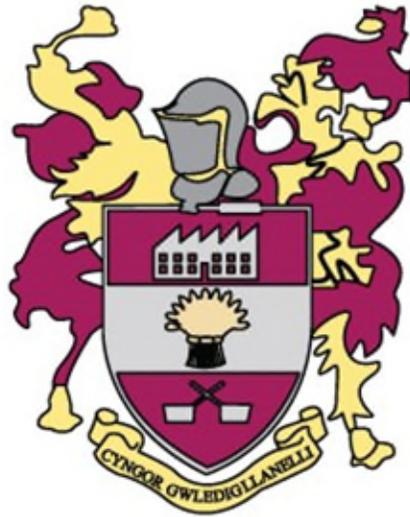


ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

WELL-BEING | BIODIVERSITY | PRIORITIES | ACTIVITIES | ACHIEVEMENTS



**Cyngor Gwledig
LLANELLI
Rural Council**

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

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LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

INTRODUCTION

The council has a statutory duty to prepare and publish two public annual reports and also a biodiversity action plan report once every three years to satisfy the following legislative requirements:

Section 40 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the council to publish a report annually on the progress made in meeting the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board's local well-being objectives. The report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable following the end of the financial year (31 March) to which the report relates.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires the council to prepare and publish a plan report once every three years setting out what it proposes to do to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience. The council's next plan report must be published no later than 31 December 2025.

Section 52 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires the council, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year (31 March), to prepare and publish an annual report about the council's priorities, activities and achievements over the previous year.

There are a number of over-lapping elements associated with the production of these reports. For reasons of practicality and to avoid duplication the council has decided to prepare a single composite annual report to satisfy its legislative reporting duties. The council is permitted to do this in preference to producing three individual reports.

The composite annual report structure has been designed to reflect the chronological order of the enactment of the legislative reporting requirements based on when the reporting duties were first introduced to the local council sector and comprises three parts:

- PART 1 – The council's contribution to supporting the local well-being objectives for the area (the Section 40 reporting duty (Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015));
- PART 2 – The council's contribution to supporting and promoting local biodiversity (the Section 6 reporting duty (Environment (Wales) Act 2016)); and
- PART 3 – A review of the council's key tasks and activities performed over the previous year (the Section 52 reporting duty (Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021)).

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the ordinary local government elections in May 2022, eleven new councillors were elected to serve on the council together with ten re-elected councillors. All seven of the council's electoral wards were contested with a total of 53 candidates contesting 21 seats. Since the formation of the new council, it has agreed a capital programme of works to provide new community facilities throughout its administrative area. These works will be progressed over the current electoral cycle of the council up until May 2027 and will feature in future annual reports. The council continues to conduct its formal business and decision making arrangements by facilitating multi-location council and committee meetings using Microsoft Teams software to accommodate councillors, the press and public participating remotely if they so wish. Llanelli District Cemetery, council parks, playgrounds and community halls continue to flourish and the newly added floodlit AstroTurf pitch in Dafen Park is proving very popular with local sports groups. Floodlights have also been installed at the multi-use games area in Llwynhendy, which is being well used by the community. The adoption of Lower Lliedi Reservoir in Swiss Valley is progressing well under the council's stewardship. The upgraded features and amenities have been well received, with the facility attracting in excess of 99,000 visitors this year.

The training department has built on the success of the Jobs Growth Wales Plus programme by continuing the work with ITEC Training, learners achieving 60% progression to higher learning and employment. An increase in contract delivery has been achieved and the opportunity to work with Coleg Sir Gar to become a delivery partner.

In apprenticeships the Training Department continues to deliver programmes in Logistics and Business, recording good performance results at Foundation and advanced levels. The logistics team remains very busy delivering not only apprenticeships but various courses through Personal Learning Accounts attracting additional funding for new courses to train LGV and PCV drivers with licence acquisition. Two staff members received recognition at the Skills Academy Wales Awards receiving a Practitioner of the Year 2023 and Coleg Cenedlaethol Practitioner of the Year 2023. A local employer was awarded Employer of the Year 2023 for their commitment to recruiting and supporting Logistics Apprentices through to achievement.

The return of the Prince's Trust Team programme proved successful capturing the attention of the Prince's Trust Wales awards panel with their community initiative project in partnership with Carmarthenshire County Council and local street artist Steve Jenks by transforming a local community area in creating a permanent art installation and garden, going on to win the Wales JD Prince's Trust Community Impact Award.

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

HEADLINE ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the last 12 months the council has achieved:

- In February 2024, the council resolved that it was an eligible community council for the purpose of using the General Power of Competence.
- Fish stocking programme enacted at Lower Lliedi Reservoir, Swiss Valley. Native predatory species introduced in an initiative to combat invasive fish species in partnership with Welsh Water and Natural Resources Wales.
- License for land and water based activities at Lower Lliedi Reservoir, Swiss Valley to an outward bound activity provider thus enabling angling and paddle sports opportunities to take place as well as other outdoor land activities.
- First year of the Dwyfor Growing Space was a success with the majority of raised bed occupiers renewing for year 2.
- Successful funding application for Shared Prosperity Fund grant via Carmarthenshire County Council and UK Government Levelling Up programme for a new play area and environmental enhancement at Gwili Fields, Llwynhendy.
- Successful delivery of Welsh Government and National Lottery Heritage Fund's Local Places for Nature programme for Ponthenri Recreation Ground and other Llanelli Rural areas
- Completed the Community Asset Transfer of land at Clos Cilsaig, Gwili Fields Llwynhendy and Penygraig for the purpose of developing new children's play areas
- Coordination of a Litter Pick Hub that has allowed 25 litter picks carried out by 261 volunteers.
- Reduced its grass cutting operations in test areas to allow for better pollinators for local biodiversity.
- Awarded a contract for new play area equipment at Gwili Fields and Ponthenri.
- 2 staff members were recognised at Skills Academy Wales' awards ceremony, Practitioner of the Year 2023 and Coleg Cenedlaethol Practitioner of the Year 2023.



Local Places for Nature
project at Ponthenri
Recreation Ground

LRC Training
activities 2023/24



Annual Report – Part 1

Report for Carmarthenshire Public Services Board - Llanelli Rural Council Annual Report - 2023-24

Outline of Council

One of nine community councils in the Llanelli district area, the Council, formed during Local Government re-organisation in April 1974, is made up of 21 elected members, advised by the Clerk to the Council.

The Council's geographic area is approximately 26.78 square miles, with a population of 22,018 and surrounds the urban centre of Llanelli. Its boundaries extend from Loughor Estuary in the east to Burry Port in the west and skirts the Gwendraeth Valley in the north. The area is made up of the villages and districts of Bynea, Cwmbach, Cynheidre, Dafen, Felinfoel, Five Roads, Furnace, Llwynhendy, Ponthenri, Pontyates (south of the railway line), Pwll, Sandy and Swiss Valley.

Chairman: Councillor Susan Phillips

Leader of the Council: Councillor Susan Lewis

Clerk to the Council: Mark Galbraith ACIS

The Council's 21 elected members represent seven wards and it meets on the second Tuesday at 6.00 pm each month except for August.

Councillors by ward are:

Bynea: Cllrs D M Cundy, T M Donoghue and S M T Ford.

Dafen: Cllrs R E Evans, S N Lewis, A J Rogers and N A Stephens.

Felinfoel: Cllrs E M Evans and N Evans.

Glyn: Cllrs A Evans and O Williams.

Hengoed: Cllrs M V Davies, J S Phillips, W E Skinner and B M Williams.

Pemberton: Cllrs S L Davies, J P Hart, S K Nurse and A G Stephens.

Swiss Valley: Cllrs S R Bowen and A G Morgan.

The Council's precept for 2023/2024 was £1,122,755 equivalent to £132.43 per band D property. Since the Council's inception, it has built and maintained nine community halls, sports changing rooms and a community resource centre incorporating community and changing facilities. In November 2020, the Council signed a five-year community adoption agreement with Welsh Water to provide upgrades and routine maintenance for the Lower Lliedi Reservoir at Swiss Valley. The agreement is the first of its kind in Wales. The council also maintains seven parks where rugby, football, bowls and cricket are regularly played and has provided and maintains 14 children's play areas. It grant aids voluntary and charitable organisations. Through its Training Department the Council provides work based learning training and job opportunities.

The Council manages and maintains Llanelli District Cemetery which is jointly owned with Llanelli Town Council. The Council also provides a grounds maintenance service to the town council to maintain its parks and open spaces under a service level agreement.

