2024-2025 have focused on enhancing housing, social services, and community safety. We have strengthened partnerships with housing developers to deliver quality, affordable, and low-carbon housing, ensuring that the right mix and size of properties are built in areas of demand. Our efforts have also been directed towards preventing homelessness and reducing the number of people living in emergency and temporary accommodation through early intervention and better support systems.

We have made significant progress in bringing empty properties back into use, addressing the demand for housing, and empowering individuals to develop local solutions that address their unique needs. Projects like the Trem Y Glyn and Afan Valley Place-based initiatives have fostered community involvement and support, while the Fy Mywed Pilot Project has scaled up to provide strengths-based support to individuals, enhancing their capacity and resilience.

Our commitment to supporting people with disabilities and complex needs has led to the development of a wider range of community services, enabling them to enjoy and contribute to community life. The introduction of new models of care and the expansion of services like B'spoked have significantly increased attendance and engagement.

We have also focused on improving digital connectivity and combating digital exclusion, ensuring that more people can access high-speed internet and develop digital skills. Our efforts in this area have been supported by various funding initiatives and community engagement activities.

In addition, our regeneration and active travel projects have made substantial progress. We have developed Place Plans for various towns, incorporating community feedback to ensure they reflect local needs and aspirations. The Aberavon Seafront Masterplan has been adopted, and consultations for other Place Plans are ongoing. Our active travel initiatives, funded through the Active Travel Act Fund, have completed several key projects, enhancing routes and accessibility to encourage walking and cycling.



Number of Strategic Priorities: 12

-  11 on-track
-  1 off-track
-  0 not started

Number of Performance Measures: 25

-  19 on-track
-  3 off-track
-  2 not started
-  1 for monitoring

Unveiling the Ocean Giant at Aberavon Seafront!

[The Ocean Giant at Aberavon Seafront!](#)

Our brand-new playground at Aberavon seafront, featuring the magnificent 8.9-metre high play tower, the 'Ocean Giant' has been officially opened.

The playground is partly made from ocean waste, such as outworn fishing nets and rope, helping to reduce marine pollution. It also has inclusive equipment for all children to enjoy.



2

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE**All communities are thriving and sustainable**

Cost of living - NPT Public Service Board's (PSB) Cost of Living & Poverty Prevention Partnership have agreed a 4-point action plan, framed around tackling some of the impacts of poverty on children and young people. Partners have been focussing on actions that help to maximise household income and reduce living costs, while also reflecting on the importance of wider holistic support for children, young people and their families. The sharing of intelligence – the 'on the ground' impact of the ongoing cost of living in NPT – continues to play an important role in the work being done to support residents; partners have also begun discussing how the 'voice of the child' could be incorporated into the workstreams of the NPT PSB.

Encouraging progress has been made with the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) database, which has been utilised to launch targeted benefit take-up campaigns. Most notably, this can be seen in relation to the Pension Credit campaign, with over £400,000 in annual Pension Credit income claimed in 2024/2025. In January 2025, NPT Council were accepted into the Welsh Government's local authority benefits take-up pilot, which will support the further use of LIFT to encourage take up of both devolved and reserved benefits.

**NPT warm spaces**

Our warm spaces directory will help you find public spaces or buildings you can use to keep warm and safe.

**Claiming benefits**

Help to understand what benefits you could get

**Money and debt**

Help with money and debt

**Education and school costs**

Help with the costs of sending your child to school

**Household bills**

Help with your household bills

2

Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Corporate Plan 2024/2027 - 3 Year Aims	Annual Progress	Transformation Programme								
		TP 1	TP 2	TP 3	TP 4	TP 5	TP 6	TP 7	TP 8	TP 9
Work to ensure residents have access to high quality sustainable housing and prevent homelessness	On-track			✓						
Support our communities who are at risk, or living in poverty	On-track	*Update provided below								
Improve the range and quality of informal and formal support for elderly and vulnerable residents, including unpaid carers	On-track				✓					
Ensure there is a wide range of community services for residents with disabilities and complex needs	On-track				✓					
Ensure that we support our communities to develop and give residents a voice to be involved in community life and decision making	On-track				✓					
Further develop our valleys, villages and towns and progress our regeneration vision linked to funding and investment opportunities	On-track					✓			✓	
Support the development of community groups, community hubs and access to volunteering opportunities	On-track					✓				
Secure funding to further develop our access to walking and cycling routes as part of our active travel network	On-track					✓				
Reduce carbon outputs and meet statutory recycling and waste targets	On-track					✓				
Effectively manage drainage networks, surface water and ordinary watercourses. Protect property from flooding by constructing new defences and maintaining existing defences. Promote wider catchment approaches to managing flood risk, including cross border and multi-agency working	On-track					✓				

2

Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
We will have strengthened our partnerships with housing developers and those arrangements are delivering more quality, affordable and low carbon housing.	On-track	In addition to regular strategic partnership meetings with housing developers, a more personalised approach is being taken to engage and connect with developers. This ensures that the right mix and size of properties are being built in areas of demand. In January 2025, we completed an initial engagement event with Support Providers and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to collaborate on how to meet people's holistic needs to enable people with more complex situations obtain and retain housing. The feedback from the workshops event has been used to expand on the project work for "The Home for Me" project. The project group has been established for a number of months and has completed significant amount of work profiling and consulting with clients in interim accommodation to understand their support requirements and move on opportunities. To maintain momentum and strengthen our partnerships we have also established a Homelessness Providers Strategic Forum from the initial event. A meeting is planned for April 2025 to build on the foundation work completed at our initial engagement events and establish action points to ensure we create the right pathways to successfully house individuals with support needs. Regular meetings/discussions are also being held with colleagues within the Planning/Estates Services to maximise development opportunities and ensure reporting tools are displaying the housing need within Neath Port Talbot. Further work is also progressing on data mapping with partners. We currently possess stock profiles from a number of our partner RSLs. We will continue to liaise with other RSLs partners to obtain comprehensive information on NPT stock availability. The current information has been utilised in various project activities such as area scoping documents or demand data assessments to ensure that we are making informed proposals and decisions. A new 'Developments Dashboard' has been developed, providing a comprehensive, real-time overview of affordable housing schemes across Neath Port Talbot. This dashboard allows the Strategic Housing Team to quickly assess where and what types of homes are being developed, supporting proactive planning to meet local housing needs.	Social Services, Housing & Community Safety

2

Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
More people are prevented from becoming homeless and fewer people are living in emergency and temporary accommodation. Continued...	On-track	Housing Assessment Prevention and Support Services (HAPPS) restructure is now fully implemented, and the impact is starting to be seen via various factors. The successful prevention rates are exceeding target significantly and have remained in excess of 70% throughout the year. This is the impact of early intervention work being carried out along with better support which will result in less repeat presentations, and this is something that will be monitored moving forward. The early intervention work is not a reportable piece of work as is the statutory duty, but reporting mechanisms are being put in place internally to ensure the work being carried out is identified and recognised. The average stay has also reduced significantly. This is a positive impact of the increased resources in the temporary accommodation (TA) Teams which allows staff to work more intensively due to lower caseloads. The new post of a 'Nominations Officer' has also contributed to the reduction, whose role is to work with RSLs streamlining the process which has enabled the team to nominate the right people at the start. A bid was approved from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), and the project has been awarded £728,000, which, although less than the requested amount, will still allow for deliverable projects with a refined scope. The project will be led by Housing Strategy Team with support. The project detail includes: • Purchase of temporary and/or settled accommodation to explore innovative housing solutions and ensure appropriate support for households. • A research project investigating the source of homelessness presentations and understanding household experiences during the homelessness process. • Significant IT development work to improve system conditions for managing homelessness presentations. The Flipping Tenancies initiative has successfully transitioned three cases from temporary accommodation to permanent homes since early 2024, significantly improving the stability and quality of life for these service users. The process involves close collaboration with Tai Tarian, and there are currently two more applicants going through the process. The Housing Strategy Team has been heavily involved in overseeing these cases. The updated process and documents are under review and expected to be finalised by May 2025 which will deliver on more successful tenancies.	Social Services, Housing & Community Safety



Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... More people are prevented from becoming homeless and fewer people are living in emergency and temporary accommodation.		The Private Sector Landlord Forum has been re-established in partnership with Environmental Health. Attendance in previous meetings has been strong, and the project team has been working diligently to ensure the event's success. Invitations have been widely circulated through Rent Smart Wales and the National Rented Private Landlords Association to maximise participation. Based on feedback from landlords at the previous event, the structure has been revised to facilitate more one-on-one conversations and support. Formal presentations will be held in the middle of the event, with informal chats arranged before and after the presentations to encourage personalised interactions. The Housing IT System Development Project has set clear goals to scope the current system, understand both front-end and back-end processes, and identify the reports generated. To ensure a thorough and robust scoping exercise, several scoping meetings have been scheduled for April and May 2025, as well as a Stakeholder mapping exercise to ensure a collaborative approach. The development of this IT system is crucial in preventing homelessness and reducing the number of people living in emergency and temporary accommodation. By thoroughly understanding and improving the current system, the project aims to streamline processes and enhance the efficiency of housing services. This includes better tracking and management of cases, more accurate and timely reporting, and improved communication between stakeholders. Youth Accommodation Review – The Children and Young People Service (CYPS) and Housing Support Grant (HSG) funded services have merged to identify efficiencies and undertake a collaborative approach. This area is currently under review. Prevention and Well-being Support - A proposal has been developed with The Wallich to remodel the service, which is currently in progress. The new model aims to provide more support to individuals with complex needs, the provision of dedicated support to the gypsy and traveller community and the establishment of supported temporary accommodation.	Social Services, Housing & Community Safety



Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Empty properties have been brought back into use through the Empty Property Grant, helping to address the demand for housing.	On-track	The Empty Property Grant Scheme remains highly popular, with 212 applications received. Out of these, 53 applications have been formally approved - 47 are currently being processed, and 26 have been completed on site. To date, the amount of grant that has been awarded is £515,746.	Social Services, Housing & Community Safety
More people feel that they are involved in decision making and are empowered to develop local solutions that address issues that affect them locally.	On-track	The Trem Y Glyn Project has made significant progress over the past year. The scoping and planning phase has been completed, and the service was successfully transferred to the council on 1st April 2025. A capital funding application has been submitted to the Welsh Government (WG), with the initial Expression of Interest already approved. Work has commenced 'at risk' to avoid delays, with the reablement unit expected to be operational by June 2025 and the bungalow by August 2025. Several key milestones and activities have been planned. The TUPE consultation and tender process for development work commenced earlier in the year. A Cabinet report seeking permission for the Reablement Model was presented on 5th February 2025. Two engagement events were held, one on 25th February 2025 for residents and families, and another on 25th March 2025 for the community. Both events received positive feedback and community support. Ongoing work includes painting the building and developing the kitchen unit in the reablement wing. There is continued engagement with the Health Board to secure necessary health posts, although potential setbacks due to recruitment issues have been identified. Follow-up discussions are planned to address these issues, with the potential use of agency staff being considered.	

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Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... More people feel that they are involved in decision making and are empowered to develop local solutions that address issues that affect them locally.		The Afan Valley Place-based project, established in partnership with Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services, aims to empower and develop local solutions for the community. Several workstreams have been identified for the Upper Afan Valley, including Ageing Well, Transport, Children and Young People, and Education and Employment. The Transport workstream is currently active, with a working group already established. Initial discussions have been facilitated with a diverse range of stakeholders, including transport providers, local authorities, third sector organisations, and community members. Ongoing efforts are focused on understanding the current transport demands within the area, which includes mapping existing provisions and identifying local needs. Planning for the Ageing Well workstream is underway, with future meeting dates and key stakeholders already identified. This workstream aims to address the needs of the ageing population in the Upper Afan Valley, ensuring they have access to necessary services and support. A significant milestone for the project was the successful submission of a funding bid to the Pen y Cymorth Wind Farm Fund. The bid secured funding for a three-year post for a dedicated Development Officer to support the Upper Afan Valley project. This position, hosted by Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services, will be crucial in driving the project's initiatives forward and ensuring its success.	Social Services, Housing & Community Safety
There is a wider range of community services able to support the unique needs of people with disabilities and complex needs which draw on a range of community resources and which enables them to enjoy and contribute to community life.	On-track	The Fy Mywed Pilot Project is scaling up to provide additional fixed-term, strengths-based 1:1 support to individuals. This initiative aims to build capacity and resilience, helping individuals feel confident to enjoy and contribute to their local community. This expansion is expected to significantly enhance the project's impact, fostering a stronger sense of community involvement and personal growth. B'spoked's capital work is progressing at pace, with painting work being undertaken and building work to create two new rooms. A rebranding of the service is underway, with a proposed re-launch in June 2025. Promotional materials have been reviewed and updated, and two new workshops—podcasting and music creation—have been added to broaden the service's offerings. The Independent Living provision continues to be well attended, with a new outreach support offer in people's homes to ensure skills are maintained. A new Prevention and Early Intervention service pathway is being introduced to aid individuals' progression, increase their independence, and maximize the number of people who can benefit from the service.	

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Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... There is a wider range of community services able to support the unique needs of people with disabilities and complex needs which draw on a range of community resources and which enables them to enjoy and contribute to community life.		Initial changes, including the introduction of a progression model of care and a twice-weekly day opportunity, have already resulted in a 70% increase in attendance compared to the same period last year. The West Glamorgan Shared Lives program, which insourced Adult Family Placements in May 2024, prepared for a CIW inspection from 19th to 26th May 2025. Temporary secondment of staff has been arranged to support with assessments, and the permanent job description and person specification are awaiting job evaluation. The Mobile Response pilot continues to demonstrate significant benefits and impacts. The service, provided by Delta Wellbeing, has been extended until the end of June 2025, following a regional funding agreement.	Social Services, Housing & Community Safety
The needs of adults of working age with accommodation, care and support needs are being met in more appropriate ways through a wider range of housing and housing support services.	On-track	The Accommodation Pathway Meeting has been established on a fortnightly basis to ensure that individuals' accommodation, care, and support needs are matched with appropriate services. This initiative aims to streamline the process of addressing housing needs and preventing homelessness. The Welsh Government has requested that data from these meetings be included in the Housing team's report, highlighting the role of the Accommodation Pathway Panel in managing homelessness prevention. Inhouse Provision for Complex Disabilities (previously named Gelligron): The project has been renamed to reflect the broader scope of addressing gaps in complex disability services. A comprehensive programme of work is underway to outline the services that will be developed by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and in-house Estates based on accommodation needs. While housing accommodation is still to be identified, 30 units of accommodation have been agreed upon for the former Gelligron site. A high-level draft plan has been provided by Estates, and several meetings have been scheduled to agree on and progress the development. There is a recognised need for wrap-around intensive support to prevent homelessness, particularly for adults exhibiting risky behaviours. RSL developments have been confirmed, and individuals have been mapped against each scheme to ensure that their needs are met effectively.	

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Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Partnership relationships between the council and the Third Sector are benefitting from a refreshed partnership agreement.	Off-track	The review was conducted in collaboration with the third sector, resulting in the development of a draft revised Compact. During the Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum meeting on 25th March 2025, it was agreed for council officers and Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services officers to collaborate to finalise the draft.	Performance & Resources
Our public realm will be cleaner and better cared for through improvements delivered through our Clean Up and Green Up programme.	Complete	This programme has largely been delivered with notable achievements, including the purchase of new vehicles such as the JCB Pot-Hole Pro Machine and sweeping vehicles. Additionally, there have been improvements to playgrounds, fences, and paths in parks, as well as enhanced tree maintenance, improved bus shelters, and upgraded public toilets. The bus shelter replacement programme has been completed. Improvements are currently in progress with the refurbishment of the Jersey Park toilets. This work is being carried out by building services and is expected to be completed by July / August 2025.	Culture, Connection & Place
A growing number of places will be seeing regeneration that has been developed with local people and stakeholders.	On-track	Throughout 2024, significant progress has been made in developing Place Plans for various towns. Workshops have been conducted to gather input and feedback from the community, ensuring that the finalised Place Plans reflect the needs and aspirations of local residents. These plans are set to be presented to the Council in the coming months. The Aberavon Seafront Masterplan has been a major focus, with consultations taking place, including public drop-in sessions and an online survey in October 2024. The results from these consultation events were thoroughly analysed and used to prepare the final Masterplan by 11th December 2024. The second round of public consultation for the Aberavon Seafront Masterplan was held in October 2024, and the final document was subsequently presented to the Corporate Directors Group on 18th December. Following a Cabinet Members Briefing on 7th January, the Masterplan was approved by the Cabinet for adoption on 5th February 2025.	

