

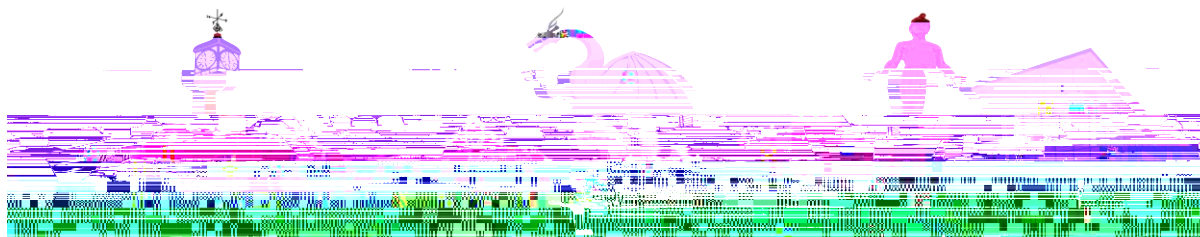


Through our previous self-assessment process, undertaken for the year 2022/23, we identified how well we were performing and what we could do better. In order to achieve this, we developed an action plan which highlights the areas where improvement was needed. The below table has been updated to show the progress made to achieve these actions throughout the year, with a summary of the work undertaken, any challenges that have arisen and our focus for the future. From evaluating our progress, we have set ourselves against Red, Amber, Green, Blue status which is aimed to give a clear snapshot of the progress we have made:

<b>BLUE</b> Action has been completed
<b>RED</b> Action is significantly behind target
<b>AMBER</b> Action is behind target but is manageable
<b>GREEN</b> Action is on target

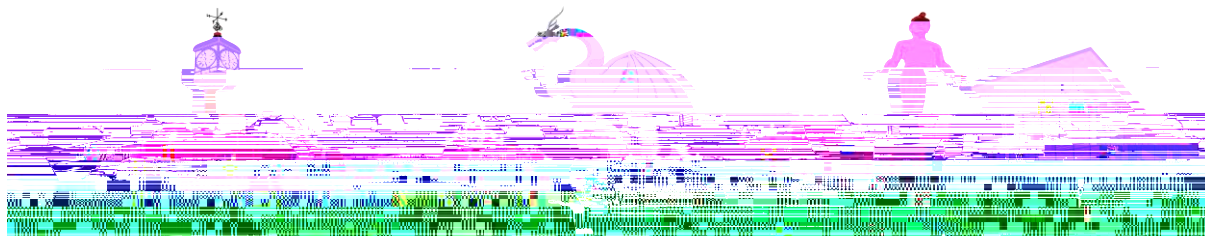


Capacity concerns across service areas	The Councils Workforce strategy 2021 – 2026 continues to be implemented across the organisation. Several key actions have been delivered as part of the Councils Workforce delivery plan which underpins the strategy. Most recent progress of the implementation of the workforce strategy can be found <a href="#">here</a>		
Uncertainty of the economic impact of: Covid-19; the exit from the European Union; and WG future financial settlements	The Council has embedded the changes to local government regulations and monitoring of resilience issues impacted by the European Union (Withdrawal) Act into business-as-usual activity when the exiting the EU transition period ended.		
Achievement of the 70% recycling target by 2024/25	The Council continues to exceed the Welsh Government statutory recycling target of 64%, with a recycling rate of 66.18% for 2023/2024. A new recycling target has been set of 70% for 2024/ 2025, working is ongoing to help reach this target including a food waste campaign and data analysis to determine what improvements need to be made to reach the 70% target. Regular meetings are held with the waste team which are specifically focused on reaching the target. If the council does not maintain and improves its recycling targets the Council will be imposed a financial penalty. If the current recycling rate of 66.18% remains the same in 2024/25 there are potential fines of £243,712 to be incurred by Blaenau Gwent.		

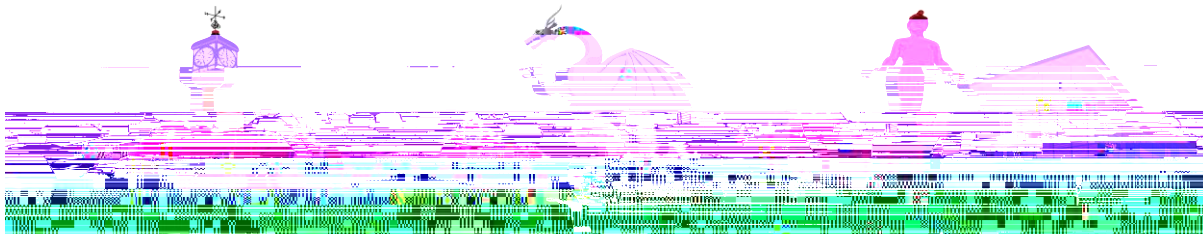




Higher levels of language acquisition and reading in our very young children in the early years is required