What is the Council's Vision/Objectives?

The Council is committed to working for and with the local community to help improve general well-being while acting as a local voice to safeguard key services.

The Council has the following ambitions:

- To be recognised as an excellent organisation;
- To be an organisation that people are proud to work for and be associated with.

The Council aims to be:

- Caring and supportive;
- Fair and equitable;
- Inclusive;
- Developmental and Innovative;
- Empowering, Enthusiastic and Encouraging.

The Council's general vision is outlined in its Strategic Plan but following the enactment of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGAct) it elected to employ a full time Community Development Officer (CDO) and commissioned a 15 year plan that focuses on well-being called the Llanelli Rural Area Whole Place Plan – 2015 to 2030. This plan details the background, approach and methods of delivering well-being for its area. Both its Strategic Plan and Well Being Plan integrate the seven National Wellbeing Goals and five ways of working brought about by the Act.

OUR SPENDING PRIORITIES FOR 2024/25

How is the Council funded?

The Council is funded entirely from the Council taxpayer and other sources of income collected from charges etc.

Where does your money go?

The Council has agreed a budget of £2,221,153 to spend on the provision of services in 2024/25. For the council tax payer, the Band D tax levied will be £137.30 per dwelling which represents a 3.7% increase on 2023/24.

The Council has budgeted to spend on:

2023/24		2024/25
£		£
533,660	Halls	542,037
485,882	Parks/open spaces	539,691
114,885	Roads and footpaths	88,382
100,000	Cemetery	100,000
142,174	Arts and tourism	132,290
114,237	Community development	117,704
9,220	Training	6,274
33,000	Grants	25,000
522,955	Play areas	527,531
55,389	Asset Transfer	59,336
<u>110,215</u>	Other services	<u>82,908</u>
<u>2,221,617</u>		<u>2,221,153</u>

To be financed by:

	£
Council Tax payers	1,174,180
Charges, grants etc	254,927
Reserves	792,046

Financial Reserves

Balances are necessary to provide for the levelling out of normal peaks and troughs of a year’s financial activities. It is estimated that these working balances will stand at around £456,554 on 31 March, 2023.

Continuing Services

- the maintenance of its community halls, parks, play areas, footpaths and open spaces
- the maintenance of Llanelli District Cemetery in partnership with Llanelli Town Council.
- providing a grounds maintenance service to Llanelli Town Council
- funding of the Christmas Lights with Carmarthenshire County Council and Llanelli Town Council
- projects under the Whole Place Plan
- to deliver Work Based Learning Programmes

Our Plans

Specific projects this year are:-

- to continue the development of new facilities at Swiss Valley Reservoir including a fish stocking programme
- to continue with the lease transfer of assets from Carmarthenshire County Council
- to negotiate Section 106 funding for play and recreational facilities
- to install play areas at Cilsaig Dafen, Gwili Fields, Penygraig and Ponthenri
- to continue the development of the Community Hub project in Llwynhendy

Progress against the Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan Objectives

Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan Objective 1: Ensuring a sustainable economy and fair employment

Steps taken by Llanelli Rural Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)
Learner Wellbeing	The wellbeing of learners is a priority within Work Based Learning Provision (WBL). Estyn inspections and self-evaluations of training provision will focus on the 'Wellbeing and Safeguarding' of learners along with the 'Care, Support and Guidance' offered to them. This is alongside their progress in learning. In Skills Academy Wales the Training Department is represented on the Health, Safety and Wellbeing group which oversees the support given to apprentices in programme. In JGW+ provision wellbeing and safeguarding issues are reported and monitored through the 'My Concern' platform provided by ITEC Skills or 'Be Safe' provided by Coleg Sir Gar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales
Work based learning provision for 16-19 year olds	LRC Training's Job's Growth Wales + programme is available on a roll-on, roll-off basis, ensuring that young people who often face many difficult barriers to learning can access provision when they need to. Inductions are held at least monthly and often more frequently, each learner will have an Individual Learning Plan drawn up which will include targets which are SMART and achievable. Progress against these targets are reviewed monthly. Learners will access training opportunities which are appropriate and timely for them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Resilient Wales • More equal Wales
Apprenticeship opportunities and Personal Learning Accounts (PLA)	Apprenticeship opportunities are available at any time. LRC Training will work with employers who have apprenticeship vacancies to help them fill vacancies. The availability of apprenticeship places is promoted to employers in the relevant sectors, particularly in logistics where employers are currently experiencing a shortage in operatives and LGV Drivers. Learning follows pre agreed apprenticeship frameworks but there is flexibility in the method of delivery, a mix of on and off the job training and an opportunity to complete the framework over a longer or shorter time span. PLA funding has been directed at priority sectors such as logistics and passenger transport. The training department is using this funding to deliver training to those not already employed in the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Resilient Wales • More equal Wales
Networking in Training and Education	LRC Training is recognised as a quality Work Based Learning provider in Wales. Membership of National Training Federation Wales, Neath Port Talbot College Group and Skills Academy Wales allows the department to participate and contribute to all consultations, training and guidance relevant to WBL provision. LRC Training is also involved in sector specific networks, notably with the National Logistics Academy which offers apprenticeship opportunities across the UK.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities

	<p>LRC Training is now working with ITEC Skills Ltd and Coleg Sir Gar to deliver the Jobs Growth Wales + programme in Carmarthenshire.</p> <p>Locally, officers network well with referral agencies such as Careers Wales, The Youth Service and JobCentre Plus. There are good communications with other local providers and support agencies such as Choices and Iechyd Da who are involved with young learners.</p>	
Opportunities for Learning	<p>LRC Training has developed unique training provision.</p> <p>The Jobs Growth Wales + programme exhibits a high level of learner support and pastoral care with dedicated provision for additional learning needs and skills development.</p> <p>LRC Training is a delivery partner with the Prince's Trust and delivers both 'Achieve' and 'Team' programmes.</p> <p>LRC Training is unique in its provision of apprenticeship opportunities in Logistics and Transport throughout Wales, adding Supply Chain Management to the apprenticeship offer this year, and is one of very few providers in Wales offering Level 4 apprenticeships in Business Administration.</p> <p>LRC Training is working with Neath Port Talbot College (NPTC) Group to deliver training in Logistics and Road Passenger Transport through Personal Learning Accounts across South Wales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • More equal Wales • Resilient Wales
Investors in People Accreditation	<p>The council is putting people first as an investors in people organisation, which is a standard wherein the employer engages with employees to discuss welfare, wellbeing training and employment needs. It maintains open dialogues and evaluates the council's values whilst seeking to improve the leadership and management capability of the organisation. Accreditation achieved in 2023.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Healthier Wales • More equal Wales

Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan Objective 2: Improving well-being and reducing health inequalities

Steps taken by Llanelli Rural Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)
<p>Community adoption plan with Welsh Water for Lower Lliedi Reservoir, Swiss Valley</p>	<p>The community adoption plan was agreed in November 2020, and is the first of its kind in Wales. Its purpose is designed to open up the Lower Lliedi Reservoir local beauty spot to members of the public. The intention is to enable recreation, public access for all and create a high quality visitor experience that balances recreation with conservation and biodiversity. The agreement allows regulated water access for paddle sports and anglers. The space will be promoted as a place where schools and other outdoor education providers can visit. Volunteering opportunities have been created since the adoption. The toilet block has been restored and the car parks have been reopened. The eastern footpath has been resurfaced whilst improvements have also been made where necessary on parts of the western footpath. The adoption has prompted the council to establish a volunteer led angling club. The agreement also allows for opportunities for angling and canoe competitions and mobile traders at the site. This in turn will have a positive effect on the local economy and tourism industry. The council installed visitor counters at entrance points at the site and between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 they recorded 99,254 visitors to the reservoir.</p> <p>The council has improved the visitor experience by way of a woodland management plan and installation of signage, seating/picnic areas, accessibility, footpath repair and improvements to existing woodland trails. Habitat boxes have been installed to help monitor and aid biodiversity in the woodland.</p> <p>The council continues to work with a number of public sector partners to deliver its site management plan. Staff are assigned with site monitoring which ensures the area is maintained for the purposes it is intended for. Based on the recommendations of stakeholders, an appropriate fish stocking programme is now underway. Working relationships for the ongoing use of the reservoir have been established with Carmarthenshire County Council leisure, biodiversity, rights of way and outdoor education officers. Relationships have been established with local anglers, paddlers, volunteers and community groups to ensure the site is inclusive of their needs. This approach has embraced the five ways of working sustainably by collaborating with partners and involving user groups in the discussions. The ongoing dialogue with the different stakeholders and the public have helped frame the long term plans for the site by overcoming or flagging up any potential problems and putting well-being at the fore front of our plans for the reservoir.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language • Globally Responsible Wales