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Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... A growing number of places will be seeing regeneration that has been developed with local people and stakeholders.		The Aberavon Seafront Masterplan has now been endorsed by the Cabinet and adopted by the Council. Consultations for the Place Plans of Port Talbot, Neath, and Pontardawe have been concluded, and the feedback is being incorporated into the final versions. These Place Plans are scheduled to be presented to the Cabinet in June 2025. Additionally, workshops and consultations are being arranged for Briton Ferry, Ystalyfera, and Glynneath, with the expectation that these will be presented to the Cabinet in October 2025. Efforts are also underway to secure funding to commence a Place Plan exercise for Skewen.	
The regeneration ambitions for the county borough as a whole will be set out with supporting visions of how towns, valleys and villages will be regenerated. This will be clearly linked to funding and investment opportunities.	On-track	We have been working to develop a holistic borough-wide Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy. This strategy aims to reflect the current economic circumstances and capitalize on opportunities such as the TATA Transition, Freeports, and FLOW initiatives. The consultation process for this strategy has already begun, with the goal of presenting the final draft to the Cabinet in the New Year. As the year progressed, the consultation process for the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy neared completion. It is now proposed to bring the final draft to the Cabinet in September 2025. This comprehensive consultation included extensive stakeholder engagement and a Members' workshop, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives and insights were considered. The results from these consultations are currently being incorporated into the final draft of the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy. The strategy is expected to go before Members in September 2025, marking a significant milestone in the council's efforts to drive economic growth and regeneration.	Culture, Connection & Place
The county borough will be benefiting from better digital connectivity and fewer people will be digitally excluded.	On-track	The percentage of residents with access to ultrafast broadband speeds of 300Mb/s+ increased from 75% to 81%, while 99% of premises can now receive superfast speeds of at least 30Mb/s. Additionally, 83% of premises are gigabit-capable, and 71% can access full fibre connections, marking substantial improvements from the previous year. These advancements were supported by commercial rollouts and public sector interventions, including the UK Government's Project Gigabit and the Swansea Bay City Deal Digital Infrastructure programme. The Connected Places workstream invested in enhancing connectivity for public sector sites, awarding a contract for Dark fibre to major council sites. This infrastructure investment facilitates faster commercial broadband rollouts to businesses and residents.	Performance & Resources

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Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... The county borough will be benefiting from better digital connectivity and fewer people will be digitally excluded.		A new section on the council website provides comprehensive information on broadband topics, helping residents and businesses navigate their options. The NPT Broadband Engagement Officer, funded by the Swansea Bay City Deal, played a crucial role in engaging with broadband operators and supporting the community through various events and consultations. Efforts to combat digital exclusion were also a priority. Between October 2023 and 2024, nearly 500 older and/or disabled adults and 47 young people were supported in getting online and developing digital skills. The Digital Solutions Suite at Cimla saw 179 visitors, and a virtual tour of the suite is in development. The SPF-funded project further supported 847 older and/or disabled adults and 47 young people, with 232 visitors to the Digital Solutions Suite. The Digital Enablement team focused on individuals discharged from hospitals and supported the development of a new reablement unit. The Digital Inclusion Ambassador engaged with numerous community groups and events, assisting families with fraud attempts, supporting schools, and aiding survivors of domestic violence. Regular digital inclusion sessions were held across Neath Port Talbot, reaching over 1500 people. The Adult Learning Digital Inclusion initiative exceeded its targets, supporting 97 participants directly and an additional 227 through the extension of SPF-funded Digital Inclusion Officers. Engagement with community groups and events continued to grow, fostering inclusive and supportive relationships. The project's success led to a successful application for SPF funding for the next financial year, ensuring the continuation of the Digital Enablement element. The formation of an Older Persons Advisory Group and ongoing collaboration with various organisations aim to promote wellbeing and build a sustainable support network.	Visible Services & Streetscene



Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Secure funding to further develop, improve and maintain the active travel and rights of way network to create high quality sustainable infrastructure which will be promoted to encourage people to walk and cycle regularly.	On-track	Active travel – development and improvement: We received funding through the Active Travel Act Fund to undertake the following works in 2024/2025: • Sandfields Masterplan • Neath to Cimla route • Neath Town Centre Masterplan • Taibach to Goytre Links • A48 Link to NCN47 • Accessibility Improvements • Improvements to NCN4 Taibach • Facilities Upgrades • Active Travel Network Map Development • Monitoring and evaluation. These proposed works have now been completed. Public Rights of Way (PROW) – development and improvement: We received the third and final year of funding through the Access Improvement Grant to undertake the following works in 2024/2025: • Byway 37 (Glyncorrwg): Grids have been installed over the catchment pits to finalise the works. • Sarn Helen Byway (Onllwyn): 100m stretch at the Aberdulais end just before it enters Natural Resources Wales (NRW) land has been completed. • Footpath 119 (Port Talbot): Still awaiting on some brown Wales Coast Path (WCP) roundels from Monmouth County Council so that we can signpost it appropriately, but the path widening work has all been completed.	Culture, Connection & Place



Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Number of new affordable housing properties funded in the year	On-track	214	209		234*	Social Services
*Breakdown of 234 total figures: • Social Housing Grant (189) (Please note that this figure includes schemes which will also be in the 24-25/25-26/26-27 PDP as these schemes typically take around 2-3 years to develop from start to finish) • Recycled Capital Grant (12) • Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (28) • Housing with Care Fund (3) The reasons for the changes compared to the ‘in year’ update can be attributed to the following: • Funding streams being flipped to cover underspends e.g. RCG to SHG; • TACP & RCG Schemes (properties purchased from the open market) dropping out at the last minute; • Schemes not able to meet the deadline with which to draw down their grant.						
40% of people owed a statutory homelessness duty who are prevented from becoming homeless	On-track	61%	72%	78%	80.9%	
*As at end of 2024/2025 end of year target has been achieved. Further work to be reported on in relation to processes behind the figures						
Number of people living in temporary accommodation	Off-track	229	229	242	259	
*Numbers in temporary accommodation are not yet reducing but the impact of additional work and securing additional properties is not yet seeing a full impact. Plans are in place to improve current position.						
Length of time people are staying in temporary accommodation	On-track	118 days	104 days	105 days	88 days	
Decrease in the number of families staying in Bed & Breakfasts	On-track	8	6	2	2	
*It remains that any families placed in hotels is for emergency purposes only and will not be for any significant length of time						



Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Decrease in the number of people staying in Bed & Breakfasts	Off-track	149	143		160*	Social Services
*This figure will fluctuate based on the presentations needing TA at any one time. There is a small decrease for Qtr. 4 which will be monitored. The Council has increased dispersed TA that it operates over the year Council owned shared accommodation pilot in progress Plans are in place to reduce numbers.						
Number of empty properties brought back into use via Empty Property Grant	On-track	2	11 completions / 40 currently in progress	14 completions /40 currently in progress	26 completions /47 currently in progress	
Number of adults aged 65+ per 10,000 population supported in the community (plus separate figure for care homes)	On-track	1,964 in the community; 636.67 per 10,000 961 in Res/nursing homes 311.53 per 10,000	1,111 in the community; 360.15 per 10,000 651 in Res/nursing homes 211.03 per 10,000	1,759 in the community; 570.21 per 10,000 718 in Res/nursing homes 232.75 per 10,000	*1,441 In the Community 467 per 10,000 *743 in Res/nursing Homes 243 per 10,000	
*Information only available until the 31st January 2025 due to reporting not being available on Mosaic yet						
% of people with reduced / no care package following reablement	On-track	19% with a reduced package of care 67.8% with no further package of care	12.44% with a reduced package of care 77.51% with no further package of care	14.16% with a reduced package of care 75.30% with no further package of care	14.06% with a reduced package of care 75.07% with no further package of care	



Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Number of working age adults with accommodation, care and support needs moved back into county	Data not yet available	Data not yet available				Social Services
Number of working age adults with accommodation, care and support needs living in their own homes with their own tenancies	Data not yet available	579	Data not yet available			
Supporting carers: Number of unpaid carers assessments undertaken	On-track	304	248	327	424	
*Note: Over the last twelve months, significant work has been undertaken to review the process and delivery of carers assessment. This has led to a change in approach focussed on strengthening the triage, proportionality and timeliness of our response, with the introduction of two additional WTE Carers Development Officers coming into post on 1st July 2024 ensuring all three geographic networks have a dedicated staff member to support carers assessments. Currently all individuals awaiting assessment have been triaged and assessments are planned where appropriate. There has been a spike in Q2, as the waiting list was worked through.						
Number of people accessing respite and average days per year	On-track	278 30.01 days average	251 11.47 days average	179 14.5 days average	267 *days not yet available	
*Note: Days used from Brokerage/ Mosaic not yet available - Information only available until the 31st January 2025 due to reporting not being available on Mosaic yet						
Number of volunteers and hours provided	On-track	2279 hours	1407 hours 49 volunteers	2060 hours 42 volunteers	497 hours 45 volunteers	
Note: While the number of volunteers remains steady, recruitment continues to be a challenge. We are re-evaluating our strategies for recruiting and retaining volunteers to increase the influx of potential volunteers beyond the traditional methods currently used by the council. Additionally, we are diversifying the types of roles offered to attract more interest, recognising the limitations of volunteer recruitment within a befriending setting. We are exploring ways to support volunteers within community settings and collaborating with other partners to directly assist those who wish to help in the community. Our efforts have led to an increase in the number of community groups supported by our volunteers, resulting in more people benefiting compared to 1-1 befriending volunteering alone. Furthermore, we are working with our internal services to promote volunteering across the wider council and demonstrate the impact of volunteering at an organisational level.						

2 Well-being Objective 2

All communities are thriving and sustainable

			2024/2025			
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Scrutiny Committee
Number of people who are digitally enabled to remain independent at home (Digital Enablement)	On-track	34 <i>(Oct 2023 - March 2024)</i>	284	371	421	Social Services
Number of people supported to remain at home following a non-critical emergency (Mobile Response Service)	On-track	No baseline data available	235	352	470	
Number of new housing units developed to meet the needs of people with accommodation, care and support needs	On-track	6 unit 3 schemes	3	3	3	
Number of people supported by Prevention and Early Intervention services	On-track	3192	2964	7228	5179	
Completed and signed off our review of our partnership agreement with the third sector	Off-track	Not yet complete, draft to be developed				
Place Plans approved, adopted and in delivery as part of the Regeneration Programme	On-track	Consultations have been concluded for the Port Talbot, Neath and Pontardawe Place Plans, and are being incorporated into the final versions, which will be presented to Cabinet in June 2025. Workshops and consultations are being arranged for Briton Ferry, Ystalyfera and Glynneath , it is expected that these will be presented to Cabinet in October 2025. Funding is being sought to commence a Place Plan exercise for Skewen.				Visible Services & Streetscene
Regeneration Strategy to be published by end 2024/2025, with priorities reflected in 2025/2026 & 2026/2027 Corporate Plan	On-track	Final draft to go to Cabinet in September 2025				
Funding secured to further develop the Active Travel network	On-track	£1,186,000	Annual total of £716,000			
Deliver £750,000 investment per year for Catch up, Clean up for the neighbourhood management budget	On-track	Programme now complete				
% of people satisfied with the local area as a place to live	For monitoring	Last report by Stats Wales 2021/2022 as 80%				
Increase the number of premises across Neath Port Talbot that are able to obtain high-speed fibre broadband	On-track	2023/2024 & 2024/2025 - 99% of residents can now access superfast speeds of 30Mb/s+ - further information can be found on page 40				4

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WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Executive Summary

Well-being Objective 3 is dedicated to ensuring that the local environment, culture, and heritage are preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of future generations. This objective emphasises the importance of sustainable development, environmental stewardship, and cultural preservation. By fostering a deep connection between the community and its natural and cultural assets, the aim is to create a resilient and vibrant locality that values its heritage while embracing sustainable practices.

A significant part of this objective involves implementing strategies to reduce carbon emissions and promote renewable energy. The council is committed to decarbonising its vehicle fleet and property assets, enhancing energy efficiency, and supporting clean transport technologies. Initiatives such as the Electric Vehicle Rally of Cymru and the development of shared regional EV charging infrastructure demonstrate the council's proactive approach to addressing climate change and promoting sustainable transport solutions.

Cultural and heritage preservation is another vital aspect of this objective. The council is dedicated to protecting historical sites, promoting local arts and culture, and ensuring that the rich heritage of the area is celebrated and maintained. By investing in cultural initiatives and heritage projects, the aim is to foster a sense of pride and identity within the community. These efforts not only enhance the quality of life for residents but also attract visitors and boost the local economy.

Community engagement and education are also key components of this objective. By involving residents in sustainability and preservation efforts, the goal is to build a community that is informed, engaged, and proactive in protecting its environment and heritage. Educational programs and community projects are designed to raise awareness and encourage active participation in these initiatives. Through collaboration and collective action, the vision is to create a sustainable and culturally rich community that future generations can enjoy and cherish.



Number of Strategic Priorities: 13

- 11 on-track
- 2 off-track
- 0 Not started

Number of Performance Measures: 20

- 14 on-track
- 4 off-track
- 0 not started
- 2 data not available/to follow

Gnoll Park's £12m Modernisation Project

Progress Update on Gnoll Park's £12m Project

Work on our ambitious £12m project to modernise visitor facilities and restore historic features at the much loved Gnoll Country Park in Neath are firmly on track!

This will encompass a modern café, stunning south facing balcony views across the lake, event, meeting and conference facilities and a dedicated children's soft play space.

This project is funded by the UK Government





WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Corporate Plan 2024/2027 - 3 Year Aims	Annual Progress	Transformation Programme								
		TP 1	TP 2	TP 3	TP 4	TP 5	TP 6	TP 7	TP 8	TP 9
Implement our culture, leisure and heritage strategies alongside our destination management plan and raise the profile of NPT as a visitor destination	On-track							✓		
Have a strong approach to high quality leisure and recreation activities	On-track							✓		
Work with communities and partners to engender a greater sense of stewardship, encouraging them to take a more active role in the ongoing management and improvement of their local environment	On-track						✓			
Embed the history of the local environment, heritage and nature into the curriculum and ensure all schools have access to environmental and outdoor learning opportunities	On-track							✓		
Strengthen our approach to decarbonisation of fleet and assets, alongside a robust policy and supporting strategies to respond to climate change and nature emergency, highlighting where we have a part to play	On-track						✓			
Secure funding to further develop and promote our active travel network and improved public rights of way to encourage more people to walk and cycle	On-track					✓				
Work to help nature recover and to improve the quality of and access to our natural environment	On-track							✓		
Encourage people to speak, and enjoy the Welsh language	On-track	✓						✓		

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WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
The council will have reduced its carbon footprint through the decarbonisation of its vehicle fleet, property assets and through behaviour change.	On-track	Through energy management and optimisation actions across the highest energy-using sites, the council achieved cost savings of £457k in 2023/24 and £267k during 2024/2025, in addition to money saved through electricity and gas contract savings. Investigations into metering and billing issues at various sites, including YGG GCG, YG Ystalyfera, and Gnoll Country Park, resulted in substantial savings and rebates. Final figures will be available early September 2025. The council also focused on improving its buildings and fleet to enhance energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. LED lighting upgrades were completed at key sites, and the provision of gas automatic meter readings was increased. Controls and BMS reviews were conducted across high-usage buildings, and electric vehicles were purchased to replace diesel vehicles, with plans to explore hydrogen-powered vehicles. The council hosted the final of the <u>EVROC (Electric Vehicle Rally of Cymru)</u> as part of Wales Climate Week, showcasing zero-emission vehicle capabilities and promoting clean transport technology. The recently formed (April 2024) Decarbonisation, Energy & Climate Change (DECC) have been working with procurement and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), looking at decarbonisation aspects in relation to the supply chain and steps which need to be taken internally. • A number of the DECC team are undertaking CPD accredited <u>Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Course for Local Authorities</u> The Welsh Government is funding 2 places per council. • In respect of the Fleet - Cross Boundary, Shared Regional EV Charging Infrastructure Pilot project – an on-going pilot project working with Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, and Swansea to pilot shared public and fleet infrastructure is ongoing, before it is passed over to CJC Transportation Group to develop across 34 public bodies. NPT are making progress with Swansea and have worked on back-office systems to enable a Swansea Fleet EV to charge at an NPT Fleet charger, and automatically bill Swansea for energy delivered. Site visit at the Quays Charging Hub with Simon Apsland. Regular fortnightly group meetings have been established to organise practical issues such as authorisations and access control to secure ‘host’ car parks, agreements to allow overnight parking and charging of participating ‘visitor’ EVs and similar for daytime parking of ‘visitor’ private vehicles. • Energy Sparks pilot invitations were sent out to the first 34 schools (both primary and secondary schools), with the rest of the schools invited March 2025. To encourage the uptake of Energy Sparks Programme, there is an online Energy Sparks Demonstration delivered during January 2025 to schools, bursars and eco-co-ordinators at a network meeting.	Visible Services & Streetscene / Culture, Connection & Place

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WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... The council will have reduced its carbon footprint through the decarbonisation of its vehicle fleet, property assets and through behaviour change.		A second demonstration was delivered to comprehensive schools on 4th March 2025 to encourage the schools to sign up for the programme. Information and links were sent out to comprehensive schools who missed the demonstration to book individual online demonstration sessions. New A4 flyers for the Energy Sparks programme have been created, with one aimed at Primary schools and another for secondary schools to promote the scheme and improve uptake. • Currently verifying metering suitability for participation in the pilot scheme. Invitations were sent out to schools and bursars for the remaining 32 schools, NPT will book an Energy Sparks demo at a time convenient for their school. • The Energy Team are working together with the analytical gas Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) kWIQly energy monitoring software to identify in real-time if schools/operational buildings energy performance start to reduce or alter from the normal energy use profiles. Several sites raised issues recently, with these issues currently being investigated by individual members in response to the system's alerts. • We were successfully awarded a Sports Wales grant for Celtic Leisure to fast track installation of a pool blanket installation at Vale of Neath Leisure on 20th March. • The Energy Team scheduled regular meetings to further develop effective monitoring and targeting of buildings energy performance. 3 Case Studies published on the intranet for Gnoll Primary School and The Quays lighting scheme. Additional case study being prepared for Cilfrew School.	Visible Services & Streetscene/ Culture, Connection & Place
We will have published a strengthened policy and supporting strategies to respond to climate change.	On-track	The Net Zero strategy document is complete, with the delivery plan still being finalised which contains tables of projects and activities that the council will need to undertake between now and 2030 to help us work towards reaching net zero. We have also created an additional document to aid with understanding the decarbonisation strategy, this is a shorter executive summary document for those who do not wish to read the full strategy document but still provides a good overview of the activity. This work has required significantly more input from NPT than originally envisaged. Once finalised, these will be sent to senior management for approval before being formally signed off by the respective council committees and boards. The final meeting with The Carbon Trust took place May 2025.	

