REPORT SUMMARY SHEET

TITLE: STATUTORY POLICY: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN, BIODIVERSITY COMPLIANCE PLAN AND CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY OUTLINE

Purpose

To seek comment and, if appropriate, approval of the finalised Strategic Equality Plan, Biodiversity Compliance plan.

To provide an update on the development of CCR's Child Poverty Strategy.

Summary

As a newly formed public body, CCR will be publishing its first Strategic Equality Plan, covering 2024-2028, alongside our Biodiversity Compliance Plan. This will ensure CCR is compliant with relevant legislation as it pertains to the Public Sector Equality Duty and Biodiversity Compliance Plan prior to 1st April 2024. As the first Plans for the new Corporate Joint Committee, consultation and future iteration have been considered and embedded in both plans.

Further work is required to ensure the Child Poverty Strategy is updated appropriately, in line with refreshed Wellbeing Objectives for CCR. Given this, and the level of consultation required, this will be complete by October 2024.

Recommendations

(1) Approve the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028;

(2) Approve the Biodiversity Compliance Plan; and,

(3) Approve the outline timeline and next steps in regard to the development of the Child Poverty Strategy.

Contact Officer

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South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Cyd-bwyllgor corfforaethol De-Dwyrain Cymru

MONDAY 18TH MARCH 2024

STATUTORY POLICY

- **STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2028**
- **BIODIVERSITY COMPLIANCE PLAN**
- **CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY OUTLINE**

TO RECEIVE THE REPORT THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA ITEM 7

Reason for this Report

1. To seek comment and, if appropriate, approval of statutory policies for the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SEWCJC), known for the purposes of this report as Cardiff Capital Region (CCR). The policies submitted for approval are:

   - The Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 to ensure the complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This Plan ensures CCR meets the legal requirement of the Equality Act 2010.

   - The Biodiversity Compliance Plan to ensure CCR comply with our Public Duty, Section 6 under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1.

2. To provide an update on the development of CCR's Child Poverty Strategy, to ensure compliance with the Child Poverty Strategy as part of the CJC (Wales) Regulations 2021, and expected timelines.

Background – Strategic Equality Plan (Public Sector Equality Duty)

3. As a newly formed public body, this is CCR's first Strategic Equality Plan. This plan builds on the foundations of the CCR City Deal, demonstrating our commitment to fairer, inclusive, and shared prosperity.

4. The plan covers the period 2024-28. Given that this is the first plan for a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) as a new form of regional governance in Wales, there is an expectation that the Plan will be iterated as the CJC matures in operation and delivery.

5. To that end, a review will take place by December 2024, with the first iteration of the Plan due to be published upon completion. This review will allow for further consultation as required (both with stakeholders and citizens); ensure the objectives are fit for purpose; allow for adjustment to the Plan; and, also effectively incorporate our wider activities as a CJC.

6. The Regional Economic and Industrial Plan (REIP) 2023-2028 acts as the building blocks for our first Strategic Equality Plan. The Strategic Equality Plan responds to the statutory powers and associated duties of a CJC, including economic wellbeing, spatial planning, and regional transport planning.

7. The Plan aligns to relevant strategies, plans and appropriate legislation at a regional, Welsh and UK Government level. Consultation has taken place over a number of months with internal and external stakeholders, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

8. The first set of four objectives detailed in the Plan are regional, outlining what we intend to do and the positive change it will achieve for the citizens of Cardiff Capital Region. As a new public body, we must also ensure that we comply with the Duty at an organisational level and have inserted a further three objectives to that end:

Regional Objectives

- Objective 1 – Support employment and funding opportunities for protected groups to reflect the diversity of our region.
- Objective 2 – Adopt a collaborative approach to sustainable and inclusive economic growth that addresses both in-region and region-on-region disparities.
- Objective 3 – Develop an aligned approach to regional transport and spatial planning that enables social mobility and improves wellbeing.
- Objective 4 – Engage with communities and utilise a data-driven approach that informs regional provision and activity.

Organisational Objectives

- Objective 5 – Record pay information and take relevant actions that address the organisation's Gender Pay Gap.
- Objective 6 – Promote employment opportunities for protected groups that reflect the diversity of our region.
- Objective 7 – Create an inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential.

9. As stated within the legislation, CCR will publish a revised Strategic Equality Plan every four years. Progress against each specific objective and their subsequent action plans will be published through our Annual Report.

10. Data collection for continuous monitoring and evaluation will comprise of two main elements:

    a) Regional level (please see the appendix in Strategic Equality Plan) – work underway to establish our regional benchmark across a range of productivity, wellbeing, and wider economic measures. This will now be routinely collected, to ensure CCR can effectively report annually against the measures set out.

    b) Intervention level – monitoring and evaluation at investment and intervention level to continue. Enhancements to our Investment Framework are now being implemented, to ensure the measures are captured and provide further insight into our impact, ultimately helping to shape future strategy and focus.

11. Further work is underway to ensure the Strategic Equality Plan is finalised and is presented appropriately prior to publication.

Background – Biodiversity Compliance Plan

12. As a newly formed public body, this is CCR's first Biodiversity Compliance Plan, covering 2024, with annual reporting against each aim to be completed.

13. This plan builds on the activities undertaken to date by the CCR City Deal, demonstrating our commitment to improving our environment.

14. The region's geographical make-up is diverse, comprising of two cities, a range of market towns, the South Wales valleys, rural communities, and a coastal belt.

15. Under the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty, public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems.

16. The Duty requires authorities to embed the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems into their early thinking, business planning and wider activities; policies, plans, programmes and projects.

17. CCR's Biodiversity Compliance Plan sets out clear compliance, through a wider environmental lens, as our role to Wales's transition to Net Zero already forms a key part of our Regional Economic and Industrial Plan. Biodiversity cannot be positively impacted without considering wider impacts on the environment, and the links with citizen's wider wellbeing.

18. The Plan also aligns with all six objectives outlined in The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales (NRAP), and remains proportionate given the scope of our activity, the influence we may have over biodiversity across the region, and with an eye on future responsibilities.

19. Our six aims, each with specific actions and expected outcomes, include:

    a) CCR to publish a revised Impact Investment Framework with new consideration given to biodiversity.
    b) Engage and support CCR staff participation and understanding on issues of biodiversity, as it relates to CCR activity.
    c) CCR to declare a Climate and Nature Emergency and make further key climate and wider ecological commitments.
    d) Continued work with key partners and stakeholders to increase awareness and understanding of biodiversity issues.
    e) Embed biodiversity considerations into CCR's approach towards its Statutory Powers; Regional Transport and Spatial Planning.
    f) Establish a framework of governance and support for delivery of CCR's Biodiversity Compliance Plan.
    g) Further work is underway to ensure the Biodiversity Compliance Plan is finalised and is presented appropriately prior to publication.

Background - Child Poverty Strategy

20. The below summary sets out how CCR will work to publish a full Child Poverty Strategy, alongside refreshed Wellbeing Objectives and wider Plan by October 2024.

21. This timeframe will allow us to develop the best approach to addressing child poverty across the region, by leveraging our new responsibility and powers as a Corporate Joint Committee.

22. As part of developing the strategy, it will be key to ensure that CCR's Child Poverty Strategy is aligned to, and directly supports the Welsh Government's Child Poverty Strategy for Wales (2024), as well as building on the key elements of CCR's current Working Towards a Framework for Addressing Child Poverty, published in March 2023.

23. During the interim period, our current framework alongside the four Public Service Boards in the Southeast Wales region will be adopted. Each Public Service Board have Wellbeing Plans with integrated Child Poverty Strategies. Details of these may be found at:
    - Cardiff Public Service Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
    - Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
    - Gwent Public Service Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
    - Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028

Reasons for Recommendations

24. To ensure CCR comply with relevant legislation as it pertains to the Public Sector Equality Duty and Biodiversity Compliance Plan prior to 1st April 2024.

25. To ensure CCR have a clear pathway to refreshing the Wellbeing Objectives and Plan, aligned to the development and implementation of a regional Child Poverty Strategy by October 2024.

Financial Implications

26. There are no direct Financial Implications arising from this report. Activity linked to the Strategic Equality Plan, the Biodiversity Compliance Plan, and the development of CCR's Wellbeing Plan and integrated Child Poverty strategy are included within the CJC's Annual Business Plan. In this regard, appropriate resources have been factored in the CJC's approved 2024/25 Annual Budgets.

Legal Implications

27. The finalisation and publication of CCR's Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 seeks to ensure that CCR is compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. Officers have been in contact with the Equality and Human Rights Commissioner throughout the transition period and will continue to ensure the Commission is satisfied with CCR's approach and progress.

28. The finalisation and publication of CCR's Biodiversity Compliance Plan seeks to ensure that CCR is compliant with the legal requirement of Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

29. The finalisation and publication of CCR's Child Poverty Strategy seeks to ensure that CCR is compliant with the Child Poverty Strategy (Corporate Joint Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2021. In the interim period between 1st April 2024 and October 2024, when it is anticipated that the strategy will be finalised, CCR will adopt the regional Public Services Boards Wellbeing Plans, alongside the approach already set out in March 2023.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

30. In developing the Plan and in considering its endorsement regard should be had, amongst other matters, to:

    (a) the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards;

    (b) Public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are a. Age; b. Gender reassignment; c. Sex; d. Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality; e. Disability; f. Pregnancy and maternity; g. Marriage and civil partnership; h. Sexual orientation; I. Religion or belief – including lack of belief.

    (c) the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act') is about improving the

social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales - a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and is globally responsible. In discharging their respective duties under the Act, each public body listed in the Act (which includes the Councils comprising the CCRCD) must set and published wellbeing objectives. These objectives will show how each public body will work to achieve the vision for Wales set out in the national wellbeing goals. When exercising its functions, the CJC Cabinet should consider how the proposed decision will contribute towards meeting the wellbeing objectives set by each Council and in so doing achieve the national wellbeing goals. The wellbeing duty also requires the Councils to act in accordance with a 'sustainable development principle'. This principle requires the Councils to act in a way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Put simply, this means that SEW CJC must take account of the impact of their decisions on people living their lives in Wales in the future. In doing so, CJC Cabinet must:

- look to the long term.
- focus on prevention by understanding the root causes of problems.
- deliver an integrated approach to achieving the 7 national well-being goals.
- work in collaboration with others to find shared sustainable solutions.
- involve people from all sections of the community in the decisions which affect them.