	<p>Having a third party water sports and outward bound activity provider at the reservoir has been an aspiration for the council. In the summer of 2023, LiveFree Adventures Ltd. was successful in its tender for an operator licence to provide water sports and outward bound activities at the reservoir. There are now many land and water based activities on offer through LiveFree Adventures at the reservoir. You can book in advance or turn up and pay to book a self-launch permit or hire a Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP), Kayak or Row Boat. The company are looking at expanding their offering his year to do a range of new land and water based activities.</p> <p>For anglers at the reservoir, the launch of a new online booking system powered by Club Mate has been developed and is set to launch in April 2024.</p>	
Maintaining the footpath network within the Council's boundaries	The Council has an agreement in place with Carmarthenshire County Council to maintain public rights of way within its area on an agency basis for the county council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Globally Responsible Wales
Provision of seven playing fields used for recreation and sports such as bowls, cricket, football and rugby teams from junior to adult age groups.	These facilities allow for sports teams to participate in leisure and recreation throughout the Council's administrative area. The Council has a positive relationship with these groups and the Council maintains facilities to a satisfactory level at no cost to the user. The Council's grounds maintenance team has good communication links with local clubs. This proactive approach helps to deal with issues at an early intervention therefore preventing problems while safeguarding long term needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Globally Responsible Wales
Provision of grant funding to voluntary groups and community hall committees	Local volunteer led organisations and charities are encouraged to approach the council for small donations that help them deliver on their aims and objectives. Organisations that are doing good things for the Llanelli Rural area and are looking for assistance with running costs, can approach the council for financial support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities
Phil Bennett OBE Community Resource Centre	This building has additional facilities compared to other Council owned community halls. It is a two storey building with a depot for the council's grounds maintenance team, office space and changing rooms for the sporting organisations that use Felinfoel Recreation Ground. The management committee is set up as charity and company limited by guarantee which is supported by the Council's Community Development Officer. The office space has housed Carmarthenshire County Council staff in the past and now hosts Hywel Dda University Health Board Primary Care team. The community hall sits on the first floor and hosts a varied programme of classes and clubs for the community and is a popular venue for training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities

<p>Provision of a community growing space in Llwynhendy</p>	<p>The Council has acquired the former allotments at Dwyfor, Llwynhendy via a Community Asset Transfer from Carmarthenshire County Council. The funds received as part of the transfer and via a Welsh Government Allotment grant has enabled the council to transform the space into more manageable growing space. The previous issue of waterlogging has been alleviated and the space is now suitable once more to grow food. Individual raised beds are available to individuals whilst community groups, charities and local primary schools also benefit from the space. At the rear of the growing space is a wild growing area, which is being developed next. This space will be good for biodiversity and will also be able to hold outdoor education classes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities
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Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan Objective 3: Responding to the climate and nature emergencies

<p>Steps taken by Llanelli Rural Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective</p>	<p>How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)</p>	<p>Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)</p>
<p>Working with Keep Wales Tidy in the provision of a Litter Pick Hub</p>	<p>The Council's offices acts as a litter pick hub for Keep Wales Tidy. This enables individuals and groups to loan litter picking equipment free for one off clean ups. Measures are in place to financially support newly formed litter picking groups. The Council is also represented at Pride In Your Patch and Llanelli Litter Taskforce. The litter pick hub opened in 2021. Between 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024, the litter picking kit was loaned out on 25 occasions and 382 bags of litter were collected by 261 volunteers at venues in and around Llanelli. The number of occasions has doubled on the previous year and there has been substantial increase of additional 217 bags of litter collected on the previous year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Globally Responsible Wales
<p>Working group dealing with climate change and the promotion of biodiversity in place to further support the principle of sustainable development</p>	<p>The working group undertook a review of the council's position in relation to Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reduction of target from 2°C to 1.5°C global temperature rise.</p> <p>The aim of the review: To review the council's position in relation to IPCC and recommend how the Council can contribute towards this target in the short, medium and long term.</p> <p>The working group will consider the potential changes and impacts of global warming across the Council's administrative area. The review will involve gathering information from its own activities in providing local services and consult with other resources such as government advisory bodies, websites, partner organisations, agencies and individuals. Identify the key areas where the council can impact on the IPCC target</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • Globally Responsible Wales

	<p>whilst carrying out its service delivery functions (direct and indirect) and how the Council can also encourage residents to make an impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing carbon emissions; • Use energy more efficiently; • Switch to low carbon fuels; • Prepare for climate change. <p>The recommendations of the group are reported to the council's Policy and Resources Committee for consideration. Stemming from this an Environment and Climate change policy, strategy and action plan will be formulated and reported for further consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee.</p> <p>The work identified by the working group helped convince the Council to acquire new IT equipment for the Council chamber providing for more sustainable practices associated with remote attendance at council and committee meetings.</p> <p>The printing of meeting papers for Council members has reduced by 29% in the last year. This is due to council members opting in to receive their meeting papers digitally instead of having paper copies delivered.</p> <p>Reduced energy consumption and improved energy efficiency across council buildings and assets by introducing smart controls and upgrading heating and lighting systems into low energy consumption models where possible.</p> <p>Reduced grass cutting practices to allow for the benefit of pollinators have been introduced. The biodiversity areas the council have identified has been increased. In Pwll we have doubled the area that has been left to grow naturally, thus increasing the potential for wild flower and pollinators. Through grant funding we have purchased a grass collection machine. By collecting the arisings from wild flower meadows prevents the build-up of dead vegetation, which can smother delicate plants. There is more exposed ground to allow seeds to grow. The soil fertility is reduced, therefore slowing down the growth of nutrient-loving coarse grasses that choke wild flowers</p>	
Local Places for Nature funding approval	A successful grant application to the Local Places for Nature programme sponsored by Heritage Lottery Fund and Welsh Government was approved this year. The Council made an application after being approached by volunteers of Ponthenri Park Committee to make improvements to their local park. Their community consultation revealed that improvements to the recreation ground as the main priority in the community. The funding paid for tree and hedge planting, raised bed install and planting, benches, a nature trail, interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • Globally Responsible Wales

	<p>panels on the biodiversity at the park and several community work days. At one of these days the local primary school was invited and the pupils planted daffodil bulbs in and around the park.</p> <p>The grant also paid for cut and collect machinery. This allows for areas left to grow to produce more wild flowers which benefit pollinators and local biodiversity. This machinery is used by the council's ground maintenance team across Llanelli, not just in Ponthenri.</p>	
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Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan Objective 4: Tackling poverty and its impacts

Steps taken by Llanelli Rural Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)
<p>Putting a funding package together for the refurbishment and extension of the existing library in Llwynhendy and surrounding green space enhancement for community benefit.</p>	<p>Following a number of recent community consultations including the one carried out for the Whole Place Plan, the Council has acted and is looking at addressing the need for a community hub provision in Llwynhendy. This has resulted in the production of a feasibility study and other preliminary works such as ground surveys at Gwili Fields at Heol Gwili, which surround the library building. The Council is part of a collaborative approach that was initially led by a steering group made up of officers from housing, leisure, community regeneration and libraries within Carmarthenshire County Council, local members and community volunteers. The Council's participation in the group has helped achieve the aforementioned milestones as well as match funding from project stakeholders. External funding will be required to realise the project's full potential.</p> <p>The council's Recreation & Welfare Sub-committee was appointed in November 2022 to work with local stakeholders and the appointed architect in order to help move progress on the project. This collaborative approach has guided the project in a positive and decisive manner. As such, this has resulted in a successful bid for Shared Prosperity Funds for external works. Also an invitation to tender for the building works at Llwynhendy Library has been issued to six local contractors. The tenders will be returned to the Council for deliberation in April 2024.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
<p>Time Credits programme</p>	<p>Working in partnership with Tempo to deliver volunteering opportunities in order to address local priorities in return for Time Credits. The time credit currency can be used to access both local and nationwide amenities in return for the volunteer's time. The time credits model from Tempo has changed to digital however the Council will continue to deliver in a similar way as before. Furthermore the Council will encourage its existing groups to engage in the programme as well as continue to advocate new groups to sign up.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities

Supporting the local economy by being included on Carmarthenshire County Council's procurement framework	The Council works on a sustainable footing and strives to ensure best value in all of its spending decisions and where appropriate it looks to support the local economy. Participating in the county council procurement framework supports this general aim.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • More equal Wales • Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
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Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan Objective 5: Helping to create bilingual, safe and diverse communities