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WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
We will have extended our work to help nature recover and the quality of and access to the natural environment will have improved, guided by our biodiversity action plan. Continued...	On-track	The final quarter of 2024/2025 saw many of our key grant-funded projects completed. All of these projects helped nature to recover and engage local people with nature, with all projects being well received by the public. The following projects were finished: • Local Places for Nature: restored habitat for nature, delivered public events and training, improved school grounds, delivered a small-grants fund for community groups, wildlife tower, building/parks enhancements, volunteering, nature murals at libraries, improvements for nature and wellbeing at Swn Yr Afon NHS facility, GNOLL bug hotel letters and engagement through social media. • Re-greening Port Talbot: green infrastructure and artwork improvements at Harlequins RFC and Llewellyn Street, green screens and planting at Llewellyn Street, planting at Vivian Park, public engagement events/training. • Coastal Connections: coastal and marine themed public events, volunteering and training, dune management works, support and enhancements for coastal businesses, seafront improvements, guided walk and school's events with the Beach Academy. • Melincwrt Car Park: car park improvement including green roof bike shelter, wooden sculptures, path resurfacing and conversion of a pillar box to a bat house. • NPT's Hidden Woodlands: feasibility studies for council-owned woodland improvements, including pilot improvements and community activities. • Lost Peatlands: peatland and other habitat restoration, public engagement events and training, volunteering, schools environmental/outdoor learning, school grounds improvements, health and wellbeing activities. Further funding for projects in 2025/26 has been sought, which includes funding for development of a second phase of the Lost Peatlands Project (secured). Local Places for Nature funding has also been confirmed by the Welsh Government but plans are yet to be approved, and the grant award is yet to be received. A bid for National Lottery Nature Towns and Cities grant has also been submitted.	Visible Services & Streetscene

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WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... We will have extended our work to help nature recover and the quality of and access to the natural environment will have improved, guided by our biodiversity action plan.		Other business as usual, biodiversity work continued to support nature recovery in line with the Biodiversity Duty Plan: • Advisory service – ensured legislation/statutory duty compliance especially in relation to planning applications, RLDP, and SABs applications. Particular support provided for large planning applications such as Tata Electric Arc Furnaces, and ABP Future Port Talbot. • Consultancy service – ensured legal compliance for numerous internal schemes e.g. Godre'rgraig school demolition, and Canals project. Other Biodiversity Duty Plan initiatives – included training staff in Streetcare about NPT Bee-friendly, continued biodiversity audit of council-owned land, designation of sites of importance for nature conservation, policies developed on honey bees and artificial grass; as well as options for 'motion for the ocean'.	Visible Services & Streetscene
More people in our community and wider partners have developed a greater sense of stewardship, actively working to manage and improve their local environment. Continued...	On track	Decarbonisation, Energy & Climate Change (DECC) Team: • Hosted a VIP delegation from Kazakhstan on the 6th March 2025 with a focus on renewable energy and technologies. The delegation consisted of Embassy staff, Government departments, bankers, academics, industrialists etc. The day was spent visiting local facilities including the Hydrogen Centre, Bay Tech Centre and Pilot line Manufacturing Research Centre. Presentations on the Council, Hydrogen Centre, Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth (SILCG) Programme, SWITCH Harbourside building, RWE renewables were given and were well received. A parallel meeting was held between academics to share online modules with Kazakhstan. Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to be set up and formalised relations between UK and Kazakhstan governments to be established. • Provided a presentation to Natural Resources Wales on our decarbonisation programme and activities undertaken during the year. There are some issues to be addressed with the Public Services Board Subgroup on 'Climate Change and Nature Emergency', which include wider membership of the group, currently we have only NPT, NRW and the Health Board but those involved have limited time and scheduling meetings has proved difficult.	Visible Services & Streetscene / Culture, Connection & Place



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... More people in our community and wider partners have developed a greater sense of stewardship, actively working to manage and improve their local environment.		Numerous volunteers aided the countryside and wildlife team to manage nature sites throughout the year. Support was also provided for existing community groups to improve their skills and knowledge through the NPT 4 Nature group and the local places for nature small grants scheme. This delivered numerous small community projects e.g. the living wall at YMCA Neath. The Local Nature Partnership, that includes all key organisations, groups and individuals in the nature conservation sector in NPT, was facilitated and supported. The council provided secretariat for the NPT Nature Partnership.	Visible Services & Streetscene
Greater numbers of households and businesses will be participating in our recycling and reuse programmes.	On track	Initial statistical returns suggest that NPT surpassed the 70% recycling target set by Welsh Government and achieved 71.4%. This was because of the tremendous work undertaken by the teams to invest in processes and technology to maximise recycling and the educational work undertaken to influence behaviour amongst residents and businesses. This figure is potentially subject to change following Natural Resources Wales assessment, but will still retain NPT in a strong position compared to previous years. The Recycling Officer delivered the following works/activities organised to promote recycling and reuse: • Running of the Recycle4NPT social media account with regular messages posted offering collection advice, how to recycle correctly and developing education and information videos showing the end-to-end process of collections and reprocessing. • Visiting schools with recycling promotion packs and community/volunteer clubs and societies on request. • Delivering a programme of school visits with the council's first electric recycling vehicle 'TREV' (The Recycling Electric Vehicle) together with Green Bob recycling mascot. In addition, arranging school visits to the Transfer Station in Crymlyn Burrows to see the processing of recycling in operation, with engaging activities to promote recycling (visits currently on hold during site construction work). • Community 'pop-up' events held at various locations throughout the county, with specific emphasis on food waste recycling.	



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... Greater numbers of households and businesses will be participating in our recycling and reuse programmes.		• Worked with social housing providers to improve waste and recycling collection services. • Worked with all our communities to increase recycling and improve the local environment, using enforcement action as a last resort if necessary. Trade Waste: The Workplace Recycling Regulations introduced in April 2024, require all commercial and charitable premises to present recyclable material in separate containers for collection at the kerbside. The council's trade collection service is compliant with the new regulations, offering a collection service for food waste, paper, card, plastic bottles, metal cans and glass containers on a weekly basis. Recycling is a compulsory component of our trade collection service, except in some circumstances where only a small amount of non-recyclable waste is produced. Our trade waste section provides advice and information to all our customers to increase recycling and have undertaken door knocking exercises, direct mailing exercises and attend business community events whenever possible.	Visible Services & Streetscene
The Dramatic Heart of Wales campaign will have raised the profile of Neath Port Talbot as a destination for visitors and more people will be staying overnight to enjoy what our area has to offer.	On track	The Dramatic Heart of Wales visitor focused campaign is proceeding at pace. Since the launch in August 2023 up to the end of November 2024 the following outputs have been achieved: • 24 million people reached through campaign activity (against a target of 1 million in total) • 323 tourism businesses/ stakeholders engaged in campaign activity • 22,662 engagements across social media • 17 Blogger/ Journalist Visits • 126,744 visits to campaign websites Funding has been secured to continue to deliver the Dramatic Heart of Wales (visitor) and We Are NPT (resident) campaigns in 2025/2026.	Culture, Connection & Place



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
We will have reset our strategic approach to leisure and recreation ensuring high quality leisure and recreational activities for our residents.	Completed	This priority has been completed following the decision taken to contract Celtic Leisure for a further 5 years.	Culture, Connection & Place
We will have formed a new strategic partnership involving community and wider stakeholders to deliver our culture and heritage objectives and this partnership will be securing additional investment to extend our work to conserve and promote the county borough's heritage and culture.	On track	Discussions took place with both the HertiageNPT Steering Group and the HeritageNPT Partnership, which has led to the collective decision to merge the two groups into one entity, which will include both external partners and internal colleagues. The HeritageNPT Steering Group will continue to meet and be responsible for the delivery of the Heritage Strategy Action Plan and align to our overarching Culture Strategy.	



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Our heritage, sport and culture offer will be making an increased contribution to economic growth and well-being across the county borough.	On track	A partnership is in the process of being agreed with Arts Council Wales to fund a five-year project, with staff resource, to support and grow the Creative/Arts sector within NPT. The first meeting of the Cultural Compact/Partnership took place in April 2025, and included representation across all strategic partners who have a role to play in developing cultural provision and delivering the Culture Strategy. The team continues to seek funding for a staffing resource to coordinate partnership activities. Funding has been secured via the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver a second phase of the Heritage, Culture, Tourism and Events fund to the end of December 2025, with a total grant pot of £1.2m. This will enable a range of partner and stakeholder projects to be delivered which contribute to meeting the aims of the Culture Strategy. The new NPT Events Strategy has been approved by Cabinet on 5th February, a full team has now been recruited to deliver the new NPT Events Policy and support events organisers. As part of the HeritageNPT project, eleven Community Heritage grants have been funded. From 1st April 2025, the Grant will be funded from UK Gov Funding (SPF). The Commemorative Blue Plaque Scheme's funding window for the two council funded plaques will be live from 1st April to 30th September 2025. There have been 3 nominations received to date for self-funded plaques. The scheme celebrates significant people, places and events in our shared history, thereby enhancing community well-being and economic growth through the development of Heritage trails in our communities, a boost for our Visitor Economy. Under the Heritage NPT Project, we ran 3 learning sessions which bolstered the capacity and wellbeing of volunteers and our community heritage groups: • Sensory heritage walk arranged for NPT's Young Archaeologists Club (YAC), which is run by NPT's Heritage Education Officer, in conjunction with Heneb (The Trust for Welsh Archaeology) - 16 children and 3 adults attended • Sensory heritage walk arranged for Macular Society - 5 attended • Oral history training delivered by People's Collection - 11 attended • Additionally, to increase the financial resilience of groups collaborative funding advice appointments were run with NPTCVS which ten groups attended.	Culture, Connection & Place



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued.. Our heritage, sport and culture offer will be making an increased contribution to economic growth and well-being across the county borough.		The HeritageNPT Team is collaborating with the Community Safety Team for Crucial Crew initiative 2025 in Margam Park, which will see 1500 leaflets on Heritage Crime included in all Crucial Crew packs to go to homes of Year 6 primary school pupils across NPT.	Culture, Connection & Place
We will have established new masterplans for Aberavon Seafront and the Afan Valley and will be working with partners to deliver those plans.	Off-track	The Aberavon Seafront Masterplan was adopted by Cabinet on 5th February 2025. Further work is needed to scope out the delivery of certain elements. A funding bid will be made to Shared Prosperity Fund Heritage, Culture, Tourism and Event fund which, if successful, will put in place electrical supply and Hostile Vehicle Mitigation measure on the seafront to facilitate events. A detailed feasibility study for the Tir Morfa site is due to be funded via the Shared Prosperity Fund Place Anchor project. No progress to date on agreeing a Masterplan for Afan Forest Park, this delay is due to a new Forest Resource Plan being produced by Natural Resources Wales which means that the original plan will need significant amendments. In addition to this Natural Resources Wales has needed to carry out extensive reinstatement works to the mountain bike trails in Afan Forest Park as a result of storm Darragh in early 2025.	
Pontardawe Arts Centre will be home to a new cinema complex and this will have strengthened the role of the Centre as an important community hub.	Off-track	Buildings works are due to complete shortly but have been delayed due to site complications.	



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
We will complete and publish a feasibility study to replace Pontardawe Swimming Pool	On-track	The report is in its final draft format and will be published later in the year.	Culture, Connection & Place
We will have developed a heritage corridor through the Vale of Neath and refurbished the Princess Royal Theatre and surrounding public realm in Port Talbot – these developments are being enjoyed by local people but also helping to grow our local economy, particularly the visitor economy.	On-track	Work at Gnoll Estate Country Park continues at pace. Planning application has been submitted for the new adventure play provision and officers are awaiting the outcome. The Council has now purchased land at Pontneddfechan to enable the Waterfall Country Visitor Infrastructure scheme to proceed. Anticipated start date is early summer 2025. Work has begun on Princess Royal Theatre and the development is on track for completion in late 2026. The findings of the consultation exercise on the Neath and Tennant Canals will be presented to community groups, partners and stakeholders during an event be held on 30th April 2025.	

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WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
			6 monthly update (Qtr 1 & 2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
New DARE strategy published end 2024/2025	On-track	N/A	Following the workshop in November, the Decarbonisation (Net Zero 2030) Strategy and Action plan - the revised and updated DARE Strategy (DARE 2) is being prepared in two parts and will be implemented in 2025/26. The first related directly to the Net Zero strategy to 2030 and the second part relates to the associated delivery plan with a range of project ideas/activities which other directorates and service sections will take ownership of going forward. These documents are expected to be finalised in March 2025.		Given the additional amount of work required around the action plans, the finalised plan will be ready a few weeks later than planned. The Net Zero Strategy document is ready for senior management sign off and will be circulated along with the action plan during mid-June 2025.	Culture, Connection & Place
Establish a Decarbonisation team by December 2024	On-track	N/A	The new DECC team has been established earlier in 2024. There are two posts to be advertised which will now be linked to implementing the Net Zero Strategy and secondly providing support to implementing and delivering on the LAEP actions.		Job adverts have finished and the posts are advertised to the end of July 2025. It is planned to have people in post anytime from end of September 2025.	
Establish our carbon baseline and set net zero 2030 implementation plan by March 2025.	On-track	30,371tCO ₂ e	This has been achieved and promoted in organised workshops and will be published in the Net Zero Strategy in the next quarter Decarbonisation (Net Zero 2030) Strategy and Action (implementation) plan is scheduled for completion 2025 April/May.		Carbon baseline has been established. Plans due to be signed off July 25.	
Make progress towards the actions set out within the Biodiversity Duty Plan.	On-track	N/A	Progress against the actions as part of the Biodiversity Duty Plan (BDP) will continue to be monitored annually and fully reported in 2026, through the BDP monitoring and reporting requirements. 2 new policies have been approved as per the requirements of the BDP and options for the 'motion for the ocean' have been investigated.			Visible Services & Streetcare
% of waste reused, recycled or composted	On-track	67.72%	71.5% - full year figure, surpassing the statutory Welsh Government of target of 70% (subject to Natural Resources Wales validation).			
Delivery of 70% of the culture strategy action plan targets	On-Track	N/A	69% of Culture strategy action plan targets set for this period are either in progress or complete.			Culture, Connection & Place



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Number of overnight stays in Neath Port Talbot	Off Track	400,000 (2023)	390,000 As anticipated, overnight stays in 2024 have decreased as a result of the loss of mid-week occupancy lost through the Tata transition, however the decrease has not been as severe as expected.			Culture, Connection & Place
Investment delivered in visitor infrastructure and product development	On Track	£1,005,605	All funding secured last financial year but projects to be delivered on 2024/2025		£1,901,677 investment delivered through the Heritage Culture, Tourism & Events fund (completed).	
Indoor leisure Business plan published by March 2025	Off Track	N/A	Data not available			
New partnership compact to be developed by end 2024/2025	On Track	N/A	On-track			
External grant funding attracted across the whole area (not just NPT council)	Off Track	No data at present	Data not yet available		Model of collecting this data not yet established	
Margam Castle National Lottery Heritage Fund bid successful	Complete	N/A	Bid successful		Initial bid successful, currently completing the Stage 1 submission	
Aberavon Seafront masterplan to be adopted by end of 2024	Complete	N/A	On-track - Masterplan to be taken to Cabinet - 5th February 2025		Complete Adopted by Cabinet on 5 th February 2025	
Pontardawe Cinema to be open by April 2025	OnTrack	N/A	On-track		Awaiting final completion	
Budget targets met for Pontardawe Arts Centre	To follow	N/A	2024/2025 budget will see an overspend due to the extended closure			
NPT museum feasibility complete by Dec 2024	Complete	N/A	Completed			



WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3

Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Achieve museum accreditation by 2027	To follow	N/A	To follow			Culture, Connection & Place
Library strategy adopted by March 2025	Complete	N/A	To be taken to Cabinet in March 2025		Complete Adopted by Cabinet on 19 th March 2025	
Events strategy adopted by March 2025	Complete	N/A	To be taken to Cabinet in February 2025		Complete Adopted by Cabinet on 5 th February 2025	
Pontardawe Swimming Pool feasibility study complete	Off-Track	N/A	To be completed March 2025		Final draft received, publication later in 2025	

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WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 4

Jobs & Skills

Executive Summary

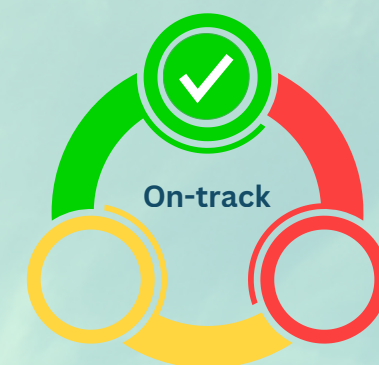
During 2024/2025, we have progressed our work under Wellbeing Objective 4 to foster economic growth and enhance the skills and employability of the local population. This objective aims to create sustainable job opportunities, support local businesses, and ensure that residents have the necessary skills to thrive in an ever-changing economy.

By establishing the Celtic Freeport, the goal is to attract investment and create jobs in the green economy, including sectors such as floating offshore wind, biofuels, and high-value manufacturing. Additionally, implementing transport schemes to improve connectivity will support economic activities and ensure the transport needs of the county borough are met.

A significant part of this work has involved the positive outcomes achieved through UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. This initiative has focuses on economic growth, public realm improvements, and reducing inequalities. The programme aimed to ensure that all allocated funds are spent effectively to benefit the community. Another critical aspect is mitigating the impact of decarbonisation at Tata Steel UK by helping affected individuals find alternative employment and supporting local businesses to diversify. These efforts are crucial in maintaining economic stability and providing support during transitions.

The completion of City Deal projects is also a priority, as these projects are expected to create jobs and infrastructure that promote green and sustainable economic growth. Developing a skills and employability strategy aligned with economic and regeneration goals is essential. This strategy, once developed, will enhance pathways into work for residents and increase participation in apprenticeship programmes. Strengthening support for businesses in the foundational economy, particularly in valley communities, and promoting circular economy principles are also key components of this objective.

Improving the qualification and skill levels of residents is vital to better align with local economic growth needs. Through various employability projects, individuals are supported to progress into work or prepare for work, including those who are economically inactive and face complex barriers to employment. These initiatives are designed to build a resilient and inclusive economy, providing opportunities for all residents to benefit from economic growth and development.



Number of Strategic Priorities: 12

11 on-track

0 off-track

1 not started

Number of Performance Measures: 15

11 on-track

0 off-track

1 not started

3 Data not available

4

Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Corporate Plan 2024/2027 - 3 Year Aims	Half Year Progress	Transformation Programme								
		TP1	TP2	TP3	TP4	TP5	TP6	TP7	TP8	TP9
Establish the Celtic Freeport across Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire, attracting investment and creating sustainable jobs across the green economy	On-track								✓	
Complete the significant programme of work via the UK Government's Levelling Up and Shared Prosperity Funds, benefiting locals and visitors alike	On-track							✓	✓	
Support those impacted by the decarbonisation of Tata Steel UK	On-track								✓	
Take forward major development and investment opportunities and activities linked to the council's Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy Strategy with a range of partners, and developed more green opportunities	On-track						✓			
Work to maximise Social Value Developed transport plans in partnership with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to support access to work, reduce emissions and serve the needs of residents, businesses and visitors	On-track					✓	✓			
Secure funding to establish a strong gateway to business support to help diversify the local economy and increase its resilience to future economic shocks by helping existing businesses to grow, establishing new enterprises, attracting new investment and delivering targeted programmes that enable local people to benefit from the employment created through new investment	On-track								✓	
Maximise Social Value and Community Benefits opportunities across the council's procurement activities and with key private sector partners/investors to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits for local residents, businesses and communities	On-track								✓	
Maintain a strong employability focus to support those needing help to find work, including those who are hardest to reach, this support will be accessible for all	On-track									✓
Continue to strengthen partnership working to upskill those already in work or who wish to return to work; more local people will hold qualifications	On-track									✓

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Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Working with our partners we will have fully established the Celtic Freeport, and continued the delivery of Swansea Bay City Deal projects, attracting new investment to the area, including the creation of sustainable jobs in floating off-shore wind, biofuels, high value manufacturing and the wider green economy.	On-track	Celtic Freeport - The Tax incentives for the tax sites are now activated and a landowner event for both tax sites has been held. A Seed Capital application has been submitted for remediation at Harbourside. Discussions are being held to determine the designation of a 3rd tax site with potential for this to be in Neath Port Talbot. A draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been received which is currently being reviewed. Swansea Bay City Deal – both projects being led by Neath Port Talbot which remain outstanding are on track to deliver: • Supporting Innovation and Low Carbon Growth – programme comprises eight interlinked projects which are all in delivery, except the Advanced Manufacturing Production Facility and associated skills academy which is at scoping stage. • Homes as Power Stations (HAPS) – project is currently exceeding the benefits it is modelled to achieve at this stage. The Expression of Interest process has opened for the £7m HAPS regional Supply Chain Fund.	Culture, Connection & Place
Where funding from Welsh Government allows we will have delivered a range of transport schemes that enable better integration across different modes of transport and we will have ensured that the transport needs of the county borough are fully reflected in the regional transport plan prepared by the Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales.	On-track	Neath Transport Hub - Public and stakeholder engagement has progressed significantly and public consultation commenced on 30th April. Neath Integrated Transport Hub The detailed design is almost complete, and pending updates and amendments from the consultation period. The 2025/26 bid to Welsh Government has resulted in £440k of funding and will support the negotiations with private property owners regarding purchase of their premises; contingency is included to begin a CPO process if necessary. Contact has been made with all property owners and discussions are in an early stage. Funding will also cover the planning process, completion of the design and negotiations with Network Rail and Transport for Wales. Cymmer carriageway improvements – NPT has been awarded £730K from the Welsh Government to continue with the development of the scheme and land purchase.	

