

# Annual Well-being Report

## 2020/21



Working For Cardiff, Working For You



## Leader's Introduction

The Annual Well-being report provides an evaluative assessment of the Council's performance for the financial year 2020/21.

In drawing conclusions about the performance of the organisation, we have drawn on a number of sources of intelligence to ensure a full and balanced assessment. This not only includes progress against the Council's Key Performance Indicators and Steps under each Well-being Objective, but also financial monitoring and risk information as well as surveys and citizen feedback.

The self-assessment process also draws on the assessment of the Council's wider political governance, reflecting the judgements of our Scrutiny and Audit Committees on a range of issues. A key test of any self-assessment is consistency with the judgement of external auditors and I believe that our self-assessment aligns with the findings of regulatory partners such as Audit Wales, Estyn, and Care Inspectorate Wales.

The recently adopted Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places significant emphasis on self-assessment and I believe, because of the arrangements we have in place, we are ahead of the game. Our maturing arrangements enable us to develop a balanced picture of the progress made over the previous year and identify areas of performance challenge which require further attention and focus over the months ahead.

By any measure, the last year has presented unique challenges for all public service partners. Faced with new, urgent and complex problems as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have seen joint working between the city's public services on an unprecedented level, with new partnership services created at scale and speed. Radical solutions requiring fundamental service redesign and reform – solutions often seen as long-term aspirations pre-pandemic – were identified, agreed and delivered in order to keep vulnerable people, residents and staff safe whilst preventing the spread of the virus.

In the past year, a highly effective, locally-led Test, Trace, Protect Service was established, playing an instrumental role in safeguarding public health, and Council buildings and staff have supported the delivery of the city's vaccination programme. Tens of thousands of food parcels were delivered to school children and our city's most vulnerable residents, and hotels repurposed so that nobody need sleep on our city's streets. The Council has also administered over £120 million in financial support to nearly 20,000 businesses over the course of the pandemic.

These achievements are testament to the extraordinary commitment of Council staff – and other public service colleagues – in responding to the crisis. Whilst a difficult and challenging time for everyone, staff have effectively risen to the challenge and continue to play a vital role in protecting our communities and keeping Cardiff safe.

Equally, good progress has been made in delivering our long-standing policy priorities. This includes delivering new schools, the ongoing delivery of one of the UK's most ambitious house-building programmes, continuing the shift in the balance of care and implementing a radical new approach to

tackling homelessness. We have also taken forward broader initiatives, such as encouraging employers across the city to pay the real Living Wage and progressing the city's low-carbon transition.

There are challenges too, however, and areas where we know we must do better. We recognise that more must be done to drive up recycling rates to achieve statutory targets, and the standard of cleanliness in some wards do not meet the high standards we have set for the city as a whole. We recognise there is a need for a continued focus on practice improvements across Children's Services, as well as the need to manage demand and cost pressures. Financial resilience remains an ongoing priority – over and above the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis, certain directorates continue to face long-standing and significant financial pressures. Furthermore, a targeted approach is needed to continue to improve sickness absence and staff wellbeing across the Council, with a need to understand the drivers of the productivity gains achieved during the pandemic. These areas will represent priorities for improvement over the year ahead.

This report also makes clear that the next phase of responding to the pandemic will involve addressing significant demand pressures across the Council. Covid-19 has brought significant economic hardship to bear on people and communities, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable in society. Unemployment has doubled since March 2021, and there has been over a 100% increase in Universal Credit applications. There has also been a significant increase in children on the Child Protection Register over the last 12 months, as well as children requiring a Care and Support Plan. The impact of social isolation on mental health has also placed significant demand for mental health and wellbeing support across all services. These are likely to be early indicators of the 'long-tail' of the pandemic, where the medium and long-term economic and social impact of Covid-19 will lead to demand and cost pressures.

Moving forward, a comprehensive recovery planning exercise was undertaken as part of the development of the Corporate Plan 2021-24, which contains priorities for service recovery over the medium term. We have also committed to a programme of 'city renewal', which sets out how the Council will work with city partners to lead a greener, fairer recovery. This is underpinned by a series of proposals that will support long-term renewal, which will represent delivery priorities over the year ahead.

As always, my thanks go to all Councillors, staff, partners and citizens who have helped deliver the achievements set out in this report. I would also like to extend particular thanks to members of the Audit and Scrutiny Committees, who continue to support the Council's performance and governance arrangements and have played a valuable role in informing this assessment of performance.

This report has provided an honest, fair and balanced assessment of the performance of the Council over the past year, and we will focus on the priorities identified in the year ahead.



**Cllr Huw Thomas**  
Leader of Cardiff Council

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## About this Report

The Council’s Corporate Plan – ‘Delivering Capital Ambition’ – translates the Administration’s political priorities into deliverable organisational objectives.

This Annual Well-being Report provides an end of year summary of the progress made in delivering the Corporate Plan.

### The Corporate Plan 2020-23 includes:

### The Annual Well-Being Report 2020/21 includes:

<p><b>Well-being Objectives:</b> These set out the outcomes the Council wants to achieve, which reflect the political priorities of the Administration and the aspirations shared with public service delivery partners. (Statutory Requirement)</p>	<p>A strategic assessment of each Well-being Objective and an analysis of progress.</p>
<p><b>Steps:</b> For each Well-being Objective, the Council identified a number of Steps that it would undertake to help achieve the Well-being Objective. (Statutory Requirement)</p>	<p>An appendix which provides a detailed update against each Step.</p>
<p><b>Key Performance Indicators:</b> The Council identified a number of indicators to support and give an indication of progress throughout the year against each Well-being Objective.</p>	<p>An appendix which includes an update against each of the Key Performance Indicators.</p>
<p><b>Targets:</b> Where appropriate, targets against Key Performance Indicators are set to indicate the desired level of performance.</p>	<p>A clear indication of whether targets have been met.</p>
<p><b>RAG ratings:</b> Key Performance Indicators are assigned a RAG rating within a set tolerance level. Green is where the result is on or above target, Amber where the result is within 10% of target, and Red where the result is greater than 10% from the target.</p>	<p>A RAG assessment is provided for both Steps and Key Performance Indicators.</p>

It is important that the Annual Well-being Report is considered in the wider context of the Council’s corporate reporting landscape. Alongside the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Risk Report, the Annual Well-Being Report helps provides a rounded view of organisational performance.

The Annual Well-being Report will be presented for Cabinet and full Council approval in July 2021.

### We welcome your feedback on this report, please contact:

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E-mail: [performance@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:performance@cardiff.gov.uk)

## The Council at a Glance - Serving the City

Each year the Council delivers around 700 services to over 365,000 residents in 154,000 households, helping to support local communities and improve the lives of Cardiff residents. The services the Council delivers include:

- Schools and education
- Collecting bins
- Maintaining parks and cutting the grass
- Cleaning streets
- Providing services for older people and people with disabilities
- Managing housing stock
- Looking after children who are in care
- Maintaining roads and highways

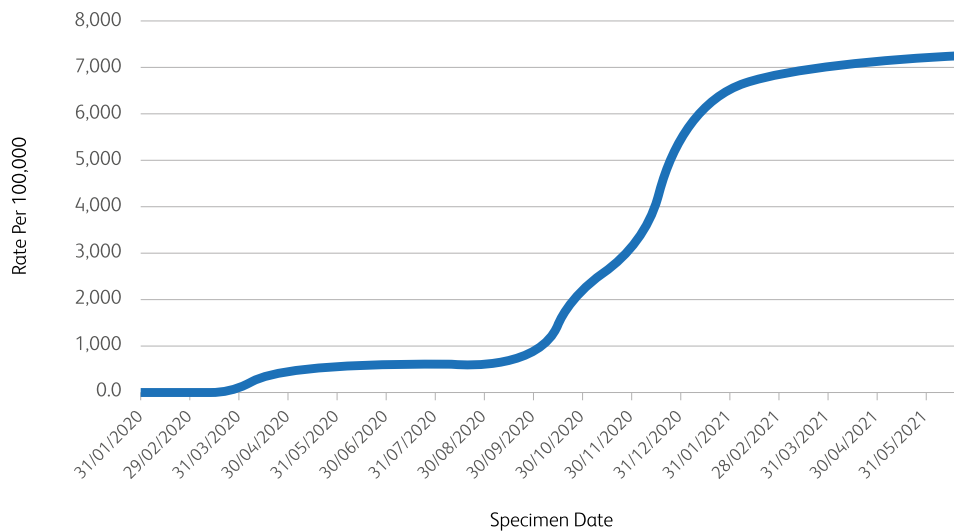


# Cardiff in 2020/21: Major Trends

## ■ The Impact of Covid-19 on Cardiff

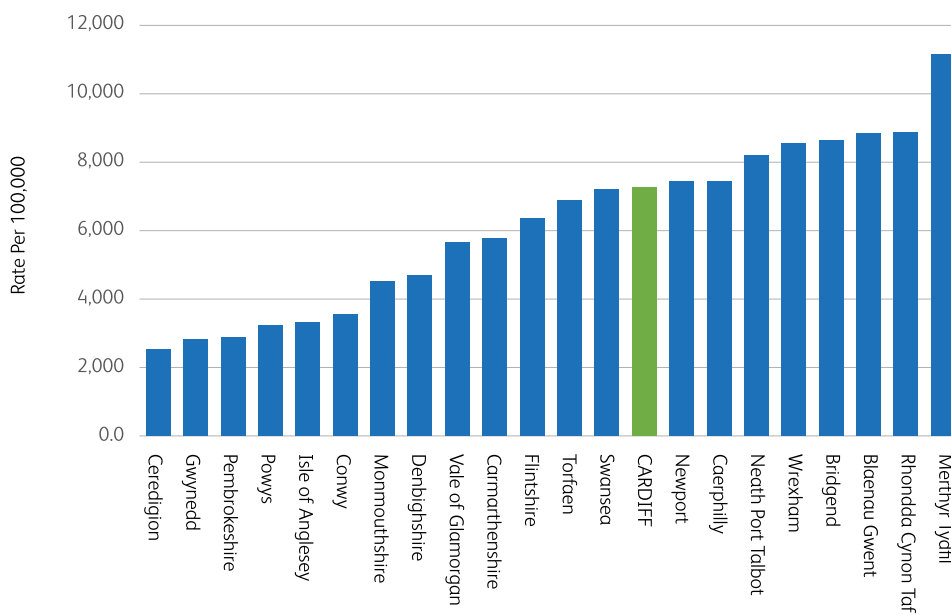
The Covid-19 pandemic has presented the greatest challenge to local public services in a generation. Alongside its partners, the Council led the response to the pandemic by working collectively to prevent the spread of the virus, reduce hospital admissions and ensure the health of the population.

On 22 June 2021, the cumulative number of Covid-19 cases in Cardiff reached 26,703. Figure 1 illustrates Cardiff's cumulative number of cases between 31 January 2020 and 22 June 2021.



**Figure 1:** Cumulative Covid-19 Cases in Cardiff (rate per 100,000) between 31 January 2020 and 22 June 2021

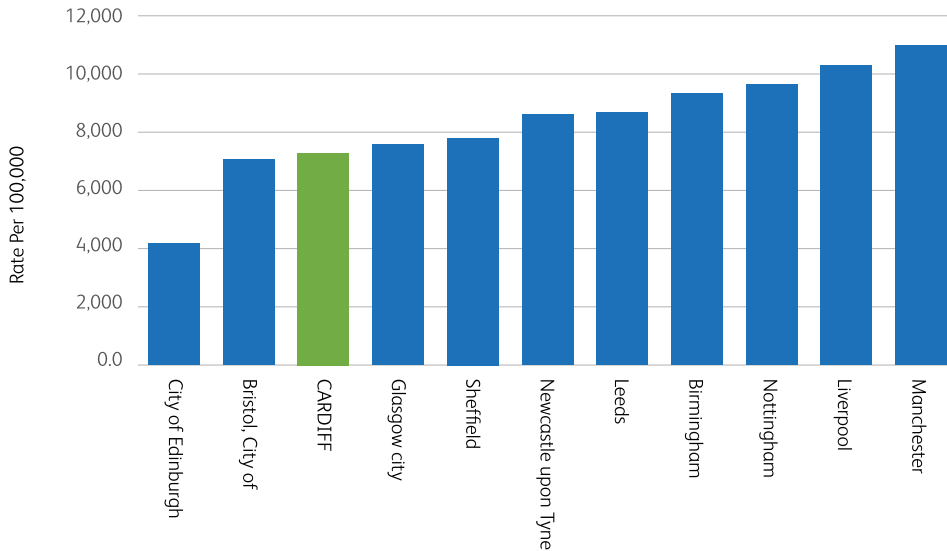
Figure 2 shows cumulative cases in Cardiff, to 22 June 2021, compared with other Welsh Local Authorities. Cardiff's relatively high position can be attributed, at least in part, to Cardiff's position as an urban local authority and its population density.



**Figure 2:** Total Covid-19 Cases in Welsh Local Authorities (rate per 100,000)



Nonetheless, it is clear that Cardiff has fared better than most Core Cities. When compared to Core Cities across the UK, Cardiff’s cumulative number of Covid-19 cases is low, with only Bristol and Edinburgh’s cases lower (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Total Covid-19 Cases in Core Cities (rate per 100,000) – Last updated 23 June 2021

Whilst the roll-out of the vaccination programme is proceeding at pace and levels of infection in the city are currently low as a result of lockdown, the pandemic will require ongoing management and measures will still need to be taken to control the spread of the virus and protect citizens. This includes preparing and responding to potential future waves, including the current third wave, and ensuring that hospital admissions remain as low as possible. As a region, there are processes in place to manage any variants and mutants of concern, in line with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidance, and international travellers, particularly those arriving from ‘red list’ or ‘amber list’ countries, are continuing to be monitored and managed.

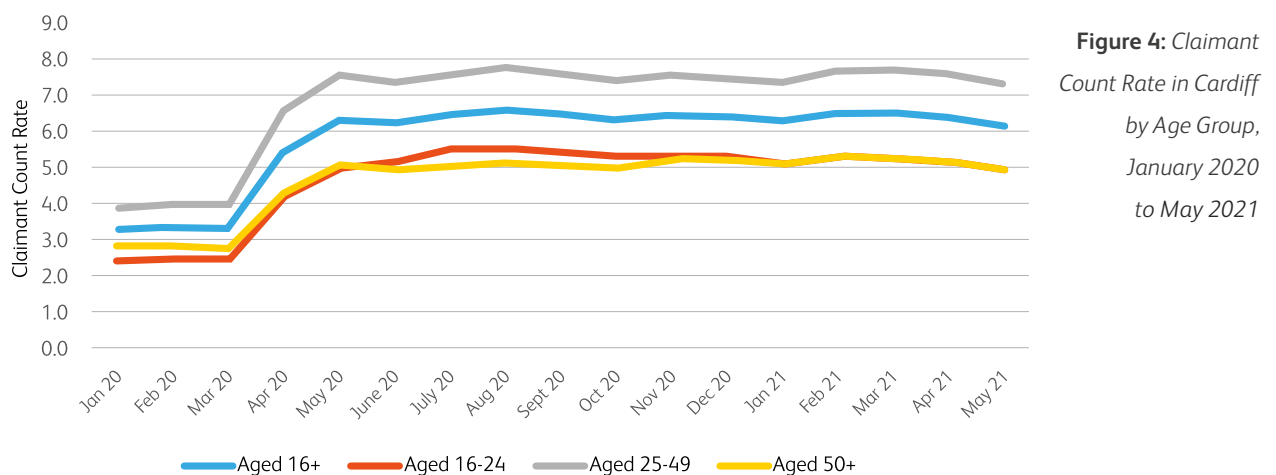


## ■ A Deepening Economic Crisis with Plans for Recovery

In parallel with the Covid-19 public health crisis, the UK is now facing an unprecedented economic crisis. The UK economy is facing the biggest contraction in three centuries, with the Office for Budget Responsibility projecting that unemployment will be over 50% higher in Cardiff for at least two years.

The economic impact of lockdown has led to young people and those in insecure work being at the greatest risk of unemployment, since the most affected sectors – hospitality, leisure and retail – are those that employ large proportions of young people. Whilst a high number of businesses have been able to furlough their employees through the UK Government’s Job Retention Scheme, with 20,000 of the city’s workforce on furlough at 31 March 2021<sup>1</sup>, the scheme is due to come to an end on 30 September 2021. This is within the context of unemployment already having doubled in the city.

The economic crisis can be anticipated to hit the poorest areas of Cardiff hardest, entrenching deprivation and increasing the gap in outcomes between communities in the city. Data from the Office for National Statistics (Figure 4) reveals a clear rise in people claiming unemployment benefits across all age groups since March 2020 and the onset of the pandemic.