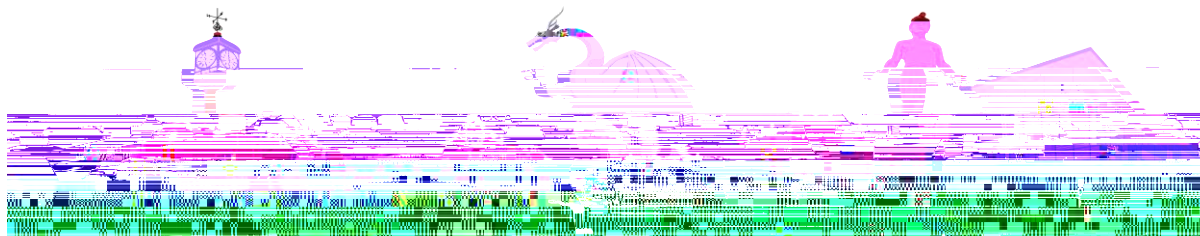


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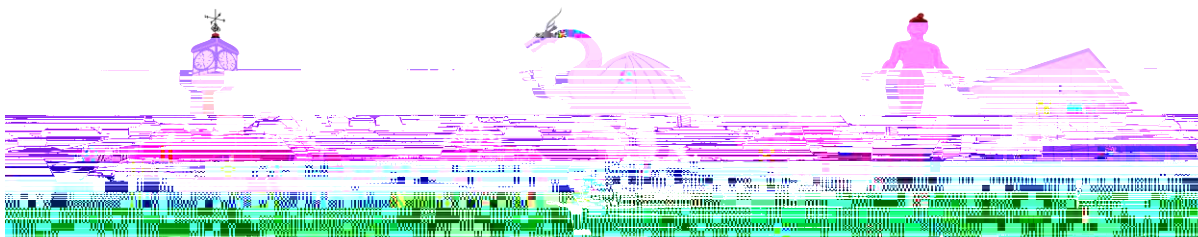
<p>Monitor closely school place and sufficiency of all schools, use data more effectively to inform long term planning.</p> <p>Supporting the community to gain the right skills for a changing world and build capacity for lifelong learning.</p>	<p>A number of our Secondary schools are experiencing sufficiency issues, for the September 2024 academic session, a catchment area review has been undertaken and a consultation is taking place during the autumn term to gain more understanding and to help alleviate some of these issues</p> <p>Utilised SPF funding to have a coordinated approach of delivery across the LA, upskilling and offering work placement opportunities to improve skills across a range of occupational sectors.</p> <p>Engaged with several partners to facilitate these opportunities, community and voluntary sector partners, education and BG CBC teams</p> <p>Engaged with business to determine future skill needs and adapted courses and training to upskill employed as well as econ</p>	<p>7</p>	







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.	Customer Services Strategy 2023-27 and Digital Transformation Strategy 2023-27 were reviewed to consider service delivery, including understanding access points across the Council and establishing what barriers people face. Our aim is to develop a culture that supports digital improvement, innovation and uses new technology. The Council is also responding to the Older People's Commissioner for Wales's 'Access Denied' report. A Digital Inclusion Officer is now in place who attends all our community hubs on a weekly basis to help residents get online.		
Provide support to those impacted by the cost-of-living crisis via actions identified by the Cost-of-Living Member and Officer Groups.	The cost of living group has continued to meet throughout 2023/24 and has implemented a number of actions to support those most in need. Moving forward, a review of this group is to be undertaken to consider merging it with the current Local Well-being Partnership.		
Engage effectively across the organisation, with partners and key groups to develop the new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.	The new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 was presented alongside the final Annual Report for the existing SEP. The plan was in April 2024. The annual reports progress was acknowledged and provides a good basis of the ongoing commitments in relation to Equality. The new SEP Delivery and Oversight Group was set up and has agreed Terms of Reference moving forward to monitor the progress of delivering the plan over the next four years. An internal and external Lived Experience Network has been established to reflect and capture people with protected characteristics experiences in working for and/or living in BGCBC.		
Respond to the recommendations from the Welsh Language Commissioner.	The Welsh Language Investigation action plan completed, and Welsh Language Commissioners Office (WLCO) correspondence received to agree conclusion of the investigation. CLT agreed proposal to re-brand the Core Group of Officers to ensure continuation of best practice in line with the Welsh Language Standards. Continuation of delivering Welsh Language forward work programme including a programme of Welsh Cul		





<p>Further embed safeguarding arrangements across the whole Council.</p>	<p>Work has been undertaken to implement safeguarding arrangements across the Council. As part of this, a review has been undertaken to consider how best to take this forward corporately, this approach is to be considered by CLT for implementation in 2024. Audit Wales intend to re assess safeguarding arrangements in Blaenau Gwent in late 2024.</p>		
<p>Progress the Workforce Strategy including consideration of recruitment and retention across the Directorates</p>	<p>The Councils Workforce strategy continues to be implemented across the organisation with several key actions delivered through the year. This includes a review of our Agile Working and Flexible Working policies, i800F45035&gt;20116013A2 ( )</p>		