Steps taken by Llanelli Rural Council that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How have the 5 Ways of Working been used to shape your activity? (Summary in Appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (Summary in Appendix B)
Provision of meeting spaces: nine community halls / centres	<p>These facilities were in place long before the WFGAct and the way they are run embody the five ways of working. The halls / centres are run by local volunteers and provide a range of uses that impact positively on the well-being of people. The halls host services, classes and clubs such as keep fit, martial arts, knitting groups, historical societies, post offices, yoga, cafes, cylch meithrin, weight loss, birthday parties, NHS staff and more. The Council supports the voluntary effort of running the buildings by carrying out essential maintenance, annual grants and covers the cost of insurance and rates. This model enables each hall committee to make a surplus which it can reinvest in the hall.</p> <p>The Council's halls are well used and relied upon by our communities. These versatile community spaces host a variety of classes that give residents the opportunity to improve their well-being. The Council recognises that not every community has a hall and it can work with residents to explore options for new facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
Community Development Officer (CDO) support	There is CDO support available for our communities. The support follows the principles set out in the five ways of working as well as the well-being objectives set out in the Council's Well-Being (Whole Place) Plan. The CDO also provides support to Llanelli Rural community on matters that positively affect Carmarthenshire's well-being objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language • Globally Responsible Wales

Whole Place Plan delivery	<p>The Whole Place Plan was developed back in 2015. The Whole Place Plan is a 15 year well-being plan for the Council. It was the Council's initial response to comply with the provisions of the WFGAct. The 5 ways of working and national well-being goals are referred to throughout the document. Future updates will link in with the PSB's Well-being Objectives for Carmarthenshire. 14 interventions are mentioned in the plan with many already actioned. The plan's delivery is now into its eighth year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Resilient Wales • Healthier Wales • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language • Globally Responsible Wales
Safe Routes in Communities	<p>The Council has a strong recent track record of supporting its communities in order to benefit from Welsh Government Safe Routes in Communities. It has played an important role in recent years with successful bids for Hengoed, Pemberton, Swiss Valley and Glyn wards. Five Roads in the Glyn ward has been identified as an area that requires safer routes and a stage 1 application is looking likely. The process involves a collaborative approach between the community, local schools and the local authority. The council's Community Development Officer facilitated meetings at the early stages and also helps arrange community consultation exercises. The aims of the Safe Routes in Communities is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and increase walking/cycling connections to schools and within the wider community. • Reduce car use by providing residents with viable alternatives. • Increase physical activity and fitness levels to improve health. • Improve road awareness, confidence and independence of young people on the school journey coupled with reducing congestion around schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Globally Responsible Wales

Reflection and Looking Forward

An opportunity to reflect on how things are going and outline future priorities.

<p>What has worked well for the Council?</p>	<p>Accessing Local Places for Nature Funding for Ponthenri Recreation Ground. The Heritage Lottery and Welsh Government sponsored grant has allowed for environmental and biodiversity enhancements at the park in Ponthenri which has included interaction with volunteers on work days. The funding has enabled the council to purchase cut and collect grass cutting machinery. This machinery is being used across Llanelli in areas maintained by Llanelli Rural and Town Councils. The collection of cuttings allows for the grasses to flourish, wild flowers to grow, which is beneficial to the bugs, creatures and pollinators. Having signage up in places to highlight wild growing areas explains why there is a restriction on cutting in areas. Since the signs have been in place the number of enquiries from residents asking for the grass to be cut has reduced significantly.</p> <p>Biodiversity initiatives undertaken: Tree planting in cemetery grounds and at amenity areas in several parks, recreation grounds, growing space and the reservoir. Re-wilding areas, habitats, nest boxes created to attract pollinators, and improving biodiversity. Revised grounds maintenance regimes and amended working patterns reducing journeys, fuel consumption etc. reduce carbon footprint.</p> <p>The benefits of grant funding for the well-being project at Swiss Valley have been enjoyed by over 99,000 visitors in the last year. Whilst more benefits in regards to Dwyfor will be reported next year after its first full year of opening. These projects have enabled the council to work with third party groups and individuals to run their activities from our assets. This is an approach we look to continue to maintain whilst new opportunities will be sought for future projects.</p>
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<p>What have been the barriers for the Council?</p>	<p>Slow turnaround of asset transfers.</p> <p>Available revenue grant funding to pay for staff. Whereas grant funding for capital works and environmental enhancements have been accessed in the last 12 months, the community and town council sector would benefit from more revenue funding to pay for staff to ensure these improvements meet their full potential.</p> <p>Commercial quality battery equipment to replace petrol and diesel machinery and equipment not sturdy enough yet.</p> <p>From a training perspective the effects of the pandemic have negatively affected apprenticeship numbers in Business Administration and Customer Service, public sector employers have suspended recruitment and support for apprenticeships</p>
<p>Are there any matters the PSB could support delivery/progress on?</p>	<p>To continue to take a pro-active interest in the work of the Council and where appropriate to offer advice and sign posting to support for Council activities.</p>
<p>What are the Council's main priorities looking forward to 2024-25?</p>	<p>The Council's plans for this year includes these specific plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to continue the development of new facilities at Swiss Valley Reservoir including fish stocking programme • to continue with the lease transfer of assets from Carmarthenshire County Council • to negotiate Section 106 funding for play and recreational facilities • to install play areas at Cilsaig Dafen, Gwili Fields Llwynhendy, Penygraig and Ponthenri. • to continue the development of the Community Hub project in Llwynhendy

Appendix A: 5 Ways of Working

Long Term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
Prevention How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
Integration Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

Appendix B: National Well-being Goals

National Goal
A Prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the Global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately, and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
A Resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
A Healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood
A More Equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances
A Wales of Cohesive Communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities
A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language: Where we have lots of opportunities to do different things and where lots of people can speak Welsh
A Globally Responsible Wales: Where we look after the Environment and think about other people around the World

Annual Report – Part 2

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2023/24

Introduction and Context:

Llanelli Rural Council provides a range of services to the local community which have an impact on biodiversity and ecosystems.

The council provides thirteen community buildings providing community halls and sports changing facilities. It provides and maintains seven recreational parks where a range of sports such as rugby, football, bowls and cricket are regularly played.

The council also provides and maintains fourteen children's play areas and jointly owns a large cemetery facility – Llanelli District Cemetery.

The council has transferred a large community growing space from Carmarthenshire County Council and has entered a five year adoption agreement with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water for Swiss Valley Reservoir. The community adoption agreement is the first of its kind in Wales

The council maintains over fifty miles of public footpaths across its geographical area. The use of which reduces reliance of vehicles for essential journeys such as school runs and pedestrian access to shopping areas. The network of footpaths also provides access for recreational walks in rural areas.

The council provides community support via its dedicated Community Development Officer and awards grants for community projects in the council's area.

The council promotes principles of sustainability and biodiversity by pursuing sustainability goals and sustainable practices whenever possible.

The council has engaged with Carmarthenshire County Council and formed a partnership with Llanelli Town Council embarking on a community asset transfer programme to protect, secure and maintain sporting, leisure and children's play areas.

The council has declared a Climate Emergency and subsequently set up an Environment and Climate Emergency Steering Group as a response to the declaration. The terms of reference of the group are annotated below.

A review of the council's position in relation to IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) reduction of target from 2°C to 1.5°C global temperature rise.

The aim of the review:

To review the council's position in relation to IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and recommend how the council can contribute towards this target in the short, medium and long term.

The Group will consider the potential changes and impacts of global warming across the council's administrative area.

The review will involve gathering information from its own activities in providing local services and consult with other resources such as government advisory bodies, websites, partner organisations, agencies and individuals.

Identify the key areas where the council can impact on the IPCC target whilst carrying out its service delivery functions (direct and indirect) and how the council can also encourage residents to make an impact on:

- a. Reducing carbon emissions
- b. Use energy more efficiently
- c. Switch to low carbon fuels
- d. Prepare for climate change

The recommendations of the group are reported to the council's Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

Stemming from this, an Environment and Climate change policy, strategy and action plan has been formulated and reported for further consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee.