31. CJC Cabinet must be satisfied that the proposed decision accords with the principles above. To assist CJC Cabinet to consider the duties under the Act in respect of the decision sought, an assessment has been undertaken, which is included within the Strategic Equality Plan, please see Appendix 4.

Equality Act 2010

32. In considering this matter, regard should be had, amongst other matters, to the Councils' duties under the Equality Act 2010. Pursuant to these legal duties the CJC Cabinet must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are:

- age;
- gender reassignment;
- sex;
- race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality;
- disability;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief – including lack of belief.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. It is recommended that the SEW CJC:

(1) Approve the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028;
(2) Approve the Biodiversity Compliance Plan; and,
(3) Approve the outline timeline and next steps in regard to the development of the Child Poverty Strategy.

Kellie Beirne
Chief Executive, South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

18th March 2024

Appendices

Appendix 1 CCR's Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028
Appendix 2 CCR's Biodiversity Compliance Plan
Appendix 3 CCR's Child Poverty Strategy Outline
Appendix 4 Well-being of Future Generations Assessment

Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28

Document Purpose

- To meet the legal requirement of the Equality Act 2010
- Outline CCR's first Strategic Equality Plan
- Demonstrate alignment with CCR's current strategy and organisational direction

Ownership

- This document has been developed by the CCR Policy & Impact function
- All CCR employees are responsible for implementation and supporting the development of future iterations

Approvals

- CCR Executive Team – <insert date>
- CJC Board – *18.03.2024*

Review Frequency

- Annual review in line with annual reporting requirements
- A requirement to revise the plan every four years
- Proposed lightweight review, to include further consultation, to take place by December 2024

1. Introduction and Foreword

Our Regional Context

As home to the capital city of Wales and over 1.5 million people, CCR represents roughly half of the nation's population, businesses, and economy. CCR is a vibrant and diverse region which is already at the social, political, and economic heart of Wales, with a significant number of advantages; our strategic location, natural resources, and liveability.

However, our region faces socio-economic challenges. On per capita GVA measures, the Welsh economy stands at 73% of the UK average. Even in the most prosperous areas of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, GVA equates to only 97.5% of the UK average. In the Northern Valleys and particularly, the Gwent Valleys, per capita GVA equates only to around half the national average.

Two CCR Local Authorities, Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent, remain toward the very bottom of the 362 UK localities that comprise the UK Competitiveness Index. Cardiff, Monmouthshire, and Newport are faring better in comparison to other Local Authorities in the region, aided partly by City Region Deal-enabled interventions that play to key sectoral strengths, but still lag when compared to wider UK Local Authorities.

Becoming a Corporate Joint Committee

2024 will be our first year operating as a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). CJCs are new public bodies that are being implemented across the four regions of Wales, following the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The CJC will provide a framework for greater collaboration between the ten local authorities of Southeast Wales, and help to drive a more coherent, simplified and democratically controlled mechanism for regional working. The new public body will be known as Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), as we build on our reputation, partnership network, and success to date.

This plan builds on the foundations of the CCR City Deal demonstrating our commitment to fairer, inclusive, and shared prosperity. As CCR transition to a new public body, the City Deal will now be one of several deployable financing instruments. The REIP acts as the building blocks for our first Strategic Equality Plan, and outlines how, through becoming more Competitive, Connected, and Resilient, we will:

- Focus on liveability for all citizens, as well as productivity and inclusivity
- Tackle the specific challenges associated with those areas in our region experiencing declining populations
- Stimulate the economy and encourage more people of working age to stay and return to the region
- Attract a range of companies and increase productive capacity by growing the employment based in key competitive clusters
- Reinforce the important partnerships forged across local political and business leadership

The Strategic Equality Plan directly aligns to the new statutory powers of CJCs - economic wellbeing, strategic spatial planning, and regional transport planning. Given CCR's remit as a regional body, all of the objectives set out aim to have a wide-reaching, positive impact on the families and citizens that call the region home, as well as for our businesses, academic and public sector partners.

We have referred to the following resources and evidence to help inform the development of this plan:

- **The Well-being Assessment** (Well-being of Future Generations Act)
- **Is Wales Fairer 2023** – a report prepared by the EHRC that highlights areas that they suggest Public Bodies in Wales need to address
- **UK Competitiveness Index 2023** – a report to measure of the long-run potential of localities, cities and regions to generate economic growth and well-paid employment
- **State of the Nation Report** by Chwarae Teg 2023 – a report examines what progress Wales is making towards becoming a truly gender equal nation
- **National Survey for Wales** – a report sets out results on a wide range of topics asked in the National Survey for Wales
- **Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation** – The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is designed to identify the small areas of Wales that are the most deprived
- **Regional Data and Benchmarking** – prepared internally, these data sets provide an initial benchmark for regional performance and insights using data from the ONS and StatsWales

Our Goals

Becoming More Connected

Enable businesses within our priority sectors and public services to achieve higher levels of productivity through innovation-led growth.

Becoming More Competitive

Invest in cutting-edge digital and physical infrastructure and grow the green economy through investing in and promoting companies, technologies and community initiatives that are embracing the decarbonisation agenda.

Becoming More Resilient

Maximise 'good growth' by ensuring prosperity is shared and spread across the Region and take direct steps to reduce the economic and social disparities between our places.

Our Values

Ambitious

We strive to be the best we can be. We are leaders in our fields, opinion formers, and influencers - challenging conventional thinking, innovating continually, having the courage of our convictions, and believing passionately in the pursuit of excellence.

Collaborative

We listen, we share information freely and we keep everyone informed. **We never pass on an opportunity to help a colleague** - recognizing that our collective impact is greater than our individual impact.

Adaptable

We embrace the challenges we meet and maintain our effectiveness. We have an agile mindset and view setbacks as learning opportunities, **striving to create an environment where we 'learn by doing'**, seeking to continuously improve our working practices - and ourselves.

Inclusive

We respect each other and value diversity of opinion. We take the time to ensure everyone feels seen and heard. We value the input of our partnerships and advisory bodies - and ensure that we leverage their collective genius.

2. National Policy Context

The Equality Act 2010

The Public Sector Equality Duty is a statutory duty on listed public authorities and other bodies carrying out public functions. It ensures that those organisations consider how their functions will affect people with different protected characteristics. The duty supports good decision-making by helping decision-makers understand how their activities affect different people. It also requires public bodies to monitor the actual impact of the things they do.

The three key aims of the duty are:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic
3. foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic

The relevant Protected Characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The Socio-Economic Duty

This Duty places a legal responsibility on bodies when they are taking strategic decisions to have due regard to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. CCR will discharge this duty through the use and application of our Public Sector Equality Duty and subsequent Strategic Equality Plan.

The Well-Being of Future Generations Act

This Act places a duty on each public body to carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as a process of improving the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. The below assessment demonstrates the alignment between this Strategic Equality Plan and the Well-being of Future Generations Act seven well-being goals.

Well-Being Goal	How does CCR's Strategic Equality Plan contribute to this goal?
A prosperous Wales *Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth and provides jobs*	This Strategic Equality Plan sets out clear, long-term objectives to continue CCR's work to date in ensuring high-value job creation in innovative sectors while working with key partners to continue to develop skills initiatives that support future employer needs.
A resilient Wales *Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)*	Responding to the climate crisis sits at the core of our activity. As highlighted in this Strategic Equality Plan, those who experience socioeconomic disadvantage are typically disproportionately affected by climate change – actions aiming towards equality therefore go hand-in-hand with our actions to mitigate the impact of climate change, recognising that these threats do not exist in isolation.
A healthier Wales *People's physical and mental well-being is maximised, and health impacts are understood*	Economic development cannot be achieved to the detriment of our regions' health outcomes. The objectives within this plan set out a holistic approach to measure inclusive economic wellbeing, by measuring wider well-being indicators at a regional level.
A Wales of cohesive communities *Communities are attractive, viable, safe, and well connected*	The objectives within this plan clearly demonstrate alignment with this goal, through the delivery of both the Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan. Although these are longer-term pieces of work, the requirement for equality and inclusion within both is paramount, while embedding indicators to continuously measure progress.
A globally responsible Wales *Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic, and environmental well-being*	Work towards this goal will be covered in two main areas. Firstly, CCR will continue developing and maturing our regional data capability, working with best-in-class Academics and regional data assets to better understand the impact of our investments, interventions, and projects. Secondly, building on our work to date in developing strategic partnerships with other Regions, in similar size and scope to CCR, across the globe.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language *Culture, heritage, and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, are and recreation*	Within the objectives, CCR has made a commitment to promote the Welsh language throughout the organisation and region, ensuring we not only comply with Welsh Language Standards, but encourage staff participation in Welsh events and Welsh language training.
A more equal Wales *People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances*	Equality is at the heart of this first iteration of our Strategic Equality Plan, with a clear focus on the interface between liveability and inclusivity, as well as productivity across our Region. Gathering data at investment and intervention level, coupled with regional data will ensure better insights and well-informed developments to this Plan.

Alignment to Other Strategies, Plans and Legislation

- Regional Economic and Industrial Plan 2023-28
- Annual Business Plan 2024-25
- Regional Transport Plan
- UK Government Department for Transport Inclusive Transport Strategy
- Strategic Development Plan
- The Socio-Economic Duty
- The Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Wales Anti-Racist Action Plan
- Wales LGBTQ+ Action Plan
- Welsh Language Standards
- Biodiversity Compliance Plan
- Cardiff Capital Region Energy Strategy
- Any future CCR strategies and plans
- Future Welsh Government and UK Government legislation, where there is a clear interface

3. Our Strategic Equality Objectives

Addressing the economic and social challenges of the region is central to everything we do – from the development and implementation of regional policy, through the delivery of our programmes, to how we measure impact. Increasing better access to opportunities is critical to good growth, and CCR is committed to ensuring that people in our region have the opportunity to develop new skills. Continuing to work collaboratively with the private and public sectors is key in bringing this to life.