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Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... Where funding from Welsh Government allows we will have delivered a range of transport schemes that enable better integration across different modes of transport and we will have ensured that the transport needs of the county borough are fully reflected in the regional transport plan prepared by the Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales.		Bus Franchising - A strategy is being developed with Transport for Wales (TfW) on how best to engage and consult on the base network with local Communities and bus users, stakeholders and the wider public. Engagement and consultation will run in conjunction with the introduction of the bill during 2025/26. Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) - A draft plan has been consulted on for an 8-week period starting on 10th February 2025. The Final Regional Transport Delivery Plan will be presented to Neath Port Talbot in May 2025 for endorsement. Final approval will be sought from the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee in June 2025, before submission to the Welsh Government for final approval in the summer.	Culture, Connection & Place
We will have delivered a range of positive outcomes across the county borough from the Shared Prosperity Programme, contributing to economic growth, the improvement of the public realm and the reduction of inequalities.	On-track	The UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2022/2025 programme closed on 31st March 2025. All UKSPF core funding was allocated and spent across the three priority areas of Communities & Place, Supporting Local Business, People and Skills. A closure report is being prepared to provide an overview of outputs and outcomes achieved. NPT was able to ensure that all allocated funds were spent before the deadline and as such no funds were returned to UK Government. Planning is underway to launch the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/2026 programme. Cabinet agreed the delivery model on 26th February 2025 to ensure that projects can be initiated in the first quarter of 2025/2026.	

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Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
We will have helped to mitigate the impact of decarbonisation at Tata Steel UK Ltd through action to help people into alternative employment and to help local businesses to diversify. We will have secured governmental support to create replacement jobs in the local economy.	On-track	Funding for SWITCH has been approved and Short Form Delivery Plans for Business Premises (Metal Box and Sandfields Business Centre), and the Advanced Manufacturing Production Facility have been submitted with a On track 6 view to announcement of funding in the May Transition Board. All immediate response funds are now operational and effectively addressing need – Supply Chain Flexible Fund, Job Matching, Outplacement and Skills and Business Start Up, Growth and Resilience. NPT Council will also commission Mental Health and Wellbeing interventions as announced at Transition Board in March 2025. An NPT Programme Board has been established, and regular quarterly returns are being reported to Transition Board on the progress of the interventions.	Culture, Connection & Place
We will be in the final phases of delivering our City Deal programmes and these will have created new jobs and infrastructure that are enabling the further green and sustainable growth of our local economy.	On-track	Homes As Power Stations (HAPS) - Supply Chain Fund expression of interest process launched.	
We will have further strengthened our links with academia and the wider innovation sector. We are seeking more investment in research and development flowing from these activities and this in turn is creating more investor interest.	On-track	UKRI Launchpad - Neath Port Talbot Council is a strategic partner in the South West Wales Innovate UK Net Zero Industry Wales led Driving Net Zero Innovation and Growth Launchpad which provides funding opportunities and regional support for businesses developing decarbonisation initiatives. UKRI Place Based Impact Accelerator Account (PBIAA) SWITCH to net zero buildings - Neath Port Talbot Council is a civic partner with Swansea University, University of South Wales and Cardiff University to speed up the rate at which innovations are adopted, meaning that these technologies become more affordable and more widely deployed. This innovation ecosystem will also create strong local supply chains, boosting economic growth in the region.	

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Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Town centres are demonstrating resilience and a new town centre offer is emerging which is distinctive to each place.	On-track	Place Anchor Project, UK Shared Prosperity Funding - We have secured funding to expand the ‘Supporting Our Town Centres’ marketing campaign, which aims to boost footfall, drive economic growth, and attract investment to revitalise our high streets. This campaign will spotlight our town centres and independent businesses, showcasing their high-quality, sustainable products and services. The campaign will generate content for social media and advertising, facilitate marketing promotions at key times, and provide hands-on creative marketing workshops and networking opportunities for local businesses. These workshops will offer expert guidance on photography, videography, and social media strategies. In addition to the funding, the team will conduct workshops to assist businesses in creating inclusive and accessible environments. These workshops will equip businesses with essential skills to better support individuals with dementia, autism, hearing impairments, and other accessibility needs. Beneficiaries: - Local Businesses - The campaign will support the development of local businesses by providing hands on training and marketing support, with the aim to boost footfall, drive economic growth and attract investment to revitalise our high streets and town centres. - Visitors and Local Residents - Sustaining our town centres and making them an attractive place to visit will benefit visitors and will encourage them to visit more often, as well as increasing dwell time. It will also enhance a sense of belonging and well-being to local residents	Culture, Connection & Place
We have secured funding to strengthen the delivery of activities that support businesses operating within the foundational economy and, in particular those within our valley communities including the embedding of circular economy principles.	On-track	A Meet the Buyer event was held in February 2025 to promote supply chain opportunities on YGG Rhosafan, Harbourside Steel Science Centre (SWITCH), Princess Royal Theatre and Llangatwg Comprehensive. 41% of businesses who attended are based in NPT or South West Wales. 10 NPT businesses have been invited to quote or tender for the some or all of the projects. Specialist support funding was provided to the Applied Research for Circular Solutions (ARCS) project in Swansea University to support two NPT companies developing a circular economy project using waste water.	



Well-being Objective 4

Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... We have secured funding to strengthen the delivery of activities that support businesses operating within the foundational economy and, in particular those within our valley communities including the embedding of circular economy principles.		The SPF funded Business Support for Growth & Innovation Fund closed at the end of March 2025. Statistics covering the two-year active period of the funding were: • Number of businesses receiving non-financial support e.g. advice, referrals to other organisations - 940 • Number of businesses receiving grants - 266 • Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready - 617 • Jobs Created - 270 On track 11 • Jobs Safeguarded - 489 • Number of new businesses created - 44 • A package of financial support launched to support those impacted by the Tata Steel Transition. The four funds launched are the Supply Chain Fund, Business Resilience Fund, Business Start Up Fund and Business Growth Fund.	
We will have started to adopt the replacement Local Development Plan and will move forward on the implementation of the Plan.	On-track	An 8-week Formal public consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy document, Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Candidate Sites Register (CSR) finished on 6th February 2025. We received approximately 1,500 comments. The team have processed the comments and input them into the Objective system. The team are currently focussing on progressing a wide variety of evidence-based documents and updating the topic papers for the Deposit Plan. Additional information has been submitted by site promoters, including surveys and viability information and the team are currently reviewing this information in order to finalise a deliverable housing trajectory for inclusion in the Deposit Plan, that will meet the housing need.	Culture, Connection & Place

4

Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
We will have published a skills and employability strategy that is fully aligned with our economic and regeneration aspirations and be working with schools and wider partners to develop a wider range of pathways into work for all residents.	Not Started	Delayed until 2025/2026 due to changes in local economy.	Education
More people and more employers are participating in apprenticeship programmes.	On-track	The Apprenticeship Coordinator has continued to engage with employers, training providers and both internal and external partners to continue the links and leads to promote the SPF project. They also promote the support that is available for apprenticeships, continuing to build a network of employers and training providers as per our engagement plan, to establish a collaborative system of sharing, and sign posting information about apprenticeships. An event was held in February to promote National Apprenticeship week in 2025. This saw a huge intake of employers attending to promote their intake of apprenticeships for the coming year. Due to the demand of employers wanting to attend this event, a second Jobs Fair was then held in the shopping centre to help support the whole community including those effected by Tata. During March we worked alongside Careers Wales in the local schools holding Career Roadshow, updating both pupils and teaching staff on what apprenticeship frameworks are available, how to complete application forms correctly and the process of interviews. Even though we continue to engage and promote all we can, the feedback we are getting from Local Employers is they don't have the funds to take on young unskilled apprentices, this is something we will be working on improving. Skills & Training Apprenticeship Provision - There are over 60 apprentices currently on our programme. 41 new apprenticeships commenced in the financial year. It is anticipated that there will be approx. 40 apprenticeship 'start' places during the 2025/2026 financial year. Skills & Training have developed level 4 and level 5 CCPLD qualifications to be able to offer these apprenticeships as part of the programme.	

4

Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024 - 2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
The qualification and skill levels achieved by NPT residents are improved and better aligned with economic growth in the local area continued	On-track	Through the various employability projects under the banner of 'NPT Employability', individuals have been supported to progress into work or prepared for work. This has included support for those who are economically inactive and have complex barriers to employment. The projects are actively involved with all regeneration developments planned for NPT in relation to jobs and the necessary skills required, ensuring that individuals have access to training that will be suitable for areas of jobs growth. 543 people have been supported into work across a variety of sectors, including construction, self-employment, welding, environmental, industrial services, manufacturing and administration. Number of people who have gained a qualification/work related certificate – 262 Individuals have been supported to undertake a variety of training during this year which includes First Aid, IOSH, NEBOSH, ADT, Facilities Management, Xero Accounting, Boom and Scissor Lift, Lean Six Sigma, Level 3 Personal Training, Vinyl Wrapping, NVQ Inspection and Testing and Basic Sea Survival. We have attended 3 job fairs. Teams are working with a local HGV training company to ensure that Tata onsite skills have the relevant training/licences and access to employment opportunities for new drivers. Training providers are working directly with the ELO's to ensure that those affected by the transition are being supported into employment on successful completion of training.	Education

4

Well-being Objective 4 Jobs & Skills

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024 - 2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... The qualification and skill levels achieved by NPT residents are improved and better aligned with economic growth in the local area continued		Pathways to Progression (UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund): Delivered by Skills and Training, the project has provided Year 10 and 11 pupils with sector-specific vocational training and opportunities to gain a Level 1 qualification. Courses include Green Construction Skills, Childcare, Hospitality, Retail, Business and Beauty. At project closure 280 pupils had attended courses (target 150) and 213 had gained a Level 1 qualification (target 120). Courses provided the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge of the various routes and also awareness of future job opportunities. At the end of the project 157 participants reported that the course attended helped them decide on a career pathway. 186 rated their knowledge and understanding as 'Excellent' or 'Good' 190 said they would recommend the course attended to others. 191 rated their overall experience of the course as Excellent' or 'Good' Skills & Training successfully applied for funding to continue this project work for the 25/26 funding year, which has been agreed and the project already under implementation for the second year. Jobs Growth Wales+: Between April 2024 and March 2025 Skills & Training supported 135 NEETS (aged 16- to 19-year-old) to start on the programme with an average monthly occupancy of 100 learners on programme each month. Within the contract year, we had 118 leavers from the programme with current estimations (to be confirmed) of 73% progressing into employment, education or further training. School Support Provision: Skills and Training is still supporting schools and internal departments and have worked with 42 young people in 24/25 to engage in training.	Education

4

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 4

Jobs & Skills

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Progress towards delivering the outputs and outcomes agreed in the Celtic Freeport Full Business Case.	On-track	N/A	The development of the Full Business Case for the Celtic Freeport is underway.	Full business case approved, outputs and outcomes will be progressed during 2025/2026.	Draft MOU received and being discussed with UKG / WG. Performance indicators will be set on agreement of the MOU.	Culture, Connection & Place
Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2 - Vale of Neath Heritage Corridor Visitor Attractor project (Gnoll Estate Country Park Visitor Infrastructure and Waterfall Country Pontneddfechan Visitor Infrastructure) to be delivered by March 2026;	On-track	N/A	Gnoll Park on track, Pontneddfechan, issues with landowners during the year. These have now been resolved and contractors have commenced on-site			
Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 3 Port Talbot Regeneration project (Princess Royal Theatre, Civic Square and Riverside Walk) to be delivered by March 2026;	On-track	N/A	On-track - see update in strategic priorities			
Collaboration Memorandum of Understanding with further education and higher education developed and signed	On-track	N/A	No further update			Education
We will have helped to deliver a range of interventions that mitigate the impact of change on local people and businesses as a result of Tata transition - see below.						Culture, Connection & Place
Number of businesses supported to diversify operations	Data not available	N/A	This information will be collected by UK Government during their post funding evaluation.			
Number of businesses supported to achieve growth	Data not available	N/A	Growth fund launched April 2025.			
Number of businesses supported to deliver redundancy measures; restructuring or closure of operations	Data not available	N/A	To follow			
Number of individuals supported to find alternative employment	On-track	N/A	149			Education
Number of apprentices supported to find new placements	On-track	N/A	2			
Number of people reskilled	On-track	N/A	970 courses booked			

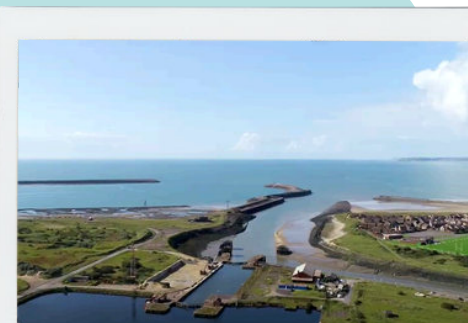
4 WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 4 Jobs & Skills

			2024/2025			Scrutiny Committee
Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2023/2024	6 monthly update (Qtr 1 &2)	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Number of people we have employed who are former Tata employees	On-track	N/A	20			Performance & Resources
Progress towards meeting year 1 and 2 actions with the approved Employability & Skills Strategy published in 2024/2025	Not started	N/A	On-track - see update in strategic priorities			Education
Number of people on various apprenticeship programme.	On-track	No data provided	On-track			
Promote the full range of pathways available for skills and employment progression.	On-track	No data provided	On-track			
Improvement in the qualification levels of the resident population	On-track	85.1%* End of 2023	85.3%* Qualification - Level 2 or above			

*Data source - [statswales](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/)

The Celtic Freeport is Officially “Open for Business”

The major step forward unlocks the investment incentives to deliver the freeport’s vision. This milestone is also accompanied by the appointment of the first permanent Celtic Freeport Chair, Ed Tomp, to take this important re-industrialisation and regeneration project to fruition.



[The Celtic Freeport](#)



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Appendix 1

Neath Port Talbot Council Corporate Plan Annual Report **Enabling Programme**

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Cymraeg
This document is also available in Welsh

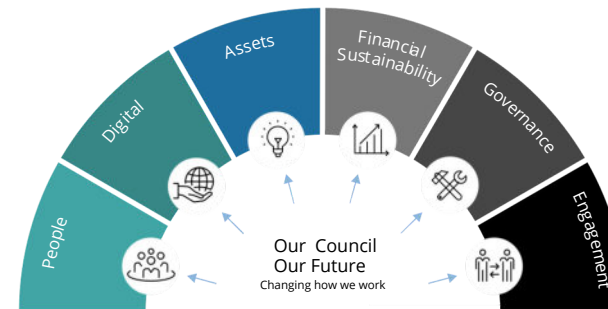
www.npt.gov.uk

If you require this information in larger print or in an alternative format, please contact the Corporate Policy Team on 07805 771506 or email: policy@npt.gov.uk⁷⁴



Enabling Programme

“Our work through our ‘Enabling Programme’ ensures we have the capabilities to support the council to adapt and transform to meet the changing needs and expectations of our communities”.



As a addition to the Corporate Plan Annual Report 2024/2025 three further sections have been included which set out the progress of the Enabling Programme, which includes the services of Digital Services, Legal and Democratic Services and People and Organisational Development.

The Enabling Programme underpin a significant amount of the work detailed throughout this Corporate Plan Annual Report. Throughout this section you will note the strategic initiatives, and progress made in enhancing the operational capabilities and resilience of Neath Port Talbot Council.

This programme is pivotal in ensuring that the council can effectively deliver its services, support its workforce, and achieve its broader strategic objectives. The report highlights various initiatives aimed at improving organisational efficiency, workforce development, and technological advancements.

One of the key areas of focus is People & Organisational Development. The council has made significant strides in implementing the Future of Work Strategic Workforce Plan 2022/2027, which includes initiatives such as the introduction of incident management training, business continuity strategies, and the development of a comprehensive People Analytics capability using Power BI. These efforts are designed to enhance the council's ability to respond to emergencies, manage its workforce effectively, and make data-driven decisions.

The Digital Services section of the Enabling Programme details the council's commitment to modernising its technological infrastructure. This includes the successful migration of the NPT.GOV.UK website to a cloud-based platform, the implementation of the ‘myNPT’ Resident Account for improved customer service, and the modernisation of the on-premise data centre infrastructure. These initiatives are aimed at improving the efficiency, security, and user experience of the Council's digital services, ensuring they meet the needs of residents and businesses.

Additionally, the programme emphasises the importance of Legal & Democratic Services in supporting the council's governance and compliance efforts. This includes providing legal advice and support across various service areas, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements, and maintaining robust democratic processes. The council's legal team has been instrumental in supporting key projects such as the Celtic Freeport and the Swansea Bay City Deal, ensuring that all legal aspects are meticulously managed to facilitate successful project delivery.

Overall, the Enabling Programme provides the foundational support necessary for the council to achieve its strategic objectives, ensuring that all initiatives are well-coordinated, legally compliant, and effectively managed.

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Delivery, monitoring and review of the Future of Work, Strategic Workforce Plan 2022/2027	On-track	Review of Year 2 Delivery Plan was completed and presented to SLT on 19th February 2025 and Personnel Committee on 10th March 2025; see links to the report and appendices below: Review of the Strategic Workforce Plan.pdf Appendix 1 Appendix 2 Appendix 3 As well as considering whether we have done what we said we would do, the review considered the impact of actions, and what actions we need to take forward into Year 3 of the Strategic Workforce Plan. Key stakeholders were involved in the review process, including trade unions, employees and managers at all levels. The review considered the workforce priorities set out in the plan and confirmed they remain relevant and fit for purpose.	Performance & Resources
Incident Management Review: Implementation of agreed recommendations	On-track	The review process involved key stakeholders across the council as well as reference to legislation, guidance and best practice. A report was presented at CLT in February and actions agreed.	
Delivery, monitoring and review of exercising and training events programme for all command levels across the council and for our partner agencies	On-track	The review process involved key stakeholders across the council as well as reference to legislation, guidance and best practice. A report was presented at CLT in February and actions agreed. Delivery of the Introduction to Incident Management course has begun with 8 council services participating.	
Delivery, monitoring and review of Business Continuity Strategy	On-track	The review process involved key stakeholders from across the council as well as reference to legislation, guidance and best practice. A report was prepared for presentation at Strategic Leadership Team in February, to consider the recommendations for approval at Cabinet in May 2025. Business Continuity Management has been incorporated into the council's New and Curious Managers leadership development programme.	