Action Report

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
Embed Biodiversity across all levels of decision making, council policies, planning and working practices.	Declare a Climate Emergency and set up a Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Task Group (CEB task group) in relation to IPCC reduction in target from 2°C to 1.5°C global temperature rise.	Commitments made in documents, reports, agendas, policies and protocols.	Reinstate regular meeting of the CEB task group post pandemic	Line Managers, Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Task Group and the Policy and Resource Committee.
	Reflect the commitment to biodiversity and sustaining natural areas in the Council's Annual Report.	Included in report		
	Embed consideration for climate change, biodiversity, reduction of carbon footprint, sustainability goals and sustainable practices into all areas of the Councils actions and activities.	Consideration to climate change, biodiversity, sustainability goals and practices is demonstrated in all decisions.		
		CEB task group activities paused during pandemic.		

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
<p>Embed Biodiversity across all levels of decision making, council policies, planning and working practices.</p>	<p>Consider climate change, in procurement protocols by assessing suppliers' commitment and policies in relation to the carbon footprint of their products, services or business management.</p>	<p>Consideration to climate change, biodiversity, sustainability goals and practices demonstrated in all decisions.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor procurement decisions.</p>	<p>Commitments made in reports, agendas, minutes, policies and protocols.</p>
	<p>Reduce energy consumption and improve efficiency across council buildings and assets by introducing Smarter controls and upgrading heating and lighting systems with low energy options wherever possible.</p>	<p>New energy efficient shower heating systems installed and lighting units routinely replaced with LED. Light sensors fitted where possible.</p>	<p>Seek to install low carbon energy efficient systems wherever possible. Seek to remove use of carbon fuels.</p>	
	<p>Council comments on Planning Applications in support of climate change and biodiversity.</p>			
	<p>Respond to sand dredging licenses in Carmarthen Bay Estuary.</p>			

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
<p>Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance within the council and within the community.</p>	<p>Raise awareness and organise training sessions for members and staff.</p>	<p>Reinstate awareness training post pandemic.</p>	<p>Re-affirm to all staff.</p>	<p>Through feedback from Council members and residents.</p>
	<p>Support The Prince’s Trust programme which undertake community biodiversity projects, planting, maintaining community spaces etc.</p>	<p>Liaise with Prince's Trust lead</p>		
	<p>Encourage the community as a whole to volunteer in the context of supporting and promoting biodiversity and reducing carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Volunteer activities undertaken</p>		<p>Learner engagement</p>
	<p>Develop community growing space gardens with ecological and biodiversity initiatives.</p>	<p>Development underway.</p>	<p>Seek consultant or partners to assist and advise on activities/methods. Seek funding.</p>	<p>Monitoring social media engagements and comments</p>

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance within the council and within the community	Developing woodland management plans and providing improved access to woodlands with eco/biodiverse initiatives.	Plan received	Enact recommendations and policies	
	Promoting biodiversity and ecological awareness via interpretation boards and social media.	Interpretation boards installed at reservoir, parks, cemetery and amenity areas.	Seek to publicise through social media outlets	
	Promoting community events on website and social media-wildlife walks, supporting litter picking groups.	Volunteer activities undertaken		Number of people taking part in activities.
	Promoting and providing support for community, wellbeing and educational events on website and social media.	Volunteer activities undertaken		

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
<p>Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance within the council and within the community</p>	<p>Providing natural burial area in cemetery. Encouraging natural burial principles throughout the service, promoting via website, funeral directors and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Natural Burial area developed. Eco friendly options also available for traditional burial areas.</p>	<p>Increase promotion and awareness through appropriate channels. Consider developing additional areas.</p>	
	<p>Post details of the actions we have taken to help biodiversity on our website and social media platforms.</p>	<p>Posts created</p>	<p>Increase activity</p>	
<p>Safeguard principal species and habitats</p>	<p>Manage land to buffer and link up neighbouring areas as part of resilient ecological networks. Create wildlife corridors.</p>	<p>Various areas planted and maintenance regimes amended.</p>	<p>Seek further opportunities.</p>	<p>Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Task Group and the Policy and Resource Committee.</p>
	<p>Native pollinators planted wherever possible, increase areas of flowering grassland environments in amenity areas.</p>	<p>Various areas within parks and amenity areas have had wildflower and rewilding areas introduced.</p>		<p>Monitor feedback</p>

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
Safeguard principal species and habitats	Ensure activities do not have negative impacts on species and the environment.	Consider biodiversity in all activities	Use consultants and liaise with CCC Environmental Officer to manage and improve amenity and woodland areas.	
	Reduce or remove the use of herbicides.	Minimal use of herbicides as a general policy. Maintenance programmes adjusted.	Continue to amend maintenance plans to reduce further.	Application records Maintenance programmes
	Maintain historical stone memorials to consider protecting lichen growth.		Liaise with memorial masons and the general public. Provide information and signage.	Cemetery management
Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks	Undertake tree and hedgerow planting programmes. Coppice woodland areas to increase biodiversity.	Tree programmes undertaken at several sites. Grants and publically donated trees installed at several sites.	Continue to seek further opportunities.	Ongoing programme of tree and hedgerow management.
	Remove diseased and dead trees and create wildlife havens from log piles.	Reservoir woodland management plan and tree surveys dictate management process.		Record new tree and hedgerow planting areas.

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks	Encourage education and wellbeing groups to access the woodland areas and environs.	Links set up with several external groups and stakeholders to provide education and wellness sessions. Coed Lleol, Carmartheshire County Council, Coleg Sir Gar, Heol Goffa School	Continue to liaise and seek out new providers and promote activities on media outlets.	
	Plant native pollinator friendly flowers and plants using annual plants in planting schemes.	Pollinator, tree and hedgerows planting schemes undertaken at several sites.	Continue to seek further opportunities wherever possible.	Monitor purchase orders. Report on new areas created and improvements.
	Introduced new pollinator opportunities in parks and amenity areas.	New habitats created for birds, bats and dormice.	Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Task Group and the Policy and Resource Committee.	
	Create biodiverse areas to provide nest boxes for birds, bats, dormice etc.	Habitats protected.`		
Change grass cutting regimes at all sites, reducing frequency of cuts to encourage wildflowers and other pollinator friendly plants and provide cover for small mammals and reptiles.	Wildlife corridors and insect habitats created.			

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
Tools and Equipment Reduce pollution, use of carbon fuels.	Seek to use battery powered tools and equipment as opposed to those using fossil fuels.	Solar energy in use in several community buildings	Seek further opportunities. Utilise solar energy at Dwyfor gardens and rainwater harvesting.	Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Task Group and the Policy and Resource Committee. Policy documents, reports, council minutes. Procurement policies.
	Monitor driving habits and routes to reduce fuel use.	Vehicle monitor and tracking devices fitted to fleet.	Continue to monitor and improve.	Line manager reviews vehicle report and advices to undertake improvements when needed.
	Change to electrical/hybrid vehicles when practical.	Hybrid vehicle is being considered.	Seek to reduce fossil fuel use wherever possible.	Line managers seek to make improvements where possible.

Actions Target	Detail of action carried out	Status	Further Action/ Ambition	Monitored by
Use improve and share evidence.	<p>Liaising with Biodiversity Officers at Carmarthenshire County Council, Welsh Water, Natural Resource Wales and other associated professional stakeholders and specialists to ensure use of best practice and to increase knowledge of local issues.</p> <p>Benchmarking with Welsh Cemetery managers forum, other authorities.</p> <p>National benchmarking and policy guidance via the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Officers take part in benchmarking meetings and forums.</p>	<p>Increase communication and seek further collaboration opportunities.</p> <p>Education and training modules. Training for Staff via the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM).</p>	<p>Reporting to Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Task Group and the Policy and Resources Committee.</p> <p>Line managers seek to make improvements where possible</p>

Review of S6 duty

What has worked well?

The creation of wildflower areas and tree and hedgerow planting across the councils facilities continues to be implemented. The initiative continues to work well, and it increasingly proves popular with the public in addition to raising public awareness of the importance of assisting biodiversity, for example, the “No Mow May” initiative. Several volunteer groups assist in the tending of these areas. In addition, there have been some cost savings through the reduction in mowing, i.e. less consumables, fuel, travelling, equipment maintenance etc.

Development of a natural burial area amongst mature pine trees has proved popular. Native species tree planting continues and new native species hedgerows have been established.

Changes to grass cutting regimes in the cemetery have resulted in the emergence of an abundance of wild primroses that have been recognised as possibly one of the largest concentrations in Carmarthenshire.



Also noted are the appearance of swathes of wild daisy and pilosella.

A drastic reduction in the widespread use of herbicides has resulted in the re-establishment of grassed and native wildflower areas and has halted damaging ground erosion.