The objectives, actions, and monitoring methods outlined on the following pages are our commitment to deliver over the next four years, enabling our people across the region to realise their potential.

The first set of four objectives are regional, outlining what we intend to do and the positive change it will achieve for the citizens of Cardiff Capital Region. As a new public body, we must also ensure that we comply with the Duty at an organisational level and have inserted a further three objectives to that end.

Regional Objectives

- Objective 1 – Support employment and funding opportunities for protected groups to reflect the diversity of our region
- Objective 2 – Adopt a collaborative approach to sustainable and inclusive economic growth that addresses both in-region and region-on-region disparities
- Objective 3 – Develop an aligned approach to regional transport and spatial planning that enables social mobility and improves wellbeing
- Objective 4 – Engage with communities and utilise a data-driven approach that informs regional provision and activity

Organisational Objectives

- Objective 5 – Record pay information and take relevant actions that address the organisation's Gender Pay Gap
- Objective 6 – Promote employment opportunities for protected groups that reflect the diversity of our region
- Objective 7 – Create an inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential

Reviewing and Monitoring Our Progress

As stated within the legislation, CCR will publish a revised Strategic Equality Plan every four years. Progress against each specific objective and their subsequent action plans will be published through our Annual Report. Every future iteration of our Strategic Equality Plan will build upon the former, ensuring we are demonstrating continuous progress and growing ambition, aligned to our organisational strategy and activity.

Given that we are publishing our first Strategic Equality Plan as a new public sector body, a **review will take place by December 2024** to ensure the objectives are still fit for purpose and effectively incorporate our wider activities as a CJC.

As identified in the *Is Wales Fairer?* (2023) report, data collection and reporting remain an obstacle to effective monitoring of progress across Wales. As such, to support the implementation of this Strategic Equality Plan and ensure best-in-class approaches to our wider activity, CCR has begun taking key steps towards improving our data capabilities. Going forward, utilising data at the regional and intervention level will become key to our activity, particularly regarding equality issues and the protected characteristics.

Ensuring connectivity with Local Authority data and Welsh Government WBFG indicators, CCR recognises that improvements in the longer term will be targeted at the routine linkage of socioeconomic, spatial, and transport data, in line with our new powers.

Regional Objectives		
Equality Objective	**Expected Outcomes**	**Monitoring Impact**
1. Support employment and funding opportunities for protected groups to reflect the diversity of our region.	1. An enhanced Impact Investment Framework with key, measurable indicators on employment and funding opportunities. 2. Our investment portfolio and wider activity is aligned to the aims of our Strategic Equality Plan. 3. Enhanced data and insight on existing investments and interventions will be used to influence future areas of interest, our strategic direction and the deployment of future funding. 4. CCR to have become a Living Wage Employer. 5. CCR to have advanced progress towards becoming a Living Wage Region.	▪ Monitor the source of investment attracted to the Region. ▪ Gender, ethnicity, and disability of those receiving funding. ▪ Gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age group of those employed by jobs[1] created. ▪ Home postcode of those employed through jobs created. ▪ Work postcode of those employed through jobs created. ▪ Location of investment/project/business supported. ▪ Average salary levels of new jobs created. ▪ Job transition from diminishing markets to more sustainable employment opportunities which will be assessed at Impact Evaluation stage. ▪ Investment Reporting Templates - completed reports with outputs related specifically to PCs.
2. Ensure a collaborative approach to sustainable and	1. A strengthened Impact Investment Framework with key markers on economic	▪ Gross weekly earnings by Local Authority: full-time employment by workplace and residence of the employee. ▪ Employment by local area: full-time employment by gender. ▪ Gender Pay Gap by Local Authority, by place of residency.

inclusive economic growth, pursuing economic wellbeing and addressing both in-region and region-on-region disparities	wellbeing, and inclusive and sustainable growth. 2. An investment portfolio that is aligned to the aims of our Strategic Equality Plan and Economic Wellbeing Objectives. 3. Strengthened focus on addressing in-region disparities and continuation of investments made through the Northern Valleys Initiative. 4. Increased monitoring and evaluation of regional disparities, inclusive economic growth, and economic wellbeing across chosen indicators. 5. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth across the region and improved economic well-being of citizens across chosen markers.	▪ UCKI and National Ranking by Local Authority ▪ Households living in material deprivation, by Local Authority ▪ Various indicators from the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation ▪ ONS Wellbeing Objectives: Life satisfaction by Local Authority and Feeling that things done in life are worthwhile, by Local Authority ▪ Household incomes at regional level.

3. Develop an aligned approach to regional transport and spatial planning, that enables social mobility and improves wellbeing.	1. The production, development, and implementation of a Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan, which are aligned with our regional Strategic Equality Plan. 2. A strengthened Impact Investment Framework with key, measurable markers on future Infrastructure projects, to ensure alignment with future planning requirements. 3. A joined-up regional approach to inclusive travel and site development, helping to reduce in-region economic disparities. 4. Improved digital infrastructure across the region, working towards increased provision for commercial and residential sites in areas of digital poverty.	▪ Continuous monitoring and reporting against both the Regional Transport Plan and the Strategic Development Plan in line with predefined deadlines and wider requirements, to include measures against Equality Objectives. ▪ CCR to publish annual performance reports against the RTP for Welsh Government on an annual basis, allied to a comprehensive evaluation three years post-adoption of the RTP. ○ Number, capacity, quality and accessibility of public transport services operational. ▪ Annual progress reports of site schemes, alongside the number, scale and location of both housing and commercial sites developed. ○ Number and location of strategic development sites. ▪ Number of commercial and residential sites benefitting from new digital infrastructure. ▪ Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to developed in conjunction with the RTP by CCR with further indicators to be included.
4. Create positive social impact through engagement with	1. The strategic direction of CCR will be designed in collaboration with communities and citizens, particularly those with protected characteristics,	▪ Number of citizens engaged. ▪ Awareness of CCR across the region, for example findings of CCR Communications Survey and State of the Region Business Report. ▪ Monitoring and evaluation of Regional provision.

communities and regional provision.	to ensure our work addresses the needs and wants of citizens equally. 2. An increased awareness of CCR across the region, to ensure knowledge of the opportunities available through CCR's work is widespread and accessible to all. 3. Decision-making on regional provision will be guided by community engagement and data, ensuring a robust approach.	▪ Impact assessments. ▪ Stakeholder consultations. ▪ E-Survey findings from mid-term and final report (GR2). ▪ Local Engagement surveys: % of people who feel they can impact change at the local level.
Organisational Objectives		
Equality Objective	**Expected Outcomes**	**Monitoring Impact**
5. Record employment information and take relevant actions in relation to CCR's Gender Pay Gap.	▪ Recorded improvement in any identified gender pay gap of CCR employees over the course of this 4-year plan. ▪ Published employment information to ensure awareness of the gender pay gap and actions taken towards addressing it.	▪ Internal Gender Pay Gap Analysis. ○ Mean (average) gender pay gap for hourly pay. ○ Median gender pay gap for hourly pay. ○ Percentage of men and women in each hourly pay quarter. ▪ Employment Information by protected characteristic. ▪ Recruitment Information by protected characteristic. ▪ Payroll data.

	▪ Positive action taken to recruit and promote female staff into upper pay quartiles, with increased representation at the highest level of the organisation. ▪ Increased number of female staff, and those with protected characteristics, given the opportunity to attend networking events and engage with regional stakeholders. ▪ CCR to become an accredited Real Living Wage Employer.	
6. Promote employment opportunities for protected groups, to represent the population of the Cardiff Capital Region.	▪ Action plan for promoting vacancies to underrepresented groups, with an increase in the number of underrepresented applicants to job openings at CCR. ▪ Increased hiring of those with protected characteristics at CCR.	▪ Recruitment Information by protected characteristic. ▪ Employment Information by protected characteristic.

	▪ Increased awareness of job opportunities for marginalised groups. ▪ Increased rigour, policy, and process around development and appraisal opportunities, with improved levels of development of employees.	
7. Ensure an inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential.	▪ Employees feel supported at work and included within the organisation. ▪ Increased retention of employees and improved support to staff to reach their potential.	▪ Employment Information by protected characteristic. ▪ Staff Engagement Surveys. ▪ Employee Engagement Forum feedback.

Equality Objective 1: ***Support employment and funding opportunities for protected groups to reflect the diversity of our region***

Why?

Inclusive economic development is at the heart of Cardiff Capital Region's mission. This objective helps to ensure that CCR, as an organisation and through its various interventions, is positively contributing to the economy while simultaneously addressing inequalities in both employment and funding opportunities. CCR must ensure our activities are not exacerbating existing inequalities and are part of the solution to the regional economic disparities.

Action to work towards this objective:

1. CCR will refresh its Impact Investment Framework to ensure that, projects and activities directly supported by CCR, support inclusive employment and funding opportunities for groups with protected characteristics:
    - New indicators to be included in the Investment Framework to monitor progress against this objective, including those outlined below.
    - Monitoring and evaluation tools will be built into the Investment Reports, with specific targets relating to outputs, outcomes, and impacts, enabling CCR to monitor the progress against this objective.

2. Working with key stakeholders from relevant sectors, any new interventions and investments brought forward will be assessed based on their contribution to the above objective, ensuring consideration to this is developed throughout the business case approval process.

3. CCR will undertake work to scope the possibility of becoming a Real Living Wage Region and work with colleagues across the public and private sectors alongside academia, to progress towards this ambition within the four-year life of this Strategic Equality Plan. Cardiff, as a Real Living Wage City, will be used as an exemplar for expanding this ambition across the region and when devising an action plan for this initiative.

Protected Characteristics Impacted:

This objective has been developed so that all protected characteristic groups will be positively impacted. With an emphasis on those from marginalised groups in terms of access to employment and funding opportunities, CCR will work across their existing portfolio; Innovation, Infrastructure, Skills, and Challenge to ensure equal opportunities, with an eye on future responsibilities.