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Delivery, monitoring and review of Emergency Preparedness and Resilience Strategy	On-track	The review process involved key stakeholders across the council as well as reference to legislation, guidance and best practice. A report was prepared for presentation at SLT in February, to consider the recommendations for approval at Cabinet in May 2025.	Performance & Resources
Implementation of PowerBi to support the development of our People Analytics capability and evidence based employment strategies.	On-track	The People Analytics team have all received training in Power BI and are developing manager dashboards using this technology. Licences are in place for Corporate Directors and Heads of Service to enhance the workforce data they have access to into real time data. This will then allow for this data to be used in decision making processes.	
Ongoing development of iTrent, to improve employee management processes, data collection and reporting.	On-track	The following developments have been implemented in iTrent this year: • Manager Self Service for Sickness absence has resulted in access to up-to-date and real time data in relation to sickness absence. • Further automation in relation to sickness absence will be launched in June 2025. Managers will receive prompts for all stages of the sickness absence process with links to comprehensive resources including video guides. • Annual Leave management is available for services to adopt. • DSE Eye Test Requests and Flexible Working applications are now available from employee self-service. • Work is ongoing to include all onboarding documentation within the system. This is due to be completed by June 2025.	

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Delivery, monitoring and review of the Talent Management Forward Work Programme	On-track	The forward work programme was signed off by Corporate Director Group in April 2024, link provided below. Talent Management Team Forward Work Programme Key achievements this year include:- • Provision of a bespoke recruitment support service to managers • Career coaching services are provided across the Council, supporting job search, application form completion, and interview preparation for prior consideration applicants. • Attendance at jobs fairs to promote the council as an Employer of Choice • We continue to collaborate with JobCentre Plus to successfully fill challenging school catering vacancies. • LinkedIn Recruiter Licence to advertise our business critical technical and professional roles • Collaboration with NPT Schools, FE, and HE institutions to promote Council careers and engage managers in course content discussions. • Exit interviews offered to all leavers to inform employment policy and practice.	Performance & Resources
Review of the HR Operating Model and development of HR Business Partnering	On-track	Discussions have begun on transitioning to the Business Partner model. As an initial step, we are enhancing our people analytics team to deliver meaningful data. This will enable us to adopt a more proactive approach to workforce management.	
Review of Sickness Policy and Processes and digitalisation of associated resources	On-track	Feedback was collected from managers, trade union representatives, HR, and Occupational Health Officers. Policy or procedural changes were created based on the feedback received. These changes were discussed with the trade unions, occupational health, and management representatives. Supporting documentation, including forms, guides, and system prompts, was developed to aid implementation. The new arrangements were approved by the Personnel Committee in April 2025.	
Implementation of actions recommended by external Equal Pay Audit	On-track	The initial recommendations from the Equal Pay Audit are part of our Gender Equality Action Plan and will continue. Research indicates that part-time working is a positive choice for those with this work pattern; there is no evidence yet that family friendly working requests are denied by managers. Additionally, our Hybrid Working Framework has enhanced work-life balance for women.	

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Delivery, monitoring and review of an action plan to improve data collection and provision of training across the Regional Social Care Workforce Development Partnership	On-track	A meeting held with partners early in 2024 to improve data on training activity and training needs across the sector led to the implementation of an agreed action plan. A Regional Connector was appointed in January 2025 to help with regional training activity and data collection. Private providers now have access to the Council's Learning Management System, enhancing training accessibility, data collection and reporting across the partnership.	Performance & Resources
Delivery, monitoring and review of Thinqi Learning Management System	On-track	Following extensive development and testing, the Thinqi LM system went live to all employees early in 2025. There are currently 2707 active users of the system, with 2637 having completed a course. The catalogue now includes 42 course packages created in-house, 15 Highfield accredited health & safety courses, and 50 All Wales Consortium packages designed to address legislative, mandatory, and learning and development requirements.	
Delivery, monitoring and review of the council's internal apprenticeship programme.	On-track	28 Starts - 8 new staff upskilling, 6 Foundation Apprentices & 14 Modern Apprentices. 6 Staff Achievements: 1 - Level 3 Site Carpentry ENV 1 - Level 4 HNC in Construction ENV 1 - Level 4 Advice and Guidance SSHH 1 - Level 2 Business Admin S & CS 2 - Level 2 Supporting Teaching & Learning ELLL	
Delivery, monitoring and review of health and safety management information	On-track	Health and Safety management information is now being made available on a quarterly basis via the Workforce Information Teams channel. Accident statistics are provided to Senior Management Teams in each Directorate as well as being shared with Trade Unions and Managers at Joint Consultative Groups (JCG's) and Health and Safety Committees. The in-house Compliance Database is now operational. This tool allows the Health and Safety Team to report on compliance and non-compliance observed during inspections, as well as provide accident information. The preparation of the Annual Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Report is underway, and it will be presented to both the Strategic Leadership Team and Members.	

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Develop a lone working solution to minimise risk	On-track	Following extensive engagement with managers and employees, a 'Contractor Selection Process' is taking place to award a contract to a Corporate Lone Working provider.	
Review Responsible Persons in partnership with the Facilities Team	On-track	The Responsible Persons Health and Safety Procedure was reviewed in August 2024. Following an evaluation of first aider arrangements across the three primary Civic buildings, enhanced post-Covid measures have been implemented to ensure improved assurance regarding first aider provision.	
Embed a health and safety culture through the delivery of an awareness campaign	On-track	Research and evidence has been collated to support the development of the strategy by December 2025.	
Delivery, monitoring and review of the council's Communications and Marketing function to support the development and implementation of a Communications and Marketing Strategy	On-track	Westco, a trading company of Westminster City Council with extensive experience in public sector communications, has been appointed to review our communications and marketing. The review started in October 2024 and will occur in three phases: review and diagnostic, strategic development, and implementation and embedding. The goal is to develop a clear roadmap for a corporate approach across the council. Key actions: • Focus groups with residents and staff were held to complete the analysis and diagnostic stage of the review. The staff focus groups explored staff perspectives on internal communications, cross departmental engagement, and external interactions with customers/residents and service users. • The resident focus groups explored people's everyday lives in the area, what matters most to them, and how they feel about the council and communications. • The findings and insights from both are helping to shape communications planning, and a first draft of the review report was completed at the end of March 2025. Three major tasks were completed this quarter: • Social media audit – Recommendations to improve engagement across social media channels. • Email marketing report – Strategies to enhance email reach and increase open rates. • Customer Service access and enquiry handling review – Suggestions for improving customer service efficiency and resolving queries promptly on first contact.	Performance & Resources

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Review of the council's Corporate Performance Management Framework, implementing arrangements that ensure the council is able to demonstrate delivery of the Corporate Plan	On-track	The review of the council's Corporate Performance Management Framework has been completed. The Framework was presented to the Strategic Leadership Team on 2nd April 2025. The purpose of this framework is to ensure effective corporate governance within the council. It builds on existing operational risk management practices and complements other governance systems to form the council's internal systems of control. The framework aims to promote good management, performance, stewardship of public funds, and public engagement, demonstrating that the council is "Working Towards a More Prosperous, Fairer and Greener NPT". It is essential that there is an appropriate Corporate/Service Planning and Performance Management Framework in place that aligns council business from employee level to council level, ensuring clarity on individual contributions towards achieving the council's vision, purpose, and well-being objectives contained in the Corporate Strategy. The revised Framework will be implemented during 2025/2026.	Performance & Resources
Review of the council's approach to self-assessment for 2024 / 2025	On-track	A project plan for the 2024/2025 Self-Assessment has been completed, aligning it with other statutory reports like the Annual Governance Statement and Corporate Plan Annual Report. Additionally, Directors and Heads of Service completed a survey to aid in the assessment's scoring and content. The survey asks for feedback on the following functions: • Digital services • Our approach to procurement • Financial services • The role of the council • Risk management • Physical assets and facilities The completed self-assessment will be presented to Governance & Audit Committee on 9th September and Cabinet on 29th October for approval.	

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Review of Strategic Risk Management	On-track	The council's Strategic Risk Register has been updated for better monitoring. Each risk is now detailed on its own page with a description, mitigating actions, owner's comments, and both inherent and revised risk scores. Mitigating actions are divided into risk controls and additional steps. A Risk Appetite Statement has been established. The council acknowledges that achieving the ambitions outlined in its Corporate Strategy necessitates taking risks. This statement delineates how the council will balance risks and opportunities to pursue and deliver the well-being objectives, strategic priorities, and associated plans and strategies contained within the Corporate Strategy. The Risk Appetite Statement is a key element of the council's Code of Corporate Governance and the Strategic Risk Register has been updated to reflect the risk appetite set out in the Statement. Audit Wales have completed their review of the council's Risk Management arrangements and the report setting out their findings is being drafted. The outcome of which will inform any further improvements required in the council's approach to strategic risk management. As set out in the Corporate Risk Management Policy, the Strategic Risk Register and Risk Appetite are presented to the Strategic Leadership team on a quarterly basis and to Cabinet and Governance & Audit Committee on a six-monthly basis.	Performance & Resources
Delivery, monitoring and review of the Code of Corporate Governance	On-track	The Code of Corporate Governance control sheet has captured a starting list of the systems, documents and processes in place across the council. Work has continued during quarter 4 with members of the Corporate Governance Group to determine when the listed systems, documents and processes were last reviewed to inform a programme of review work to ensure they remain up to date and fit for purpose.	
Review of the oversight arrangements that support the delivery of the council's Strategic Equality Plan 2024/2028	Off-track	Research and evidence has been collated to support the development of the strategy by December 2025.	

People & Organisational Development

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Develop Cost of Living/ Poverty Prevention Partnership Action Plan, to deliver actions that produce tangible impact	On-track	The Cost of Living & Poverty Prevention Partnership (COL&PPP) agreed to focus their action plan on child poverty. The plan now targets fewer, impactful actions to avoid duplicating existing efforts and to address capacity and funding constraints. The current draft outlines four key actions based on recommendations from The Bevan Foundation's NPT Report from January 2020, as well as insights gathered through workshops and partner feedback. These actions include maximising income, reducing living costs, promoting financial inclusion, and providing holistic support for children and families. The Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) is instrumental to the plan as it will be used to identify cohorts of individuals missing out on benefits they are entitled to, building on the success of the campaigns in 2024-2025. In January, the council was accepted into the Welsh Government's local authority benefits take-up pilot, which will support the further use of LIFT to encourage take up of both devolved and reserved benefits. Example - The LIFT database has been used successfully in 2024/2025 to undertake a series of targeted campaigns framed around maximising income and reducing living costs. Utilising the data, policy officers have identified cohorts of low-income households and individuals eligible for financial support they are not yet receiving. The primary campaign has been framed around encouraging take-up of Pension Credit. Run on a monthly basis, the LIFT database can identify successful Pension Credit claims worth an annual total of £449,544 for the period 2024-2025; the current total value of annual Pension Credit claims - since the campaign was launched in January 2024 (to end March 2025) - is now £555,306.	Performance & Resources
Develop a Health and Well-being Strategy for the council	Off-track	This work was delayed in 2024/2025 due to lack of capacity and other priorities. However, with additional capacity, it was prioritised, and a proposal for a Member Equality Panel has been developed.	

People & Organisational Development

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Number of new employees joining the council	For monitoring	195	297	511	678	Performance & Resources
Employee Turnover rate	For monitoring	1.4%	4.2%	8.4%	10%	
% of employees who leave the council whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis during the year	For monitoring	2.7%	4.5%	7.6% / 588	9.9% / 707	
% of employees who leave the council during the year, initiated by the council	For monitoring	31%	27%	28.5% / 169	29% / 208	
% of temporary employees who leave the council during the year, initiated by the council	For monitoring	22%	42%	38% / 76	44% / 106	
% of temporary employees who leave the council during the year, initiated by the employee	For monitoring	78%	58%	62% / 125	56% / 135	
% of permanent employees who leave the council during the year, initiated by the council	For monitoring	34%	19%	23% / 89	22% / 102	
% of permanent employees who leave the council during the year, initiated by the employee	For monitoring	66%	81%	77% / 298	78% / 364	
Number of employees (excluding teachers) on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes	For monitoring	230	255	268	300	
Number of employees (excluding teachers) on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes	For monitoring	58%				

People & Organisational Development

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
% of employees that would agree/strongly agree that they will recommend NPT Council as a great place to work (annual employee engagement survey)	For monitoring	67%				Performance & Resources
Number of Mental Health First Aid Champions across the Authority	For monitoring	33	33	33	33	
Number of Accidents/Incidents reported *Figures revised	For monitoring	211 (*213)	165 (*166)	278 (*295)	245	
Number of lost time Accidents reported *Figures revised	For monitoring	19 (*22)	14 (*17)	13 (*16)	22	
Increase % of accountable managers who have an up-to-date Business Continuity Plan in place (a plan reviewed/updated within the last 12-month period)	For monitoring	No data available	23%	52%	52%	
Increase % of employees who have completed mandatory training courses (cumulative as at 'end of period') *	On-track	n/a	23%	52%	52%	
GDPR		53%	58%	67%	62%	
Health and Safety		11%	16%	22%	24%	
Manual Handling		37%	44%	51%	58%	
Prevent Duty Training		20%	23%	26%	30%	
Safeguarding		70%	83%	90%	88%	
VAWDASV		48%	53%	59%	56%	
Welsh Language Awareness		24%	30%	35%	43%	

People & Organisational Development

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Number of employees who self-report as fluent or fairly fluent Welsh speaker/writer	For monitoring	605	607	607	610	Performance & Resources
Number of employees who self-report as fluent or fairly fluent Welsh speaker	For monitoring	204	206	207	201	
Number of employees who self-report as a Welsh learner	For monitoring	770	767	767	767	
Number of employees who self-report as little or no knowledge of the Welsh language	For monitoring	3762	3698	3693	3691	
Number of employees who prefer not to say or have not reported their welsh language status	For monitoring	1217	1217	1283	1363	
Number of Welsh Language Complaints received by the council via the Welsh Language Commissioner	For monitoring	0	0	0	0	
Reduce average time (seconds) to answer calls in Welsh	Off-track	45	77	73	37	
Reduce average time (seconds) to answer calls in English	On-track	50	81	46	52	

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provide support to Transport colleagues and undertake procurement advice and support in respect of home to school transport contracts	On-track	The council's legal team has been instrumental in providing robust support to Transport colleagues, particularly in the realm of home to school transport contracts. By offering expert procurement advice, the legal team ensures that all contracts are meticulously drafted, negotiated, and executed in compliance with relevant regulations and best practices. This support includes guiding the procurement process, from the initial tendering stages to the finalisation of contracts, ensuring that all legal aspects are thoroughly addressed. The legal team's involvement helps mitigate risks, safeguard the council's interests, and promote transparency and fairness in the procurement process. Through their dedicated efforts, the legal team contributes to the efficient and effective delivery of home to school transport services, ultimately supporting the council's commitment to providing safe and reliable transportation for students.	Performance & Resources
Provide legal advice to Education Directorate and oversee contract delivery of new build schools.	On-track	The council has played a pivotal role in supporting the Education Directorate by providing comprehensive legal advice and overseeing the contract delivery of new build schools. This involves ensuring that all legal aspects of the construction projects are meticulously managed, from initial contract negotiations to final delivery. The council's legal team works closely with the Education Directorate to navigate complex legal frameworks, ensuring compliance with relevant regulations and safeguarding the council's interests. Additionally, the council oversees the entire contract delivery process, ensuring that projects are completed on time, within budget, and to the highest standards of quality. This collaborative approach not only facilitates the smooth execution of new school builds but also reinforces the council's commitment to enhancing educational infrastructure and providing a conducive learning environment for students.	
Undertake prosecution work on behalf of Education Directorate in respect of non-attendance at schools.	On-track	The council has actively undertaken prosecution work on behalf of the Education Directorate to address the issue of non-attendance at schools. By leveraging legal measures, the council aims to ensure that all children receive their right to education and that parents and guardians fulfil their legal obligations. This initiative involves close collaboration with educational institutions, legal teams, and social services to identify cases of persistent absenteeism and take appropriate action. The prosecution work serves as both a deterrent and a corrective measure, emphasising the importance of regular school attendance for the overall development and prospects of students. Through these efforts, the council demonstrates its commitment to upholding educational standards and supporting the welfare of its young residents.	

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... Undertake prosecution work on behalf of Education Directorate in respect of non-attendance at schools.	On-track	The Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. Under the Section 576 of the Education Act, any person who has care of a child – whether they are the parent – or who has parental responsibility, is deemed to be 'a parent' and is therefore responsible for ensuring regular school attendance. In the last twelve months, 36 prosecutions have been considered and actioned by Legal and Democratic Services. The nature of the work however is that there is ongoing support and provision of legal advice to children's services as part of meeting their legal obligations.	Performance & Resources
Provide legal support to Housing and Community Safety in respect of housing obligations and undertake any conveyancing work appropriate to meeting needs.	On-track	The council's legal team has been pivotal in providing comprehensive legal support to Housing and Community Safety, particularly in relation to housing obligations and conveyancing work. This support ensures that all housing-related legal matters are handled with precision and in compliance with relevant regulations. The legal team assists in interpreting and applying housing laws, advising on tenant rights and landlord responsibilities, and ensuring that housing policies are legally sound. Additionally, they undertake conveyancing work, facilitating the smooth transfer of property ownership to meet the Council's housing needs. This includes drafting and reviewing contracts, conducting due diligence, and ensuring that all legal requirements are met during property transactions. Through their dedicated efforts, the legal team helps to uphold the council's commitment to providing safe, secure, and legally compliant housing solutions for the community.	
Provide legal support to social services directorate and undertake any adult safeguarding legal work as required.	On-track	The council's Legal Team plays a crucial role in supporting the Social Services Directorate by providing comprehensive legal advice and assistance on all aspects related to childcare and adult social services functions. This includes advising on safeguarding matters and handling related court proceedings. The team ensures that the council meets its statutory duties in protecting and safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Additionally, the Legal Team undertakes any necessary audit safeguarding legal work, ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations. This support is vital for the effective functioning of the Social Services Directorate, enabling it to deliver its services efficiently and in accordance with legal requirements.	

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Ensure a procurement strategy and delivery plan are in place to ensure sustainability and decarbonisation is at the heart of procurement processes	On-track	The council has implemented a comprehensive procurement strategy and delivery plan that places sustainability and decarbonisation at the core of its procurement processes. This strategy ensures that all procurement activities are aligned with the council's commitment to environmental responsibility and reducing carbon emissions. By integrating sustainability criteria into the procurement framework, the Council not only promotes the use of eco-friendly products and services but also encourages suppliers to adopt greener practices. The delivery plan outlines specific actions and milestones to achieve these goals, including the evaluation of suppliers based on their environmental performance and the prioritisation of low-carbon solutions. Through these efforts, the council demonstrates its dedication to fostering a sustainable future and leading by example in the fight against climate change.	Performance & Resources
Provide legal advice and act as Monitoring Officer to the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee	On-track	During the past year, the council has diligently ensured the provision of a Monitoring Officer service to uphold legal compliance and foster ethical behaviour in decision-making processes. This service has been instrumental in guiding the Corporate Joint Committees actions, ensuring that all decisions are made within the legal framework and adhere to the highest ethical standards. The Monitoring Officer has played a crucial role in advising on legal matters, preventing potential breaches, and promoting transparency and accountability. Throughout the year, the number of complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) zero, with no findings being referred to the Standards Committee. This reflects the council's commitment to maintaining integrity and ethical conduct in all its operations.	
Provide legal support in respect of the acquisition of land, highways work, planning work to meet regeneration obligations	On-track	The Legal Section has played a pivotal role in supporting various initiatives aimed at meeting the regeneration obligations of the council. This support has been multifaceted, encompassing the acquisition of land, highways work, and planning activities. Below is a detailed account of the legal support provided in these areas: Acquisition of Land The legal team has been instrumental in advising on all aspects of land acquisition necessary for regeneration projects. This includes negotiating and drafting agreements with landowners to secure the necessary legal permissions and responsibilities for long-term maintenance of the proposed schemes. Early agreements with landowners have been a priority to ensure that remedial works can commence promptly.	

