

# Well-being Objective 1

*Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent*

## Key Challenges Identified for Action in 2024/25

- Implement plans to improve attendance and reduce exclusions to pre Covid levels, including addressing the reasons for exclusions
- Work with the River Centre to support its removal from an Estyn Category
- Work with Bryn Bach Primary School as part of its Estyn Follow Up
- Use ALN Data more effectively to inform long term planning
- Work to reduce the number of EHEs
- Work with Coleg Gwent to support pupils to perform at Key Stage 5
- Address the financial pressures within the education budget such as home to school transport and schools in deficit
- To develop one key project in each town placemaking plan with limited resources
- Work with the UK Competitiveness Index data to improve BGs standing for a second year.
- Continue to ensure the industrial portfolio is fit to let to local businesses
- Open Goldworks and begin to build entrepreneurship capabilities in BG
- Celebrate 10 years of the ASPIRE apprenticeship scheme
- Work to get the Hybrid Units on Lime Avenue operational
- Ensure the Local Development Plan delivery agreement is progressed,
- Address the current staffing capacity and projects that are reliant on grant funding, specifically SPF that ends in March 2025 with no foreseeable replacement
- Increase the number of apprenticeships, including Local Authority Apprenticeships



## Well- being Objective 2

*Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities*

### Key Challenges Identified for Action in 2024/25

- Implement actions to reduce the amount of residual [black bag] waste being collected and increase kerbside recycling with the aim of meeting the Welsh Government target of 70%. At quarter 1 in 2024/25 we are at 69.4%
- Work to address the number of fly tipping incidents across the borough and target 'hot spot' areas
- Work to identify how partners can support us in reaching Net Zero by 2030
- The carbon footprint associated with the Council's Commissioning and Procurement activities (Tonnes CO2) increased in 2023/24. Continue to work on this area by implementing the Greener Framework to support the Council to reach Net Zero.



## Well-being Objective 3

*Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient*

### Key Challenges Identified for Action in 2024/25

- The number of adults suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect and the number of adult safeguarding referrals has increased significantly
- Safeguarding performance shows a decline in the number of newly registered children that were visited within 10 days of being registered
- There is an increasing number of children on the Child Protection Register
- An increased number of Children Looked After are being placed outside of Wales which is difficult for the child and costly to the Local Authority
- Workforce stability is a risk for Social Services
- Address the current staffing capacity that is reliant on grant funding and the impact this may have
- Recruitment of adopters is an area of improvement needed for the service
- Implement actions from the Social Services Staff Survey and repeat the survey next year to assess progress
- Continue to deliver DFGs in private homes linked to available budget and demand
- Identifying the required funding to support people on housing benefit or universal benefit to prevent people from becoming homeless
- Preventing homelessness continues to be a challenge with the percentage becoming homeless increasing
- To aim for lowering the number of families that are placed in B&B - 15 families were placed in bed and breakfast accommodation in 2023/24, which has exceeded the target of 12
- reduction in the overall percentage of premises that are classed as broadly compliant with food hygiene requirement



## Well-being Objective 4

*An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services at the right time and in the right place*

### Key Challenges Identified for Action in 2024/25

- Prioritise the financial challenges being faced including budget pressures and service delivery requirements
- Identify budget saving proposals that address the budget shortfall and not rely on the use of reserves
- Work to complete the sign off of the 2022/23 and 2023/24 accounts and report these through Governance and Audit Committee.
- Address workforce recruitment across the Council and reduce the reliance on agency workers
- Further reduce the high levels of sickness absence
- Work with the Gwent Digital Exclusion Network to address the gap in resident's digital capabilities before moving services online
- Improve response rates to all FOIs received
- Improve response rates to all complaints received
- Manage the increase in Subject Access Requests being received
- Reduce the number of data breaches across the Council
- Respond to the Audit Wales Service User Perspective recommendations
- Implement the final actions from the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office Investigation