In response to this crisis, the Council is working to reposition Cardiff as a thriving, inclusive and green economy in the post-Covid era. While the immediate priority is protecting existing jobs and businesses, new and accessible jobs will also need to be created – particularly for young people and those who have lost their jobs during the pandemic.

As part of a strong recovery, the Council will invest in major development projects that will create jobs in the green, foundational and high-value sectors, including the Indoor Arena, the Canal Quarter, a district heating network and low-carbon house building scheme. In addition to generating good-quality jobs in some of the most deprived communities, these developments must help accelerate the decarbonisation and renewal of the city. Furthermore, the Council remains committed to the ongoing development of Central Square, which will continue to play a key role in attracting the inward investment needed to create high-productivity jobs in the growing fintech, professional services and creative sectors. With further investment in Cardiff Central Station and the bus station soon to create a thriving regional transport hub at the heart of this Central Business District, Cardiff will continue to act as the economic engine of the city-region and the nation in the years to come.

<sup>1</sup> This is based on claims made by 14 May 2021.

## ■ Tackling Widening Inequalities

Across Wales, Covid-19 has hit more deprived communities hard, in terms of direct health outcomes and through bringing further economic hardship to bear, particularly on the poorest and most vulnerable in society. Unemployment has doubled, there has been over a 100% increase in Universal Credit applications and, ultimately, many more families have fallen into poverty.

Furthermore, the gap between rich and the poor in the city is too wide (Figure 5). For example, unemployment rates in Ely and Adamsdown are around five times higher than those in Lisvane. Differences in health outcomes are even more pronounced, with a healthy life expectancy gap of between 22 and 24 years between the most and least deprived communities, and premature death rates from key non-communicable diseases in Splott being around six times higher than in Thornhill.

Narrowing the inequality gap and creating more prosperous communities remains a central aim of Capital Ambition, as well as the Council's recovery and renewal strategies, with a programme of major policy initiatives designed to close the gap. This includes building new schools, driving up attainment standards for all learners and supporting young people into work. It also involves a radical new approach to tackling homelessness whilst taking forward the Council's ambitious house building programme. All of this will be supported by the Council's commitment to using its size and scale to deliver maximum social value, whilst taking forward broader initiatives such as encouraging employers across the city to pay the real Living Wage and progressing the city's low-carbon transition.

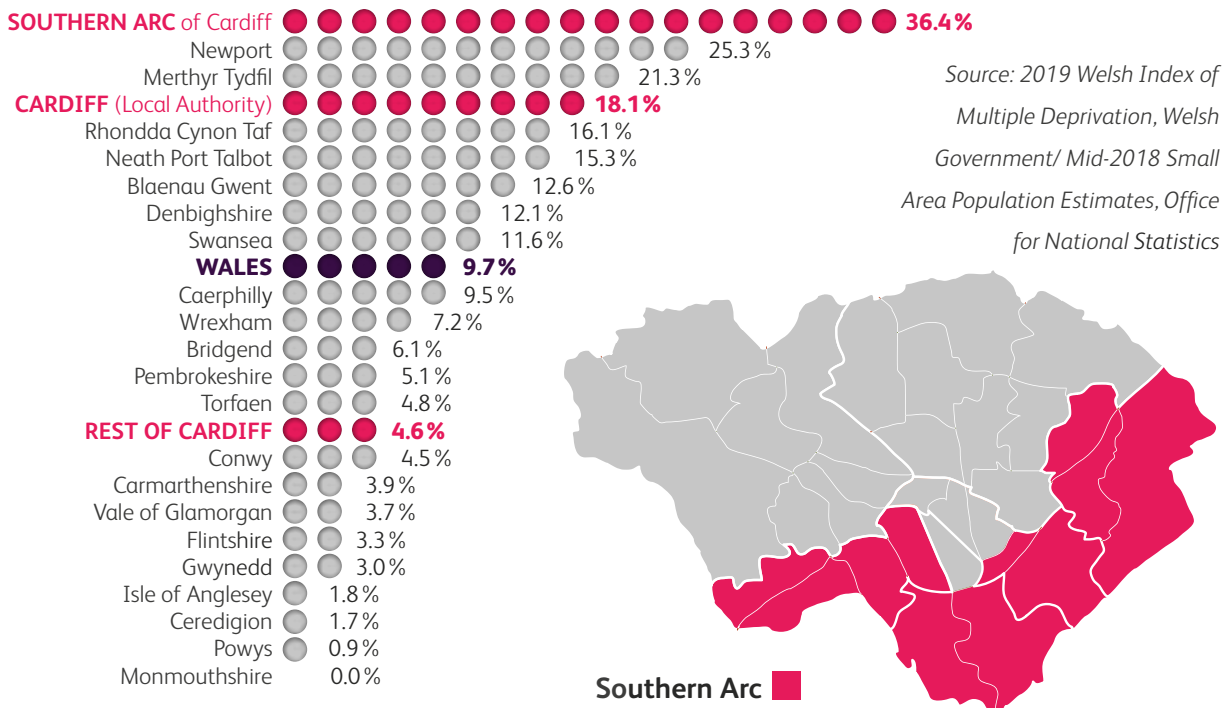


Figure 5: Percentage of Population Living in 10% Most Deprived Areas of Wales

## ■ Responding to the Climate Emergency

Notwithstanding the depth of the Covid-19 crisis, the Council has recognised that climate change remains the defining global challenge of our generation. The impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels, flood risk, extreme weather events, unsustainable energy supplies and ultimately, widespread economic instability, are putting tens of millions of people, and their jobs, across the globe at direct risk. These issues are already impacting the Cardiff area and its population.

The Council's Cabinet approved a draft One Planet Cardiff Strategy for consultation in October 2020 as a response to the Climate Emergency. This set out an ambition for the Council's operations to be carbon neutral by 2030, and to work with city-wide partners to develop a road map and action plan for a Carbon Neutral City by 2030.

The strategy identifies a wide range of opportunities that the city can utilise to stimulate a "green recovery" from Covid-19, reframing the Cardiff economy in a way that is resilient, robust and long-term. One Planet Cardiff is therefore a key delivery mechanism for the Council's recovery and renewal strategies; moving forward, the Council will lead a capital city that is at the forefront of a green and inclusive economy, supporting both environmental and economic recovery in Wales.

A final One Planet Cardiff strategy will be released towards the end of the year.

## ■ Financial Outlook

Major risks to the Council's budget position have emerged, not least the ongoing costs and lost income associated with responding to Covid-19, as well as the impact of the agreed Trade Deal with the European Union. These financial challenges follow a decade of austerity over which time the Council has closed a budget gap of almost a quarter of a billion pounds and seen the number of its non-school staff reduce by 22%.

[The Council's Budget Strategy for 2021/22](#), approved by Council in March 2021, included the most up-to-date Medium Term Financial Planning assumptions and suggested a budget gap cumulatively over the next four years of £85m (to 2025/26). There is a need therefore to continue to identify new opportunities for delivering efficiency; a significant driver for this must be transformation across services, especially where the benefits from new service delivery models post-pandemic can be maximised.



## ■ Engaging With Our Residents: Overall Citizen Satisfaction

In the most recent National Survey for Wales, undertaken in 2019/20, Cardiff was ranked as the top Local Authority in Wales when citizens were asked whether their Local Authority provided high-quality services. The National Survey for Wales is a large-scale survey of adults in Wales – involving around 12,000 people each year – covering a range of topics such as wellbeing and people’s views on public services. The study is run by the Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Local Authority	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
<b>Cardiff</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>
Gwynedd	57	22	21
Denbighshire	55	26	19
Rhondda Cynon Taf	54	20	25
Carmarthenshire	53	25	22
Conwy	52	25	23
Monmouthshire	52	19	29
Flintshire	51	19	30
Pembrokeshire	51	23	26
Torfaen	49	22	29
Isle of Anglesey	48	25	27
Neath Port Talbot	47	21	31
Vale of Glamorgan	46	28	26
Ceredigion	45	30	25
Caerphilly	44	25	31
Newport	44	24	32
Swansea	42	29	29
Merthyr Tydfil	37	23	39
Wrexham	34	30	36
Powys	34	29	36
Bridgend	34	23	43
Blaenau Gwent	29	21	51

Furthermore, each year the Council engages directly with Cardiff residents, via the Ask Cardiff Survey, to hear their views and [consult on a wide range of policies, plans and proposals](#) affecting the local community. **The annual Ask Cardiff survey provides people living and working in Cardiff the opportunity to share their experiences of public services.**

Results of the most recent Ask Cardiff survey, undertaken in 2020, **found that citizen satisfaction with Council services increased by almost 11%**, with 67.4% of residents stating that they were satisfied or very satisfied with Council services (Figure 6). Additionally, **86.1% of respondents described themselves as satisfied with Cardiff as a place to live.**

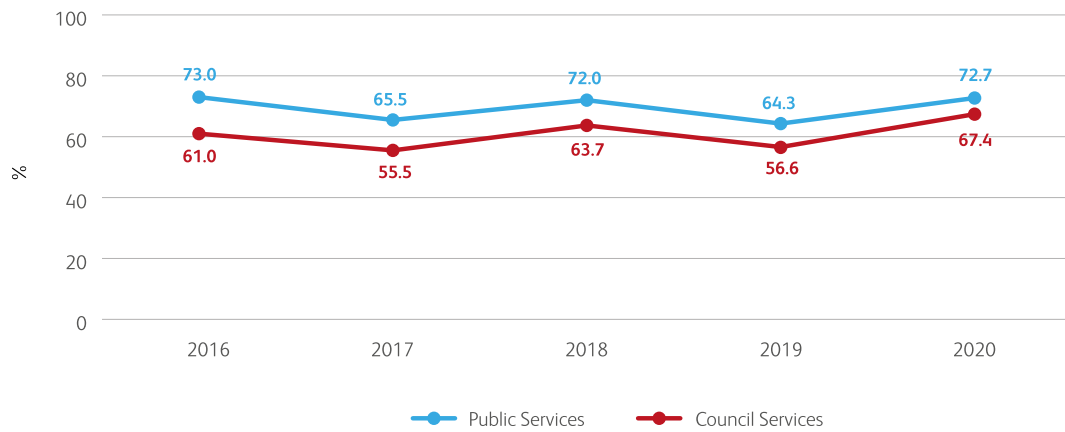


Figure 6: Citizen Satisfaction with Council and Public Services



## Review of Well-being Objectives

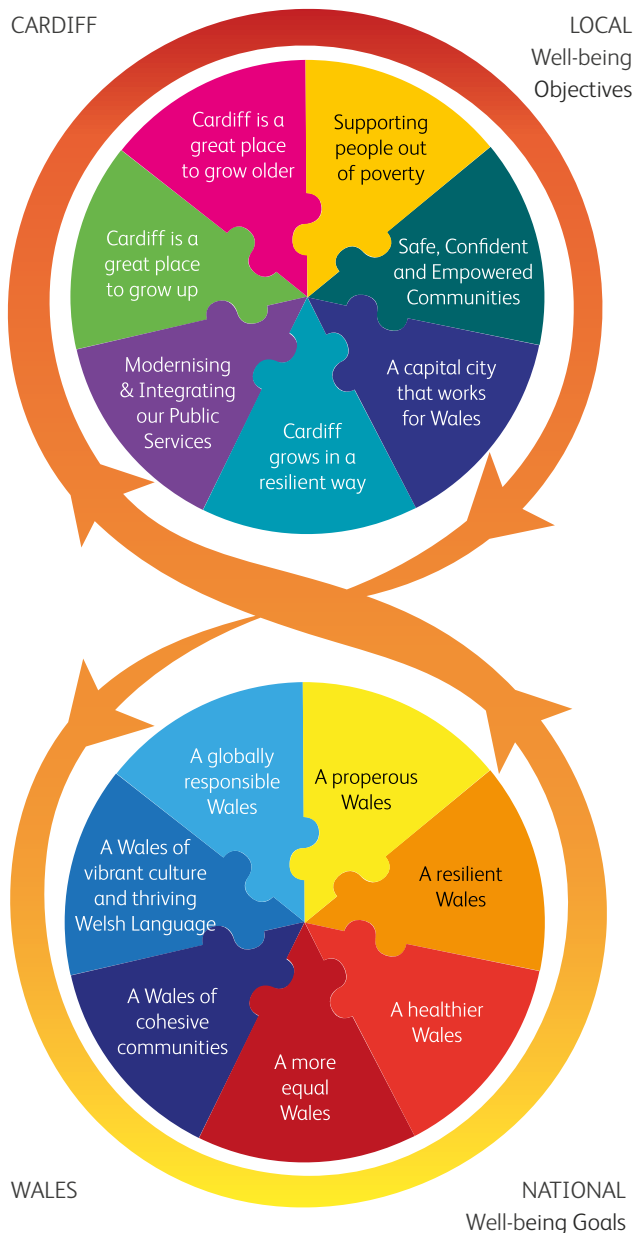
The Well-being Objectives are set following a self-assessment process undertaken by each directorate. As a result of this exercise a new Well-being Objective – Managing the Covid-19 Pandemic – has been adopted for 2021/22.

All reasonable Steps are being taken to meet the Objectives and our Objectives remain consistent with the Sustainable Development Principle.

## Contribution to National Well-being Goals

The Welsh Government has set out national Well-being Goals. Cardiff Council and the Cardiff Public Services Board have agreed local Well-being Objectives, which are complementary with the national Well-being Goals. In order to measure Cardiff’s progress towards achieving the seven Well-being Objectives, a series of high-level outcome indicators were selected which provide objective measures of the city’s performance.

Outcome indicators are high-level indicators which measure long-term trends. They provide an overview of the city’s performance, both over time and relative to other cities and Local Authorities. The trends they measure are difficult to influence directly and no single body or organisation can be held accountable for delivering them. Because both Cardiff Council and the Cardiff Public Services Board are working towards the same seven Well-being Objectives, it was agreed that the Council and the Public Services Board should adopt a complementary set of indicators when measuring progress against the Well-being Objectives.



## ■ How We Self-Assess our Well-being Objectives

The Council uses a number of sources of information to assess progress against Well-being Objectives, including:

- **Progress against the Council's Key Performance Indicators** – A number of performance indicators are identified within the Council's Corporate Plan which help show the progress made in delivering the Well-being Objectives. Where applicable, targets are set against these performance indicators to demonstrate the desired level of achievement. Performance indicators are assigned a RAG status: **Green** where the indicator is on or above target, **Amber** where the result is within 10% of the target and **Red** where the result is greater than 10% from the target.
- **Progress against the Steps in each Well-being Objective** – The Council included a number of Steps in the Corporate Plan to help achieve the Well-being Objectives. Monitoring the progress of these Steps provides an understanding of what has been achieved and where further work is required.
- **Inspection Reports** – The Council is subject to a number of inspections from regulatory bodies including Audit Wales, Estyn (Education) and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Their findings help the Council to assess areas of strong performance, as well as identifying areas that require improvement.
- **Surveys and Citizen Feedback** – The annual [Ask Cardiff survey](#), as well as more specific consultation and engagement work, provide residents an opportunity to share their views on a wide range of the Council's services. From this, areas of strong performance can be identified, along with those areas where Cardiff's citizens feel the Council needs to improve. Similarly, complaints and compliments provide a valuable source of information on performance. The Annual Well-being Report is normally considered by Cabinet alongside the Annual Complaints Report; however due to staff re-deployment, the Complaints Report will be considered later this year.
- **Finance Monitoring** – The Council's [Outturn Report 2020/21](#) serves to inform of the Council's financial position in respect of the year ending 31 March 2021.
- **Feedback from Scrutiny Committees and Audit Committee** – The Council responds to the issues raised and recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committees, which help inform performance improvement.
- **Risk** – The Council's Corporate and Directorate Risks are considered as part of a rounded view of performance.

Reviewing this information assists the Council to develop a balanced picture of the Council's improvement journey over the year. By utilising this information, the Council can identify areas of improvement and celebrate success, and also identify areas where performance may not have been as good, and therefore the areas that may require further attention.



# Meeting the Challenges of Covid-19

## ■ Context

The emergence of Covid-19 in 2020 represented an unprecedented challenge for the Local Authority and its public service partners, affecting almost every aspect of service delivery. The Council and its partners have led the response to the pandemic, preventing the spread of the virus whilst ensuring the continued delivery of key frontline services and the protection of the city's most vulnerable people.

Though the pandemic will still require ongoing management and measures will still need to be taken to control the spread of the virus and protect citizens, in particular responding to any variants of concern, the Council is now looking towards 2021 as a year of recovery and renewal.

## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

### Convening a city-wide response to the pandemic

- **Strengthened Partnership Working:** Delivery arrangements across Cardiff have been characterised by an unprecedented level of partnership working, with the Council convening a coalition of public, private and third sector partners to deliver a city-wide response to the crisis. Staff were moved quickly across the public service system to where they were needed most urgently, and new partnership governance arrangements were put in place, under the leadership of the Cardiff Public Services Board (PSB), chaired by the Leader of the Council, to enable rapid and robust decision-making.

### Delivering an effective Test, Trace, Protect Service

- **Establishing a new Test, Trace, Protect Service:** The Council was instrumental in the creation of the city's Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) Service, as well as the national TTP system. At the height of the pandemic, over 400 staff worked remotely for the service, all of whom received training. 151,513 tests were undertaken in Cardiff in 2020 and between June 2020 and January 2021, around 30,000 index cases and 50,000 contacts were managed. This work will continue, as Welsh Government have extended funding for the service until March 2022. TTP will be embedded as an ongoing service for as long as it remains necessary.
- **Providing "Overflow" Support across Wales:** Such was the success of the Cardiff TTP Service that Welsh Government requested that Cardiff Council be the hosting body for a National TTP Team, providing "overflow" support to regions across Wales when demand exceeds capacity.
- **Monitoring the Spread of the Virus:** To monitor the spread of the virus, a population-level surveillance dashboard was created to provide regular updates on a set of Covid-related indicators, and a mapping tool was also developed to geographically visualise new cases and potential clusters, guiding daily decision-making on how to respond.

- **Effective Communication and Engagement:** The success of the TTP Service has been dependent upon the effectiveness of communication and engagement, with residents continually provided with the latest and most accurate information. Targeted engagement work has been undertaken to effectively engage with hard-to-reach communities. An Ethnic Minority Covid-19 Operations Sub-group has also been established, as well as a communications and engagement strategy.

### Supporting the delivery of a Mass Vaccination Programme

- **Supporting the Immunisation of All Residents:** A Mass Vaccination Programme was established, with the Council providing support by making use of its buildings, staff and communications and community networks to support the immunisation of all residents.

### Embedding robust health and safety practices across all council buildings and in service delivery

- **Keeping Vulnerable People, Residents and Staff Safe:** In response to the extraordinary challenges presented by Covid-19, radical solutions requiring fundamental service redesign and reform were realised by the Council in order to keep vulnerable people, residents and staff safe whilst preventing the spread of the virus. This relied on the allocation of resources and staffing across the system to where they were needed most urgently, with new partnership governance arrangements established to enable rapid and robust decision-making.
- **Robust Health and Safety Arrangements:** Covid-specific health and safety arrangements were established at pace and scale, in accordance with advice and guidance issued by Public Health Wales and UK/ Welsh Government. The Council's health and safety methodology includes:
  - » Safe Premises – subjecting all council premises to an assessment, which applies a corporate template to achieve physical distancing.
  - » Safe Services – requiring all service areas to complete a risk assessment and checklist, which highlights risk in relation to interaction with the public, colleagues, contractors, as well as use of equipment and travel in work.

### Ensuring the availability of appropriate PPE to protect staff, service users and residents

- **Ensuring the Safe and Effective Delivery of Services:** The safety and wellbeing of staff, service users and residents has remained a foremost consideration for the Council, with the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided to ensure that services are delivered safely and effectively. Between March 2020 and March 2021, the Council issued 36,933,176 pieces of PPE to staff, schools, social care providers, unpaid carers, as well as private companies.
- **Securing a Resilient Pipeline of PPE Supply:** Moving forward, the Council's procurement team have secured a resilient pipeline of PPE supply through its partnership with Welsh Government, the NHS and its own contractual arrangements.

## Enforcing compliance effectively through Shared Regulatory Services

- **Minimising the Risk of Exposure to Coronavirus:** The Council, through Shared Regulatory Services, has worked to ensure that measures are taken to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus at workplaces and other premises that are open. This has involved rapidly adapting to new responsibilities under the Coronavirus Regulations.
- **Ensuring Regulatory Compliance:** Between April 2020 and March 2021, 1,229 visits were made to businesses to check compliance with regulations in respect of social distancing and business closures. Additionally, 6,429 businesses, premises and individuals were proactively advised of how to operate safely and comply with the Coronavirus Regulations.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

- **Looking to the future, the continued management of the pandemic will require the same level of partnership commitment and action.** In the immediate term, this will include:
  - » The continuation of the TTP Service, with Cardiff Council hosting the national surge team for Wales.
  - » The continued roll-out of the Mass Vaccination Programme, including the potential for further booster shots in the autumn.
  - » The critical role of responding to increased international travel and any outbreaks of 'variants of concern'.
- **It remains likely that for the remainder of 2021 and perhaps beyond, council services will have to continue to operate with some social distancing measures in place. These restrictions will continue to significantly disrupt the delivery model for a limited number of services,** notably face-to-face services and those in the leisure, culture and visitor economies. For each of these services, recovery plans have been developed to put the service back on a sustainable footing.
- **The Covid-19 pandemic has had, and will continue to have, significant financial impacts on the Council, with additional costs incurred as well as income lost due to the closure of the Council's cultural and supporting venues.** Throughout the pandemic, the financial implications of the Council's actions to support the city through the crisis and to deliver services safely have been closely monitored. At the end of December 2020, the Council's accepted and pending claims to Welsh Government's Covid Hardship Fund totalled over £37 million in respect of expenditure and over £30 million in respect of income. Known budget hotspots, particularly in areas which will see increased demand as a result of the pandemic or those reliant on income streams impacted by the pandemic, will receive targeted intervention to support service recovery over the course of 2021.

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

- **Ongoing Pandemic Management:** In 2021/22 the Council will continue to:
  - » Support the delivery of a Mass Vaccination Programme, including any booster shots.
  - » Deliver an effective Test, Trace, Protect Service.
  - » Embed robust health and safety practices across all Council buildings and in service delivery.
  - » Ensure the availability of appropriate PPE to protect staff, service users and residents.
  - » Robustly monitor the financial implications of the Council's actions to support the city through the pandemic, including both additional costs and income losses, with appropriate claims submitted to Welsh Government.
  - » Enforce compliance effectively through Shared Regulatory Services.
  - » Continue to support delivery of the national, all-Wales [Coronavirus Control Plan](#), as well as the [Cardiff and Vale Covid-19 Prevention and Response Plan](#).
- **Partnership Governance Arrangements:** To ensure that the city's public service partnership governance arrangements are fit for purpose for meeting the complex multi-agency challenges that the city's public services will face over the coming years, partnership governance arrangements supporting the Cardiff Public Services Board (PSB) will be reviewed and refreshed. Furthermore, given the challenges presented by the pandemic and the wider existing health inequalities between communities in Cardiff, the Council will explore with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board a new approach to joint working on public health matters.
- **Recovery and Renewal:** The Council recognises the long-term recovery challenges and will continue to use the 'Restart, Recover, Renew'<sup>1</sup> framework, approved by Cabinet in June 2020, to guide its planning for restarting services and for identifying medium and longer-term priorities for recovery and renewal. A comprehensive recovery planning exercise was undertaken as part of the development of the Corporate Plan 2021-24<sup>2</sup>, which contains priorities for service recovery over the medium term and was approved by Council in March 2021.

Looking to the longer term, it is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic will lead to significant shifts in the way in which people live, work and travel, and will create new challenges and opportunities for the city economy and for local public services. This is alongside existing, pre-pandemic, challenges.

To begin this process, four 'Recovery and Renewal' reports were commissioned to consider how the pandemic has impacted life in the city and to identify a series of proposals that could underpin long-term renewal – addressing both new and ongoing challenges:

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<sup>1</sup> [Restart, Recover, Renew: Next Steps for Cardiff during the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Cardiff Council Corporate Plan 2021-24](#)

1. [Organisational Recovery and Renewal](#)
2. [Greener, Fairer, Stronger: City Recovery and Renewal](#)
3. [Delivering a Child Friendly Recovery](#)
4. [A One Planet Recovery](#)

These reports were presented to and approved by Cabinet in May 2021.



# Well-being Objective 1: Cardiff is a great place to grow up

Since March 2020, and the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, children and young people have encountered major change, with the restrictions adopted to prevent the spread of the virus leading to lost learning, isolation and mental health challenges for many.

Throughout the course of the pandemic, the Council has worked with schools and partners to make sure that as much support as possible has been available to all children and young people to keep them safe and to ensure that learning can continue, with additional support for vulnerable children and those from more deprived communities, who have been disproportionately impacted.

Whilst the Council continues to respond to these immediate challenges, focus has been maintained on medium-to-longer-term ambitions as set out in the Cardiff 2030 vision for education and learning. It is crucial that the Council drives forward commitments to making rights a reality for all and to ensuring that all children and young people in Cardiff experience high-quality education and are able to grow as happy, safe and resilient individuals.

## **Our priorities in 2020/21 were:**

- Ensure all children and young people in Cardiff experience high-quality education
- Support young people into employment
- Support vulnerable children and families

## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

### Ensure all children and young people in Cardiff experience high-quality education

- **Continuity of Learning during the Pandemic:** The Council has ensured continuity of learning for children and young people whilst schools have been closed as a result of the pandemic, with Cardiff's support for children and young people identified as an area of strength by Estyn.
- **Rapid Adaption of Schools:** Provision for vulnerable learners and the children of key workers has been maintained throughout the pandemic, with schools quickly adapting into Covid-safe spaces for learners and staff. This has included the development of hub schools, continued free school meal provision and summer holiday support programmes.
- **Provision of Digital Devices:** In support of the blended learning approach, the Council ensured that learners were provided with the digital devices needed to continue their learning. This work has involved the rapid distribution of over 20,000 digital devices, alongside 2,500 new 4G broadband devices, to schools since March 2020.
- **Safely Re-opening Schools:** The Council worked to ensure the safe re-opening of schools following periods of lockdown. Communication between the Local Authority, schools, other Directorates and Health partners has been incredibly positive, with support provided to schools regarding Covid-19 restrictions, protocols for managing confirmed cases, testing, risk assessments and parental concerns.
- **New Assessment Processes:** Support was provided to schools and learners following the cancellation of exams in the 2019/20 academic year, including developing and implementing new processes for Centre Assessment and changes to qualification arrangements in 2020/21.
- **Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform:** Good progress has been achieved in the implementation of ALN reform, with 97% of schools rated Very Good or Strong in relation to strategic preparedness for ALN Reform, compared with a regional average of 85%.
- **School Improvements:** St Illtyd's, Pontprennau and Ton-Yr-Ywen Primary Schools were removed from Estyn follow up in 2020/21.
- **Enhancing the School Estate:** Schemes under Band B of the School Organisation Programme are being progressed, including Fitzalan High School, Willows High School, Doyle Avenue and St Mary the Virgin. A new approach for new school buildings has been developed, including net zero carbon standards in line with the One Planet Cardiff Strategy. Furthermore, asset renewal spend has increased significantly, from £7.5m in 2018/19 to £13.9m in 2020/21, to improve the overall condition of the school estate.

## Support young people into employment

- **Supporting School Leavers:** Extensive work was undertaken by the Council's Youth Service to assist school leavers with their transition from statutory education in the summer of 2020. Despite the extraordinary challenges of the year, the Youth Service maintained progress in supporting learners into education, employment or training (EET), with Cardiff's EET figure at 97.6% in the 2019/20 academic year: 92% for learners in Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) and 84% for Children Looked After. Enhanced tracking systems have been put in place for the 2020/21 academic year, including additional youth mentor support.
- **Progression Opportunities for Young People:** Council teams, schools and wider Cardiff Commitment partners are continuing to work together to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on progression pathways for young people. Apprenticeships, traineeships, Kickstart places and alternative pathways for vulnerable groups are being offered and opportunities to extend these will continue to be explored.
- **Work Experience Opportunities:** 'Experiences of Work' pilots were supported in three secondary schools and 'Open your Eyes' week and activities to inspire children and young people have continued virtually.
- **Supporting Care-Experienced Young People into Education, Employment and Training:** Bright Futures, the Council's scheme to help care-experienced young people into education, employment or training, continued to operate during the pandemic. During 2020/21, Bright Futures supported 25.8% of care leavers by assisting 49 young people into employment; 39 into education; 47 into training and 18 into a Bright Start work placement.

## Support vulnerable children and families

- **Utilising Technology to Maintain Contact during the Pandemic:** In responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, Children's Services utilised technology to enable virtual contact to be maintained with children, families, colleagues and partners. Results from a survey showed that 70% of families were positive about the virtual experience, with 45% reporting that the pandemic has had a positive impact on their working relationship with Children's Services.
- **Supporting Learners with Complex Disabilities and Medical Needs during the Pandemic:** The Local Authority worked collaboratively with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board to establish a multi-agency group with professionals from Health, Education and Children's Services to support learners with complex disabilities and medical needs during the pandemic. This will be built on post-pandemic to continue to improve multi-agency working, for example through the Joint Vulnerable Learners Panel.
- **A Child Friendly Recovery:** The Local Authority has set out a plan for a Child Friendly Recovery as part of the Capital Ambition: Recovery and Renewal Programme. This has been developed with children and young people at its heart and outlines plans for greater partnership working across various council services and with partners.
- **Co-locating Services in Secondary School Clusters:** In addition to the collaboration that achieves the 'Team around the Family' approach in Cardiff, the Council is also exploring 'Team in the School' –



the co-location of services in secondary school clusters. Pilot locality working is already underway with Cardiff West Community High School, with one of the Children's Locality teams working closely with the school to great success.

- **Supporting Children with Multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences:** A pilot for resilience workers is also in place, in partnership with University Hospital of Wales, to build capacity for schools to address the numbers of children affected by multiple adverse childhood experiences.
- **Supporting Young People's Emotional and Mental Health:** The Youth Service have delivered a range of programmes to support emotional and mental health for young people, including the delivery of independent living skills, street-based youth work and a homelessness prevention offer.
- **Developing a Corporate Parenting Strategy:** The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-24 has been agreed and signed off by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. The Strategy clearly outlines the multi-agency approach to ensuring Children Looked After achieve their potential in education and beyond.
- **Successfully Recruiting Foster Carers:** The successful recruitment of foster carers continues, with 104 carers providing 194 places at 31 March 2021 compared with 90 carers providing 172 placements at 31 March 2020. A further 23 full assessments were ongoing at 31 March 2021.
- **Developing a New Multi-disciplinary Assessment Centre:** Falconwood House, a four-bed home for use by up to three young people at a time, is being developed as the Council's new short-term assessment provision. The provision is designed to provide multi-disciplinary assessment and support over the course of a young person's ten-week residence at the home, to ensure that the young person's next move, whether back home to family or onto a new placement, is as suitable as possible for their needs and wellbeing.
- **Quality Assurance Framework:** A Quality Assurance Framework has been developed and a lead officer is in post to lead on a review of Children's Services. In addition to this, a Practice Development Group has been established to improve engagement with staff and enable the workforce to contribute to improvements in practice.
- **Continuing Services for Young Carers:** Services to young carers have continued throughout the pandemic. Pathways are in place and operating well; a permanent specialist social worker has been recruited and is in post and the YMCA have been commissioned to deliver services to support young carers. Cardiff has also agreed to be an early adopter of the national identification card for young carers, enabling young carers to get the support and recognition they need.
- **A Journey of Improvement:** A risk-based inspection of Social Services in late 2020 noted that Senior Managers and Lead Members have introduced a new culture of raised expectation and standards, with Cabinet leads for both Adult and Children's Services well-informed, understanding of the changes required and focused on improving outcomes for people. Furthermore, the inspection noted that the Local Authority is working hard with all stakeholders to support the safety and wellbeing of people who use and work in services, with operational and strategic partnerships working well to help people achieve their wellbeing outcomes.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

### Education

- **Maintaining a Safe Learning Environment for Pupils and Staff:** As the pandemic continues, it is crucial that a safe learning environment is maintained for pupils and staff, in partnership with Health and Safety and Public Health Wales. This includes managing confirmed cases, risk assessments, testing and preparing for possible future waves of the pandemic.
- **Supporting an Integrated Approach to Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing:** Many children and families will have experienced significant emotional distress as a result of the pandemic, through isolation, reduced access to services, bereavement and money worries. Supporting an integrated approach to mental health and emotional wellbeing is crucial as children return to education, particularly for vulnerable young people, for which the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact.
- **Supporting School Leavers:** It is crucial that the Council ensures positive destinations for all young people transitioning and leaving school post-16, including Education Otherwise than at School (EOTAS) and Children Looked After. The economic impact of the pandemic has affected future pathways into employment for school leavers and there is risk of drop-out from further and higher education.
- **New Accountability and Assessment Arrangements:** Changing accountability and assessment arrangements, including the cancellation of exams (in 2019/20 and 2020/21) and data collections, as well as the suspension of Estyn inspections, has resulted in a lack of consistent key performance information at a national level to support performance and evaluation. Schools have been, and will continue to be, supported to implement new approaches for Centre Determined Grades.
- **Continuing to Progress Improvement and Reform:** Despite the pandemic, it is crucial that the Council continues to progress national reforms, including the Curriculum for Wales 2022-2026 and the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) reform. It is also crucial that the Council continues to secure improvements in all of Cardiff's schools and ensures that sustainable leadership is in place.
- **School Organisation Programme:** The pandemic has resulted in delays to the delivery of schemes in the Band B Programme. There has also been a need to give consideration to a decline in city-wide birth rates and therefore potential changes to priorities/ the order of individual investment schemes. The pace of delivery will need to be increased to enable the Band C Programme to commence.
- **Asset Management Programme:** The scale of priority condition works in the Asset Management Programme has increased as part of suitability requirements and provision for Additional Learning Needs, totalling £23.6 million.
- **Sufficiency of School Places:** Consideration needs to be given to the sufficiency of school places, particularly at secondary level and in certain parts of the city. There is also an acute need for ALN provision, in particular emotional health and wellbeing, as well as the expansion of Welsh-medium provision, in line with Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 targets.