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... Provide legal support in respect of the acquisition of land, highways work, planning work to meet regeneration obligations		Highways Work In the realm of highways work, the legal section has provided comprehensive support by advising on and drafting highways agreements. These agreements are crucial for the development and maintenance of infrastructure projects that are part of the council's regeneration efforts. The legal team has ensured that all legal aspects are meticulously handled to facilitate smooth execution of these projects. Planning Work The legal section has also been actively involved in planning work to meet regeneration obligations. This includes advising on planning agreements and ensuring compliance with all relevant regulations. The legal team has supported various planning projects, including the development of Neath Town Centre and other significant local developments. Their involvement has been critical in navigating the complex legal landscape associated with planning and development. Key Projects Supported The legal section's support has been integral to several key regeneration projects, including: Homes as Power Stations (City Deal): Providing legal advice and support for this innovative project aimed at transforming homes into energy-efficient power stations. Celtic Freeport Business Case: Assisting with the legal aspects of developing the business case for the Celtic Freeport, a significant economic development initiative. Neath Town Centre Developments: Advising on property acquisition, leases, and planning agreements to facilitate the redevelopment of Neath Town Centre. The Legal Section has been instrumental in providing comprehensive legal advice and support across all service areas to bolster the council's tourism, leisure, and culture offerings. This support has been crucial in ensuring that all initiatives are legally sound and effectively contribute to the council's strategic goals. Below is an overview of the key areas where the legal section has provided support: Contractual Advice The legal team has offered extensive contractual advice to various service areas, ensuring that all agreements and contracts are robust and legally compliant. This includes drafting and reviewing contracts for events, partnerships, and service provisions related to tourism, leisure, and culture. For instance, bespoke agreements have been created for events within the Neath Port Talbot area, such as those held at Aberavon Seafront and Neath Fair.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provide legal advice and support to all service areas in respect of contractual advice, property advice, regulatory advice and general governance advice to achieve a strong tourism, leisure and culture offer		Property Advice In terms of property advice, the legal section has provided guidance on property acquisitions, leases, and other property-related matters essential for developing and maintaining tourism and leisure facilities. This advice ensures that all property transactions are conducted in accordance with legal requirements and support the council's objectives in enhancing its cultural and leisure infrastructure Regulatory Advice The legal team has also been pivotal in offering regulatory advice to ensure compliance with all relevant laws and regulations. This includes advising on health and safety regulations, licensing requirements, and other statutory obligations that impact tourism, leisure, and cultural activities. The ongoing support to the Safety Advisory Team is a testament to the legal section's commitment to ensuring that all events and activities are conducted safely and legally. General Governance Advice General governance advice has been provided to ensure that all decisions and actions taken by the council are legally sound and align with good governance practices. This includes advising on council-related policies and protocols, as well as providing templates and arrangements for event management. The legal section's involvement in overseeing the legal arrangements for significant projects, such as the Celtic Freeport, further underscores their role in supporting the council's governance framework. Key Contributions Celtic Leisure Contractual Arrangements: The legal section has advised on the extension of the Celtic Leisure contractual arrangements following a recent decision by the Cabinet Heritage Schemes and Cultural Development: General advice has been provided on various heritage schemes and other cultural development opportunities Event Management: Bespoke agreements and templates have been developed for managing events, ensuring that all legal aspects are covered Overall, the legal section's proactive and comprehensive support has been essential in achieving a strong tourism, leisure, and culture offer, ensuring that all initiatives are legally compliant and effectively contribute to the council's strategic goals.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Oversee the legal arrangements necessary to establish the Celtic Freeport and its operation.	On-track	Over the past twelve months, the council has diligently overseen the legal arrangements necessary to establish the Celtic Freeport and ensure its smooth operation. This period has seen significant efforts to conclude both the Outline Business Case and the Full Business Case, each requiring extensive legal involvement. Additionally, the Celtic Freeport Company Limited has been successfully incorporated and established, marking a crucial milestone in the project. We are now awaiting approval of the Full Business Case before moving forward with the delivery phase. To further support the Freeport programme, a Public Funds Committee and a Scrutiny Committee have been established to oversee the public investment opportunities it brings. Concurrently, work continues to ensure that Neath Port Talbot Council can effectively fulfil its role as the Accountable Body, demonstrating the Council's commitment to the successful implementation of the Celtic Freeport initiative.	Performance & Resources
Provide ongoing democratic services support to the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee and City Deal Scrutiny Committee	On-track	The council has been actively providing ongoing democratic services support to the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee and the City Deal Scrutiny Committee, ensuring that these bodies operate smoothly and effectively. This support includes organising and servicing a significant number of meetings, which are crucial for the committees to fulfil their roles in governance and oversight. By facilitating these meetings, the council ensures that all discussions and decisions are conducted in a structured and transparent manner, thereby upholding the principles of good governance. The dedicated efforts of the Democratic Services team have been instrumental in enabling the committees to scrutinise and guide the implementation of key initiatives, contributing to the overall success and accountability of the council's projects and objectives. 31 meetings have been serviced in the last twelve months, representing a combination of Cabinet/Council/committees and member seminars.	

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provision of Legal advice and support to all areas of council services to ensure legal compliance can be achieved in meeting wellbeing objectives	On-track	The council has diligently overseen the provision of legal advice and support across all areas of its services to ensure that legal compliance is consistently achieved in meeting wellbeing objectives. By integrating comprehensive legal guidance into the operational framework, the council ensures that all actions and decisions are aligned with statutory requirements and best practices. This proactive approach not only safeguards the council against potential legal challenges but also promotes a culture of accountability and transparency. Through continuous collaboration with legal experts, the council is able to navigate complex legal landscapes, thereby enabling the effective implementation of initiatives that enhance the wellbeing of the community. This commitment to legal compliance underscores the council's dedication to upholding the highest standards of governance and public service. In the last twelve months, advice has been provided in a wide number of areas along with specific transactional work in all service areas, amounting to 927 files opened. There are currently 2,116 specific files opened with work ongoing (though some are historic). These figures though do not take into general ad hoc advisory work.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provision of a Democratic Services function to ensure decision making is taken in a legal manner and meets democratic requirements and members are supported to ensure they can take decisions at the appropriate time that are safe and legal.	On-track	The council has established a robust Democratic Services function to ensure that all decision-making processes are conducted in a legal and democratic manner. This provision is designed to support members by providing them with the necessary resources and guidance to make informed decisions that are both safe and compliant with legal standards. By facilitating timely and well-informed decision-making, the Democratic Services function ensures that all actions taken by the Council meet democratic requirements and uphold the principles of transparency and accountability. This comprehensive support system empowers members to fulfil their roles effectively, ensuring that decisions are made at the appropriate time and in a manner that is both safe and legal. The team have continued to: • Provide information for members of the public about councillors and our meetings. • Process questions from the public for Full Council. • Give advice to councillors and officers about the formal decision-making process. This includes maintaining a Forward Plan of future decisions. • Support the Overview and Scrutiny function which looks at cabinet decisions and keeps an overview of what the Council does. • Maintain and update our Constitution. This helps govern how the elected councillors and the Council interact. • Support councillors, including directing to other services and external bodies. 202 meetings have been serviced in the last twelve months, representing a combination of cabinet/council/committees and member seminars. The team have implemented the changes to the scrutiny model agreed at Full Council in May 2024 and undertaken a review and made some amendments in April 2025. The team have also undertaken two task and finish groups in respect of diversity in democracy (continuing at present) and Member harassment and support and one ongoing into the use of social impact bonds.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee																											
Provision of an electoral registration service to ensure local people are able to participate in democratic service processes	On-track	The Electoral Services team has been instrumental in ensuring that local people can participate in democratic processes through their comprehensive electoral registration service. This team is responsible for meticulous project planning and the effective management of electoral registration services. <table><tr><th>Route (2024/25)</th><th>Description</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Route 1 (properties)</td><td>DWP and Local Data Matched Properties</td><td>77.34%</td></tr><tr><td>Route 1 (electors)</td><td>DWP and Local Data Matched Electors</td><td>83.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Route 2 (properties)</td><td>Unmatched Properties</td><td>19.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Route 2 (electors)</td><td>Unmatched Electors (requiring canvass)</td><td>16.43%</td></tr><tr><td>Route 3 (properties)</td><td>Properties of Multiple Occupation (requiring canvass)</td><td>3.16%</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Total number of Residential Properties (2024/25)</td><td>69,338</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Total number of Registered Electors (2024/25)</td><td>113,212</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Overall property/electorate match rate following conclusion of annual canvas</td><td>97.89%</td></tr></table> They engage with the electorate, political parties, candidates, agents, and elected representatives to ensure the smooth operation of the electoral services function, which includes registration, absent voting, and the conduct of elections and referenda. Throughout the year, the team have overseen 20 casual vacancies, which resulted in co-option and 4 town and community council by-elections. The team has also introduced new technology and procedures, such as digital registers in polling stations, to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of the registration process. By maintaining a high level of administrative support and ensuring compliance with statutory deadlines, the Electoral Services team has significantly contributed to the democratic engagement of the local community.	Route (2024/25)	Description	%	Route 1 (properties)	DWP and Local Data Matched Properties	77.34%	Route 1 (electors)	DWP and Local Data Matched Electors	83.6%	Route 2 (properties)	Unmatched Properties	19.3%	Route 2 (electors)	Unmatched Electors (requiring canvass)	16.43%	Route 3 (properties)	Properties of Multiple Occupation (requiring canvass)	3.16%	Total number of Residential Properties (2024/25)		69,338	Total number of Registered Electors (2024/25)		113,212	Overall property/electorate match rate following conclusion of annual canvas		97.89%	Performance & Resources
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Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provision of a procurement service to ensure commissioning achieves corporate aims and is legally compliance	On-track	The Procurement Strategy Delivery Plan for 2024/2025 was the first annual delivery plan for the implementation of the new Procurement Strategy 2024/2028. It included the actions necessary to introduce a new way of working associated with procurement reforms, and the council's strategic policy drivers. Progress: Amazon Business: To improve the way the council manages tail spend, it was recognised that Amazon was a large driver for such spend, the team has successfully rolled out Amazon Business across all council departments and all schools. The rollout means that Amazon spend is compliant through the use of a YPO framework; both Procurement and Finance teams have complete visibility of Amazon spend to target categories which may benefit from an alternative means of purchasing, such as a Corporate Contract. Implementing Amazon Business in Q2 24/25 has saved £35,000 so far, and continues to generate savings month on month through corporate proving and free delivery. Improving Communications: To raise the profile of procurement as a function, the team implemented an informal communications strategy. The Engage community now has 135 officers and messages have reached approx. 1631 people across the council. The channel allows officers to view a stream of communications related to training opportunities, updates and requirements. We will continue to use Engage as our main base of communications and will soon release bite-size learning. Visibility and Early Engagement: The council's updated Contract Procedure Rules have provided the foundations for improving procurement compliance. The council have used the opportunity to streamline processes and created standardised forms to allow us to capture key data, monitor compliance and manage demand. The use of the new Procurement Strategy Document (PSD) intends to capture data related to our procurement objectives, in readiness for reporting via the SPPP Act. The PSD aims to promote more project thinking and a sense and ownership to the end user. The Contract Award Report, now completed at the end of the procurement process contains the necessary information to demonstrate compliance, potential savings recording and other data which is proactively obtained in preparation whilst we await further advice from the Welsh Government. Officers are seeing more queries come through for lower-levels of spend, and the team is supporting client officers in creating their Request for Quotation packs, and in turn, more meaningful methodology questioning to ensure the we are selecting the Most Advantageous Supplier.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... Provision of a procurement service to ensure commissioning achieves corporate aims and is legally compliance		Process Management: The newly appointed Procurement Assistants have developed a new 'Procurement Workflow' on Microsoft Planner. They're designing it in an agile way whilst we get used to new ways of working. The Procurement Workflow provides visibility of the demand coming through, keeps track of compliance requirements and allows us to have a birds eye view of activity. The team is screening requests that come through and offering support to officers whilst being a critical friend. Data enhancements: • Spend: correcting unmatched spend and applicable categories to ensure more meaningful management information and spend reporting • Social Value: developing a simplified social value toolkit mapped to corporate aims, procurement objectives and the Well-Being goals for Wales • Sustainability: working with Wrap Cymru and Miller Research to introduce the 'sustainable procurement hierarchy' toolkit	
Provision of a statutory licensing, commons and rights of way of service to ensure legal obligations are met and safeguarding is paramount in activities	On-track	The Legal Section has diligently overseen the provision of statutory licensing, commons, and rights of way services to ensure that all legal obligations are met, and safeguarding remains paramount in all activities. This comprehensive oversight includes managing the licensing function, ensuring that all licensing activities comply with relevant laws and regulations, and providing guidance on commons registration and rights of way functions. The legal team has been instrumental in advising on and implementing best practices to promote safe and lawful operations across these areas. By maintaining a strong focus on safeguarding, the Legal Section ensures that all activities are conducted in a manner that prioritises the safety and well-being of the community, aligning with the council's commitment to legal compliance and public protection. The team have overseen all aspects of regulatory work in respect of licensing, commons and rights of way in the last six months, processing 1361 applications in various areas such as taxi licences, special procedures, and alcohol licences. As well as this, they have been implementing the forthcoming special procedure legislative changes to ensure appropriate systems are in place. The team have also undertaken a series of regulatory inspections in major events such as In It Together and other public events to monitor compliance.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provision of a local land charge service to meet legal requirements and help facilities regeneration and conveyancing processes in the county borough	On-track	In the past year, the local land charge service has continued to meet legal requirements and facilitate regeneration and conveyancing processes within the county borough. Throughout the year, a total of 1326 searches were undertaken, with 1148 completed within the target timeframe, resulting in 86.6% completion rate. This is significantly lower than the same period for 2023/24 where 1372 out of 1387 searches were completed within 10 working days with a 98.90% completion rate. We achieved an average of 6 working days return time for 2024/2025 whereas, the average was 3 working days for the period 2023/24. The decline in return times can be attributed largely to the land charges service transferring to a new software system during February 2025 which changed working practices as well as a change in staffing resources in other directorates. Combined, these produced a drop in performance levels for the last quarter, therefore impacting the whole year performance. In addition to their regular duties, the land charges team has undertaken several significant projects to enhance service delivery. They have been actively collaborating with Digital Services colleagues to implement a new system for recording environmental information, which is expected to improve the accuracy and efficiency of data management. The team has also been involved in a re-financing exercise with Tai Tarian, coordinating with various departments to ensure the timely and accurate completion of 180 land charges searches. Furthermore, the team is preparing for the migration of local land charges data to the HM Land Registry Portal, a project that will standardise and centralise land charges information, providing more accessible and reliable search results. These initiatives demonstrate the team's commitment to continuous improvement and their proactive approach to addressing the evolving needs of the community.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provision of a statutory registration service to meet legal obligations and ensure individuals are afforded a choice in respect of services in respect of birth, death and marriage registration	On-track	In the past year, the Council has diligently ensured the provision of a statutory registration service to meet legal obligations and provide individuals with choices regarding birth, death, and marriage registration. Despite the challenges posed by the temporary closure of the Neath Port Talbot Birthing Centre until September 2024, the Council successfully registered 98 births within the statutory 42-day period, achieving a 99% compliance rate. The reopening of the birthing centre has allowed for an increase in birth registrations within the NPT district. Additionally, the Council registered 380 deaths with no coronial involvement, of which 369 were registered within 5 days of death. Delays were primarily due to late issuance of paperwork from GPs, often caused by part-time schedules, leave, and time pressures, as well as the initial phased introduction of the Medical Examiners Service. Following the statutory introduction of the Medical Examiners Service on 9th September 2024, all deaths now require scrutiny by a Medical Examiner before paperwork can be issued to the registrar, except for those referred to HM Coroner. This new process has shifted the KPI from registering deaths within 5 days to the date the Medical Examiner's report is received by the register office, resulting in improved statistics but typically extending the registration date to around 2 weeks after death, causing delays for bereaved families. Furthermore, 346 marriage ceremonies were conducted at the Register Office and Approved Premises, with 3 new Approved Premises added in the last twelve months. Officers are continuously working to enhance service provision by creating a larger marriage room to facilitate income generation and further developing celebrant services	Performance & Resources
Provision of a Monitoring Officer service to ensure legal compliance and ethical behaviours in decision making	On-track	During the past year, the Council has diligently ensured the provision of a Monitoring Officer service to uphold legal compliance and foster ethical behaviour in decision-making processes. This service has been instrumental in guiding the Council's actions, ensuring that all decisions are made within the legal framework and adhere to the highest ethical standards. The Monitoring Officer has played a crucial role in advising on legal matters, preventing potential breaches, and promoting transparency and accountability. Throughout the year, the number of complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) was 1, with no findings being referred to the Standards Committee. This reflects the Council's commitment to maintaining integrity and ethical conduct in all its operations. During the course of the year, 6 courses have been provided on ensuring legal compliance in decision making to ensure safe decisions are made and these will continue to be rolled out.	

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Annual Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Provision of a Data Protection Officer to ensure legal compliance in respect of the processing and handling of personal data by the council	On-track	In the past year, NPT Council has taken significant steps to ensure legal compliance in the processing and handling of personal data by appointing a dedicated Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Information Governance Team. The DPO and Information Governance Team have been instrumental in developing and overseeing corporate training programs for officers, ensuring that all staff are well-versed in data protection principles. Additionally, the DPO and Information Governance Team have provided critical advice on policy reviews, ensuring that all policies are up-to-date and compliant with current regulations. The DPO has also been responsible for reviewing and signing off on Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) ensuring that potential risks are identified and mitigated. The DPO has played a crucial role in managing data breaches, receiving notifications, advising on and overseeing investigations, and adjudicating on whether incidents need to be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). In the past year, there have been 91 data breaches, with 3 reported to the ICO. Importantly, the ICO found no further action was necessary in these cases. The DPO has also liaised with the ICO and corresponded with complainants to address any concerns. Furthermore, the DPO has provided ad hoc guidance, support, and challenge on new issues as they arise, ensuring that the council remains agile and responsive to emerging data protection challenges. The DPO has contributed to various projects, including new Social Services systems and Environment Information systems, ensuring that data protection considerations are integrated from the outset. Finally, the DPO has developed and undertaken a comprehensive program of independent assurance work, providing ongoing oversight and assurance of the council's data protection practices.	Performance & Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Number of successful judicial reviews or challenges to decision making	On-track	0	0	0	0	Performance & Resources
		In the past year, the Legal & Democratic Services department has maintained a strong record of compliance and effective decision-making. Notably, there have been no judicial reviews or procurement challenges against the department's decisions. This achievement underscores the department's commitment to statutory compliance and strategic priorities.				
Number of successful legal challenges in the Courts to contract awards made by the council	On-track	0	0	0	0	
		In the past year, the Legal & Democratic Services department has maintained a strong record of compliance and effective decision-making. Notably, there have been no judicial reviews or procurement challenges against the department's decisions. This achievement underscores the department's commitment to statutory compliance and strategic priorities.				
Response to Freedom of Information requests dealt with by the Chief Executives Directorate and Subject Access Requests within the statutory defined periods Note: <i>Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests which were outside of timescale were due to the requirement for a large volume of data to be collated from various sources resulting in delays, as well as one instance of staff absence which caused a delay in response.</i>	On-track	465 Freedom of Information requests received, of which: • 382 were responded to within 20 days, (82% response rate within 20 days). • 64 responded to outside of the 20 days. • 19 FOI’s were not answered and 6 were placed on hold. 4 Subject Access Requests were dealt with, of which: • 3 were within timescale. This gives a 75% response rate. 1 request was a coordinated response and 1 was not dealt with as ID was not provided.				