Expected Outcomes:

1. An enhanced Impact Investment Framework with key, measurable indicators on employment and funding opportunities. These will be realised both directly as a formal part of the "deal" or as part of the agreed outcomes and outputs of the investment/project.
2. Our investment portfolio and wider activity is aligned to the aims of our Strategic Equality Plan.
3. Enhanced data and insight on existing investments and interventions will be used to influence future areas of interest, our strategic direction and the deployment of future funding.
4. CCR to have become a Living Wage Employer.

5. CCR to have advanced progress towards becoming a Living Wage Region.

Expected Timeline:

- An enhanced Impact Investment Framework will be in operation by **September 2024** and will be applied to all new prospective investments.
- CCR will aim to become a Real Living Wage accredited employer by **May 2024**. Once this has been achieved, work will begin towards scoping the possibility of becoming a Real Living Wage Region.
- Becoming a Real Living Wage Region is a long-term and on-going ambition as it necessitates extensive collaboration with key stakeholders across the region. We therefore aim to have completed a scoping exercise and will publish a report on the feasibility and practical implications of becoming a Real Living Wage Region in **2025**.
- There is no set timeline for achieving inclusive economic development, rather an **ongoing commitment,** building on our work to date, which will sustain for the duration of Cardiff Capital Region and will be evident across the portfolio teams and wider delivery and activity.

Monitoring and Evaluation Tools:

1. Proposed Regional and UK-Wide Measures
    - Funding opportunities for marginalised groups, for example the UK Business Angels Association, CRÈME and Development Bank Wales
    - Investment data per protected characteristic.
    - Skills Data from ONS/Horsefly.
    - Employment data relating to those with protected characteristics.

2. CCR Monitoring and Evaluation – **proposed** indicators:
    - Monitor the source of investment attracted to the Region.
    - Gender, ethnicity, and disability of those receiving funding.
    - Gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age group of those employed by jobs[1] created.
    - Home postcode of those employed through jobs created.
    - Work postcode of those employed through jobs created.
    - Location of investment/project/business supported.
    - Average salary levels of new jobs created.
    - Job transition from diminishing markets to more sustainable employment opportunities which will be assessed at Impact Evaluation stage.
    - Investment Reporting Templates - completed reports with outputs related specifically to PCs. The raw data will be aggregated up, from all individual interventions, and reported on within our Annual Report.

[1] Direct/construction/apprenticeships/safeguarded.

Monitoring Impact:

- This objective, and our progress, will be reviewed and evaluated annually in our Equalities Annual Report, as well as being continuously reported against within our Impact Investment Framework.
- Our investment indicators will provide opportunity for ongoing assessment.
- As highlighted, this is a long-term, ongoing objective and necessarily demands time to observe the full impact of investments and growth.
- Our approach will be re-assessed fully in four years' time, when renewed equality objectives are published.

Equality Objective 2: ***Adopt a collaborative approach to sustainable and inclusive economic growth that addresses both in-region and region-on-region disparities.***

Why?

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth has always been at the heart of CCR's mission. Our transition to a Corporate Joint Committee, and adoption of economic wellbeing as a statutory power, enables us to be bold in the action we take and the impact we can have.

We will ensure that our approach is sustainable and inclusive, that growing the regional economy is not to the detriment of our citizens, and that in-region disparities are not exacerbated through our work. In addition, and recognising that those facing socio-economic disadvantage are often hit hardest by the impact of climate change, our economic growth must be environmentally sustainable, to ensure we are not exacerbating the climate crisis through our activities. Economic growth can be a powerful tool for change. Harnessing this potential, and continuing to pursue sustainable and inclusive growth, is central to our mission and success.

This Strategic Equality Plan, aligned with refreshed Economic Wellbeing Objectives, will frame our continued approach towards sustainable and inclusive economic growth. As a regional body, we are keenly aware of the in-region disparities we face. Part of our approach therefore will be centred on the need to track these disparities, address them through our work, and ensure they are not exacerbated.

This objective will ensure that economic growth is led from the ground-up and meets local needs, as highlighted in our Regional Economic and Industrial Plan, while working closely with key local authority stakeholders.

Actions to work towards this objective:

1. CCR will update its Impact Investment Framework to ensure our investment portfolio strives towards improving the economic wellbeing of CCR citizens and inclusive, sustainable growth.
    - Ensure key indicators are included within the Investment Framework to monitor progress towards this objective.
    - Utilise existing wider regional, and UK-wide measures annually.

2. CCR, through its Northern Valleys Initiative, will help address regional disparities by funding sustainable, inclusive growth in the Northern Valleys with an eye to decreasing the current inequalities across the region.
    - Resources will be allocated through this targeted fund, with ongoing collaboration with local leaders.

3. New economic wellbeing objectives will be designed in collaboration with key stakeholders across the region, including those with protected characteristics.
        - Engage with key stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of economic wellbeing and ensure alignment with statutory powers of Regional Transport Planning and Strategic Development Planning.

4. CCR will increase its data collection and analysis capabilities, working to build a baseline for the region to enable monitoring and evaluation of impact. In collaboration with Universities, CCR will establish new data points on economic wellbeing and inclusive growth at the regional and local level. This will aid us in enhancing our outward perspective, allowing us to look at specific region-on-region disparities.

5. Looking to the longer-term, and given the growing remit of CJCs, work will be undertaken with key stakeholders to ensure wider equality indicators are developed and deployed across our wider activities, above and beyond the Investment Framework, for example, Investment Zones.

Protected Characteristics Impacted:

All protected characteristic groups will be impacted by this objective. There is a special emphasis on those facing socio-economic disadvantage given our focus on addressing regional disparities across the Northern Valleys and the Southern Arc of Cardiff. This objective will positively contribute towards CCR meeting its Socio-Economic Duty.

Expected Outcomes:

1. A strengthened Impact Investment Framework with key markers on economic wellbeing, and inclusive and sustainable growth.
2. An investment portfolio that is aligned to the aims of our Strategic Equality Plan and Economic Wellbeing Objectives.
3. Strengthened focus on addressing in-region disparities and continuation of investments made through the Northern Valleys Initiative.
4. Increased monitoring and evaluation of regional disparities, inclusive economic growth, and economic wellbeing across chosen indicators.
5. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth across the region and improved economic well-being of citizens across chosen markers.

Expected timeline for meeting this objective:

- A revised Impact Investment Framework with key indicators to measure economic wellbeing, regional disparities, and inclusive economic growth will be in operation from **September 2024**.
- The Northern Valleys Initiative will be in operation from **March 2024-March 2029**. All investments made throughout the life span of this targeted fund will be aligned to this objective.
- Increased monitoring and evaluation of impact will be an ongoing initiative. Working with key partners to develop a regional data proposition to provide further insights throughout **2024** will act as a first step towards increasing our data capabilities.
- Inclusive, sustainable economic growth can be only achieved through **ongoing**, long-term initiatives, investments, and strategies; necessarily, there is no set date for completion of this objective.

Monitoring and Evaluation Tools:

Our monitoring and evaluation of success towards this objective is two-fold. We will define our success and report against regional-level data to gain an insight into long-term progress against our objectives, as well as report our own investment data and outputs.

1. Proposed Regional and UK-Wide Measures
    - Gross weekly earnings by Local Authority: full-time employment by workplace and residence of the employee.
    - Employment by local area: full-time employment by gender
    - Gender Pay Gap by Local Authority, by place of residency
    - UCKI and National Ranking by Local Authority
    - Households living in material deprivation, by Local Authority
    - Various indicators from the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation
    - ONS Wellbeing Objectives: Life satisfaction by Local Authority and Feeling that things done in life are worthwhile, by Local Authority
    - Household incomes at regional level.

2. CCR Monitoring and Evaluation – proposed indicators:
    - Investment attracted to the Region.
    - Gender, ethnicity, and disability of those receiving funding.
    - Gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age group of those employed by jobs created.
    - Home postcode of those employed through jobs created.
    - Work postcode of those employed through jobs created.
    - Location of investment/project/business supported.
    - Average salary levels of new jobs created.
    - Average number of weekly hours worked within jobs created.
    - Job transition from diminishing markets to more sustainable employment opportunities.
    - Investment Reporting Templates - completed reports with outputs related specifically to PCs. The raw data will be aggregated up, from all individual interventions, and reported on within our Annual Report.

Monitoring Impact:

- This objective, and our progress, will be reviewed and evaluated annually in our Equalities Annual Report, as well as being continuously reported against within our Investment Framework.
- Our investment indicators will provide opportunity for ongoing assessment.
- As highlighted, this is a long-term, ongoing objective and necessarily demands time to observe the full impact of investments and growth.
- Our approach will be re-assessed fully in four years' time, when renewed equality objectives are published.

Equality Objective 3: ***Develop an aligned approach to regional transport and spatial planning that enables social mobility and improves wellbeing.***

Why?

As a Corporate Joint Committee, CCR has statutory powers for Regional Transport Planning and Strategic Spatial Planning. Above and beyond being statutory powers, these elements will act as key enablers for increased social mobility, and, when approached correctly and holistically, can provide improved access to opportunities for protected groups. Access to reliable and efficient transport, linking citizens to improved sites and premises, can open doors to further opportunities, employers, and networks of support.

This objective directly correlates with, and supports, our first equality objective and aim of improving the wellbeing of the region's citizens.

Action to work towards this objective:

1. Develop and produce an inclusive and evidence based **Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan** in line with prescribed timelines and in partnership with key stakeholders.
   - Ensure Public Sector objectives and the relevant indicators are embedded within the Strategic Development Plan and Regional Transport Plan.
   - Utilise existing wider regional, and UK-wide measures annually, for example modal shifts.

2. Adopt a sustainable and inclusive approach to transport through the **Regional Transport Plan**, aligned to the Wales Transport Strategy.
   - Ensure that the Regional Transport Plan is **aligned with our regional ambitions** in the REIP and has equality considerations embedded.
   - CCR to produce an **Engagement Plan** to ensure that the RTP is developed in a collaborative manner across LAs, key stakeholders, and citizens. This will ensure broad representation and consultation with those who utilise CCR's transport infrastructure.