## Children's Social Services

- **Restarting Services:** The Council and its partners offer a broad range of support services, many of which, especially preventative services, have been withdrawn or very limited over the last year due to Covid-19 restrictions. Whilst virtual services and some face-to-face provision has been enabled in the highest risk scenarios, normal services have been challenging to maintain in lockdown phases. As the city begins to re-open, it is imperative that all Council support services are fully restarted and work is undertaken with partners to re-instate the services required by the most vulnerable children, young people and families.
- **Increased Demand and Budgetary Pressure:** Demand has increased for specialist services over the past 12 months, placing budgetary pressure in Social Services and across a number of Council services. This includes:
  - » An increase in referrals to the Council's front door to children services: the Family Gateway service saw an increase of 15.5% (from 4,256 to 4,917) and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub saw a 9.1% increase (from 19,276 to 21,023).
  - » An 81.4% increase in children on the Child Protection Register (from 253 to 459) over the last 12 months.
  - » A 22.6% increase in children open to Children's Services requiring a Care and Support Plan (from 1,819 to 2,231).
  - » A 3.9% increase in the numbers of Children Looked After (from 955 to 992).

The end of Welsh Government Covid-19 funding poses a major risk to the sustainability of services beyond this year.

- **Emotional and Mental Health Issues:** Coinciding with the reopening of schools following the latest lockdown, there has been a significant rise in children and young people presenting with emotional and mental health issues, with a rise in in-patient admissions and referrals to both Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Children's Services. There are plans in place to reduce the length of time children and young people wait for a first assessment and work with third sector organisations to provide support to children who are waiting for CAMHS intervention.
- **Children Placed for Adoption:** Despite the pandemic, the Council continued to ensure that children were placed for adoption. However, the percentage of children with a Placement Order not placed for adoption within 12 months of the order remains high – at 50.8% in March 2021, against a target of 25%. A process is now in place that enables the assessment of children's needs prior to placement for adoption, six months following placement for adoption and prior to the making of an adoption order, and work is ongoing to improve the timeliness of the adoption process.
- **Wales-wide Sufficiency of Foster Placements:** Securing foster placements for children over the age of 8 and sibling groups is an ongoing difficulty, however, the situation has become more significant of

late. The Council is working with providers to gain an understanding of the issues to inform decisions and mitigating actions. In the meantime, the Council is continuing to grow its in-house fostering service and is exploring other options to ensure that all children who require a placement are safely looked after. Options are also being explored for the provision of additional support to enable children to remain safely at home with their families.

- **Complex Safeguarding Concerns with Providers:** The Council has launched a thorough investigation into an independently owned and managed provider and developed a robust plan to oversee the safeguarding processes in relation to each individual child.
- **Social Worker Vacancies:** Whilst the level of Children's Social Worker vacancies has improved, it still remains high – vacancies were at 28.8% in March 2021 compared to 38.7% in June 2020, however, this is against a target of 24%. A dedicated website – SocialWorkCardiff – has directed traffic to recruitment, a market supplement has been introduced and induction processes have been reviewed and strengthened.

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

### A Child Friendly Recovery

Recognising the impact of the pandemic on children and young people's education, rights, wellbeing, and future pathways into employment, the Council is committed to putting a programme of activity in place to ensure that Cardiff's recovery and renewal post-Covid-19 has the voice, rights and interests of children and young people at its centre.

Over the medium-to-longer-term, the Council will work in partnership with children, young people and families to refresh and publish a new, post-pandemic, Child Friendly Strategy in the autumn of 2021, inclusive of detailed shared commitments and a three-year plan.

The strategy will incorporate all key areas of reforms to education, as well as a cohesive Post-16 strategy, integrated and locality-based models of support for vulnerable children and young people, an integrated model of Youth Support Services and a clear education workforce development strategy.

### Education

In 2021/22, the Council will continue to address some of the key challenges and risks facing Education in Cardiff, whilst leading a Child Friendly Recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. Specific areas of future focus include:

- **Maintaining a Covid-safe learning environment:**
  - » Continuing to work with schools, Health and Safety and Public Health Wales to respond to positive Covid-19 cases and changing restrictions, including updating guidance and continuing positive communication with head teachers.

- » Continuing to provide Lateral Flow Device testing to school staff and pupils in Year 7 and above as required.
- **Re-engaging and protecting the wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and families:**
  - » Building on improved multi-agency working, including Health, Children’s Services, Police, Early Help and Family Support Services, to address contextual safeguarding issues.
  - » Progressing Child Friendly initiatives, including: increasing the number of Rights Respecting Schools, the Summer of Smiles Festival and Children’s University Project.
  - » Promoting consistent whole-school approaches to wellbeing through Thrive and Nurture approaches.
  - » Extending the reach of open access youth provision.
- **Maintaining learning and supporting transition and progression post-16:**
  - » Supporting Cardiff schools to work towards Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform and the Curriculum for Wales 2022, including developing approaches for blended learning.
  - » Continuing to invest in digital infrastructure, equipment and new learning technologies for schools and learners.
  - » Improving the accessibility and range of post-16 learning pathways.
  - » Increasing the levels of youth work support and mentoring available to the most vulnerable young people.
- **Additional commitments to deliver the Cardiff 2030 vision for education and learning:**
  - » Driving forward the Council’s commitment to make rights a reality for all and become a Child Friendly City.
  - » Developing an integrated model of Youth Support Services.
  - » Progressing school workforce development, including middle leadership and support to new head teachers.
  - » Developing a model for Community Focused Schools.

## Children’s Social Services

Ensuring sufficiency and quality of workforce and services against the backdrop of increased needs and demands following the pandemic period continues to be the highest priority for Children’s Services. Specific areas of future focus include:

- Recommencing support services as soon as it is safe to do so, including community support packages and respite provision.

- Continuing to focus on shifting the balance of care, including placement sufficiency and accommodation for care leavers. This includes developing a range of support services to ensure children can remain at home with their families when it is in their best interests to do so.
- Launching the Reunification Framework, with a dedicated team to support implementation.
- Bringing together each model of practice that the service has been piloting, including Signs of Safety, the Reunification Framework, Family Group Conferencing and the Safe and Together Model, into one cohesive practice framework that covers all aspects of assessment and care planning.
- Developing robust outcome-focused assessments, care planning and reviewing pathways to ensure children and families receive the right help at the right time and from the right people.
- Piloting a Family Drug and Alcohol Courts initiative, a new approach to working with families with substance misuse issues going through the court process.
- Continuing to progress a five-year development plan to increase in-house residential provision.
- Continuing the ongoing recruitment of in-house foster carers.
- Developing a Participation Charter to improve partnership working with children, young people and parents and launching the 'Mind of My Own' app, which will support children to communicate with the Council, enabling the views of children and young people to be captured in care planning.
- Rolling out the 'Team in the School' approach across all secondary school clusters, so that all secondary schools have a named Social Services Team Manager to work with to address the needs of those more vulnerable children.
- Joint working across Health and Children's Services to address the critical rise in children and young people presenting with emotional and mental health issues. This includes setting up a task and finish group with the aim of reviewing the current provision and identifying how any gaps in provision can be addressed, as well as developing joint commissioning plans and joint arrangements for assessment care and treatment plans.
- Recruitment and retention of a permanent, engaged workforce with a focus on attracting experienced social workers and embedding a mix of skills into teams. This includes using Welsh Government grant funding to recruit additional practitioners into the Cardiff Parenting Service, Cardiff Flying Start and Cardiff Family Advice and Support to provide support to vulnerable children, young people and their families.

## Well-being Objective 2: Cardiff is a great place to grow older

Whilst responding to the pandemic has placed unprecedented challenges on local services, and impacted everyone who lives in the city, older people have been particularly affected by Covid-19. That is why the Council has worked to ensure that services for older people, in particular, have been adapted, enhanced or established anew to safeguard their health and wellbeing.

Many of the service innovations introduced during the pandemic will serve the city well as it continues to respond to long-standing challenges. For instance, as the city grows, and life expectancy continues to increase, the number of older people living in Cardiff aged between 65 and 84 is expected to rise significantly; almost 40% in the next 20 years. The number of people aged 85 and older is also expected to more than double by 2039. Though the majority of older people are in good health, increased life expectancy has meant a greater number of people suffering from ill health in later life and relying ever more on public services. To meet this challenge, the Council is working with partners to manage demand by joining up social care, health and housing, with the goal of helping people living in their own homes and local communities, for as long as possible.

### **Our priorities in 2020/21 were:**

- Work with people with care and support needs, helping them to live the lives they want to lead
- Become an Age Friendly City
- Become a Dementia Friendly City

## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

Work with people with care and support needs, helping them to live the lives they want to lead

- **Adapting Services to Respond to Need:** Throughout the pandemic, the Council has adapted services to meet individual need, particularly those required to shield. In 2020/21, over 13,000 food parcels were provided to the most vulnerable across Cardiff, and almost 500 volunteers were supported and coordinated to undertake tasks such as collecting prescription medicine and providing support to access online shopping delivery slots.
- **Supporting the Vaccination of Priority Groups:** Working with the University Health Board, the Council helped ensure that everyone over the age of 70, all care home residents and the city's care workforce were offered the first dose of the vaccine by 15 February 2021.
- **Safe Hospital Discharge:** Hospital social workers have worked with community teams and care providers to progress the "home first" approach, by working through complex cases to discharge individuals from hospitals to their homes, or to secure isolation beds away from hospital settings.
- **Timely Hospital Discharge:** The First Point of Contact Hospital Teams (Pink Army) have expanded across multiple hospital sites to prevent and reduce delayed discharges from hospital. The team work with the patient to determine what matters to them, and seek to meet their needs through a whole systems approach, working with Health, Community, other Local Authority and third sector partners to support people back home.
- **Ensuring Service Resilience during periods of Challenge:** Throughout the pandemic, the Community Resource Team has provided the flexibility needed to ensure continuity of care for the most vulnerable, helping to avoid many hospital admissions and preventing residents and care homes going into crisis. This has allowed the Council to address potential staffing shortfalls when colleagues have needed to receive the vaccine or shield as they were unable to work with Covid-19 symptoms.
- **Continued delivery of the Older Person's Housing Strategy:** A range of new-build community living schemes across the city have been progressed, with planning consent achieved for the Maelfa, St. Mellons and Worcester Court independent living schemes. Bute Street and Riverside schemes are ready for Pre-Application Consultation and the Moorland Road scheme is soon to be at this stage. External works have commenced at Broadlands Court, having been finalised and agreed with the residents, and Heathmead is soon to commence.
- **High level of user satisfaction with the Council Services:**
  - » 93% of clients feel able to live independently in their own homes following support from Independent Living Services.
  - » 84% of new cases were dealt with directly at First Point of Contact (FPoC), resulting in no requirement for onward referral to Adult Services.



## Become an Age Friendly City

- **Addressing Social Isolation throughout the Pandemic:** All individuals identified as being at risk of isolation have been regularly contacted via a range of approaches:
  - » Welfare calls have been carried out over the phone, and virtual means utilised, to make regular and consistent contact with those on their own and most at risk of isolation.
  - » Meals on Wheels have adapted to provide welfare support when delivering their services, referring vulnerable individuals to the appropriate services where identified.
  - » Day Opportunities have provided digital support to vulnerable people, helping individuals to get online, access emails, join courses and participate in online groups.
  - » Befriending services, run through Age Connects and Age Cymru, have supported over 700 people, over the phone and virtually.
- **Providing Digital Devices and Support:** Through the Council's Tablet Gifting Scheme, almost 200 data-enabled devices were offered for free to the most vulnerable in the community. The scheme includes a digital support package for those who are socially and digitally isolated, with support available from dedicated Digital Inclusion Officers.
- **Hosting Digital Festivals:** Two multi-day digital festivals have been held, opening up a whole new world of connectivity for a lot of individuals, and creating links to council services, third sector digital provision and other virtual services offered through the Council's Hubs.
- **Creating Spaces for the Local Community:** An Alzheimer's Garden has been completed and partnerships with local community groups are being explored to promote shared space and shared learning experiences for the local community.
- **Keeping Communities in Contact:** A number of virtual groups have been set up to help keep individuals and communities in contact. The Council's Hubs offer online events, including Keep on Moving, Goldies singing group, Coffee and Book Talk; and Adult Learning run a group across Cardiff and the Vale, offering activities such as creative writing, macro photography, arts and crafts, and cookery.

## Become a Dementia Friendly City

- **Launching a Dementia Friendly Cardiff Website:** The Dementia Friendly Cardiff website and resource hub launched in October 2020, providing a 'one-stop shop' of valuable information about services and support in the city, to assist people living with dementia to live well in the capital. Adapting to the limitations for physical events to be held, there have been over 400 digital events showcased via the website.
- **'Read about Me':** 'Read about Me' has been created by Cardiff & Vale University Health Board as a simple, effective new way to assist people with dementia or a cognitive impairment who are receiving medical care. Providing person-centred information, it allows all staff to have a better understanding of the patient, without the need for repetition of their personal story. 'Read about Me' has been distributed to every single resident in a care home within Cardiff.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

- **Quality of Care and the Sustainability of Care Homes:** The care sector has faced considerable challenges during the pandemic which, overall, have been coped with well. Some care homes in particular, however, have given rise for concern both in terms of quality of care and sustainability into the longer term. Learning from some high-profile cases is informing the Council's approach to monitoring the homes and improving the quality of care will be an important part of the new Adult Service's Quality Assurance Framework. Sustainability of care homes is also of concern given the current level of voids and the imminent end of Welsh Government's Covid funding. The regional market sustainability assessment and development of a Cardiff market position statement, setting out the Council's future commissioning intentions, will help to inform the approach to this.
- **Increased Numbers of Individuals in Residential Care:** While the Council and partners are committed to support people to live full and independent lives as they grow older, with care and support joined up and delivered at home wherever possible, the number of people in residential care aged 65 or over per 10,000 population has increased across the year. This rise is, in part, due to shielding requirements and families being unable to help in ways they would in normal circumstances.
- **Staff Qualifications:** There is pressure across the domiciliary and residential care sectors in order to meet the legal requirement for all staff to be qualified and registered care workers. The impact of this is also being seen in the recruitment of new staff to the sector.
- **Backlog of Assessments and Evaluations:** The pandemic has created a backlog of assessments and home condition evaluations that could not be undertaken during lockdown. Focus will be required to ensure all vulnerable individuals and those in need receive the assessments they require.
- **Delay in the Recommissioning of Domiciliary Care:** The recommissioning of domiciliary care contracts has been delayed, with existing arrangements extended for 12 months. The decision was taken to develop a new commissioning model that sits responsibility for delivery firmly in the service areas. Significant work will be required to be in a position to commence the tender process within the timescales required.
- **Dementia Friendly Businesses:** With many businesses closed or adapting to the requirements of Covid regulations, focus on becoming Dementia Friendly must regain momentum as Covid restrictions are lifted.