Legal & Democratic Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Percentage of Local Government Electors (via routes) verified and registered to vote Route 1 – DWP and local data matching Route 2 - Unmatched properties Route 3 – Properties of multiple occupation i.e. residential care homes and student accommodation	On-track	Annual Measure Total number of residential properties – 69,338 Annual Measure: Route 1 (properties) – 53,626 (77.34%) Route 1 (electors) – 94,645 (83.6%) Route 2 (properties) – 13,520 (19.3%) Route 2 (electors) – 18,600 (16.43% Route 3 – 2,206 (3.16%				Performance & Resources
Percentage of standard searches carried out within 10 working days - Target - 96%	On-track	1326 searches received with 1148 completed within target, giving a figure of 86.6%. <i>Average of six working days return time</i> This has been affected by the Land Charges service transferring to a new software system in February 2025 and a change in staffing resources within other directorates who contribute to search responses.				
Number of fines imposed by the Information Commissioners Office in respect of data breaches	On-track	0 - In the past year, the Legal & Democratic Services department has successfully maintained robust data protection practices, resulting in no fines being imposed by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for data breaches. This achievement underscores the department's commitment to stringent data protection measures and compliance with relevant legislation. Throughout the year, the department has effectively managed data security incidents and ensured that all necessary precautions were taken to prevent breaches. Regular training and awareness programs have been conducted to keep staff informed about data protection principles and their responsibilities. Additionally, the department has implemented comprehensive policies and procedures to handle any potential data breaches promptly and efficiently. These measures have been instrumental in safeguarding personal data and maintaining the trust of the public and stakeholders. Overall, the department's proactive approach to data protection has been successful in preventing any financial penalties from the ICO, reflecting a strong culture of compliance and risk management.				

Legal & Democratic Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Percentage of births registered within 42 days Note: The number of birth registrations is steadily increasing. It is anticipated that birth numbers will continue to increase due to the continued pressure on Singleton consultant led maternity department and longer term closure of the Princess of Wales maternity department, due to on-going building works.	On-track	98 births registered overall with just 1 birth registered outside of 42 days – 99%				Performance & Resources
Percentage of still births registered within 42 days Note: mothers typically will deliver stillborn babies within a consultant led maternity department (Singleton/Bridgend)	On-track	0 still births registered				
Percentage of deaths (with no coronial involvement) registered within 5 days	On-track	871 deaths registered, this figure includes data relating from September 2024 – March 2025 (with introduction of Medical Examiner) of the 380 deaths registered without coronial involvement, there were just 11 over 5 days, achieving 97% for this period. From September to March the Local registration service set achievable targets, contacting families the same day or next day, only 11 took longer due to informants’ availability or awaiting declarations from other districts.				
Percentage of Licensing Act 2003 applications completed within statutory timescales.	On-track	100% (323 applications completed) New premises - 17 Vary premises - 5 Vary DPS - 63 Transfers - 22 Minor Variations - 9 TENS - 207				

Legal & Democratic Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Percentage of premises licensed under the Gambling Act 2005 receiving at least one compliance inspection	On-track	100% - 14 compliance inspections carried out at licensed gambling inspections.				Performance & Resources
Percentage of premises authorised for firework storage receiving at least one compliance inspection	On-track	100% - 17 compliance inspections carried out at licensed fireworks premises, along with 1 complaint inspection.				
Percentage of animal welfare (dog breeding, animal boarding, pet shops, riding establishments) licensed premises receiving at least one compliance inspection	On-track	Annual Measure 100% of compliance inspections carried out – 63 premises inspected as well as 5 complaints inspections carried out – 3 for boarding and 2 for breeding.				

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Transforming Customer Contact in NPT - Corporate Website Roadmap Delivery/ MyNPT Roadmap Delivery/DTB-000110 - NPT Forms Roadmap Delivery/DTB-000028 - Customer Hub Roadmap Delivery	On-Track	DTB-000028 - Customer Hub: Continues to evolve as a core component of our digital by design objectives set in our digital strategy, supporting the Council's ambition to deliver a modern, user-centred CRM and achieve a single view of the customer. The platform has seen significant enhancements across integration, case management, and data quality—laying the groundwork for more seamless and efficient customer contact. Key progress includes the successful integration with the myNPT Resident Account and iDOX Public Protection, enabling real-time case visibility and improved coordination across systems. Legacy databases have been consolidated into a unified structure, simplifying support and enabling future enhancements. Location and case management capabilities have been expanded, including the introduction of GIS-based mapping and improved property identification through LLPG integration. The team has also delivered a range of user-focused improvements: • Streamlined triage processes and a dedicated Contact Centre section • Flexible email templates for more targeted communications • Case closure reasons to improve transparency and resident satisfaction • Automated housekeeping to maintain data integrity • Performance optimisation to support over 1.2 million case records While integration with commercial systems like iDOX has presented challenges due to limited modern APIs, the team has successfully developed custom solutions to ensure a seamless digital experience for residents. The decommissioning of legacy systems remains on track, further reducing technical debt and supporting a more agile, scalable service model.	Performance & Resources
Improving Cyber Resilience in Neath Port Talbot (DTB-TBC)	Off-track	CymruSOC/SIEM: The project to migrate to the Welsh Government sponsored Security Operations Centre (SOC) is underway with some delays owing to the availability of CymruSOC and NPT resources the project team have rescoped and are working to the new delivery date of June 2025. Migrate Endpoint Protection to a new XDR platform (Trend Vision One): The migration from our existing anti-virus protection tool to Trend Vision One is proceeding at pace and on track with additional security being phase in throughout the project.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Street and Address data management	Completed	Completed 17/01/25 - Historically, we had two versions of the LSG data - the LSG data in the LLPG schema, and the other sat on a network drive and was separately updated. Discrepancies of the data between the two were identified and reconciled and we are now working with one live version of the truth. Further development work in the address management application enables us to maintain and develop this dataset and upload the latest version to GeoPlace smoothly. These activities have allowed us to move up to Gold status with the aim for platinum in due course. The first instalment of a live dashboard to visualise and track the data quality of our gazetteer has been handed over to the address custodian. Further data quality measurements are being identified for addition. These milestones have now opened the way forward to integrate several other important datasets into the LLPG/LSG (PROW, unadopted streets, cycle paths, etc). Since the teams began this work, we have achieved gold standard for both address and street submissions to Geoplace. Previously, our street submissions were below the national level, posing a risk of fines and necessitating Geoplace's involvement to improve standards. We have now identified all discrepancies between the two main LSG versions and have ongoing improvement plans in progress.	Performance & Resources
FOI Streamlining; part of workstream 4	Off-track	There are several workstreams in this project. • The FOI application functionality has been reviewed following UAT and a few changes will be implemented prior to go live. • The publication scheme work will be scheduled in the coming weeks following the launch of the new website. • Public Health Funerals webpage has been completed with metadata and narrative; FOI officers can now redirect inquiries to it; Benefits: We expect to save around 75 hours officers time yearly that was spent responding to FOI requests regarding this information.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Training – Learning Management System (DTB-00120)	Completed	This project directly supports the Our People theme of our Digital, Data and Technology Strategy, by providing our workforce with the tools and opportunities to grow, adapt, and lead in a digital-first environment. Our new Thinqi LMS empowers staff to take ownership of their development with personalised learning journeys, while enabling managers to better build engagement and support performance and capability building. Aligned with our Digital by Design principles, the platform was developed with user experience at its core—offering intuitive navigation, mobile accessibility, and streamlined access to learning resources. It simplifies training delivery while ensuring consistency and inclusivity across the organisation. In addition, the LMS enables better decision making by providing insights into learning engagement, compliance, and skills development. These analytics will help inform strategic workforce planning and help the council identify emerging training needs across the organisation.	Performance & Resources
Migration and modernisation of NPT.GOV.UK to Umbraco Cloud (DTB-00003)	Completed	Our migration and modernisation of NPT.GOV.UK to Umbraco Cloud has delivered a transformative project that redefines how we connect with our residents and businesses through digital channels. This transformation programme has been more than a technical migration; it has been a strategic opportunity to modernise our digital presence. By moving to a modern, cloud-based CMS, we have transformed NPT.GOV.UK into a transactional, place-based, and promotional community platform—one that better meets the needs of our residents, businesses, and visitors. Featuring a brand-new design following our innovative design system, it is mobile-first, intuitive, and accessible—achieving a 99% accessibility score and placing us among the top 25 UK council websites. We’ve rationalised over 2,800 pages, reducing content by 50% and improving navigation and clarity of the content across the website. This programme has also allowed us to think differently about how we engage with our customers—maintaining the integrity of GOV.UK standards while creating a more dynamic, locally relevant experience.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
NPT Resident Account and Self-Service online forms (DTB-00023)	Completed	The delivery of the first phase of our NPT Resident Account and Self-Service Online Forms project has now been completed—an essential milestone in the Council’s Transforming Customer Contact in NPT programme and a cornerstone of our digital transformation journey. The launch of the myNPT Resident Account provides a secure, bilingual, and accessible digital front door to council services. It enables residents to manage their interactions with the Council more efficiently, offering 24/7 access to a growing range of services through a personalised, mobile-friendly platform. The platform was developed to address key challenges: high volumes of failure demand, fragmented customer journeys, and outdated contact methods. By integrating with our CRM and digital infrastructure, myNPT reduces pressure on traditional channels, improves internal efficiency, and enhances the overall resident experience.	Performance & Resources
On Premise Data Centre Infrastructure Modernisation Programme	Completed	The On-site Data Centre Infrastructure Modernisation Programme has successfully concluded with significant achievements in rationalising and modernising our on-premise data centre infrastructure. Digital Services undertook a comprehensive analysis and restructuring of our existing data centre infrastructure, focusing on enhancing efficiency, security, reliability, and scalability. The following milestones were achieved: • Consolidation of physical servers, reducing overall hardware footprint and optimising resource utilisation. • Implementation of advanced virtualisation technologies, leading to improved flexibility and ease of management. • Upgrading network components to support higher bandwidth and faster data transfer rates. • Enhancing security measures with state-of-the-art firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and encryption protocols. • Integration of energy-efficient technologies to reduce operational costs and environmental impact. The programme has significantly enhanced our on-premise data centre's operational capabilities by modernising infrastructure, which has improved data processing speed and reliability, implemented advanced security measures, and increased cost efficiency through energy-efficient systems.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
On Premise Data Centre Infrastructure Modernisation Programme	Completed	The upgraded infrastructure also allows for scalability, better resource management, and optimised resource utilisation. Additionally, the adoption of energy-efficient technologies supports our commitment to environmental sustainability by reducing our carbon footprint. The successful completion of the on-site Data Centre Infrastructure Modernisation Programme marks a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to enhance technological capabilities and operational efficiency. Digital Services will continue to monitor and optimise the infrastructure to ensure it meets evolving organisational needs and industry standards.	Performance & Resources
Transcribe Conversations using Magic Notes (DTB-00137)	Completed	Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) software was recently piloted at the front door of Adult Social Services, resulting in a reduction of over 58% in the time social workers and admin teams spent on administrative tasks. Magic Notes, a tool that records conversations and generates assessments, was trialled by social workers and admin officers with overwhelmingly positive results. The submission of assessments was 70% faster, and the quality of assessments improved, better capturing the needs of the service user. Each participant in the pilot saved an average of 7.5 hours per week on administrative tasks using Magic Notes, and the time required to write up assessments decreased from twelve hours to four hours. Project outcomes: - The project team have evidenced that each practitioner involved in the pilot saved an average of 25 minutes per assessment write-up. This equated to a staggering saving of around 7.5 hours per week per practitioner on administration. Not only were the time savings for the practitioners significant, but we also noted that the time taken by practitioners to submit their assessments was significantly faster than without the technology, by around 8 hours. 100% of our testing group also reported that they saved a significant amount of time because of using the technology. Throughout the pilot, practitioners remarked at the high levels of accuracy being recorded by the product. Feedback was combined and all transcripts and summaries tested were at 97%+ accurate. This was far higher than the levels of accuracy we'd previously experienced with other products, further building the users confidence.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Transcribe Conversations using Magic Notes		Feedback from the practitioners also confirmed that the quality of the conversations whilst using the product was significantly higher than when carrying out traditional assessments. The open flowing conversations led to a higher quality assessment. This remarkable achievement has resulted in the project being nominated for an APSE Best Innovation 2025 service award.	Performance & Resources
Core Infrastructure Modernisation - Data Centre; Network; Domain; Oracle		Data Centre: The program to update the NPT data centre remains OnTrack with the following components completed this period. • Procurement of additional backup solution capacity • Procurement of replacement Uninterruptable Power Supply Some delays to the replacement storage contract owing to compliance with the new procurement rules. Network: The following projects have commenced: • Dark Fibre Project – to increase the network capacity and availability • Corporate Guest Wireless Provision Review – to ensure sufficient coverage and speed availability • Pontardawe Arts Centre Modernisation Domain: The following projects have commenced: • AOVPN Replacement – ensuring that we have up to date efficient control of remote network connections. Oracle: The Oracle EBS OCI Migration project is on track and is operational with the development / test environments and disaster recovery plane to complete in the coming period. The Oracle cloud OCI Migration development site has been completed, and the migration of all existing application are on track for completion in the following year.	
Think Family partnership – data linkage		The project has produced a live data quality report for the Early Intervention Panel data, as well as recommendations for improving the quality and statistics on linkage to 3 related systems (Flying Start, Social Services and Team Around the Family). Furthermore, we created a dashboard pulling information on linked EIP children from the Education and Flying Start systems.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
HR / Payroll Modernisation		The project remains on track, with the expected benefits of include reducing the number of in-house systems for increased efficiency, enhancing user engagement and data quality through built-in forms, and providing better management information. To date the following have been delivered: • System functionality • Gaps in employment • Additional Employment • Welsh language ability • HR Self-Service Forms • Eye Test Form • Flexible working request • System Upgrade In addition to this the team have managed the contract end and renewal in line with the new procurement rules.	Performance & Resources
Improvements to Current Housing Options Database	On-Track	Project approved in January, housing teams working with data team to define the desired data model based on current legislation, day to day work of front-line teams, and reporting requirements. The expected benefits include, capturing the right information into a single, standardised database will reduce misunderstandings and data loss, provide all teams with access to relevant information for optimal service delivery, enhance the organization's reputation by enabling efficient support for vulnerable people, and improve processes to save time and reduce reliance on spreadsheets.	
Capita Revs and Bens Modernisation Programme - Move to Cloud		The Revenues and Benefits system has been successfully migrated from the Council's on-premises data centre to the cloud. The platform is now undergoing user acceptance testing (UAT) in line with the Capita project plan. Staff from the service area are actively participating in UAT, confirming access and completing the defined test scenarios to ensure the system is functioning as expected in its new cloud environment.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Think Family partnership – system replacement	On-Track	This is a strategically important project that ensures the continued ability to monitor, evaluate, and improve outcomes for families supported through the Families First programme. With the closure of the third-party provider maintaining the legacy Access database, we faced the risk of losing critical insight into the reach and impact of our services. This project has delivered a sustainable, in-house solution that not only preserves but enhances our ability to understand the journey and outcomes of children and families across the Think Family Partnership. It will also eliminate third-party dependency, saving approximately £4,000 annually. The new system empowers users to take control of their data, generate dynamic reports, and gain a single, end-to-end view of the child and family journey—linking monthly user spreadsheets with the Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP) database.	Performance & Resources
Council Tax system address data quality improvement and LLPG integration	On-Track	Having a linked view of the tax system and our gazetteer we have provided the Council Tax team with a dashboard highlighting missing UPRNs in their system as well as a data quality tracker, and set up integration scripts that allow for data flow from LLPG into the tax system. Those scripts are now being tested. We are also working to manage the data migration into a new cloud hosted service.	
Think Family partnership – system replacement	On-Track	This is a strategically important project that ensures the continued ability to monitor, evaluate, and improve outcomes for families supported through the Families First programme. With the closure of the third-party provider maintaining the legacy Access database, we faced the risk of losing critical insight into the reach and impact of our services. This project has delivered a sustainable, in-house solution that not only preserves but enhances our ability to understand the journey and outcomes of children and families across the Think Family Partnership. It will also eliminate third-party dependency, saving approximately £4,000 annually. Aligned with our Digital by Design, Data and Research-Led Decision Making, and Our People strategic themes, the new system empowers users to take control of their data, generate dynamic reports, and gain a single, end-to-end view of the child and family journey—linking monthly user spreadsheets with the Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP) database.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Social Services Modernisation	On-Track	With the completion of the following functionality and system enhancements the project remains on track: • Integration of MAST Children • Migration of Western Bay System • Migration of Foster Carers Logs In addition, we have also seen the commencement of the reporting and workflow phases of the project this period.	Performance & Resources
Data linkage of IAR, App Stack, DAR and Data Catalogue	Off-Track	There has been no progress during this period due to the unavailability of resources. This has significantly impacted our ability to move forward with the planned activities. The project team is actively exploring alternative methods to deliver the components of the project. However, before any new strategies can be implemented, a comprehensive scoping exercise will be necessary once resources have been allocated. This scoping exercise will involve reassessing the project requirements, timelines, and resource needs to ensure that we can effectively address the current challenges. The team is committed to finding innovative solutions and optimising the use of available resources to get the project back on track.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Asset Management	On-Track	The project remains on track with the delivery of the Mobile Template Design and the commencement of the mobile Field Service Application development (Inspectors) this period.	Performance & Resources
Document Management Replacement	Off-Track	The project has delivered the migration of social services documentation to the new platform. Delays have been encountered due to a shortage of resources and the unavailability of contingency resources, stemming from budget and staffing reduction. Despite these challenges, the team is working diligently to address the issues and find solutions to move forward.	
Generative AI	On-Track	The HR, Welsh Language translation and SLT trials have successfully concluded, and feedback has been gathered from the final User Review Sessions to determine the long-term time and cost savings. The Community of Practice set up in MS Teams for all current Copilot license holders is an initiative aimed at fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among users who have access to Microsoft Copilot. • Actions completed: • Welsh Language Translation (Short trial complete) • Feedback: Copilot particularly beneficial for longer documents, can cut translation time in half, improves quality of translation. • HR trial (complete) • o Users feel more productive, can focus on more value-added work, and can complete tasks more quickly. • SLT trial (complete) • Reported time savings, intuitive and responsive, excellent at summarising, useful for creating emails and researching. • Engagement only at 30% • Wider feedback • Organisation excitement for AI – still receiving many requests for Copilot licenses. • Huge interest in further training and positive attendance numbers so far for Changing Social training sessions.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Finance Modernisation - Income and Spend Roadmap Delivery Landscape review of financial processes GovPay Roadmap Delivery	On-Track	Income and Spend Roadmap Delivery - Discovery underway – please see Service Transformation Update below. Landscape review of financial processes - Discovery underway – please see Service Transformation Update below. GovPay Roadmap Delivery - All Fund 7 payments have now been successfully migrated onto the GOV.UK Pay platform, marking a key milestone in the Council’s move toward a more cost-effective, and user-friendly payment platform. However, further rollout of the programme has been temporarily paused pending the outcome of strategic recommendations regarding the future direction of the council’s income management system. This pause will ensure alignment with broader income management approach and how as a council we collect income.	
Education Modernisation – EMS review / POD Development	On-Track	EMS review: The discovery and scoping phase of the project is well underway with the following activities completed: • Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement • Core Pupil Data review • System Administrator Review • Reporting Transition • Exclusions Data Review • Governors Engagement The project remains on track during this period. POD (Employability & Skills): A dedicated delivery team has been resourced within Digital Services to support the development of the new POD product. The team has conducted a series of engagement sessions with key stakeholders aligned to the programme. These sessions have informed the creation of a scoping document and have been working toward a clearly defined set of user needs and service requirements. These user stories have now been documented and played back to end users for validation and sign-off. These stories will form the basis of the product backlog, which will be prioritised to ensure that high-value features are delivered early in the development cycle. Financial scoping is also underway to support planning and resource allocation for the next phase of delivery.	Performance & Resources