3. Lead the Strategic Development Plan, ensuring engaged and empowered local community involvement.
   - Publish a **Preferred Strategy** under SDP regulations with key principles aligned to our REIP, Equality Objectives, and Economic Wellbeing Objectives.
   - CCR and LA partners to set a **threshold for Strategic Candidate Sites and Locations** that is aligned with wider equality objectives, during the Call for Sites.

4. Contribute to the roll-out of **enhanced digital infrastructure.**

5. **Ensure alignment between current interventions**, for example the Metro Plus scheme, Housing Fund, Strategic Sites and Premises, and above plans to maximise impact.

6. CCR will **refresh its Impact Investment Framework** to ensure that any infrastructure interventions directly supported by CCR take into consideration potential impact on social mobility, the wellbeing of the region's citizens, and alignment to the RTP and SDP.

- New indicators to be included in the Investment Framework to monitor progress against this objective.

Protected Characteristics Impacted:

This objective has been developed so that all protected characteristic groups will be positively impacted. Additional consideration will be shown to those with disabilities given the importance of equitable accessibility.

Enabling social mobility through regional transport and site development will positively impact those that are socio-economically disadvantaged, and those with the protected characteristics of age, race, sex, and pregnancy and maternity.

Expected Outcomes:

1. The production, development, and implementation of a Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan, which are aligned with our regional Strategic Equality Plan.
2. A strengthened Impact Investment Framework with key, measurable markers on future Infrastructure projects, to ensure alignment with future planning requirements.
3. A joined-up regional approach to inclusive travel and site development, helping to reduce in-region economic disparities.
4. Improved digital infrastructure across the region, working towards increased provision for commercial and residential sites in areas of digital poverty.

Expected Timeline:

- RTP to be developed as per the timelines established in CCR's Implementation Plan, in line with Welsh Government Guidance on final publication.
- Following public consultation and approval by Welsh Government Ministers, the Regional Transport Plan, Regional Transport Development Plan, and Integrated Well-being Appraisal will be published in **June 2025.**
- As per Welsh Government draft guidance, the SDP will be prepared with an adoption date, yet to be determined, but is not anticipated to be before 2030**.** This timeline includes public consultation and submissions to Welsh Government for approval.

Monitoring and Evaluation Tools:

1. **Proposed RTP/SDP Indicators**
   - Continuous monitoring and reporting against both the Regional Transport Plan and the Strategic Development Plan in line with predefined deadlines and wider requirements, to include measures against Equality Objectives.
   - CCR to publish annual performance reports against the RTP for Welsh Government on an annual basis, allied to a comprehensive evaluation three years post-adoption of the RTP.
     - Number, capacity, quality and accessibility of public transport services operational.
   - Annual progress reports of site schemes, alongside the number, scale and location of both housing and commercial sites developed.
     - Number and location of strategic development sites.
   - Number of commercial and residential sites benefitting from new digital infrastructure.

- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to developed in conjunction with the RTP by CCR with further indicators to be included.

2. **Proposed Regional and UK-Wide Measures**
   - Travel to work times – modal shifts.
   - More sustainable modes of transport/active travel.
   - Digital accessibility and inclusion statistics.

Monitoring Impact:

- This objective, and our progress, will be reviewed and evaluated annually in our Equalities Annual Report, as well as being continuously reported against within both the Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan.
- The development and identification of specific indicators will provide opportunity for ongoing assessment against this objective, in line with the development of the plans themselves.
- As highlighted, this is a long-term, ongoing objective and necessarily demands time to observe the full impact of regional transport and site development, with economic well-being at their core.
- Our approach will be re-assessed fully in four years' time, when renewed equality objectives are published.

Equality Objective 4: Engage with communities and utilise a data-driven approach that informs regional provision and activity.

Why?
In alignment with the Duty, this objective will ensure CCR positively contributes to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in our day-to-day activities. Striving for positive social impact through our activities, this Strategic Equality Plan will guide decision-making on regional provision and ensure communities' interests are protected. Engaging with communities and citizens, particularly those with protected characteristics, alongside utilising various evidence bases will ensure that CCR's strategic direction is to the benefit of all, across the region.

Actions to work towards this objective:

1. The formation of stakeholder engagement groups to discuss the high-level strategic direction of CCR, as it pertains to those with protected characteristics.
    - The establishment of Public Forums and Citizen Assemblies to represent those across the region, as the organisation develops and evolves, to improve participation and involvement.
2. Increased and directed communication initiatives across the region, to raise awareness of CCR and the opportunities it offers.
    - To demonstrate due regard, through our own activities, the need to foster good relations between people who shared a protected characteristic and those who do not, as per the Public Sector Equality Duty.
3. Data to be used to inform decision-making across regional provision, i.e. strategic sites and transport, with special consideration given to marginalised groups.
    - Building CCR's evidence base and monitoring and evaluation capabilities to ensure robust reporting of social impact.
4. Embedding positive social impact as a consideration into all relevant decision-making.
5. Ensure CCR documents are accessible with inclusive use of language. For example, our press releases and Expressions of Interests

Protected Characteristics Impacted:
This objective has been developed so that all protected characteristic groups will be positively impacted. Additional consideration will be given to marginalised groups that are most impacted by regional provision, e.g. those with the protected characteristics of age, sex, disability, and race, and those impacted by socio-economic disadvantage.

Expected Outcomes:

- The strategic direction of CCR will be designed in collaboration with communities and citizens, particularly those with protected characteristics, to ensure our work addresses the needs and wants of citizens equally.
- An increased awareness of CCR across the region, to ensure knowledge of the opportunities available through CCR's work is widespread and accessible to all.
- Decision-making on regional provision will be guided by community engagement and data, ensuring a robust approach.

Expected timeline for meeting this objective:

- This objective will be met **continuously** whilst shaping CCR's strategic direction and will be embedded within the policy-making process, where required.
- An initial scoping exercise will be undertaken to ensure a best-practice approach and meaningful engagement, with an eye to the establishment of these groups, forums, and assemblies by **2027**.
- Continuous developments to CCR's data capabilities and capacity to be improved and embedded further in decision-making by **2026.**

Monitoring and Evaluation tools:

Proposed Indicators:

- Number of citizens engaged.
- Awareness of CCR across the region, for example findings of CCR Communications Survey and State of the Region Business Report.
- Monitoring and evaluation of Regional provision.
- Impact assessments.
- Stakeholder consultations.
- E-Survey findings from mid-term and final report (GR2).
- Local Engagement surveys: % of people who feel they can impact change at the local level.

Key Elements:

- Regional Comparators: Greater Manchester, The Basque Country etc.
- Key Partners: WhatWorks Network, WERU, ONS, Productivity Institute.

Monitoring Impact

- Progress towards this objective will be monitored and reported annually within our annual report, through community surveys and stakeholder engagement groups.
- The effectiveness of our approach will be assessed by reviewing our strategic direction and the impact made by community input.
- Success for this objective means effectively incorporating community engagement into CCR structures and processes, regarding our strategic direction.

Equality Objective 5: ***Record pay information and take relevant actions in relation to CCR's Gender Pay Gap.***

Why?
CCR is a mission-driven and inclusive growth body – our values must be demonstrated internally and our commitment to inclusivity must be visible to our own current and potential future staff. Ensuring that CCR works to address any visible gender pay gap is crucial to achieving our wider aims and meeting our duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (2010) Act.

As CCR will become its own public body in April 2024, with staff employed by various LAs across the region prior to this point, we will begin reporting our gender pay gap in the first iteration of our Annual Equalities Report.

Actions to work towards this objective:

1. Publish and report our Gender Pay Gap analysis, in line with guidance, within each Equalities Annual Report, beginning in 2024/25.
2. Design and implement a CCR action plan towards addressing a Gender Pay Gap, as appropriate.
3. **Ensure workforce data is regularly collected and reviewed, to enable monitoring against equality objectives and to meet any duties placed upon us.**
    - Use **workforce data** to guide action and analyse existing barriers to inclusion and development.
    - **Publish employment information** as required by the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.
4. **Where necessary, make changes to policies and practices that are found to be a contributory factor to any identified inequality in pay.**
    - Revise and create policies and processes that raise awareness of, and access to, opportunities such as **family-friendly policies, flexible working, part-time work, job sharing** etc.
    - Review and revise **recruitment and promotion** policies, processes, and practices.
5. Taking positive action to recruit and promote female staff into upper pay quartiles to ensure equal representation across the organisation.
    - Make **development and appraisal opportunities** mandatory, to promote the personal development of employees and help them to break down barriers.
    - **Actively promote vacancies** to marginalised groups, through focusing outreach methods and advertising in forums that specifically target people and groups with protected characteristics.
    - Implement **standardised performance management processes**.
    - Deliver **unconscious bias training** to all staff undertaking interviews, alongside any other statutory training requirements.
6. Promote networking opportunities and increase access to networking for female staff, and others with protected characteristics.
7. Work towards becoming an accredited Real Living Wage employer.

Protected Characteristics impacted:
This equality objective will positively impact those with the protected characteristics of Age, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, and Sex.

Expected Outcomes:

- Recorded improvement in any identified gender pay gap of CCR employees over the course of this 4-year plan.
- Published employment information to ensure awareness of the gender pay gap and actions taken towards addressing it.
- Reviewed and revised HR policies to ensure they are not contributing to the gender pay gap.
- Positive action taken to recruit and promote female staff into upper pay quartiles, with increased representation at the highest level of the organisation.
- Increased number of applicants with protected characteristics applying for roles at CCR.
- Strengthened data collection and analysis capabilities on internal workforce and recruitment data. Established process put in place to meet reporting requirements and enable internal review of progress towards inclusivity.
- Increased rigour, policy, and process around development and appraisal opportunities, with improved levels of development of employees, regardless of gender and protected characteristics.
- Increased number of female staff, and those with protected characteristics, given the opportunity to attend networking events and engage with regional stakeholders.
- CCR to become an accredited Real Living Wage Employer.

Expected timeline for meeting this objective:

- This objective will be met **continuously** whilst shaping CCR's organisational direction and wider people strategy.
- Although not time constrained, given our obligation to report against progress of each objective, more specific timelines will be embedded during our lightweight review, due to take place by December 2024.