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

As the Council continues to respond to long-standing challenges, with the goal of helping people living in their own homes and local communities, for as long as possible, focus will be maintained on:

- Implementing an outcome-focused, locality-based approach to the delivery of domiciliary care, through the completion of key domiciliary care projects, including the recommissioning of services, agreed provider list and fee setting strategy. The implementation of the first phase of the new way of delivering domiciliary care will need to fully reflect local and community provision and the priorities of the Older Person's Housing Strategy.
- Remodelling the Community Resource Team, to move towards a locality working model that has been embedded in other areas of the service area.
- Undertaking a complete review of complex hospital discharge, working in partnership with health colleagues to ensure this meets not just the aims of supporting timely discharge, but encompasses a holistic approach to wellbeing and independence.
- Continuing to deliver the Older Persons Housing Strategy to support independent living, fully understanding older people's housing needs and aligning work between Council and Health Services. This will include work to build and refurbish Community Living schemes for older people and improving the use of existing Community Living and Extra Care schemes.
- Formalising Cardiff's status as an Age Friendly City, in collaboration with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales and partners from the Regional Partnership Board.
- Working with the third sector to review the support available for mental health and wellbeing of individuals living at risk of isolation, and their carers.
- Ramping up work with Alzheimer's Society Staff across the next financial year to enhance the Council's approach to becoming a Dementia Friendly City, as well as training increasing numbers of Council staff to become Dementia Friends.
- Further strengthening links between Adult Services, Meals on Wheels and Telecare, as well as third sector organisations, to provide a robust service and to support signposting for vulnerable people being supported by those services. This will enable a new hybrid approach to preventing social isolation.
- Continuing to promote a blend of digital and face-to-face Dementia Friendly events

## Well-being Objective 3: Supporting people out of poverty

Despite Cardiff's economic renewal over recent decades, it remains home to the greatest number of people living in the most deprived communities in Wales. The Coronavirus pandemic has hit the poorest, most deprived and disconnected communities hardest, further exposing these long-standing economic and social inequalities.

The economic impact of the pandemic has led to a doubling of unemployment, over a 100% increase in Universal Credit applications and, ultimately, to a great many more families falling into poverty. Looking to the year ahead, economic recovery will be uneven, with some sectors continuing to be impacted by the pandemic, particularly those sectors - such as hospitality and retail - that typically employ young people, women and those from a BAME background.

Responding to this will require a programme of concerted action across all Well-being Objectives. As part of this, supporting people into work, promoting the Living Wage and tackling homelessness will be crucial to supporting people out of poverty and leading an inclusive recovery.

### **Our priorities in 2020/21 were:**

- Living Wage City
- Help people into work
- Tackle homelessness and end rough sleeping

## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

### Living Wage City

- **Increases in Living Wage Employers:** 126 employers in the city are now accredited Living Wage employers, with 19 becoming accredited during 2020/21 including Cardiff & Vale University Health Board. There are now 58,886 people working for an accredited Living Wage employer and 7,929 workers have received a pay rise as a result of their employers becoming Living Wage accredited. Between 2012 and the end of 2020, the Living Wage initiative has resulted in an extra £32.4 million being paid in wages to workers in Cardiff<sup>1</sup>.

### Help people into work

- **Increases in Apprenticeships and Trainee Opportunities:** Over the course of the year, 119 paid apprentice and trainee opportunities were created across the Council. Close contact has been kept with directorates during the pandemic to ensure that apprentices and trainees are being utilised effectively and that their learning is continuing.
- **A New Cardiff Works Website:** Cardiff Works launched a new website in February 2021. The new site features the latest temporary vacancies within the Council, as well as information and advice about finding the right job, standing out during the application process, volunteering and training opportunities, and interview tips. The team works side-by-side with the Into Work Advice Service, who can ensure candidates have access to all the employment guidance and expertise they need to equip them for roles they are interested in.
- **Creating Wrap-around Support and Pathways into Permanent Employment:** During 2020/21, the Into Work Advice Service incorporated Cardiff Works – the Council’s in-house employment agency – and Adult Community Learning, creating wrap-around support and pathways into permanent employment. In response to the emerging economic challenges, the service enhanced its capacity and is now able to support more than 55,000 clients and 250 employers annually. Advice was given almost 50,000 times to people through the Employment Gateway during 2020/21 and 814 people secured employment as a result of the support provided. Additionally, 237 employers have been assisted by the Into Work Advice Service, exceeding the target set of 220 for the financial year.
- **Continuing to Deliver Services throughout the Pandemic:** During 2020/21, 2,841 customers were supported and assisted with their claims for Universal Credit, despite Covid-19 restrictions, demonstrating the level of need which exists in the city given the economic pressures caused by the pandemic. The team also ensured that support remained available across the city through Advice Line. Almost £15.5m of additional weekly benefit has been identified for clients of the Money Advice Team.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure is cumulative and based on 2019 prices, as well as 7,735 people having a wage uplift by December 2020.

## Tackle homelessness and end rough sleeping

- **Supporting the City's Most Vulnerable People:** At the onset of the pandemic, the Council was faced with the challenge of getting very vulnerable people off the street and into Covid-secure accommodation at scale and pace. Almost immediately, hotels were procured and repurposed to create Covid-safe spaces. 140 clients were rehoused in accommodation where they could shield or self-isolate, and the number of people sleeping rough in the city was reduced to single figures. In total, 182 units of supported accommodation were established, all with the wrap-around, multi-agency support needed to address complex needs, including mental health nurses and substance misuse support staff, alongside housing staff. Engagement with this support showed a marked improvement due to those services being co-located within the same premises.
- **No Going Back:** After such huge achievement, a new vision for homelessness, *No Going Back*, was approved in July 2020. The vision sets out a new approach to tackling homelessness based on prevention, a rapid assessment and triage approach, and dedicated support for each individual to help them to live independently as soon as they are ready, rather than following a default 'staircase' approach through hostels and supported accommodation.
- **Expanding the Multi-disciplinary Team:** The Multi-disciplinary Team works to assertively target service users caught in the 'revolving door' of homelessness and prolonged periods of rough sleeping. The team was expanded during 2020/21 in order to offer consistent health care and case management approaches. The team now includes social workers; mental health workers and a mental health social worker; housing support workers; an advocate; a primary care nurse; substance misuse workers including a rapid prescribing service; probation officers; therapeutic outreach workers and psychological services; counsellors; a peer mentor co-ordinator; a police street safe officer; and an occupational therapist.
- **Tackling Substance Misuse Issues:** New homelessness projects have provided an unprecedented opportunity for services to work with clients with substance misuse issues, with health and third sector colleagues providing services directly into the hostels, including harm reduction and rapid prescribing. Therapeutic and counselling services have also continued throughout the crisis to ensure that clients' underlying needs are identified and met. As at February 2021, 71 individuals are still in active treatment – a retention rate of 75%, a significant achievement for this hard-to-reach client group.
- **Major Additional Investment in Homelessness Schemes:** Cardiff was successful in achieving Welsh Government capital grant funding totalling £12 million for a number of homelessness schemes. In December 2020, the Welsh Government announced an additional £40 million Housing Support Grant funding for Wales, of which Cardiff will receive £5.243 million.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

- **Inequality in the City:** The pandemic has exposed and exacerbated inequality in the city. People already at the lower end of the economic scale have been at greater risk of being furloughed or losing their jobs entirely as well as being at greater risk of contracting Covid-19 and dying from it.

- **Universal Credit Claims:** The number of people claiming Universal Credit in Cardiff has risen by more than 100% during the pandemic, with those working in sectors such as hospitality, leisure and retail particularly badly affected. The furlough scheme, which is currently providing some protection, is due to end in September 2021 and the impact of that on unemployment levels within the city could be considerable.
- **Digital Deprivation:** The pandemic has highlighted the number of people who are affected by digital deprivation, resulting in social isolation and being unable to search for work online or upskill. The Into Work Advice Service has previously secured funding to provide over 200 devices to those who are socially isolated and are unable to afford their own tablets, however funding has since now ended.
- **Funding Sustainability:** The future funding of into work support and adult education remains a source for concern. Many into work projects are externally funded by Welsh Government and the European Social Fund; this funding will end in September 2022. Funding for Adult Learning has been reduced by 5% each year for the previous two and larger cuts are expected over the next three years.
- **Homelessness Services:** Demand for homelessness services continues to be high, and it is anticipated that the ending of measures put in place due to the pandemic will cause this to increase. The eviction ban is due to end on 30 June; however, this will not affect the service immediately as the Coronavirus Act 2020 provides that landlords will remain under a statutory obligation to provide a six-month notice period to tenants before making a possession claim (except in relation to anti-social behaviour and domestic violence).

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

To ensure that all our citizens are able to contribute to, and benefit from, the city's success, areas of future focus include:

- Creating 30 six-month trainee roles through the national Kickstart scheme. Young people aged 16-24 who are in receipt of Universal Credit are eligible. The Cardiff Commitment will ensure that the number of Kickstart places in the city are maximised through their work with partners.
- Launching the new Single Person Assessment Centre at Hayes Place, Cowbridge Road East, which will provide 24-hour services, with multi-disciplinary assessment of need for single homeless people. The Centre will also provide 19 self-contained units on site as emergency accommodation for immediate overnight need. Where necessary, this accommodation will also allow clients to stay longer to allow them to stabilise and for their needs to be fully assessed. Developing this self-contained accommodation ensures that the Council is meeting the Welsh Government's aim of moving away from a shared floor space model as emergency accommodation.
- Establishing the Multi-disciplinary Team at the new assessment centre, which will allow individuals to have immediate access to assessment, advice, support and harm reduction services. The expansion of the team will continue and an additional three therapeutic workers will be recruited, raising the total to six.

- Developing a range of permanent schemes to replace the hotels that were used in the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as innovative new schemes to address homelessness:
  - » The Council is planning to purchase the YHA to be able to continue to offer high-quality self-contained accommodation with support on a longer-term basis.
  - » Adams Court is being repurposed to provide 103 self-contained apartments for single people. The properties will be let using Housing First principles and a trauma-informed approach, with a focus being on individuals with complex or high support needs.
  - » 47 self-contained flats will be developed at Baileys Court. The aim is to provide stable accommodation for individuals with complex or high support needs.
  - » Family homeless centres are being delivered at Harrison Drive in Trowbridge and the Gas Works site in Grangetown, and will be completed by spring/ summer 2021. The first centre at Briardene in Gabalfa has recently opened. All three centres will offer good-quality, family accommodation with staff on site during the day and other provision such as Early Help family services, health visiting and parenting support.
  - » As part of the Welsh Government's Private Rented Sector Leasing Scheme, Cardiff Council will manage up to 67 properties on behalf of private landlords for up to five years. These properties will be held alongside council housing stock to ensure effective and efficient management. The properties will be leased to homeless clients and anyone accessing these properties will be able to access housing-related support and other support as needed.







## Well-being Objective 4: Safe, confident and empowered communities

Strong communities are the bedrock of every great city. They play a vital role in connecting people with each other, with the social groups and networks and day-to-day services upon which all citizens depend. This has been particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, as communities have sprung into action to support vulnerable individuals and families in their area. Local community groups, businesses and third sector agencies have helped the Council to supply food and essentials to those vulnerable and self-isolating, while others have provided other roles such as befriending.

Community support and resilience is crucial, now more than ever. The Council therefore continues to make sure that communities in Cardiff are safe, receive investment to improve local and district centres, and that they have easy access to good-quality, joined-up local services, great parks and green spaces and a local sports, leisure and culture offer.

### **Our priorities for 2020/21 were:**

- Work to end the city's housing crisis
- Invest in local communities
- Create safe communities
- Ensure children and adults are protected from risk of harm and abuse
- Continue to lead an inclusive and open city to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers
- Promote the Welsh language
- Improve sports and leisure
- Continue to improve our parks and green spaces

## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

### Work to end the city's housing crisis

- **Delivering New Council Homes:** Progress continues to be made on the largest Council-led development programme in Wales. Over ten years, the £1 billion programme is set to deliver 4,000 new homes. Despite Covid-19 delaying the overall target of 1,000 new Council homes by May 2022, 552 homes have already been completed, including 236 in 2020/21.
- **Specialist and Supported Housing Schemes:** As well as affordable new homes for families and older people, the 'Cardiff Living' and community housing programme is delivering new specialist and supported housing schemes to help meet the needs of the most vulnerable. Recently completed schemes include Willowbrook in St. Mellons and the Briardene homeless family scheme in Gabalfa, delivering 88 affordable homes and 39 affordable flats respectively.

### Invest in local communities

- **Working 'Together for Cardiff':** 1,000 people volunteered to help deliver food and medical supplies to the most vulnerable at the start of lockdown in March 2020. Since then, 491 volunteers have supported Cardiff Council's foodbank, providing over 3,000 hours of additional support, and 23 volunteers joined a new befriending scheme funded by Age UK, providing support to those feeling lonely or isolated during the pandemic. Visits to the website have also far exceeded expectations, with 156,153 hits over the year.
- **Transforming Neighbourhoods:** The Council is leading on development schemes that are transforming whole neighbourhoods, providing new energy-efficient homes and boosting local economies. The Council's 'Cardiff Living' partnership, for instance, has already supported £47 million of spend with small and medium enterprises and 250 people, including 75 apprenticeships, have been supported with training and employment.
- **Building Low-Carbon Homes:** Work has started on 200 high-energy performing, low-carbon homes on the former site of Eastern High School, the first of four schemes designed around the needs of the older generation. Consultation has taken place on initial plans for the Trowbridge Green and Pennsylvania developments, with detailed designs for further consultation being developed. The Roundwood estate and Lower Llanrumney regeneration schemes are also progressing well and are due for completion this year.
- **Regeneration Projects:** As part of a programme of smaller regeneration projects across the city, environmental improvements to Cathays Road, Riverside and Llanishen Street have been completed and work has started at Llanishen Park and Cowbridge Road East. 89% of residents responding to surveys have been satisfied with completed regeneration projects to date.

- **Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRIP) Funding:** Funding has been secured from Welsh Government to help deliver regeneration initiatives in the South Riverside Business Corridor. The funding will support an investment of over £4 million in Tudor Street and work has started on site to deliver improvements to the business environment and transport infrastructure, as well as the regeneration of 30 business premises.
- **Progressing the Council's Hub Programme:** The Council's Hub Programme continues to be rolled out across the city, with the new Butetown Creative Hub and refurbishment of Community Hubs in Whitchurch and Rhydypennau providing additional and enhanced services under one roof. Work has also started on the Maelfa Health and Wellbeing Hub and Rhiwbina Hub is due for completion during 2021/22. Options are also being explored for a Youth Hub in the city centre.
- **Launching a New Hubs Website:** To improve access to services, a new Hubs website has been launched. The website provides information on all services delivered from Hubs across the city, including Advice Services, Adult Learning, the Into Work Advice Service and Library Services. In a customer survey, 98% agreed that their experience of using a Hub met their needs.

### Create safe and cohesive communities

- **Launching a New Youth Justice Services Development Strategy:** In June 2020, *All Our Futures*, a new Youth Justice Services Development Strategy, was launched in response to performance challenges identified in the city's Youth Justice Service. The past year has also seen progress in strengthening the strategic governance and partnership working, with the Youth Justice Board reporting through to the Public Services Board, and in the use of partnership intelligence to inform the service. A Resettlement Panel has also been introduced to ensure that planning for a young person's release into the community commences from the moment they enter custody or become at risk of entering custody.
- **Establishing a New Violence Prevention Group:** In advance of a new Serious Violence Duty that will be a provision of the new Policing and Crime Bill due to come into force in 2022, a new Violence Prevention Group has been established. In line with the Duty, the Council and its partners will adopt a public health approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence and take action to reduce serious violence through prevention and early intervention.

### Ensure children and adults are protected from risk of harm and abuse

- **Supporting Victims of Domestic Abuse:** A new 'one-stop shop' to support victims of domestic abuse in the Cardiff Royal Infirmary has been opened. Refurbishment work has also been completed to transform the former Chapel at the Infirmary into a vibrant health and wellbeing facility for residents in the south and east of Cardiff. The facility is expected to open in summer 2021.
- **Joint Child and Adult Exploitation Strategy:** A strategy has been published to reflect new and emerging themes of child and adult exploitation such as modern slavery. Work is underway with partners to strengthen the Council and partners' approach to contextual safeguarding, recognising that outside of the family unit, the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.