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Service Transformation Engagement	On-Track	The key projects the team has been working on are: - Income Management: We've made excellent progress in reviewing existing working practices and identifying ways in which we can modernise our approach to income management. - Finance Data Landscape Review: As part of our broader transformation strategy, we've undertaken a detailed landscape review of the current state of the infrastructure supporting our core finance system. - IT Systems Landscape Review: As part of our strategic transformation efforts, we are supporting a comprehensive review to better understand all the software and digital tools (e.g. systems) the council uses. This work goes beyond simply cataloguing systems. - Gen AI: Since our last update, the Transformation Team has made meaningful progress in exploring how Gen AI can support smarter, more efficient services across the council. From piloting Copilot Agents to automating translation and correspondence, we're focusing on practical applications that deliver real value. – Please see further update above. - Amazon Web Services (AWS) Translate: As part of our ongoing commitment to explore innovative technologies that enhance service delivery, we've launched a proof-of-concept using an AI tool to help with content translation.	Performance & Resources
NPT Unified comms business case and roadmap	Complete	The initiative was developed to enhance the council's communication infrastructure, ensuring that all personnel have access to efficient and reliable communication tools. This improvement facilitated service areas in delivering effective services to the public and bolstered internal communications. Digital Services determined that the programme of work would be divided into two categories: telephony for standard service users and a distinct solution for service areas necessitating a contact centre solution. Microsoft Teams was chosen as the primary communication tool for most service staff. This decision was driven by several factors: - Integration: Seamless integration with other Microsoft Office applications, enhancing productivity and collaboration. - Accessibility: Easy access from various devices, ensuring staff can stay connected whether in the office or working remotely. - Functionality: Robust features including chat, video conferencing, and file sharing, promoting efficient communication and teamwork.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Continued... NPT Unified comms business case and roadmap		For a service area that necessitated a contact centre solution, FourNET was identified as the optimal platform. Key considerations included: • Specialised Features: Advanced contact centre functionalities, tailored to the unique needs of staff handling high volumes of customer inquiries. • Reliability: Proven track record in providing stable and reliable communication services to contact centres. • User Experience: Intuitive interface that enhances user experience and operational efficiency. Key Benefits Achieved • The successful implementation of these communication platforms has resulted in numerous benefits: • Enhanced Collaboration: Teams can now collaborate more effectively, sharing ideas and information seamlessly. • Improved Productivity: Staff have access to tools that streamline workflows and reduce downtime. • Greater Flexibility: The ability to work from various locations without compromising on communication quality has empowered staff. • Customer Satisfaction: Contact centre staff can handle inquiries more efficiently, improving overall staff and citizen experience. The NPT Unified Comms Business Case and Roadmap programme of work has successfully transformed our communication infrastructure. The strategic decisions made by Digital Services have ensured that our staff are equipped with the best tools to perform their roles efficiently. This project has not only enhanced internal collaboration and productivity but also elevated citizen and staff satisfaction, solidifying our commitment to excellence.	Performance & Resources

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Implementation of GOV.UK Pay to replace existing online payments		The implementation of GOV.UK Pay as Neath Port Talbot Council's new online payments platform has been delivered, replacing legacy systems and delivering a secure, user-centred, and cost-effective solution for residents and businesses. This project was initiated following Discovery work funded through our Digital Transformation Fund bid, which identified critical limitations in our existing payment systems. These included high transaction fees, poor user experience, and non-compliance with Welsh language and accessibility standards. GOV.UK Pay was selected as a modern, government-backed alternative that aligns with our Digital, Data and Technology Strategy and our corporate principles of being agile, innovative, and value-driven. The platform is now live and fully operational, supporting all Fund 7 payments previously processed through Capita, and enabling new digital payment options for services that were previously offline. This shift enhances the customer experience, improves operational efficiency, and ensures compliance with national digital service standards.	Performance & Resources
Digital Services Service Desk review and reset – including Incident, Change and Problem, along with Asset management	Completed	This initiative aimed to significantly enhance key IT service management (ITSM) processes to better serve our staff and various service areas across the council. Our initial collaboration with the consulting firm Pink Elephant was instrumental in identifying inefficiencies, devising strategic improvements, and implementing robust solutions across several critical areas. Through this partnership, we successfully addressed long-standing issues and capitalised on opportunities for enhancement, thereby driving substantial improvements in our service delivery. Together, we focused on identifying inefficiencies and opportunities for enhancement in the following areas: • Incident Management: Streamlining the process to ensure faster resolution times and improved user satisfaction. • Change Management: Establishing robust procedures to manage changes with minimal disruption and risk. • Problem Management: Implementing proactive measures to identify and address root causes, thus reducing recurring issues. • Asset Management: Enhancing visibility and control over IT assets to optimise utilisation and reduce costs.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
GIS Platform Review and Modernisation programme	On-Track	Project currently in scoping phase.	Performance & Resources
Development and implementation of the NPT Digital Service Manual	On-Track	The NPT Digital Service Manual has been successfully developed and launched. It provides clear, accessible guidance on design, technology, and digital standards to ensure that all digital services are user-centred, accessible, and aligned with government best practices. The manual supports consistent, high-quality service delivery across teams and projects. Further enhancements are planned throughout the year to ensure the manual remains current and continues to reflect evolving standards set by UK Governments Digital Service and user needs.	
Digital services training matrix and multi-year training needs assessment plan	On-Track	The Digital Services training matrix is designed to enhancing both individual and team performance. The aim of the matrix and associated processes it to identify skill gaps, ensure compliance, enhance efficiency, improve project delivery, foster career development, and boost accountability. Activities completed this period - Agreement on prioritisation and spend for 2025-26 training.	
Digital service wellness group	On-Track	Our wellness group continue to play a key role in providing opportunities to discuss health and wellness matters , providing good clear advice on health and interactive events like walk and talk. This period the team have provided the following - • 2 walk and talk events • Healthy eating seminar The management team have a continuous objective to raise awareness of Vivup - Employee Assistance Programme to all staff.	
Data Training arranged across organisation	On-Track	No activity during this period.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Career Pathways aligned to DDaT profession Framework and Target Operating Model	On-Track	The team are continuing to work with our HR colleagues to develop new routes to join the digital services team that have a career progression pathway.	Performance & Resources
Communities of practice for service/ content design across multi-agency organisations	On-Track	Digital Services is integrated within a wide and dynamic professional network that spans local, national, and international boundaries. This network includes a diverse array of peers, mentors, industry leaders, and strategic partners. Through these connections, Digital Services actively engages in collaboration and knowledge-sharing, fostering innovation and growth within these communities. Specific achievements this period: • Setting up of Copilot community • Engaging with Records Management bodies (ARMA –UK , ARMA – Canada)	
Refresh of Digital Partners – aligning to current demand across service areas	On-Track	With the implementation of Digital Services' comprehensive 'Digital Delivery Process,' in alignment with our dedicated business relationship team, we have significantly enhanced our understanding of the diverse demands across various service areas. This integrated approach allows us to systematically gather and analyse data, ensuring that we can respond more effectively to the unique needs and challenges faced by each service area. By fostering closer collaboration and communication, we are better equipped to anticipate and address emerging requirements, leading to more efficient and responsive service delivery. New engagements this period: 101 Building a digital-ready workforce campaign As part of our NPT Digital, Data and Technology Strategy , we aim to build a digital-ready workforce within the council. To achieve this, we need to understand the level of staff confidence in using digital tools, particularly Microsoft’s Office 365 suite. The insights from this survey will help us support staff in their roles and develop a tailored digital training programme.	

Digital Services

Strategic Priorities	Annual Progress	2024/2025 Summary of Progress	Scrutiny Committee
Ongoing collaboration with external organisations including WLGA, WG, CDPS, SBCD etc	On-Track	Digital Services has maintained regular engagement with external organisations, often showcasing how NPT is leading in a range of Digital Service delivery areas such as GenAI. Some examples include the CDO keynoting at the CDPS Dolenni Digidol event and keynoting for the Welsh Government SCS GenAI workshop with the Permanent Secretary. We maintain strong engagement with national working groups including the WLGA Digital Advisory Group (CDO is vice chair) and the WLGA Connecting Care SRO group. The Division has established solid connections across a wide range of Welsh and English Local authorities, and regularly engages in knowledge sharing sessions.	Performance & Resources
Formalise the Policy, Process, Procedure and Guides process and management	Off-Track	Phase one of this work stream is complete, and the team are now rolling the ISO style process management structure across the wider digital services team, actions completed this period are: • Acceptable use policy • Service desk Procedures However, owing to resource constraints and competing works there will be delays in delivering / revising policies and procedures going forward.	
Horizon scanning across emerging technologies to understand what will have an impact on service delivery	On-Track	To support innovation, staff across the Product and Delivery teams have been allocated dedicated time—typically one afternoon per week, subject to project demands—for horizon scanning and exploration of emerging technologies. This proactive approach has already led to tangible outcomes, including the rollout of a new Alexa service providing residents with updates on bin collections and school closures. Further innovation has been enabled through the setup of a new Amazon Web Services (AWS) environment, allowing teams to explore AI-driven translation tools to reduce costs, and the adoption of GitHub Copilot to enhance development productivity and code quality. Additionally, the team is actively exploring the advanced capabilities of Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) to support more powerful and scalable APEX-based developments. Team members have also been attending Local Government Collaboration & Innovation Forums to gather insights and explore future GenAI proof-of-concept opportunities that could be adopted to further enhance service delivery. Trial of innovative technologies taking place this period. • Microsoft Copilot • Magic Notes (Social Services) • iCoPlan Project planning tool (Digital Services)	

Digital Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Core System availability within core hours Target: 99.90%	On-track	99.9% The 0.1% differential relates to a controlled maintenance window within core time. This is necessary, to ensure the hosting servers are fully secured, patched and compliant. To achieve this, a designated hosting server will seamlessly migrate whatever back-office systems and services currently running on it, to a cluster of servers. During this time, council staff may experience a very slight performance degradation but there will be no system outage whilst it gets patched and reloaded.		99.9% Some staff may have experienced issues connecting to the homeworking VPN solution or whilst trying to browse the internet. This was due to Digital Services updating internet security services on client machines, to ensure they remain up-to-date and compliant. Other than that, all systems have operated within 99.9% tolerance in this reporting quarter.		Performance & Resources
NPT corporate Website User Satisfaction score Target: 90%	Off-track	87.09% As part of our migration to a new website platform and template there has been a slight drop in user satisfaction whilst this major transformation project has taken place. We have also introduced a new reporting system Gov Metric during this quarter which has changed how user satisfaction is captured and measured which is also reflected in the lower than quarterly target score.	90.32% Satisfaction scores continue to increase following the introduction of Gov Metric which is providing far more detailed reporting across our website. The continued transformation of our website is slightly affecting our satisfaction score during this period, but this is estimated to reach the quarterly target following completion.	86.5% The lower score is due to the re-platforming and modernisation of the website to the new cloud solution, and a change in the reporting metrics in the software used to calculate the user satisfaction score.	86.74%	

Digital Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) accessibility compliance score against 'AA' standard Target: 90% Note: New public sector accessibility regulations mean that all public sector websites must meet the 'AA standard'. The AA standard is part of the internationally recognised Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (known as WCAG 2.1) which sets recommendations for improving web accessibility.	On-track	Our website meets this AA standard. We use best practice accessibility tools to monitor our website for accessibility issues. All new digital services will meet accessibility standards.	Our ongoing commitment to ensure that our website meets accessibility compliance against the 'AA' standard is being highlighted as best practice with our council ranked in the top 20 most accessible council websites across the UK.	Our website remains in the top 30 most accessible council websites across the UK, which is an achievement especially following the significant changes to the website during its modernisation and refresh to cloud in this past quarter.	99.2% We continue to enhance our website to ensure it meets accessibility compliance against the 'AA' standard. Our website continues to be ranked among the top 30 most accessible council websites across the UK	Performance & Resources
NPT website Content score (Quality of content on the website) Target: 75%	On-track	89.93% We continue to write/develop website content that is easy to understand following guidance set by UK Government digital standards.	90.37% We have a program of work underway to ensure that all website content is written in a user centred way and follows UK Gov and Welsh Gov digital standards	88% Change of reporting metrics has artificially lowered the content score, conflating Welsh language with English pages.	99.3% Our content scores have increased in line with our continued program of work around transforming our website content following user-centered design principles and content design standards set by both the WLGA and UK Government.	

Digital Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Core Network availability within core hours Target: 99.90%	On-track	99.9% Even though we migrated to a new platform in June, core networking services remained fully operational, and all other systems have operated within 99.9% tolerance in this reporting quarter.	99.97% Since migration, core networking services remained fully operational, and all other systems have operated withing 99.9% tolerance in this reporting quarter.	99.9% We've migrated off legacy infrastructure as part of the modernisation programme of work, updated some core networking components and introduced a further layer of protection within the intrusion detection systems.	99.9% Ongoing work introducing new core networking components, adding to the layers of protection within the	Performance & Resources
Mean time to resolve Cyber Incident investigations - Suspicious activity Target: 20 hours	On-track	Multiple attacks attempted against our VPN and core routing services. The perimeter and associated protective technology blocked and quarantined all attacks, maintaining complete system and network integrity. No further incidents reported.		Multiple attacks attempted against our VPN and core routing services, and phishing attempts across directorates. This quarter we tracked and resolved 33 cyber incidents, ranging from phishing to "risky sign in" attempts. The perimeter and associated protective technology blocked and quarantined all attacks, maintaining complete system and network integrity.		

Digital Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Percentage of all Digital Services Incidents resolved within 5 working days Target: 90% Note: We are currently working with our ITSM provider to enable reporting by incident priority to allow further performance analysis	On-track	91.3% The Service Desk managed a total of 5,334 incidents, of which 4,870 (91.3%) were resolved within 5 working days.	99.97% The Service Desk managed a total of 5,035 incidents, of which 4,718 (93.99%) were resolved within 5 working days.	90.2% The Service Desk handled a total of 7,403 incidents across the quarter, of which 6,678 (90.2%) were resolved within 5 working days. Given the reduction in Digital Operation posts as a result of budget cuts, we will closely monitor this metric to establish impact of reduced posts on service delivery.		Performance & Resources
Corporate website availability Target: 95% Note: The 0.1% differential for both quarters relates to a controlled maintenance window within core time. This is necessary, to ensure the hosting servers are fully secured, patched and compliant.	On-track	99.9% All component systems have operated within 99.9% tolerance.	99.9% Even though a hosting service was off-air for 30 mins, all remaining component systems have operated within 99.9% tolerance.	99.9% Umbraco cloud hosting and component systems have operated within 99.9% tolerance in this reporting quarter. The 0.1% differential relates to a controlled maintenance window within core time. This is necessary, to ensure the cloud hosting platform is fully secured, patched and compliant.		

Digital Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Digital Services staff satisfaction survey Target: 95%	On-track	95% Annual activity conducted in April. This year’s survey showed a slight reduction of 6% from 2023 this has been highlighted as staff wanting to be kept more informed and wanting more clarity on how their work delivers the new Digital Strategy. This is being addressed with a series of communications from the Chief Digital Officer and then continued throughout the year by the area heads and section managers.				Performance & Resources
NPT website Content score (Quality of content on the website) Target: 75%	On-track	89.93% We continue to write/develop website content that is easy to understand following guidance set by UK Government digital standards.	90.37% We have a program of work underway to ensure that all website content is written in a user centred way and follows UK Gov and Welsh Gov digital standards	No further update provided		
Data outputs in the form of data analysis, data visualisation, data linkage, data quality assessments and action plans.	On-track	completed an extensive data quality assessment and recommendations for the EIP team; provided social services with a list of demographic standards for various data elements and gave them a list to cleanse; data cleansing with street and address custodian, providing a file with discrepancies in address data to correct; carried out a data quality assessment of public health funerals data, with a data quality improvement plan and a view ready to be shared with the public	Activities include: Supporting significant reactive project to support Chief Executive undertake Sustainability Reviews (text analysis); analysed and reported on the DS staff survey; prepared reporting dashboards for social services as part of the new Social Care Case Management Platform; and developed a draft dashboard for address data quality and integration of CT and NNDR data with LLPG.	No further update provided		

Digital Services

Performance Measures	Annual Progress	2024/2025				Scrutiny Committee
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Service area satisfaction surveys Target: 80% Note: Continuously review how we are performing for our customers is showing overall good satisfaction for our performance.	On-track	100%	95%	No further update provided		Performance & Resources
Digital Services staff satisfaction survey Target: 95%	On-track	Annual activity conducted in April. This year’s survey showed a slight reduction of 6% from 2023 this has been highlighted as staff wanting to be kept more informed and wanting more clarity on how their work delivers the new Digital Strategy. This is being addressed with a series of communications from the Chief Digital Officer and then continued throughout the year by the area heads and section managers.				



LET'S TALK

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