Monitoring and Evaluation tools:

Indicators

- Internal Gender Pay Gap Analysis.
    - Mean (average) gender pay gap for hourly pay.
    - Median gender pay gap for hourly pay.
    - Percentage of men and women in each hourly pay quarter.
- Employment Information by protected characteristic.
- Recruitment Information by protected characteristic.
- Payroll data.

Monitoring Impact

Progress towards meeting this objective will be assessed annually through our gender pay gap analysis in each Annual Report. Success would look like a continued improvement in any identified gender pay

gap over the lifespan of this plan. The effectiveness of approach will be monitored by conducting internal reviews against our action plan.

Equality Objective 6: ***Promote employment opportunities for protected groups that reflect the diversity of our region.***

Why?
CCR is a mission-driven and inclusive growth body – our values must be demonstrated internally and our commitment to inclusivity must be visible to our own current and potential future staff. Creating good growth must begin internally at CCR itself, with equal employment opportunities ensuring an organisation that is representative of the wider region.

As CCR will become its own public body in April 2024, with staff employed by various LAs across the region prior to this point, we will begin reporting our recruitment, employment, and equalities data in the first iteration of our Annual Equalities Report.

Actions to work towards this objective:

1. **Review and revise recruitment policies, processes, and practices to ensure those from protected groups face no additional challenges when pursuing employment opportunities at CCR.**
    - Establish a clear, objective, structured, and **transparent recruitment process**, with inclusive practices embedded, e.g. name and gender-blind recruitment, bias-free job adverts, and use of inclusive language.
    - Deliver **unconscious bias training** to all staff undertaking interviews, alongside any other statutory training requirements.
2. **Seek to actively promote vacancies to marginalised groups, through focusing outreach methods and advertising in forums that specifically target people and groups with protected characteristics.**
3. **Collect high-quality data to monitor inclusion outcomes.**
    - Analyse **recruitment data** to prioritise inclusion efforts.
    - **Publish recruitment information** as required by the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.
3. **Development and appraisal opportunities made mandatory, to promote the personal development of employees.**
4. **Set diversity targets for recruitment, e.g. number of applicants with protected characteristics.**

Protected Characteristics impacted:
This objective has been developed so that all protected characteristic groups will be positively impacted. Additional consideration will be given to those who may be under-represented or under-recognised within public bodies.

Expected Outcomes:

- Action plan for promoting vacancies to underrecognised groups, with an increase in the number of underrecognised applicants to job openings at CCR.

- Increased hiring of those with protected characteristics at CCR.
- Increased awareness of job opportunities for marginalised groups.
- Increased rigour, policy, and process around development and appraisal opportunities, with improved levels of development of employees.

Expected timeline for meeting this objective:

This objective will be continuously met as CCR expands its organisation and continues to recruit across the region.

- This objective will be met **continuously** whilst shaping CCR's organisational direction and wider people strategy.
- Although not time constrained, given our obligation to report against progress of each objective, more specific timelines will be embedded during our lightweight review, due to take place by December 2024.

Monitoring and Evaluation tools:

- Recruitment Information by protected characteristic.
- Employment Information by protected characteristic.

Monitoring Impact

Progress towards this objective will be reviewed and evaluated annually, via our Annual Report. Within the Annual Report, we will report against specific data points selected and assess progress accordingly. Our approach will be re-assessed fully in four years' time, when renewed equality objectives are published. As highlighted, this is a long-term, ongoing objective and necessarily demands time to observe the full impact of an action plan towards ensuring employment opportunities.

Equality Objective 7: ***Create an inclusive work environment that supports staff from all backgrounds to reach their potential.***

Why?

CCR is a mission-driven and inclusive growth body – our values must be demonstrated internally and our commitment to inclusivity must be visible to our own current and potential future staff. Ensuring that staff are able to reach their potential within an inclusive work environment is crucial to CCR's success and vital in achieving our equality aims.

As CCR will become its own public body in April 2024, with staff employed by various LAs across the region prior to this point, we will begin reporting our recruitment, employment, and equalities data in the first iteration of our Annual Equalities Report.

Actions to work towards this objective:

1. **Revise and create HR policies and processes that promote fairness, equity, and inclusivity for all employees**
   - **Development and appraisal opportunities** made mandatory, to promote the personal development of employees and break down barriers.
   - Ensure opportunities for advancement and development are communicated through an **open and transparent process**.
   - Create a consistent and transparent programme for **learning and development opportunities.**
   - **Onboarding and induction** process that is consistent for all new employees.
   - Ensure the opportunity for accessible **Welsh language** training is made available for all employees to develop their skills and confidence in using our language.

2. **Foster agency and inclusive co-creation, ensuring whole team participation in efforts towards inclusion and build a culture of belonging**
   - Establishment of an **Employee Engagement Forum** with representation from each team to create and develop a culture of continuous dialogue and an open, transparent, and inclusive culture.

3. **Establishment of a HR function**
   - Delivering **unconscious bias training** to all staff undertaking interviews.
   - Establish processes for effective collection of workforce data.
   - Use **workforce data** to guide action and analyse existing barriers to inclusion and development, e.g. comparing promotion rates across different groups.
   - Develop and implement an **organisational people strategy**, with consideration given to diversity and inclusion, to be approved by December 2024.
   - Work in **partnership with external bodies**, as and when needed, to ensure access to appropriate expertise, e.g. on matters of accessibility, outreach programmes, and targeted job advertising campaigns.

4. **Integrate accessibility considerations into all aspects of activity and within the workplace**

- Conduct review of **accessibility of the workplace** and work practices for all protected characteristics.
- Appropriately **leverage technology** to make strides towards inclusivity, for example ensuring virtual meetings are accessible for all.

5. **Build organisational trust from leadership level through open and collaborative communication**
   - Deliver inclusive leadership programmes for mid and senior-level management.

Protected Characteristics impacted:
This objective has been developed so that all protected characteristic groups will be positively impacted. Additional consideration will be shown to those who may be under-represented or underrecognised within public bodies.

Expected Outcomes:
- Employees feel supported at work and included within the organisation.
- Increased retention of employees and improved support to staff to reach their potential.

Expected timeline for meeting this objective:
- This objective will be continuously met as CCR shapes its organisational design as a new body, with an ongoing commitment to placing inclusivity at the centre of CCR's organisational culture.
- CCR's Employee Engagement Forum was established in January 2024, with bi-weekly meetings for the first three months of its establishment. Meetings will then be held monthly from April 2024.
- This objective will be met **continuously** whilst shaping CCR's organisational direction and wider people strategy.
- Although not time constrained, given our obligation to report against progress of each objective, more specific timelines will be embedded during our lightweight review, due to take place by December 2024.

Monitoring and Evaluation tools:
- Employment Information by protected characteristic.
- Staff Engagement Surveys.
- Employee Engagement Forum feedback.

Monitoring Impact
Progress towards this objective will be reviewed and evaluated annually, via our Annual Report. Within the Annual Report, we will report against specific data points selected and assess progress accordingly. Our approach will be re-assessed fully in four years' time, when renewed equality objectives are published. As highlighted, this is a long-term, ongoing objective and necessarily demands time to observe the full impact of creating an inclusive work environment.

Appendix

Socio-economic context of the Cardiff Capital Region

Extracted from CCR's 2023 Local Evaluation Framework

- Cardiff Capital Region is the dominant economic centre of Wales; just under half the population of Wales lives in the Cardiff Capital region, and it accounts for more than half of the economic activity within Wales as whole.
- Within CCR, the city of Cardiff is the largest local economy, accounting for some £12.1 billion of GVA in 2020, and containing the region's largest concentrations of government and private sector services activities and several key university assets.
- Cardiff is a relatively small 'core city' within the context of the region as a whole, with around 65% of regional GVA generated within the other nine local authorities.
- Employment in Cardiff Capital Region is just below 650,000 people including both employees and working proprietors, accounting for approximately half of total employment in Wales as a whole.
- Reflecting the Cardiff Capital Region's relative resilience, unemployment is relatively low at 2.7 percent, which contrasts with the UK as a whole at 3.7 percent; this is significantly lower than that for the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (5.1%), and also lower than that for the East Midlands Combined Authority (3.1%).
- Historically, parts of the region, especially in the South Wales Valleys, have seen high levels of economic inactivity, especially associated with the process of deindustrialisation; the past 15 years have seen a significant reversal of this. In Merthyr (for example), the economic activity rate rose from 64% in 2004 to 73% by 2022, a pattern repeated in neighbouring authorities.
- However, despite the region's strong performance in creating jobs and bringing people into economic activity, pay rates are generally somewhat below the UK average. Median workplace pay is approximately the same as the UK average in Cardiff, and between 82% and 98% of the average in the other nine local authority areas (ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2022).

Regional Benchmarking

Figure (1): Avg (median) gross weekly earnings by LA – full-time employment by workplace of the employee. Earnings and hours worked, place of work by local authority: ASHE Table 7 - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Area	2018 (£)	2022 (£)	% change (2018-2022)
Bridgend	546.5	574.9	+5.2%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	504.4	533.7	+5.8%
Merthyr Tydfil	478.4	526.9	+10.1%
Caerphilly	492.2	588.4	+19.5%
Blaenau Gwent	479.4	528.6	+10.3%
Torfaen	532.9	629.8	+18.2%
Monmouthshire	529.5	642.0	+21.2%
Cardiff	530.3	646.1	+21.8%
Newport	504.0	608.0	+20.6%
The Vale of Glamorgan	491.3	557.6	+13.5%
South East Wales Economic Region	**520.2**	**606.8**	**+16.65%**

Figure (2): Average (median) gross weekly earnings by LA – full-time employment by residence of the employee. Earnings and hours worked, place of residence by local authority: ASHE Table 8 - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Area	2018 (£)	2022 (£)	% change (2018-2022)
Bridgend	552.5	609.1	**10.24%**
Rhondda Cynon Taf	521.6	594.6	**14.0%**
Merthyr Tydfil	440.6	540.1	**22.58%**
Caerphilly	506.8	589.6	**16.34%**
Blaenau Gwent	484.5	579.0	**19.50%**
Torfaen	520.3	595.2	**14.40%**
Monmouthshire	638.4	731.7	**14.61%**
Cardiff	536.6	626.6	**16.77%**
Newport	520.7	622.2	**19.49%**
The Vale of Glamorgan	564.3	641.9	**13.75%**