A previously unused area of land at the cemetery that was overwhelmed with bramble is now managed to encourage the establishment of a broader variety of habitats for plants, trees and wildlife.



Members of the public donate new trees to the cemetery.

Some chose to 'adopt' an existing tree as a living memorial rather than use a stone memorial that is likely to have a very high carbon footprint resulting from mining, transportation and manufacturing processes.



Selective herbicides are only used where necessary and the creation of wildlife areas in the grounds of council properties has proved very popular.

New signage has been installed in many areas that provides information regarding how the areas are managed and the advantages for wildlife.

The work at the community gardens is progressing and will provide areas to support the growing of food, fruit trees, wildflowers. A small pond is planned to attract amphibians, insects and pollinators.

The area will utilise rainwater harvesting, and small solar power lights, encouraging sustainability, biodiversity. The project will



provide education and awareness opportunities for ecology and biodiversity and encouraging people to grow fruit and vegetables.

The adoption project at the Lower Lleidi Reservoir has provided an abundance of opportunities to improve the ecology of the reservoir and its environs by developing and enhancing a broad range of biodiverse habitats.

Surveys to examine the bat, dormouse and otter populations have been undertaken and a range of habitat boxes and shelters have been installed around the site.

A local school also undertook a project to make and donate bird boxes. The children and staff also assisted in installing their boxes.

Volunteers have also worked with council staff to improve access into woodland areas





A suite of education and interpretation panels have been installed around the site to provide visitors with information in regard to the variety of wildlife that can be seen.

Woodland and waterside habitats have been enhanced. The reed-bed areas of the reservoir are now protected by the introduction of an exclusion zone for watercraft that provides much needed protection for insects, amphibians and spawning fish. Biosecurity measures have been introduced to manage the spread of invasive species in the reservoir.

New angling and paddle sport clubs have been established associated with the reservoir. Education and awareness regarding the importance of protecting the ecology is paramount to the relationship between the clubs and the council.



A woodland management plan has been created and areas of woodland have been made more accessible to the public. Links to the cycle path network have been improved and new cycle racks installed, along with new benches and picnic tables made from recycled materials. Extensive repairs and improvements to footpaths have been undertaken across the site to encourage people to visit by foot and reduce vehicle use.

Targeted coppicing and removal of dead trees has been undertaken in the woodlands. The coppicing has allowed more access into the woodlands and enhanced biodiversity creating new wildlife habitats where native wild flowers and plants can thrive.



Log piles created from felled trees and branches have created havens for insects, bees, mosses and fungi to thrive.



The council has installed new energy efficient shower water heating systems at its sports changing facilities in Dafen and Pwll that will reduce energy use, emissions and the volume of water used.

The council installed a new irrigation system at its Bowls facility in Dafen that is designed to control the amount of water applied at targeted times, thus saving on water use compared to previous manual watering practices.

The council has collaborated with Carmarthenshire County Council to convert all 290 of its footpath lighting columns to energy efficient LED lamps.

Whenever possible, across all council facilities the fluorescent, halogen and sodium lamps are replaced with energy efficient LED versions.

An electrical car was chosen to replace the chairman's previous car which is used regularly when the council chairman attends official functions and community events. The new plug in hybrid model can travel up to 32 miles on electric power alone. The electric motor also works intelligently with the petrol engine when needed to provide improved fuel economy and reduced CO2 emissions.



The biodiversity areas the council have identified has been increased. In Pwll we have doubled the area that has been left to grow naturally, thus increasing the potential for wild flower and pollinators. Through grant funding we have purchased a grass collection machine. By collecting the arisings from wild flower meadows prevents the build up of dead vegetation, which can smother delicate plants. There is more exposed ground to allow seeds to grow. The soil fertility is reduced, therefore slowing down the growth of nutrient-loving coarse grasses that choke wild flowers



What have the barriers been?

The pandemic paused various activities and initiatives, especially the regular input and involvement of the Environment and Climate Emergency Steering Group. However, the core ambitions of the council have continued to be acted on by officers and staff wherever possible.

Technology for battery powered tools and equipment is not yet sturdy enough for commercial environments. The range of equipment purported to be commercial is limited. The costs of replacing fossil fuel vehicles and equipment with electric versions is high. The council presently operates a significant fleet of vehicles and machinery that uses diesel and petrol fuels.

The public wish to see amenity areas “tidy”. An ‘educate and inform’ programme would help explain what the councils initiatives are when introducing new maintenance regimes to reduce emissions or reduce the use of herbicides and when creating ‘pollinator’ areas, when the grasses are left to grow longer at certain times of the year, or when certain areas are purposely not cut.

What will you change?

Seek to work more closely with Carmarthenshire County Council’s biodiversity officers and other agency partners to seek advice and guidance, benchmarking, attending seminars etc. Undertake more interaction with the public and provide more information on the council’s initiatives.

Identify more grassed areas where we can reduce cuts through the summer months to encourage pollinators and biodiversity. i.e. an initial cut in March/April and a second cut in September. Areas will be 'framed' with mowing patterns so it is clear that the longer grass is intentional and biodiversity information for the area will be displayed.

Increase the natural burial area offering in the cemetery. Publicise that ‘greener options’ are also available in the traditional areas also where the carbon footprint can be reduced.

Seek to increase native tree and hedgerow planting. Create wildlife corridors for small mammals and invertebrates.

Consider and reinforce the importance of climate change in everything we do.

Continue to seek to replace vehicles and equipment to consider battery or hybrid technologies wherever practical.

Consider more solar or wind energy. Seek to review utility energy suppliers to consider more sustainable alternatives.

How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?

The duty will be monitored through the council's Environment and Climate Emergency Steering Group, that will report to the council on the success, or otherwise, of the actions taken through the usual management and statutory council reporting protocols.

The S6 plan will be reviewed in light of these reports and any other evidence or information that is made available to the council. At the time of this report's publication, there is no specific time or date set for the plan to be reviewed, but this will be done within the next six months.



Annual Report - Part 3

Council Priorities, Activities and Achievements 2023-24

Section 52 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, requires the council, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, to prepare and publish an annual report about the council's priorities, activities and achievements over the previous year.

The council has adopted a Strategic Plan which sets out the council's strategic aims based on a clear statement of purpose and its core values. The Strategic Plan provides an overall framework to focus the council's activities, investment and spending priorities. These are set out in more detail in annual Service Plans, incorporating service objectives, key tasks, performance measures, and related targets.

Service Plans provide the basis for on-going performance review, to ensure the provision of high quality services, which meet the needs of local citizens and help focus the activities of members and officers on clear organisational goals and outputs.

The formulation of the Service Plans, play an integral part in the council's annual budget process.

The council's service plans and results for the financial year 2023-24 are presented below and set out the key tasks, objectives and service delivery achieved during the year.

SERVICE PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES 2023-24

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE

The Council's aims and objectives and a clear statement of our purpose and core values are set out in the Strategic Plan. In this context the aims of the service are: -

- To assist Council Managers to meet their strategic aims and objectives by providing administrative services to the Council.
- To enable the Council to respond and react to legislation introduced.
- To provide an effective reception point for the general public and other visitors to the Council's offices.
- To oversee and organise all matters which relate to the civic and ceremonial side of the Authority, such as the Chairman's events and other civic occasions.
- To inform the public of the Council's services and activities and to promote the corporate identity of the Council.
- To provide a range of support services to Councillors and Officers in order to assist in the decision making process.
- To provide and maintain suitable office accommodation, meeting and function rooms to meet the needs of the Council.
- To provide depots, vehicles, stores to the Council's DLO.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

The provision of wide ranging administrative and clerical support including word processing.

The provision of a photocopying service.

The provision and maintenance of the Council's telecommunication service.

The organisation of all civic events which include the Annual Meeting, Civic Service and other functions throughout the year.

The organisation of all the Chairman's events and engagements and the provision of secretarial, attendants and chauffeur services for the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

The promotion of the corporate image of the Council.

The servicing of the Council and its Committees by preparing agendas, minutes, reports and providing a comprehensive timetable of meetings.

The provision of advice to Members on Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, pecuniary interests and other matters.

The production and provision to all Members of a year book and diary.

To ensure the Council's main office building is kept in a reasonable state of repair.

To provide the heating, lighting, cleaning and security of the building.

To manage on behalf of the DLO the Council's two depots, vehicle fleet and stores operation.

To maintain an efficient accounting system including preparation and monitoring of annual budgets.

To maintain an efficient and effective creditor payments service by maintaining financial records and reconciling accounts.

To maintain a debtors accounting system and process payments promptly and accurately.

