**Ac****tions Identified to Support Future Improvement**

As a council we are looking to ‘Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent’. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following areas will require further development and improvement. In our next annual Self-Assessment, we will include detail of how we have progressed these actions throughout the 2023/24 year.

* Improve attendance and attainment rates and reduce school exclusions in both Primary and Secondary sectors;
* Focus on Higher levels of language acquisition and reading across the board, but particularly in our very young children in early years;
* Focus on improving the pace of change for Schools Causing Concern;
* Develop a vision and strategy for the future provision of ALN;
* Respond to the recommendations from the recent Estyn Inspection;
* Continue to monitor and improve on attainment levels;
* Focus on improving the pace of change for Schools Causing Concern (SCC);
* Increase capacity at Pen-Y-Cwm and River Centre and reduce out of county placements, in turn reducing annual financial loss;
* Monitor Home to school transport funding issues;
* Secure external funding for European Social Fund (ESF) programmes e.g. Inspire;
* Monitor closely school place and sufficiency of all schools, use data more effectively to inform long term planning;
* Continue to examine the opportunity for new industrial space across the borough;
* Supporting the community to gain the right skills for a changing world and build capacity for lifelong learning;
* Progress with the development of CiNER and Regain 2 to support growth and investment into the area; and
* Work to further improve our competitiveness across the UK.

As a council we are looking to ‘Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities’. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following areas will require further development and improvement. In our next annual Self-Assessment, we will include detail of how we have progressed these actions throughout the 2023/24 year.

* Our Climate group will work to prioritise key actions from the Decarbonisation plan in order to work towards achieving the Welsh Government Net Zero Targets of reaching a 63% reduction by 2030, an 89% reduction by 2050 and a 100% reduction by 2050;
* Continue to work towards the recommendations made by our climate assembly;
* Continue to support the national campaign to tackle Fly- Tipping (not up my street);
* Continue with the delivery of the Energy Prospectus to interest in energy development across the borough to facilitate a supply of renewable energy to meet the future energy needs of the area including consideration of wind and hydro generation projects; and
* Continue to work towards meeting the Welsh Government statutory recycling target 70% by 2024-25.

As a council we are looking to ‘Empower and support communities to be safe, independent and resilient’. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following areas will require further development and improvement. In our next annual Self-Assessment, we will include detail of how we have progressed these actions throughout the 2023/24 year.

* Re-establish and strengthen existing engagement networks as well as establish new opportunities for people to get involved;
* Ensure the Safe Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy 2020 – 2025 actions are regularly monitored, implemented and reviewed;
* Continue to implement the regional action plan to meet the needs identified within the population needs assessment;
* Take forward any learning from the outcome report requested by Care Inspectorate Wales on Public Law process;
* Ensure that preventative support is available for adults and their unpaid carers, that promote and maintain personal independence; and
* Provide support to those impacted by the cost of living crisis via actions identified by the Cost of Living Member and Officer Groups.

As a council we are looking to be ‘An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place’. Alongside the many achievements detailed throughout this report we recognise that the following areas will require further development and improvement. In our next annual Self-Assessment, we will include detail of how we have progressed these actions throughout the 2023/24 year.

* Gain a greater understanding of the barriers to access digital solutions within our communities and develop support for those who wish to improve their digital skills;
* Engage effectively across the organisation, with partners and key groups to develop the new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028;
* Progress the Engagement and Participation Strategy to ensure the voice of the community is considered when planning and decision making;
* Responding to the recommendations from the Welsh Language Commissioner;
* Further embed safeguarding arrangements across the whole Council;
* Progress the Workforce Strategy including consideration of recruitment and retention across the Directorates; and
* Work to reduce the sickness levels across the Council