Figure (3): % Employment Rate by local area, year, and gender (StatsWales**).**

	FY end June 2019		FY end June 2023	
Area	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Bridgend	76.5%	67.8%	69.3%	71.6%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	69.5%	69.5%	70.5%	68.7%
Merthyr Tydfil	75.1%	66.5%	69.8%	63.9%
Caerphilly	76.4%	64.0%	76.1%	71.9%
Blaenau Gwent	70.6%	71.1%	76.6%	65.2%
Torfaen	74.5%	67.0%	80.7%	68.6%
Vale of Glamorgan	81.0%	76.3%	80.9%	71.9%
Cardiff	81.8%	70.9%	74.3%	70.2%
Monmouthshire	81.0%	75.0%	80.5%	73.4%
Newport	78.5%	71.1%	77.9%	70.0%
Wales	76.5%	69.9%	76.0%	71.2%
UK	79.8%	71.2%	78.9%	72.1%

Figure (4): 2022 Gender Pay Gap by Local Authority, by place of residency (ONS)

Local Authority (2022)	Male Full-Time (£)	Female Full-Time (£)	% difference
Bridgend	687.0	516.3	**+24.85%**
Rhondda Cynon Taf	592.6	594.6	**-0.34%**
Merthyr Tydfil	604.3	526.6	**+12.86%**
Caerphilly	622.6	530.6	**+14.78%**
Blaenau Gwent	610.7	508.9	**+16.67%**
Torfaen	595.1	570.6	**+4.12%**
Monmouthshire	771.2	621	**+19.48%**
Cardiff	663.4	556	**+16.19%**
Newport	674.6	563.8	**+16.42%**
The Vale of Glamorgan	632.3	634.9	**-0.41%**
Wales	633.1	562.7	**+11.20%**

Figure (5): UKCI and National Ranking by Local Authority, 2019 to 2023 comparison (UKCI Report 2023).

Locality	2019 UKCI	2019 UK Rank	2023 UKCI	2023 UK Rank	+/- in UKCI	+/- in Rank
Cardiff	98.3	125	101.1	97	+2.8	+28
Monmouthshire	94.6	155	96.3	137	+1.7	+18
Newport	89.8	213	90.0	208	+0.2	+5
Bridgend	86.0	253	88.6	226	+2.6	+27
Vale of Glamorgan	86.9	241	86.9	253	0	-12
Rhondda Cynon Taf	81.0	317	83.8	297	+2.8	+20
Caerphilly	79.3	345	80.8	335	+1.5	+10
Torfaen	79.9	336	79.6	346	-0.3	-10
Merthyr Tydfil	74.8	361	75.7	359	+0.9	+2
Blaenau Gwent	71.0	362	72.3	361	+1.3	+1
Average (Mean)	84.16	270.8 (271)	85.51	261.9 (262)	+1.35	+8.9

Analysis: *Both the Cardiff Capital Region as a whole and the Northern Valleys are making improvements in economic competitiveness; all local authority areas in the Northern Valleys have improved their positions on the UKCI 2019 and UKCI 2023, with the exception of Torfaen.*

The trend for the Northern Valleys is positive in terms of direction of change, however most indicators continue to remain below the UK average. In addition, there exists a gap of 38 places in the rankings between Rhondda Cynon Taf and the next most competitive Northern Valleys locality, Caerphilly. Meanwhile, there are only 26 ranking positions between Caerphilly (UKCI 2023 rank 335) and the least competitive of the Northern Valleys localities, Blaenau Gwent (UKCI 2023 rank 361). This suggests that Rhondda Cynon Taf is an outlier in comparison to other areas with the Northern Valleys.

Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

Figure (6): % of People living in households in material deprivation, by Local Authority (StatsWales). WBFG Indicator 19.

Local Authority	2017-2018	2022-2023
Bridgend	12%	16%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	17%	20% *(2nd highest in Wales)*
Merthyr Tydfil	21% *(highest in Wales)*	18%
Caerphilly	20%	15%
Blaenau Gwent	18%	16%
Torfaen	20%	19% *(3rd highest in Wales)*
Monmouthshire	14%	8% *(lowest in Wales)*
Cardiff	19%	15%
Newport	21% *(highest in Wales)*	18%
The Vale of Glamorgan	13%	16%
Wales	**16%**	**16%**

Figure (7): 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, by Local Authority ([WIMD Indicator data from 2019 (gov.wales))]

Area	People in income deprivation (%)	Working-Age people in employment deprivation (%)	People in overcrowded households (%)	Adults aged 25-64 with no qualifications (%)
Bridgend	16%	11%	4.43%	22%
Vale of Glamorgan	13%	8%	3.86%	14.1%
Cardiff	16%	9%	8.17%	17.0%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	19%	13%	4.92%	25.1%
Merthyr Tydfil	20%	14%	7.70%	28.2%
Caerphilly	18%	12%	5.59%	24.4%
Blaenau Gwent	21%	15%	6.46%	29.1%
Torfaen	17%	12%	5.88%	21.4%
Monmouthshire	10%	7%	3.89%	13.2%
Newport	18%	11%	6.61%	20.5%

*Monitored and reported every 4-5 years.

Figure (8): Gross Disposable House Income per head of population at current basic prices, pounds. Regional gross disposable household income: local authorities by ITL1 region - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Local Authority (2021)	GDHI (£)
Bridgend	17,177
Rhondda Cynon Taf	16,694
Merthyr Tydfil	16,043
Caerphilly	17,411
Blaenau Gwent	14,884
Torfaen	17,117
Monmouthshire	22,720
Cardiff	18,536
Newport	17,154
The Vale of Glamorgan	21,923

Southern Arc of Cardiff

Figure 9: WIMD 2019 Overall Deprivation – Southern Arc

Extracted from Cardiff Council's Strategic Equality Plan, Appendix A, p.7

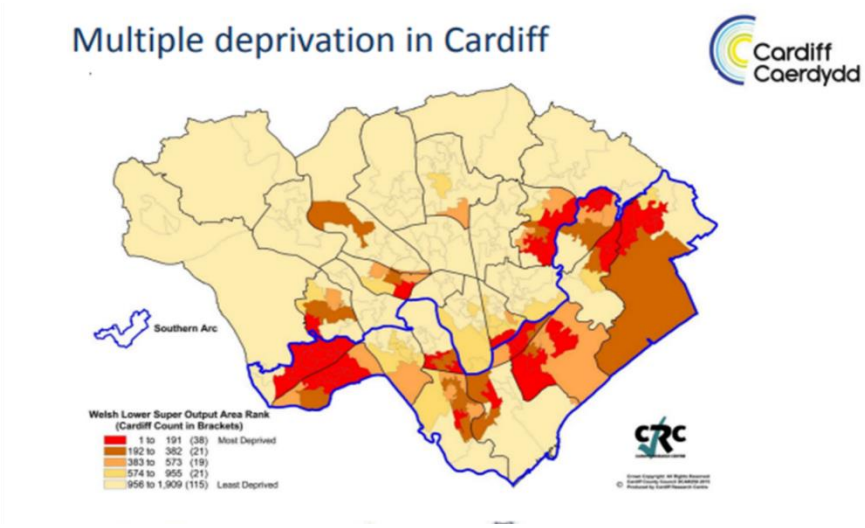
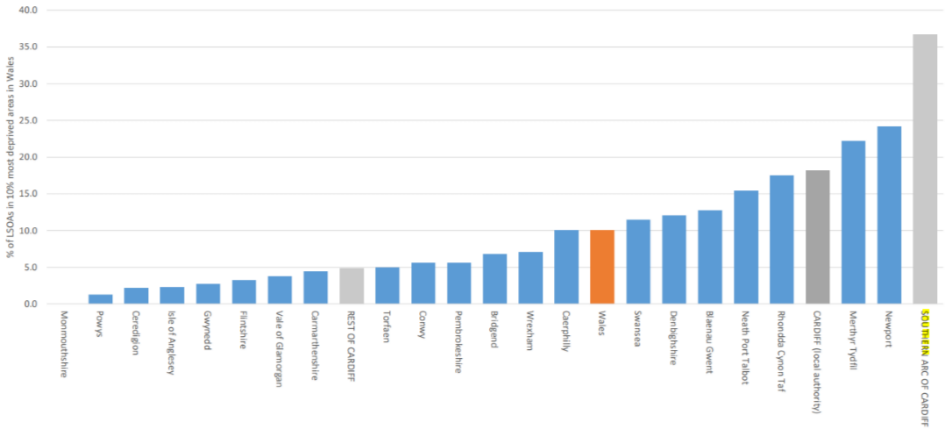


Figure 10: Percentage of LSOAs in the 10% Most Deprived Areas in Wales (Ranked 1-191), WIMD 2019 Overall Deprivation

Extracted from Cardiff Council's Strategic Equality Plan, Appendix A, p.6



Personal Wellbeing Regional Indicators

Figure (11): Life Satisfaction by Local Authority (ONS).

Local Authority	2017-2018	2022-2023
Rhondda Cynon Taf	7.5	7.4
Cardiff	7.7	7.2
Blaenau Gwent	7.7	7.3
Caerphilly	7.6	7.3
Bridgend	7.7	7.5
Torfaen	7.7	7.4
Vale of Glamorgan	7.9	7.5
Merthyr Tydfil	7.6	7.5
Newport	7.6	7.3
Monmouthshire	7.8	7.6
Wales	•	7.40
UK	7.7	•

Figure (12): ONS Annual Population Survey. Feeling that things done in life are worthwhile (ONS).

Local Authority	2017-2018	2022-2023
Rhondda Cynon Taf	7.7	7.8
Cardiff	7.9	7.3
Blaenau Gwent	7.8	7.8
Caerphilly	7.9	7.8
Bridgend	7.8	7.8
Torfaen	7.9	7.7
Vale of Glamorgan	8.0	7.7
Merthyr Tydfil	7.8	8.1
Newport	7.8	7.5
Monmouthshire	7.9	8.0
Cardiff Capital Region (avg.)	7.85	7.75
Wales	•	7.69
UK	7.9	•

Published: <insert date>

CCR Biodiversity Compliance Plan

1. Introduction and Foreword

2024 will be our first year operating as a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). CJCs are new public bodies that are being implemented across the four regions of Wales, following the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The CJC will provide a framework for greater collaboration and help to drive a more coherent, simplified, and democratically controlled mechanism for regional working. The new public body will be known as Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), as we build on our reputation, partnership network, and success to date.