To maintain accurate VAT, PAYE and payroll records and to administer the Council's payroll system by processing salaries and wages payments for Council employees.

To manage the investments, loans portfolio and cash flows of the Council so as to maximise interest receipts and minimise interest payments and bank charges.

To control, monitor and update the Council's website.

To manage the service level agreement with Llanelli Town Council for the maintenance of its open spaces.

KEY TASKS/SERVICE DELIVERY IN 2023-24

ACTIVITY	BUDGET £	DESCRIPTION	OUTCOMES
People Management AS/1/23	5,000	Investors in People 1. Re-accreditation 2. Phased delivery of action plan	1. Achieved. Awarded accreditation in February 2023 2. Action plan ongoing
Governance AS/2/23	31,840	Compliance with Financial Reporting Standard FRS/102	Completed
Registration AS/3/23		Register unregistered land with Land Registry	On-going. Registration completed for several properties awaiting completion from H.M. Land Registry.
Administrative Building AS/4/23	55,000	Update heating system	Completed March 2024
Civic Capital AS/5/23	3,280	Purchase members digital tablets	September 2023
Administrative AS/6/23	2,335	Photocopier/printer lease agreement renewal	New Lease commenced January 2024
Administrative AS/7/23	33,000	Local Council Insurance Policy renewal	Tender invites issued February 2023 Ongoing

PERFORMANCE

INDICATOR MEASURE	TARGET 2023/24	RESULTS 2023/24
Number of staff working days lost to sickness absence.	260	683 (118 short term < 7 days) (565 long term > 7 days)
Percentage of Councillors at full Council meetings.	80%	80%
Percentage of Councillors attending at Standing Committees/ Working Group Meetings.	80%	84%
Percentage of Agendas sent out within three clear working days of meetings.	100%	100%
Number of members of the public attending Council/Committee meetings.	3	0
Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days or within creditor terms.	95%	97%
Number of recommended corrections/improvements made by external auditors.	1	8

FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2023-24

ACTIVITY	BUDGET
General Administration	48,450
Administrative Building	136,910
Depots	16,100
Civic Activities	59,781
Vehicles and Machinery	45,030
Personnel	590,378
Capital Equipment	25,390
TOTAL	922,039

SERVICE PLAN FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES 2023-24

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE

The Council's aims and objectives and a clear statement of our purpose and core values are set out in the Strategic Plan. In this context the aims of the service are: -

- To promote the use of community facilities by community groups and members of the public.
- To assist the alleviation of poverty and disadvantage and otherwise assist with the development of the local community.
- To encourage health and well-being amongst the community and support in community activities and events.
- To provide financial assistance to local organisations to help further the Council's aims.
- To promote local government and the Council's civic role in the local community by working closely with schools and colleges.
- The promotion of civic pride throughout the community.
- To encourage joint partnership agreements with local authorities, the private sector and voluntary organisations.
- To act as a local voice for the community served by the Council and to diligently perform our consultative role with both the public and private sectors.
- To facilitate on behalf of the community the delivery of the Llanelli Rural Area Whole Place Plan 2015-2030.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

The provision of nine community halls for a wide range of community events and activities. Hall management committees have been established to run the day to day management and administration of the halls on a voluntary basis. The Council's halls are located throughout the administrative area.

Provision of a growing space for horticultural activities.

Assistance is given to school work placements for pupils interested in local government administration.

To co-ordinate (in partnership with Tempo) a Time Credits Programme in order to generate new community activities.

The Council maintains two War Memorials within its administrative area.

The Council administers the burial service provided at Llanelli District Cemetery.

To consider all matters requiring consultation with the Council through its committee system.

Providing grants to community halls and to organisations that use the buildings, e.g. Brownies, martial arts, senior citizens groups etc.

Surveys undertaken of community facilities during annual inspections.

In addition to the above, the Council makes grants to local groups and charitable organisations to help further their aims and to support community development.

KEY TASKS/SERVICE DELIVERY IN 2023-24

ACTIVITY	BUDGET £	DESCRIPTION	OUTCOMES
Community Development CS/1/23	Nil	Produce version 2 of Whole Place Plan. Preparation, artwork & print.	On-going. This has not been possible and has been included as one of the key tasks for 2024/25
Community Development CS/2/23	200,000	Llwynhendy Library. 1. Support the Recreation and Welfare subcommittee meet the recommendations set out in the feasibility study to provide a community hub. 2. Submit applications for capital funding during the year.	1. Shared Prosperity Fund award. Project build for outdoor work to start and finish in 2024 2. Community Ownership Fund EOI approved. Full application for COF to be submitted at next application window
Community Development CS/3/23	17,670	Dwyfor Growing Space. 1. Continue to deliver the improvements noted in the project brief. 2. Support the growing space users establish a constituted group to further develop the growing space	1. Water connection installed. Raised beds fully occupied since April 2023 2. The initial attempt to start a group failed. Second attempt is now due.
Community Development CS/4/23	Nil	Furnace Hall - provide support to the management committee in its efforts to carry out its objectives and recruit new members.	Plans are in place to look at an alternative delivery model for the hall.
Community Development CS/5/23	Nil	Pwll Recreation Ground Committee – provide support to the management committee in its efforts to carry out its objectives and recruit new members.	On-going. This has not been possible and has been included as one of the key tasks for 2024/25

Community Development CS/6/23	1,000	Coordinate a Keep Wales Tidy Litter Pick Hub. Make litter picking kits available to hire for the community to carry out their own clean ups.	25 community litter picks supported. 382 bags of litter collected by 261 volunteers
Community Development CS/7/23	Nil	Consideration of alternative management models for failing community facilities because of the lack of a sustainable volunteer base in council owned premises.	Initial internal discussions and research undertaken.

PERFORMANCE

INDICATOR MEASURE	TARGET 2023/24	RESULTS 2023/24
Percentage of planning applications considered within the 21 day consultation period set by Carmarthenshire County Council	100%	100%
Number of individuals into volunteering	100	261
Number of volunteer hours	750	2,690

FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2023-24

ACTIVITY	BUDGET
Financial Assistance	13,000
Community Halls	145,210
Community Development	20,000
Capital Scheme – community halls	215,050
Local initiatives	12,300
Burial Services	100,000
TOTAL	505,560

SERVICE PLAN FOR RECREATION AND LEISURE SERVICES 2023-24

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE

The Council's aims and objectives and a clear statement of our purpose and core values are set out in the Strategic Plan. In this context the aims of the service are: -

- To promote recreational and leisure facilities in the community.
- To encourage health and well being and generally improve the quality of life of members of the public by encouraging people to develop their participation in recreational activities and events.
- To encourage social inclusion by ensuring that play equipment is accessible to all.
- To involve the community in the development of the Council's recreational facilities.
- To preserve and protect public rights of way.
- To sustain the level of provision of street furniture throughout the Council's area, such as bus shelters, wayside seats and footway lighting.
- The marketing and promotion of Llanelli and district.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

The provision and maintenance of recreation grounds at Dafen, Felinfoel, Five Roads, Ponthenri, Pwll and Trallwm. In addition, ground maintenance is also provided to the playing fields at Pontyates which is not Council owned.

The provision and maintenance of a number of play areas throughout the Council's area.

Maintenance and improvement to the public rights of way network.

Maintenance and improvements to Swiss Valley Reservoir.

The funding and promotion of the Christmas lights and Christmas carnival in Llanelli.

The provision of footway lighting, bus shelters and wayside seats.

The annual inspection of equipment within children's play areas to British Standards BSEN 1176-2008, BS 8409 2009.

The maintenance of Llanelli Town Council's open spaces under a service level agreement.

KEY TASKS/SERVICE DELIVERY IN 2023-24

ACTIVITY	BUDGET £	DESCRIPTION	OUTCOMES
Safeguarding Sporting and Children's Play Facilities RL/1/23		Legal process for lease transfer of assets from Carmarthenshire County Council. 1. Penygraig play area 2. Cilsaig play area 3. Yspitty play area 4. Dafen Park 5. Pwll Park 6. Trallwm Football pitch 7. Trallwm play area	1 and 2 completed September 2023 3,4, 5, 6 and 7 On-going (delay with CCC)
Community Facilities RL/2/23	2,800	Felinfoel Recreation Ground Fence and gate recreation ground boundary to alleviate anti-social behavior.	Discussions ongoing with local members, police, Resource Centre management committee, sports clubs and neighbors to agree measures to fence and gate the recreation ground.
Community Facilities RL/3/23	100,000	Ponthenri play area and recreation ground 1. Collaborate with the residents park committee to devise a broader scheme for Ponthenri fields and seek match funding from grants. 2. Obtain quotations / designs for upgrading play area & Consult with the community 3. Decide on a scheme and apply for funding 4. Outcome of grant application known 5. Install Play Equipment 6. General recreation ground upgrades to support other funding projects.	1. Completed. 2. Community consultations undertaken. Contractor engagement meetings June 2022. Play scheme selected September 2023. Planning consent received 31 January 2024. Purchase order issued. 5. Awaiting Sustainable Urban Drainage approval before construction can start. 3,4 and 6. Funding bids successful for Safer Routes in Communities and Local Places for Nature. Scheme successfully delivered.