- **Improving Corporate Oversight of Exploitation and Safeguarding:** Arrangements are in place to improve corporate oversight of exploitation and safeguarding in general, with a refreshed approach implemented in March 2021 as part of the revised Corporate Safeguarding Strategy.
- **Strengths-based Practice:** Strengths-based practice has continued to be developed throughout 2020, through the delivery of Collaborative Communication training; 93% of social workers in Adult Services have undertaken the training. This has supported a change in model of social work throughout Adult Services and has ensured better links between how social work is delivered and the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

## An inclusive and open city

- **Equality and Inclusion Strategy:** The Council has published its new Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2020-24. The strategy recognises the impact of Covid-19 on different communities and prioritises the development of services and partnerships to actively address inequality, exclusion and underlying structural inequalities in Cardiff.
- **Establishing a Race Equality Taskforce:** A Race Equality Taskforce has been established, with five thematic priorities identified: Employment and Representative Workforce, Children and Young People, Health, Criminal Justice and Citizens' Voice. Sub-groups have been established for each theme, with an initial set of recommendations planned to be submitted to the Council for consideration in summer 2021.
- **Supporting EU Citizens to Apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS):** The Council has continued to help EU citizens apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), including Children Looked After and vulnerable adults. A programme of engagement and digital support to access the scheme online has seen good uptake: compared to an estimate of there being 21,000-25,000 EU nationals living in Cardiff, 21,200 applications have been made to the scheme as of 31 March 2021.
- **Supporting the Completion of the Census Population Survey:** Work to support the 2021 Census has been completed, with extensive outreach and engagement undertaken to ensure the needs of population groups who may experience barriers to participation are reflected in the survey. This includes migrant communities, ethnic minorities, the homeless and traveller communities.

## Promote the Welsh language

- **Increasing Numbers of Welsh-medium Primary Schools:** In line with Welsh Government's vision for a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050, the number of Welsh-medium primary school places continues to grow. In 2020/21, 764 pupils were allocated Reception places at Welsh-medium primary schools, representing 18.5% of the total intake across the city - Cardiff's highest intake to Welsh-medium primary schools to date.
- **Expansion of Welsh-medium Provision:** Further Welsh-medium education plans have been approved that will see the expansion of Ysgol Y Wern and new Cylch Meithrin provision, dual-stream provision to serve the Plasdŵr development and an increased provision in Central Cardiff.

- **Increases in Uptake of Welsh Language Courses:** There has also been a significant uptake of Welsh language courses over the last year, with over 700 Council staff acquiring Welsh language skills.
- **Introducing Welsh Street Names across Cardiff:** Work continues to introduce new Welsh street names across the city following the introduction of Cardiff Council's new Street Naming Policy in October 2019, which ensures parity between Welsh and English street names in the city.
- **A Virtual Tafwyl Festival:** In 2020, the Tafwyl Welsh language festival went online, extending its reach to a global audience. Around 25,000 people engaged with the festival and more than 8,000 accessed digital content.

### Improve sports and leisure

- **Restoring Lisvane and Llanishen Reservoirs:** Construction work has now been completed on the restoration of Lisvane and Llanishen Reservoirs with the prospect of this becoming a destination for walking, water sports and a space for improving residents' mental and physical health.
- **Supporting Behaviour Change Towards a Healthier and More Active Population:** The Cardiff and Vale 'Move More, Eat Well Plan 2020-23' was launched in 2020 by Cardiff's Public Services Board to support behavioural change toward a healthier and more active population and to develop resilience to health crises such as Covid-19.

### Continue to improve our parks and green spaces

- **Awards for the Council's Parks and Green Spaces:** The number of city parks and green spaces achieving the Keep Wales Tidy international mark of quality continues to rise, with 14 receiving the Full Green Flag standard in 2020. Forest Farm Country Park and Hailey Park both received the award for the first time.
- **Increasing Cardiff's Tree Canopy:** As part of the response to the Climate Emergency, the Council is working with partners to increase Cardiff's tree canopy, enhance biodiversity and provide environments which support the health and wellbeing of local residents. The Council has provided primary schools with 1,000 trees, and work is underway to identify opportunities to increase the tree canopy on public sector land.
- **Restoring Wetland Habitats:** To increase biodiversity, important wetland habitats at Forest Farm have been restored as part of the 'No Net Loss' project, funded by Network Rail.
- **Increasing 'One Cut' Mowing Regimes:** More pollinator friendly 'one cut' mowing regimes have been adopted, bringing the total area of native meadows looked after by the Council to 33.5 hectares.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

- **New Council Homes:** Whilst progress has been made, the timescale for delivering the first 1,000 new Council homes has had to be delayed by seven months, to December 2022, due to the emergence of Covid-19.
- **The Continued Impact of Covid-19 on Local and Community Services:** Although visits in person to Libraries and Hubs increased from 25,000 in Quarter 1 to over 280,000 by year end, this is a third of the footfall at the end of 2019/20. The new Hubs website launched in October 2020, enabling access to services and events online. However, combined physical and online footfall was still significantly below the 3.3 million target set, at 2.5 million. With Libraries and Hubs only able to provide limited services, this is having a community-wide impact in terms of access to services and the health and wellbeing of residents. The Council is also losing income due to events not being held.
- **Shared Regulatory Services:** Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) have played a central role in Test, Trace, Protect (TTP), with a number of officers seconded to key roles in its delivery. This has, however, impacted the delivery of the SRS business plan. Any business plan activities that were unable to be delivered as a consequence of the pandemic will be taken forward as appropriate in the 2021/22 financial year.
- **Crime Trends:** The easing of Covid-19 restrictions following the winter lockdown period has seen increases across all categories of crime, in particular, violence against the person, violence without injury, robbery, burglary and sexual offences. The further easing of restrictions and reopening of the night time economy could see further increases in crime. This would result in increased pressure on the Police and A&E services at a time when health services are experiencing significant non-Covid related demand.
- **Serious Youth Violence and Criminal Exploitation of Young People:** Serious youth violence remains a concern and prevention is a key priority for the Council and the city's Community Safety Partnership. Continued focus on improving practice and culture in the Youth Justice Service is needed, allied to a strengthened strategic and operational approach to safeguarding vulnerable young people across the Council and across the city's public service partnership.
- **Hidden Harms:** It is likely that Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions will have resulted in under-reporting of domestic violence and difficulties with mental health. The volume of domestic abuse referrals received is being closely monitored and escalated as appropriate to the Community Safety Partnership.
- **Safeguarding Awareness and Training:** Nearly 80% of Council staff have completed the Corporate Safeguarding Awareness Training. However, this remains short of the 100% target set. Additionally, whilst more than two-thirds of Council staff have completed the Level 1 online module of the National Training Framework on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, this also falls short of the 100% target set.
- **High-rise Buildings:** Since the tragic events at Grenfell Tower, Shared Regulatory Services, South Wales Fire & Rescue and residents' groups have made progress in addressing the issues relating to some buildings, but a number of buildings continue to require attention. Residents of these buildings currently have to pay for the work and this will continue to be the case unless additional funding is provided by Welsh Government.

- **Volunteering in Parks and Green Spaces:** Although many people responded to the call to help the most vulnerable access essential food and medical supplies at the onset of the pandemic, much of the work in relation to parks and green spaces had to be put on hold due to the vulnerabilities of volunteers. In 2020/21, the number of volunteer hours committed to parks and green spaces was less than 10% of the target set prior to the first lockdown.
- **EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS):** The grace period for applications to the EU Settlement Scheme ended on 30 June 2021. If individuals – who need to register – did not do so by 30 June, they could lose the right to live and work in the UK and also access to certain public services and support. UK Government has, however, published non-exhaustive guidance for caseworkers on reasonable grounds for a late EUSS application – late applications may be accepted for an indefinite period. Moving forward, the Council will support late applications to the scheme, with individuals signposted to legal advice if necessary.
- **Sustainability of the Leisure Services Contract:** Covid-19 has had a major impact on the viability of the Council's Leisure Services contract with GLL due to a significant drop in income caused by successive lockdown closures and social distancing restrictions. Whilst participation has begun to increase, income remains significantly lower than pre-Covid levels. The extent of ongoing government support to bridge the gap remains unclear. The Council has recently taken the decision to remove Pentwyn Leisure Centre from the contract to reduce the current operational deficit, however, ongoing review and changes to the contract and service specification may be required.
- **Tackling Obesity and Increasing Participation in Sport and Physical Activity:** Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of health, wellbeing and participating in physical activity, as obesity and diabetes are key underlying health risks. Although obesity levels in Cardiff are amongst the lowest in Wales, they are still too high, particularly in the city's most deprived communities. Concerted and targeted long-term action will be needed to address this challenge. Furthermore, whilst parks and green spaces have been utilised throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, restrictions have resulted in visits, per 1,000 population, to Local Authority sport and leisure centres being low – at just over 10% of the pre-Covid target.

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

To ensure that communities remain safe, confident and empowered, areas of future focus include:

- The progression of developments across 60 sites as part of the 'Cardiff Living' partnership, with future schemes including the Gas Works in Grangetown. The scheme will deliver a whole new community of 500 homes connected via sustainable transport links to the surrounding area.
- Progressing the Channel View scheme, which will see a £65 million investment in more than 250 low-carbon homes, providing replacement homes for every existing resident in the area and improved access to green space. Building work is due to commence in early 2022.
- Work will continue to complete housing estate improvement schemes in Llanedeyrn and Llanrumney, as part of a programme of environmental enhancement.



- Cardiff's Community Safety Leadership Board will focus on taking forward the partnership's agreed priorities. This includes addressing complex localised issues, street-based lifestyles and complex needs, violence prevention, and area-based working. A new Violence Prevention group will oversee the development and implementation of a Serious Violence Strategy in 2021 and a renewed partnership approach.
- Building on the progress of the past year, there will be a focus on improving practice and culture in the Youth Justice Service, linked to a wider strengthened strategic and operational approach to safeguarding vulnerable young people and to tackling youth violence and the criminal exploitation of young people.
- Developing an Adult Services Strategy that will outline the Council's plans for supporting citizens over the next four years and will be created with input from citizens, stakeholders and staff.
- The new joint Child and Adult Exploitation Strategy will continue to be taken forward, addressing new and emerging themes of exploitation, such as modern slavery.
- In the coming year, the Council will be piloting a number of initiatives, including the National Transfer Scheme, a new approach to providing support and accommodation for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children across Wales, as well as the National Referral Mechanism, identifying young people at risk from exploitation and ensuring that multi-agency plans are in place.
- The Council will continue to progress the applications of both Children Looked After and vulnerable adults to the EU Settlement Scheme, as well as support late applications to the Scheme. The Council will also continue to monitor the impact of Brexit on cohesion through the Council's Community Cohesion Action Plan.
- As a founding city of the Inclusive Cities Programme, the Council will also lead on the co-ordination of support for migrant communities, supporting access to legal advice for those whose immigration status is uncertain and which could place them at additional risk of the pandemic's economic and health impacts. A Phase 2 action plan for Inclusive Cities will also be developed over the next year.
- Working with partners, the Council will support the delivery of the Cardiff and Vale 'Move More, Eat Well Plan' by improving access to healthy environments in which to be active and make active travel choices, as well as improving access to healthy food and encouraging healthy lifestyle choices.
- The Council will develop a Cardiff's Sport, Health and Physical Activity Strategy to maximise use of the city's parks, green spaces and leisure centres and increase participation in physical activity, particularly in the most deprived communities.
- The Council will review the Leisure Services contract with GLL to ensure it is sustainable for the full term of the contract and to be sure the contract is delivering value for money.

## Well-being Objective 5: A capital city that works for Wales

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on Cardiff's economy and the life of the city, bringing the hospitality, retail and cultural sectors to a standstill, causing unemployment to double and preventing many young people from moving on into the world of work. A strong and dynamic Cardiff economy, capable of attracting inward investment and creating jobs in high-value industries, will remain key to a successful city-region and a successful Wales.

As the Council emerges from the pandemic, it is essential that measures needed to accelerate recovery and renewal are considered, whilst seizing the historic opportunity to build back Cardiff as a greener, fairer and stronger city. This work will involve protecting jobs and businesses to mitigate the immediate economic crisis, continuing delivery of major Capital Ambition projects to improve productivity, connectivity and the quality of new jobs, and implementing the adaptations needed for Cardiff to thrive in the future.

### **Our priorities for 2020/21 were:**

- Lead a capital city that works for Wales
- Continue the development of the city centre as a business location
- Write a new chapter in Cardiff Bay's regeneration story
- Support innovation and business development
- Bring world events to Wales and take the best of Wales to the world

## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

### Lead a capital city that works for Wales

- **Central Station Improvements:** Good progress has been made on the delivery of the Central Station capacity improvements, with the development of a Detailed Business Case now well underway. The enhanced Central Station will be crucial in strengthening transport connectivity between Cardiff's Central Business District and the wider city-region, which in turn will help boost productivity while making jobs more accessible and reducing congestion, pollution and carbon emissions.

### Continue the development of the city centre as a business location

- **Central Square:** Continued progress on the development of Central Square over the past year, most notably with the Interchange, has supported hundreds of construction jobs at a time of economic crisis.
- **City Centre Transformation:** The Council has approved a Framework Strategy for the Canal Quarter, which sets out an ambitious and achievable vision for the transformation of this historic part of the city centre. The Canal Quarter scheme will see the reopening of the concreted-over old dock feeder canal underneath the top half of Churchill Way, delivering significant public realm improvements and supporting sustainable water drainage.
- **Cardiff Parkway:** The planning application for Cardiff Parkway, a key component of the Industrial Strategy for the East, has been progressed, which will deliver a new train station, a new business park and real economic opportunity for this long-overlooked area of the city.
- **Further Consolidation of the Creative Sector:** The BBC has announced the relocation of its London-based global centre of excellence for Climate and Science journalism to the BBC Cymru Wales headquarters in Central Square. This development will see exciting new job opportunities created, not only at the BBC, but across the city, and further cement Cardiff's reputation as an important creative media capital.
- **New Government Office:** Cardiff has attracted the UK Government's new Trade and Investment Office, which will create 100 new jobs in the city. It is anticipated that this new department will be accommodated in the UK Government Hub in Central Square, which will provide a significant boost to the city's Central Business District during the recovery period.

### Write a new chapter in Cardiff Bay's regeneration story

- **Indoor Arena:** Good progress has been made towards delivery of the new Indoor Arena, with the Council appointing Live Nation as its preferred bidder for construction and operation. As the last major missing piece of infrastructure in the city's culturally-focused economic regeneration programme, the Indoor Arena will kick-start the next generation of Cardiff Bay's development and act as an anchor for grassroots cultural venues in the surrounding area.

- **Atlantic Wharf Masterplan:** A masterplan for the future vision of Atlantic Wharf was approved by Cabinet in December 2020. The future tramline and heating network linking the city centre and Cardiff Bay are at the heart of this vision, which will ensure that new developments included in the masterplan have a low or neutral carbon impact, and that newly-created jobs will be accessible to all communities, in line with the ambition for inclusive and green growth.

## Support innovation and business development

- **Creating Covid-secure city and district centres:** Working in partnership with FOR Cardiff – the city’s Business Improvement District – the Council transformed the city centre into a Covid-secure, attractive and people-centred environment for residents and visitors. The innovative use of public space in creating a new outdoor seating area, the Castle Quarter, allowed the hospitality sector in the city centre to continue trading within the confines of social distancing regulations, driving a significant rise in footfall and generating approximately half a million pounds for the local economy.
- **Business Support:** The Council’s Business Rates and Economic Development teams have administered over £120 million in financial support to nearly 20,000 businesses over the course of the pandemic, providing them with a lifeline while they have been unable to trade. Crucially, this work has included supporting those who fell through the cracks of UK Government support, namely through the delivery of over 10,000 grants for small businesses, roughly 800 freelancer grants for the creative sector and 200 grants for new starters.
- **Economic Recovery Task Force:** An Economic Recovery Task Force has been established to support those who have lost their job due to Covid-19 into new employment, help employers recruit and train, and more broadly, to lead the post-Covid economic recovery in Cardiff. Crucially, the Task Force has co-ordinated and promoted the Kickstart Scheme, which provides funding to create new job placements for 16- to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment.
- **Strength in Places Bid:** The Council supported a Cardiff University-led Strength in Places (SIP) bid to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to increase research and development in the city-region’s screen and creative industries. This sector – one of Cardiff’s key growth industries for the future – has been significantly affected by the pandemic, therefore ensuring its recovery will be critical to the future success of the local economy.
- **Town Centre Loan Fund:** Work to expand the city’s business infrastructure has continued, with support from the Town Centre Loan Fund secured to develop new facilities for businesses.
- **Creating New Work Spaces:** New incubation space has been created outside the city centre in the former offices of Grant Thornton to support the development of Cardiff’s creative and fintech sectors. Demand for ‘incubator’ and ‘start up’ space in the city has increased, and as such, the Council is currently exploring a number of further proposals.

- **Development of a Science Park:** Progress has been made in the development of a Science Park. The private sector owners of the potential site continue to progress this transition, with a new business recently secured that will be producing the Covid-19 vaccine.
- **Creating New Jobs:** In 2020, the Council has supported the creation of over 500 jobs and safeguarded another 1,339 jobs.

### Bring world events to Wales and take the best of Wales to the world

- **Successful Test Events:** The Council developed and successfully delivered Covid-safe test events in the grounds of Cardiff Castle, including Tafwyl – the Welsh music and cultural festival – and an Eid celebration.
- **Cultural Recovery Fund and the Capital Recovery Fund:** The Council has secured over £3 million from the Arts Council of Wales, which administered the Cultural Recovery Fund and the Capital Recovery Fund, for St David’s Hall and the New Theatre. This funding helped to ensure that Cardiff’s internationally-renowned live music and theatre offer was supported during the pandemic.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

- **Managing Unemployment and Business Closures:** In the past year, unemployment has doubled, the number of people claiming Universal Credit has risen by over 100% and businesses have closed across the city. The furlough scheme, which is currently providing some protection, is due to end in September 2021, and the associated impact on unemployment levels within the city could be considerable. The Council’s immediate priority in the recovery period is therefore to protect jobs and businesses – especially those in the hard-hit hospitality, retail and events sectors – by putting in place measures to mitigate the impact of restrictions on businesses and attracting people back to the city centre. These interventions include the provision of additional public space for the hospitality sector, work with city centre businesses to adopt a commuting plan, the roll-out of the Kickstart scheme to support young people back into work and collaboration with the Welsh Government to provide direct business support.
- **City Centre Recovery:** The initial decrease in city centre footfall, driven by the pandemic and remote working, has had a significant impact on businesses in the city centre. Securing funding for extended local business support will be key in mitigating the risk of further business failure over the coming year.
- **Recovery of Cultural, Events and Tourism Sectors:** The pandemic has had a serious impact on the city’s cultural venues and museums, with major consequences for the arts and creative sectors. This situation is reflected in attendance figures at Council venues, with only 174,286 visits against a target of 595,000 at year end, creating a significant financial risk for these income-reliant venues. Beyond creating significant funding issues, the pandemic has also delayed progress on the development of the Events Portfolio, the delivery of the Signature Music event and work to establish the feasibility of a 2030 FIFA Football World Cup bid.

While the pandemic has brought cultural, events and tourism sectors to a standstill, it is clear that demand remains high. These sectors are therefore well-placed for a strong return with a continued easing of restrictions over the coming year. With international tourism unlikely in the short-term, Cardiff's visitor offer will become more localised, creating experiences and attractions for citizens and for the regional market. Sport and music will be key parts of a 'healthy city' branding going forward, enhancing residents' wellbeing and quality of life, while also attracting visitors needed to help drive the economic recovery.

- **Brexit:** Cardiff is vulnerable to a disruptive Brexit, as it is amongst the top five British cities most reliant on EU markets, with 46% of its exports going to EU countries. Whilst the deal agreed by the UK and EU in December 2020 has provided citizens and businesses with a degree of continuity and certainty, Cardiff is still entering unprecedented territory. The Council will therefore continue to closely liaise with local employers over the coming months to mitigate the impact of Brexit, including delays at the borders and the associated implications for supply chains. Moving forward, work will be undertaken to ensure that the Council has a robust ongoing strategy to address the challenges and opportunities posed by Brexit.
- **Future of Regional Funding:** EU funding has been a significant financial contributor to regional and local economic development in Wales, especially outside of Cardiff, with per capita funding far exceeding that in Scotland, Northern Ireland or England. Consequently, any change to regional funding post-Brexit represents a significant potential risk for Wales. The new Community Renewal Fund – the one-year precursor to the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund replacing European structural funds from 2022 – represents an opportunity to invest in skills, local businesses and employment.

Furthermore, the Levelling Up Fund provides an opportunity to unlock investment in local infrastructure, town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets. Cardiff has been placed into category 1 of the Fund – meaning it is one of the places with the highest levels of identified needs in the nation – and the projects proposed for this funding will play a crucial role in increasing productivity and prosperity in the city over the long term.

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

To accelerate recovery and renewal, whilst at the same time building back Cardiff as a greener, fairer and stronger city, areas of future focus include:

- During the summer months, the Council will consult with citizens and city stakeholders on its draft *Greener, Fairer, Stronger* strategy, which sets out proposals for Cardiff's recovery and renewal in the post-Covid world. A programme of thematic engagement events is planned over the summer, in partnership with Cardiff University. An updated Recovery and Renewal Strategy will be published towards the end of the year, following the summer engagement exercise.
- The planning process for the new Indoor Arena in Cardiff Bay will take place over the remainder of 2021, with the completion of the full business case and contract award due to be presented to Cabinet in September. Later in the year, a business case will also be brought forward for Atlantic Wharf, which includes the new Red Dragon Centre, a new public square and public realm improvements.

- With the Framework Strategy now in place, the Council will look to progress the development of the Canal Quarter from 2021 onwards.
- A planning decision on the Dumballs Road/Embankment development is due in the autumn of 2021, which will potentially enable the development of a new waterfront-facing link between the city centre and Cardiff Bay.
- A new International Sports Village masterplan and update on the progression of the delivery for the new velodrome will be presented to Cabinet in September 2021.
- A planning application will be submitted for a new logistics development and transport connection between the A48 and Llanrumney in the autumn of 2021, aiming to improve transport links.
- Work will be progressed with the events sector to roll out test events and support safe attendance. Covid-safe visitor attractions will be established in Cardiff Bay, making use of open spaces to help drive the recovery of local businesses.
- In the year to come, the Council will continue work to develop a Music Strategy, Cultural Strategy and Tourism Strategy, with the latter to be presented to Cabinet in the autumn. Furthermore, the Covid-delayed Cardiff Music City Festival will be rescheduled for 2022.
- The Council will continue to lead on the work of the Cardiff Music Board and the delivery of the recommendations from the Cardiff Music Strategy report, which will support the return and recovery of live music in Cardiff, as well as the development of the music ecology in Cardiff.
- The Council will work with the Wales Millennium Centre and partners to develop the Atlantic Wharf Cultural Partnership, which aims to increase the value of creative and cultural production in Cardiff, encourage participation and nurture a diverse talent pipeline to raise the international profile of the city's creative sector.
- Over the coming year, the Council will work with its Western Gateway partners to leverage investment from the UK Government, as well as inward investment on an international scale, recognising the potential of shared assets across the region to raise overall competitiveness. This cross-border strategic partnership – with Cardiff and Bristol at its core – will help drive the inclusive and green economic growth that will define the post-Covid era.
- From late July 2021 onwards, the UK government will announce successful projects for the Community Renewal Fund, which will play a central role in creating economic opportunity in Cardiff during the recovery. Furthermore, it is expected that investment decisions for the first funding round of the Levelling Up Fund will be made by autumn 2021.
- The outcome of the Council-supported, Cardiff University-led Strength in Places (SIP) bid is set to be announced in the summer, with important implications for the development of the local screen and creative industries.
- The Council will play an active leadership role in the development and establishment of a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for the Cardiff Capital Region over the year ahead, seeking opportunities to work more effectively across the region in the areas of strategic development planning, regional transport planning and improving economic wellbeing.

## Well-being Objective 6: Cardiff grows in a resilient way

Over the past year, the emergence of Covid-19 demanded urgent work to establish Cardiff city centre and a number of district centres as Covid-secure spaces. This effort has not only helped to safeguard residents and visitors, but has also delivered public realm improvements and improved the local environment. The delivery of the Council's One Planet Cardiff Strategy, as well as the Transport and Clean Air White Paper, is therefore central to ambitions for delivering economic recovery and for Cardiff to continue to grow in a sustainable and resilient way.

Climate change, however, remains one of the most serious threats facing Cardiff with impacts such as rising sea levels and increased frequency of extreme weather events putting the city at direct risk. The Council's One Planet Cardiff Strategy sets out the Council's response to the Climate Emergency, including the ambition to make Cardiff a Carbon Neutral City by 2030.

### **Our priorities for 2020/21 were:**

- Respond to the climate emergency, leading Cardiff's low-carbon transition
- Lead a transformation of Cardiff's public transport system, alongside promoting more active forms of travel
- Put sustainability at the heart of our plans for Cardiff's future development
- Work as one team, keeping our streets clean
- Make Cardiff a world-leading recycling city



## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

### Respond to the climate emergency, leading Cardiff's low-carbon transition

- One Planet Cardiff Strategy:** The draft One Planet Cardiff strategy, the Council's vision for a Carbon Neutral City by 2030, was launched in October 2020. The strategy identifies a very broad ranging programme which aims to position Cardiff as a UK leader in a climate responsive economy, shaping environmental solutions to deliver benefits for businesses and the wider city, as well as the new skills and jobs that will be crucial to create this change. The Council has conducted broad and detailed consultation and engagement on the draft strategy and the views gathered are helping to shape a final One Planet Cardiff Strategy that will be published later in the year.
- Establishing a Climate Emergency Board:** A Board has been established with public sector partner organisations from the Public Services Board (PSB) to identify and collaborate on key projects. This has expanded to include other key partners outside of the regular PSB partnership including Cardiff University, Wales and West Utilities, Western Power, and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water.
- Becoming a Carbon Literate Organisation:** Cardiff Council has become the first Welsh Local Authority to be recognised as a Carbon Literate Organisation by low-carbon charity The Carbon Literacy Trust.
- Delivering a Solar Farm at Lamby Way:** The Council has delivered an operational Solar Farm at Lamby Way which generates a substantial, 9 Megawatt, amount of clean, renewable energy, both for direct local use and to help to further decarbonise National Grid electricity.
- Delivering the Clean Air Plan:** The Council has started delivering its Clean Air Plan's package of preferred mitigation measures; the Plan's complete delivery is still on target to be implemented by the end of 2021, in accordance with Welsh Government timescales. During the delivery period of Covid-19 mitigation options, in accordance with the impacts and measures put in place to facilitate the pandemic and subsequent reduced traffic movement on Castle Street, air quality datasets gathered on Castle Street have indicated consistent compliance with the legal air quality limit values set for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). With the complete delivery of measures forecasted for the end of 2021, sustained air quality compliance on Castle Street is likely to continue. The current average (2021) NO<sub>2</sub> figure is 23µg/m<sup>3</sup> with the legal limit set as 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.
- Monitoring Local Air Quality:** As part of Cardiff Council's statutory obligation to monitor local air quality, results obtained in 2020 from the non-automated NO<sub>2</sub> diffusion tube network indicated no exceedances of the annual average limit value for all locations monitored. However, it is noted that the implications of Covid-19 would be a deciding benefiting factor in this analysis.

### Lead a transformation of Cardiff's public transport system, alongside promoting more active forms of travel

- Delivering Cycle Routes:** The Council has delivered four new segregated cycle routes, including pop-up cycleways, to promote safe and active travel. Routes include North Road, Cycleway 1 (Senghennydd Road), Cycleway 4 (Sophia Gardens) and the Cross-City Pop-Up Route.

- **Promoting Safe and Active Travel in Schools:** Through the new Schools Bike Scheme, the Council provided 660 bicycles to over 30 schools in October 2020. The scheme aims to increase the number of children taking part in cycling by embedding it into school curriculums. Schools are also continuing to receive support in creating bespoke Active Travel Plans; so far, approximately 110 schools have a plan completed or in development.
- **Introducing a School Streets Scheme:** The Council has introduced a School Streets Scheme in order to ensure that children can attend school as safely as possible, as well as to encourage active travel. During term time, motor vehicles are not permitted to drive in specified streets on weekdays during peak drop-off and pick-up times. To date, 14 School Street Schemes have been implemented.
- **Improving Cardiff's Roads:** The Council has delivered an improvement programme which resurfaced 135 roads, equating to an approximate total area of 175,000m<sup>2</sup>. In addition, 32,000 m<sup>2</sup> of localised resurfacing work, commonly referred to as patching, was carried out to the highway network, achieving a reduction of highway condition complaints, such as potholes.
- **Introducing 20mph Speed Limits across the City:** The Council continues to roll out 20mph speed limits across the city, with installation in the core areas south of the A48 largely complete. Work has also commenced in the first areas north of the A48: Heath, Whitchurch and Tongwynlais, Llandaff North and Rhiwbina.

### Put sustainability at the heart of our plans for Cardiff's future development

- **Implementing the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Forward Plan:** A working group has been established to deliver and implement the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Forward Plan, taking into account existing resources and other priorities in the context of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.
- **A Low-Carbon District Heat Network to Serve Cardiff Bay:** The Council has successfully secured funding to implement the first phase of a low-carbon district heat network serving the Cardiff Bay area. This £15 million project will utilise heat generated at the Trident Park Energy Reclamation facility and distribute it to a range of large-scale customer buildings through a network of highly insulated water pipes.

### Work as one team to keep our streets clean

- **Additional Resources for Cleansing Services:** Additional resources have been allocated to the inner ward areas of Cathays, Plasnewydd, South Riverside, Grangetown and Splott for the provision of cleansing services.
- **Volunteer Groups:** Volunteer groups like Cardiff Rivers Group have worked safely, in line with the controls that have been put in place in response to Covid-19, to undertake activities like cleansing around the edge of Cardiff Bay.
- **New Control Room to Support the Waste Collections Service:** A new control room is now in place to support the Waste Collections Service which will help to dynamically monitor daily performance. Additional litter bin sensors have also been introduced to facilitate more efficient operations in street cleansing.

- **A New Model for Waste and Recycling Collections:** Progress has been made in relation to waste management, with the implementation of a four-day working week in collections, permanent staff recruitment, a major fleet replacement programme, and a significant improvement in workplace health and safety arrangements. Collection rounds for recycling, residual and food have been rebalanced with crews now achieving 99-100% of contracted working hours, representing a significant improvement in productivity in comparison with previous arrangements.

## Make Cardiff a world-leading recycling city

- **New Booking Systems:** A booking system was introduced for the city's two Recycling Centres in order to enable them to re-open safely at the end of May 2020. In addition, a booking system for bulky item collections was launched on 9 September 2020 on both the Council's website and Cardiff App. The new booking system and controls at Recycling Centres have supported improving recycling performance to 90%.
- **Increasing the Council's Electric Vehicles Fleet:** The Council has introduced 12 electric vehicles to the Recycling and Neighbourhood Services fleet, with five more electric Refuse Collection Vehicles (e-RCVs) on order – this will mean that the Council has the largest fleet of manufacturer produced e-RCVs in Wales and potentially the UK.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

- **Achieving Statutory Recycling Targets:** Changes to waste and recycling collections due to Covid-19 meant that between 30 March and 1 June 2020, all waste and recycling collected from residents was sent to the Energy from Waste plant. Covid-19, and the impact on collections to protect the workforce, has impacted performance throughout the year, and the 64% statutory recycling performance target has not been achieved. This poses a financial risk to the Council, and a new Recycling Strategy is required immediately to demonstrate commitment to achieving the target. Meeting the target will therefore remain a significant performance challenge for the Council in 2021/22, as well as the need to meet the statutory target of 70% by 2024/25. A programme of work to address this under-performance is being developed in partnership with the Welsh Government, WRAP and local partnerships.

Allied to this, concerted effort to improve performance in waste collections is continuing, particularly in relation to garden waste, assisted lifts, and HMOs. Workforce availability has been a key issue, which has been impacted by a national shortage of HGV drivers and high sickness absence rates in the service.

- **Street Cleanliness:** At the city level, the percentage of highways found to be of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness is above the target of 90%. However, a number of wards, particularly in the city centre and in the south of the city, fall under the 90% target for high or acceptable standard of cleanliness.
- **Promoting Changes in Resident Waste and Recycling Behaviour:** There is a variable picture across the city in terms of street cleanliness. Covid-19 has impacted work to promote changes in resident waste and recycling behaviour, with the pink sticker campaign, which lets residents know when they put out contaminated waste unsuitable for recycling, placed on hold. Once the new collections model is fully established, and collections are taking place as scheduled, officers will relaunch the campaign. Education will be followed by enforcement action where required.