ACTIVITY	BUDGET £	DESCRIPTION	OUTCOMES
Community Facilities RL/4/23	34,000	Penygraig play area – seek S. 106 monies and grant funding to provide a play area	Penygraig asset transfer completed September 2023. Community consultations completed March 2023. Play scheme tender approved and issued December 2023. Ongoing.
Community Facilities RL/5/23	75,000	Dafen, Cilsaig play area – 1. Complete asset transfer 2. Community consultation on play equipment/design.	1. Completed September 2023 2. Community consultation completed September 2023 Play equipment tender issued February 2024. Ongoing.
Community Facilities RL/6/23	32,930	Swiss Valley Reservoir – deliver objectives included in the Site Management Plan, provision of toilet and changing facilities, pontoon, water sports, managed fishery, fish stocking, improve car parks, visitor facility, footpaths, improve biodiversity, access to woodland etc.	On-going (five year plan)
Community Facilities RL/7/23	30,000	Furnace Community Hall – Replace terrace balustrade, repairs to terrace decking	Structural engineers report received. Engineers repair plan received. Contract awarded February 2024. Ongoing.
Community Footpaths RL/8/23	26,660	Dafen, Pwll Bach/Globe Row – new community lighting project	Completed November 2023

Community Footpaths RL/9/23	2,578	Pemberton, Maes Conwy – community lighting adoption project	Completed September 2023
Community Development RL/10/23	200,000	Llwynhendy, Gwili Fields – 1. Community Hub 2. Play areas and landscaping project.	Asset Transfer of field completed Nov. 2023 1. Community Hub Project tenders issued 14 February 2024 Tender return 22 April 2024 Ongoing 2. Play area and landscaping project. Play area tenders issued Tenders returned 14 February 2024 Play area scheme selected February 2024 Planning submissions ongoing Sustainable Urban Drainage scheme and landscaping tender proposals ongoing.

PERFORMANCE

INDICATOR MEASURE	TARGET 2023/24	RESULTS 2023/24
Number of cuts to public footpaths.	285	286
Net revenue expenditure per head of parks and play areas.	£6.49	£8.26
Number of facilities identified as high risk within ROSPA report.	0	0
Number of play areas providing facilities for all age groups.	19	15

FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2023-24

ACTIVITY	BUDGET
Recreation Grounds	72,030
Play Areas	37,430
Rights of Way	100
Capital Scheme – footway lighting	33,524
Swiss Valley Reservoir	37,350
Tourism & Cultural Activities	25,650
Open Spaces (Bynea & Swiss Valley)	1,880
Capital Schemes – Play Areas	356,000
Asset transfer – legal fees	20,000
Grounds Maintenance – Service Level Agreement	85,440
Capital Schemes – Recreation Grounds	11,980
TOTAL	681,384

SERVICE PLAN FOR TRAINING SERVICES 2023-24

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE

The Council's aims and objectives and a clear statement of our purpose and core values are set out in the Strategic Plan. In this context the aims of the service are: -

- To secure and deliver Welsh Government funded 'Work Based Learning' contracts as part of the Skills Academy Wales Consortium, achieving good to excellent results in relation to compliance, performance and quality benchmarks.
- To contribute towards the management and development of Skills Academy Wales consortia
- To secure a viable subcontract with prime providers delivering the Job's Growth Wales + programme.
- To meet all the programme requirements and key performance indicators as stipulated by the JGW+ specification.
- To respond positively to Welsh Government priorities for Post 16 Education and Training in Wales. Currently these include Carbon Literacy, Welsh Language and Culture, Literacy & Numeracy, Safeguarding, Wellbeing, Data Security and Equality, Inclusion and Diversity.
- To deliver high quality teaching, training and assessment and provide a range of appropriate, relevant and motivating learning programmes.
- To undertake a rigorous, Self-Evaluation process annually, and to continually plan for improvement. To use a variety of methods to capture the opinion of our learners, employers and partners.
- To involve the department wherever possible in partnership working within Skills Academy Wales, Local Initiatives, 14-19 Network delivery, Regional Learning Partnerships, Skills Sector Councils, Community Learning, DWP Delivery etc.
- To maintain an independent financially viable status for the Training Department.

KEY TASKS/SERVICE DELIVERY IN 2023-24

ACTIVITY	BUDGET £	DESCRIPTION	OUTCOMES
To meet Start profiles for JGW+ programme and achieve viable contract value.	N/A	Start and Occupancy levels monitored monthly in line with profiles. Monthly contract value meetings with ITEC Ltd.	<p>ITEC suspended recruitment for a 2 month period while awaiting for additional contract value allocation from Welsh Government. A value of £374,680 was awarded.</p> <p>Recruitment activities resumed and starts have been steadily increasing in the last few months of the year. New service level agreement with Coleg Sir Gar for centre based delivery has commenced.</p>
To meet Apprenticeship recruitment targets.	N/A	113 starts profiled for the academic year 23/24.	<p>This revised profile of starts is 73 for the academic year.</p> <p>Logistics sector recruitment has been steady although some delays with starts in North Wales and locally where one major employer suspended recruitment following a cyber attack.</p> <p>Business Admin and Customer Service sector has failed to engage with new employer base to recruit the required profile of learners in this sector despite best efforts of the team, staff resource has</p>

			been reallocated to meet demand across council service area.
To secure funding for 40 PLA learners in transport route.	N/A	Secure initial allocation for PLA in 23/24 and apply for additional at quarterly reviews.	PLA allocation met in Autumn 2023. Additional PLA funding suspended while Welsh Government redirect funds to priority groups. Bids for new courses to deliver LGV and PCV licences have been approved and additional funding allocated to support Tata Steel Port Talbot workers at risk of redundancy to retrain as drivers.
To meet key performance indicators in all programmes and routes.	N/A	Monthly review of all performance to be undertaken through review with lead organisations.	All programmes performing well and responsive to meeting lead organisation requirements. JGW+ achieving 60%. Apprenticeship performance achieved 78% overall.
To establish improved employer engagement on all programmes.	N/A	Placement officer in place for JGW+ delivery supported by Lead Workers in all centres. In apprenticeships, development of new employers in all routes especially Business Administration.	Employer networking and engagement has led to new employer collaboration in apprenticeships and JGW+ programmes. Marketing activities have been strengthened, social media, website development and attendance at events held across the region have increased profile and interest generating new demand.
To increase capacity of transport team with the addition of another assessor and the development of Essential Skills delivery.	£35,000	Bringing delivery in house and reducing reliance on external subcontractors who remain unreliable. Current Programme Assistant to be developed into an Essential Skills Tutor.	Additional Assessor recruited with logistics qualifications and experience in October 2023. The Programme Assistant has undertaken successful professional development for Essential Skills Qualifications (ESQ) delivery and has supported a number of learners through successful achievement

			of qualifications in all three qualifications in the ESQ suite.
To deliver two successful Prince's Trust Team Programmes.	N/A	Teams to commence September 2023 and February 2024.	<p>Team 14 won the Wales Community Impact Award at the Prince's Trust Wales Awards held in Cardiff during February 2024.</p> <p>Team 15 completed December 2023. This was the last team programme to be delivered, due to the lack of funding the subsequent team programme due to commence in February 2024 was suspended indefinitely.</p>

PERFORMANCE

INDICATOR MEASURE	PER 100 LEAVERS			
	YEAR TARGET	YEAR ACTUAL	½ YEAR TARGET	½ YEAR ACTUAL
	MARCH 2024	MARCH 2024	SEPT 23	SEPT 23
RECRUIT JGW+ LEARNERS	100	59	50	18
JGW+ PROGRESSION RATES 60%	70%	60%	70%	69%
COMPLETIONS – PERSONNAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS	30	10	15	7
APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETION RATES	80%	78%	80%	76%

* Apprenticeship completion rates are to the academic year-end - July