- **Sustainable Water, Flood and Drainage Strategy:** Coastal erosion, and associated flood risks relating to the condition of existing flood defences, remains a major risk area for the Council and is recognised within the Corporate Risk Register. Development of a Sustainable Water, Flood and Drainage Strategy for Cardiff was put on hold for 12 months in February 2020, due to the ongoing effects of the February 2020 storms on the Flood Risk Management Team, as well as ongoing demands related to Covid-19. Availability of match funding has resulted in further delays in the development of the Strategy, with work continuing to find a solution. The Council continues to work with external bodies such as Natural Resources Wales to manage the residual risk.
- **Public Transport and Covid-19:** The impact of lockdowns and the requirements of social distancing has had a major impact on public transport, particularly municipal bus companies, with passenger numbers falling drastically and services reduced. Managing the continued impact on mobility and the transport network is therefore crucial moving forward. The Council has supported the bus operators through the Welsh Government Bus Emergency Scheme (BES2) and is working with key stakeholders on developing the Bus Strategy as part of a programme of proposed bus reforms.
- **Housing Retrofit:** The Council has recognised the need for a major upscale in retrofit activity, especially in privately owned housing, in order to address the city-wide carbon challenge. A range of funding mechanisms already exist but the uptake of these has been low and the processes for accessing them are often complex. The Council is working actively with the Cardiff City Region to explore and unlock all potential avenues that could help to facilitate and accelerate the uptake of energy efficiency measures in the city's residential stock.
- **Single-Use Plastics:** The Council has now developed an action plan for the removal of single-use plastics from all Council buildings as part of the One Planet Cardiff Strategy. However, the project has not progressed in line with original deadlines due to Council buildings not being occupied during the pandemic. Further work needs to be undertaken with partners to develop a city-wide response to single-use plastics in all public services.
- **Clean Air:** In 2018 the Council received a legal direction from the Welsh Government to ensure that air pollution levels were below the EU limit value, specifically levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). In response, the Council undertook a detailed analysis of air pollution levels across the city, which identified Castle Street as the sole non-compliant street. The temporary measures established on Castle Street in response to Covid-19 led to a significant improvement in air quality in 2020/21, and ensured that compliance with the EU Limit for NO<sub>2</sub> was achieved in advance of the modelled forecast date within the Council's Clean Air Plan. The Council needs to ensure that the obligations, as set out in the legal direction from Welsh Government, are met and that compliance is maintained long term.

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

To ensure that Cardiff continues to grow in a sustainable and resilient way, areas of future focus include:

- Cardiff's Recycling Strategy is currently under review and a new comprehensive strategy will be released in autumn 2021. The Strategy incorporates an action plan to achieve recycling targets of 64%, and 70% by 2025.

- Progress has been made with workforce reforms in relation to waste collections with a move towards a four-day working week, staff recruitment, fleet replacement and workplace health and safety arrangements, with service improvements evident in collection rounds for recycling, residual and food. However, this remains work in progress and will need to continue as a key area of corporate focus for 2021/22. In terms of wider street scene services, the percentage of highways found to be of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness is above the target of 90 %; but levels of street cleanliness are variable with standards not being met in a number of wards in and around the city centre and south of the city.
- The Council will continue to progress the City Centre Transport Masterplan projects from 2020 through to 2022, including City Centre East and Canal Scheme, Castle Street and Central Square.
- A full and final One Planet Cardiff Strategy will be published later in the year, including details of the Council's carbon accounting methodology and project prioritisation process, along with a more detailed ten-year action plan to deliver the Council's Carbon Neutral ambitions.
- A Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26 will be published this year, which will establish key aims and objectives outlining how the Council will reduce carbon output and off-set with new renewable energy sources.
- In the longer-term, it is important that the Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) fully supports the ambition for carbon neutral developments, and that sustainable design and construction principles are fully integrated into the preparation process over the next three and a half years. Formal commencement of the Replacement LDP preparation process began in spring 2021.
- Ten Council car parks will see the installation of 22kW fast chargers in the coming months, supporting the planned action to increase the Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) network across the city. EVCPs will also be installed at three main Council locations, namely Coleridge Road, County Hall, and Lamby Way.
- Construction of the low-carbon district heat network serving the Cardiff Bay area is set to commence in the autumn of 2021, with first heat supplied by autumn/ winter 2022.
- As part of the wider commitment to Clean Air, the Council is seeking to expand its real-time monitoring network, ensuring that Cardiff has an advanced regulatory monitoring network for air quality data, enabling the Council to comply with any future legislative changes from Welsh Government. The data collected will serve as the foundation stone for research, policy development, health impact analysis and public understanding of air quality more widely across Cardiff.
- As a result of traffic and air quality monitoring, the public consultation in relation to the future of Castle Street, and further analysis of the Covid-19 recovery, it has been agreed by the Council's Cabinet to modify the existing temporary arrangements on Castle Street to allow all vehicles (including cars) to access two lanes of Castle Street, with a westbound bus lane and two-way segregated cycleway retained. This adaption to the current temporary arrangements will enable further analysis, monitoring and assessment to take place before a permanent scheme is implemented post-Covid-19 recovery.

## Well-being Objective 7: Modernising & integrating our public services

In the face of rising demand and reducing budgets, Capital Ambition set out a programme of modernisation that would improve efficiency, better support service delivery and promote social and environmental change. The challenge of responding to Covid-19, however, radically accelerated this agenda and necessitated the delivery of service innovation at an unprecedented pace and scale.

The Council wishes to build on this platform, developing a new approach that brings together assets, technology and the workforce to unlock further efficiency saving, achieve productivity gains and deliver an enhanced service offer. It will allow the Council to become a more agile organisation, providing a more responsive and adaptable service for citizens, a more flexible working environment for staff while driving down the Council's assets, energy and transport costs.

### **Our priorities for 2020/21 were:**

- Deliver fewer and better Council buildings
- Rebuild and reform our public services so that they can meet the challenges of the 2020s
- Make sure that we are a Council that better talks to and listens to the city we serve
- Deliver our ambitious Digital Strategy

## ■ Key Successes in 2020/21

### Deliver fewer and better Council Buildings

- **Ensuring Council Buildings are Covid-Safe:** In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, extensive work has been undertaken over the course of the year to ensure the Council's buildings and schools are 'Covid-safe', allowing services to resume and schools to remain open to all children.
- **Improving and Modernising the Council's Estate:** The completion of the 2015-20 Corporate Property Strategy has seen major works continue to improve and modernise the Council's estate, including significant improvements to schools buildings, ensuring they are fit for the 21st Century.
- **Reducing the Council's Accommodation Footprint:** In November 2020, the Council chose not to renew the lease on Willcox House, and to relocate staff to County Hall or to agile/home working arrangements. This has reduced the Council's accommodation footprint by approximately 60,000 sq.ft. and released costs of around £1.5 million.

### Rebuild and reform our public services so that they can meet the challenges of the 2020s

- **Significant Improvements in Sickness Absence:** Sickness absence has been a long-standing area of challenge for the Council, however, significant improvements have been seen over the course of 2020/21. The outturn position for 2020/21 was 8.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) days lost per employee across the Council, below the target of 9.5 days lost per employee. This is an improvement of 3.17 days lost when compared to 2019/20. Short-term sickness absence also continues to fall, with a 48% decrease compared to 2019/20. Furthermore, whilst long-term sickness accounts for 78% of all absences, the number of days lost has decreased by 15,000 days.
- **A Strengthened Approach to Performance Management and Data Analysis:** The Council has taken a series of steps to strengthen its performance management arrangements over the past 18 months. This has included the introduction of performance challenge sessions convened by the Leader and Chief Executive, half-year strategic assessments drawing together performance information from a wide range of sources, improved data visualisation and enhancing the role of the Scrutiny Performance Panel. Taken together, these measures ensure that the Council is well positioned to respond to the new requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- **Corporate Health:** Work continues towards the Corporate Health Gold Standard and the Council has been successful in its re-assessment for the Silver Standard. The focus for the Standard over the last 12 months, during the Covid-19 pandemic, has been around staying healthy whilst working from home.
- **Increasing Support for Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Support for mental health and wellbeing has increased, through the Council's Carefirst contract, as well as the in-house counselling team. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy has also moved to in-house provision, reducing costs, and the delivery of trauma counselling, virtual physio and DSE support for home workers has improved.

## Make sure that we are a Council that better talks to and listens to the city we serve

- **Citizen Satisfaction with Council Services:** In terms of citizen satisfaction with Council services, Cardiff continues to demonstrate an upward trend. The most recent 2020 Ask Cardiff Survey showed that 67% of citizens are satisfied with services that the Council provides, an 11% increase on the previous year. In particular, 79.1% of citizens enjoy Cardiff's parks and open spaces, 74.6% are satisfied with street lighting and 71% are satisfied with libraries and Hubs.
- **Continued Democratic Governance Throughout the Pandemic:** The Council's democratic governance has continued to operate effectively online over the course of the pandemic. Full Council meetings, Cabinet and Scrutiny meetings have all transitioned to video conference with meetings continuing to be webcast for public viewing.
- **Continued Scrutiny Throughout the Pandemic:** In response to the first lockdown, a remote Scrutiny Covid Panel was established to test time-critical decisions and explore the Council's response to the pandemic. The remote restart of all five Scrutiny Committees in September 2020, framed to ensure measured and proportionate scrutiny, enabled stakeholders' voices to be heard, with 96 external voices informing scrutiny work during 2020/21. Overall, Scrutiny Committees made 201 recommendations to Cabinet in 2020/21 and, of the responses received to date, Cabinet has fully accepted 70% and partially accepted 22%, illustrating the value added by scrutiny. Moving forward, Scrutiny is improving online mechanisms to increase public engagement and participation, helping to ensure local voices shape and inform its work and the overall work of the Council.

## Use the power of the public purse to deliver social progress

- **Social Value Framework:** A Social Value Framework and Portal has been established, with Wales-wide Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMS) launched in November 2020, which the Council played a lead role in developing through the National Social Value Taskforce Wales. The TOMs are being piloted and standard tender documentation continues to be refined in light of experience. Training has also been developed for the TOMs and portal, which will be rolled out Council-wide in 2021/22.
- **Supporting the Foundational Economy:** The Council continues to support the foundational economy through the implementation of its Socially Responsible Procurement Policy, ensuring that local people and communities benefit from the money the Council spends on goods and services. Social business spend analysis has been undertaken to identify potential areas where the Council could look to provide increased opportunities, with an aim to work with Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC) in 2021 to develop plans to support social businesses to seek out Council procurement opportunities.

## Deliver the Council's ambitious Digital Strategy

- **Investing in Digital Infrastructure and Home Working:** Investment in digital infrastructure, services and skills meant the Council was well placed to shift to digital and online working necessitated by the pandemic, with the number of remote connections rising from 500 to over 4,000.



- **Leading City-wide and National Initiatives in Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic:** Robust digital capability enabled the Council to lead on a number of city-wide and national initiatives in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the creation of the Cardiff and Vale Test, Trace Protect (TTP) Service, and the city's Mass Vaccination Programme. Other digital services were also quickly developed and expanded in response to the pandemic, including online Free School Meal payments, food appeal/hardship fund donation pages and online application forms for business grants.
- **A new Chatbot:** The Council's Chatbot 'BOBi' has enabled customers to engage with the Council for enquiries such as waste collections, council tax and Covid-19 related issues. Work has continued over the year to broaden and deepen the services offered, as well as improve conversation and enquiry responses. Since its re-launch last April, the bot has had over 40,500 conversations with customers and maintains a feedback score of over 85 %.
- **Continued 'Channel Shift':** Approximately 1.9 million customers contacted the Council via digital channels in 2020/21, 650,000 more contacts compared to 2019/20. The Cardiff App also continues to see a significant increase in citizen use, with a 74 % increase in the number of downloads when compared to 2019/20. The digital development enables services to access real-time data and analysis, and plan services appropriately.

## ■ Challenges and Risks

- **Financial Resilience:** The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic continues to have a significant financial impact on the Council. The Council has incurred significant additional costs as it has worked to adapt public services, support local businesses and workers, and keep citizens, particularly the city's most vulnerable citizens, safe. In addition, income losses have been substantial, particularly due to the closure of the Council's cultural and sporting venues. Some of these costs and incomes have been recovered via the Welsh Government's Hardship Fund for Local Authorities. However, the situation remains extremely challenging, and the continuation/ prioritisation of financial support post-Covid-19 remains a major financial risk. It will be critical for the Council to have robust recovery plans in place and that these key risks are monitored closely during 2021/22.

Over and above the Covid-19 crisis, certain directorates continue to face long-standing and significant financial pressures, with ongoing challenges relating to the planning and delivery of departmental efficiency savings. The final revenue position for the Council reflects an overall balanced position, and spending was contained within its approved budget for 2020/21. However, a shortfall in departmental savings in 2020/21 demonstrates the absolute importance of a robust Medium Term Financial Plan and a discipline to realising savings. Departmental efficiency savings for 2021/22 have therefore been reviewed for achievability in order to deliver as planned. Enhanced service planning has also been undertaken in a number of areas grappling with strategic challenges to ensure clear accountabilities, metrics and targets.

Moving forward, a sharper focus will need to be placed on the capital position, as increases in costs and supply pressures are beginning to have consequences in terms of the delivery of the capital programme.

- **Sickness Absence:** Whilst significant improvements have been made to sickness absence throughout 2020/21, it is unclear whether the gains made are sustainable post-pandemic. The Council needs to 'lock in' these improvements, acknowledging the impact social distancing, working from home and increased hygiene will have had on sickness. Improvements made to sickness absence are also not uniform across the Council, with some service areas recording persistently high sickness absence. A targeted approach will continue to be applied, with management action to improve performance. Furthermore, continued attention is needed on reducing long-term sickness absence, with a focus on case management, managerial discipline and provision of support. Allied to this, supporting staff physical and mental wellbeing will continue to be a priority, with additional support provided, particularly for those suffering poor mental health.
- **Transitioning Effectively and Equitably to a Hybrid Working Model:** Whilst greater home and agile working has produced a number of benefits, challenges have also been identified, including: a loss of personal interaction between staff; a danger that those working from home may experience a 'blurring of the lines' between their work and home lives; ensuring that home environments are both safe and appropriate for work; and the challenge of hosting meetings online that require creative thinking and problem solving. The Council produced a 'Homeworking Etiquette' guide at the beginning of the pandemic to provide guidance to both staff and managers, with training being piloted on the subject. Moving forward, the Council is seeking to introduce a 'hybrid working' model that maintains the benefits of increased home and flexible working arrangements experienced over the past year, whilst mitigating the challenges identified.

## ■ Forward Look: Areas of Focus

As the Council continues to adapt to the challenges and opportunities of its new operating environment as a result of the pandemic, a number of steps will be taken forward as part of the organisation's recovery and renewal agenda:

- To embed the service improvements, flexibilities afforded to staff and productivity gains achieved during the pandemic, the Council is developing a 'hybrid working' model. The model will focus on four interconnected areas of work: people, workspace, technology and service transformation. As part of this work the Council will:
  - » Commence a programme of trade union and staff engagement on the development of the model.
  - » Undertake a review of the relevant employee policy requirements, including the Homeworking Policy and associated agile working policies, to ensure that they support the shift to 'hybrid working'.
  - » Require all home workers and a number of home-based and flexible workers to have regular health and safety assessments, to ensure that those staff working from home are working in safe and appropriate environments. Home working assessments will be repeated at an appropriate frequency determined by the risk involved.

- » Develop a network of community ‘touch down’ points and remote working hubs, based in Council or partner buildings in communities across the city, that contain flexible desk space, meeting rooms and collaboration spaces that can be booked online. The establishment of these ‘touch down’ points/ spaces will be developed in tandem with the focus on ‘locality working’, in partnership with other major public service providers, and will support the regeneration of local community and district hubs.
- » Review the nature and scale of the Council’s accommodation footprint and, where appropriate, rationalise, adapt or modernise. A new Corporate Property Strategy (2021-26) will also be brought forward during 2021/22.

- **Accelerating the Council’s Digital Programme:**

- » The Council anticipates that the shift towards online and digital services will continue post-pandemic. To reflect this, the Council will review and refresh its Digital Strategy over the year ahead.
- » The Council will develop a plan for Cardiff to become a Smart City, in order to manage energy, traffic flows, congestion and air quality.

- **Continuing to strengthen the approach to performance management and data analysis:**

- » To respond to new performance requirements, build on the improvements in corporate performance reporting and management, and those enacted in response to the pandemic, a new Performance Management Framework will be brought forward alongside a new Data Strategy for the Council.

- **Continuing to use the power of the public purse to deliver social progress:**

- » The Council will develop a new Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy, based on the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill. The Strategy will reaffirm the Council’s commitment to using its procurement processes and procedures to deliver its Well-being Objectives.
- » The Council will continue to play a leading role in the National Social Value Taskforce Wales. Alongside other Welsh Local Authorities, the Council will work to develop a standard Themes, Outcomes, Measures (TOMs) implementation approach across Wales which will make it easier for contractors to bid for work.
- » The Council will aim to establish social clauses within all major council contracts and capital programmes, to maximise local job creation and support local supply chains and local businesses.