The Cardiff Capital Region has a population of 1.5 million people, which equates to almost half the total population of Wales. It is a diverse region comprising the two cities of Cardiff and Newport, a range of market towns, the industrial heartland of the South Wales Valleys, rural communities, and a coastal belt.

CCR is made up of the following 11 organisations across Southeast Wales:

- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Bridgend County Borough Council
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- The County Council of the City and County of Cardiff
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
- Newport City Council
- Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council
- Torfaen County Borough Council
- The Vale of Glamorgan Council
- The Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority (BBNPA)

The members of CCR are represented by the 10 Leaders of the constituent Local Authorities and a representative of the BBNPA who make up the Board and meet four times per year to undertake the business of the organisation. The BBNPA member may only vote where the matter is related to strategic planning functions.

As a Corporate Joint Committee, CCR has a number of functions prescribed to it, these are:

i. The preparation of a Regional Transport Plan
ii. The preparation of a Strategic Development Plan
iii. And the exercise of Economic Wellbeing Powers

Alongside these new powers and functions come duties and statutory requirements as a public body. One of the duties bestowed upon us is the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6: The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty, as detailed below.

2. National Policy Context

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6: The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2024

Under the Duty, Public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.

The Duty requires authorities to embed the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems into their early thinking and business planning, including any policies, plans, programmes and projects as well as day to day activities. These actions to help biodiversity only need to be proportionate to the public authority's activities and functions, but every action, no matter how small, that in some way contributes to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, will help comply with the duty.

This plan sets out what CCR proposes to do to comply with the duty, through a wider environmental lens. The environment and our role in Wales's transition to Net Zero already forms a core component of our Regional Economic and Industrial Plan, and will continue to be incorporated into our Corporate Plan and embedded into our wider activities, as detailed below.

As per the Duty and established timelines, CCR will publish a report detailing actions taken to comply with the s6 duty in line with Welsh Government guidance. This report will provide the opportunity to review progress against our aims and provide transparency and accountability. The compliance report will be prepared in the context of this s6 plan and will be aligned to the aims, actions, and expected outcomes identified here, as appropriate.

Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales (2015)

The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales (NRAP) sets out six objectives for reversing the decline of biodiversity. These have been used to develop and guide CCR's compliance plan for the S6 Duty. The 6 objectives under the NRAP to maintain and enhance biodiversity are:

Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels.

Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management.

Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation.

Objective 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats.

Objective 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring.

Objective 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

Given the scope of our activity, the influence we may have over biodiversity across the region, and with an eye to future responsibilities, our plan addresses and is aligned to all six of the Nature Recovery Plan for Wales objectives.

Alignment to Other Strategies, Plans and Legislation

- Regional Economic and Industrial Plan 2023-28
- CCR Energy Strategy
- Annual Business Plan 2024-25
- Regional Transport Plan
- Strategic Development Plan
- Strategic Equality Plan
- The Socio-Economic Duty
- The Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Welsh Language Standards
- Any future CCR strategies and plans
- Future Welsh Government and UK Government legislation, where there is a clear interface.

3. S6: The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Compliance Plan

Aim 1: CCR to publish a revised Impact Investment Framework with new consideration given to biodiversity.		
Action	**Expected Outcomes**	**Alignment to NRAP Objective**
Incorporate biodiversity and wider environmental indicators into a revised Impact Investment framework, demonstrating consideration to the species habitats of principal importance.	Biodiversity is embedded into decision making throughout the investment process. Ensures protection of the natural environment in investment decisions. Helps ensure key pressures on biodiversity are not exacerbated. Ensure species habitats of principal importance are not negatively impacted by investment decisions. Increase understanding and monitor CCR's impact on the natural environment.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (2) Safeguard species habitats of principal importance and improve their management. (3) Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation. (4) Tackle key pressures on species and habitats. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.
Commit to exploring **investment opportunities** within the green economy that strengthen the resilience of our natural environment, where appropriate and in line with CCR objectives and Energy Strategy.	Continue our focus on the green economy and leverage opportunities offered by the green transition. Align and support CCR Energy's commitment to protecting biodiversity and maximising the green economy through the Aberthaw acquisition and further development of the masterplan. Explore opportunities to restore degraded habits, or create a new habitat, where possible and as part of a wider investment proposal, to help improve citizen's access to green spaces and their well-	(2) Safeguard species habitats of principal importance and improve their management. (3) Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation. (4) Tackle key pressures on species and habitats. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring.

	being.	

Aim 2: Engage and support staff participation and understanding on issues of biodiversity, as it relates to CCR activity.		
Action	**Expected Outcome**	**Alignment to NRAP Objective**
CCR Climate Change Staff Network to incorporate biodiversity considerations into its work and goals. The Network will include representation from each CCR team and offer suggestions and input via an internal nominated lead to the CJC Environment and Climate Portfolio Lead.	Establish and widen the goals for the network to include biodiversity considerations. Ensure that awareness of both climate change and biodiversity, and the links between these, is increased across the organisation, particularly in relation to our activities. Increased internal understanding of CCR's impact on the natural environment. Increased collaboration between CCR staff and key stakeholders on issues of biodiversity.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.
CCR Staff and Members to undertake regular ecological and biodiversity training.	Accredited eco-literacy training, specific to Wales, to be offered to all staff. Training to be formally incorporated into CCR's governance structure and forward plan. Training to be considered for Advisory Boards.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

Aim 3: CCR to declare a Climate and Nature Emergency and make key climate and ecological commitments.		
Action	**Expected Outcome**	**Alignment to NRAP Objective**
Climate and Nature Emergency Declaration to include specific commitments for CCR to actively address threats to nature and the climate, within the organisation's activities and scope.	Embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels by holding the organisation to account for its commitments. Commitment to ensure key pressures are not exacerbated through the work of CCR. Develop a delivery governance structure for the Climate Adaptation Risk Matrix Action Plan. Delivery of the Climate Adaptation Risk Matrix will be monitored, to include natural environment and assets.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (4) Tackle key pressures on species and habitats. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.
CCR to begin collecting data on the organisation's own carbon emissions and publish an **organizational Net Zero 2030 Plan, i**n line with Welsh Government's Public Sector Collective Ambition towards Net Zero by 2030.	Once the organisation has sufficient data on its carbon footprint, CCR will publish and implement an organisational **Net Zero 2030 Plan**. CCR will begin collecting data on organisational carbon emissions from April 2024 onwards, to cover FY24-25. Carbon reduction will have an indirect, yet positive impact on biodiversity. Where appropriate, CCR will endeavour to undertake nature-based solutions to organisational carbon reduction.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

Aim 4: Continued work with key partners and stakeholders to increase awareness and understanding of biodiversity issues, internally and across the region.		
Action	**Expected Outcome**	**Alignment to NRAP Objective**
Continue to support the SEW Business Climate Coalition operations and seek to expand its current remit to include biodiversity considerations.	Ensure that biodiversity is embedded into the terms of reference for the business climate coalition, covered in future workshops, and included in information provided where appropriate. The Coalition is reshaping the business culture within the private sector to demonstrate that economic growth can coexist with environmentally sustainable decision-making. CCR's continued support will increase private sector engagement across the region and raise awareness through embedding biodiversity, amongst other wider environmental factors, into decision-making.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.
Engaging with external partners to ensure high quality data collection.	Building key partnerships with industry, academia, and thought leaders, in this area to ensure best quality approach. Utilise high quality data and benchmarking to monitor and evaluate the impact of CCR activity.	(5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring.
CCR to report and measure progress through the **Carbon Disclosure Project.**	The CDP will measure the region's carbon emissions and includes a biodiversity aspect. Initial work undertaken on CCR's Climate Disclosure Project (CDP) which looks at targets and required data points to monitor and track. CCR have completed the States and Regions Questionnaire and	(5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring.

	will receive an A-D rating in January 2024. Once rating received, additional work will be undertaken to action any appropriate next steps, to improve the region's rating.	

Aim 5: Embed biodiversity considerations into CCR's approach towards its statutory powers of strategic development planning and regional transport planning.		
Action	**Expected Outcome**	**Alignment to NRAP Objective**
Engage with and lead key partners to ensure best approach to strategic development planning and regional transport planning, aligned to the Wales Nature Recovery Action Plan.	Continuation of work with LAs, TfW, and other key stakeholders, to embed biodiversity considerations into planning, e.g. strategic site thresholds to include biodiversity assessments.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (2) Safeguard species habitats of principal importance and improve their management. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.
Ensure species habitats of principal importance are safeguarded through **CCR's statutory powers** of strategic development planning and regional transport planning.	Achieve this through the Sustainability Appraisal Report, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment, and a Habitats Regulation Assessment as part of the SDP. Ensure RTP has clear links back to the four long-term ambitions as published in Welsh Government guidance, including delivering a transport system that is good for the environment – encompassing emissions, biodiversity and waste.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

Aim 6: Establish a framework of governance and support for delivery of CCR's Biodiversity Compliance Plan.		
Action	**Expected Outcome**	**Alignment to NRAP Objective**
Ensure biodiversity is included as part of wider environmental considerations at Regional Growth Board Level.	Climate and biodiversity considerations to be given appropriate attention within CCR Governance structures. Biodiversity Compliance Plan to be reviewed periodically and progress to be tracked against plan. Seek to establish dedicated Environmental and Climate portfolio lead at CJC Board level, to include biodiversity considerations.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.
Embed Biodiversity compliance plan into CCR through new Corporate Plan.	Biodiversity to become a key consideration throughout all CCR activities.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (5) Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.
S6 Biodiversity Compliance Report to be published 3 years following the publication of this plan.	Help ensure transparency and effective monitoring of progress towards aims and general compliance with the Duty. Assign internal leads to actions.	(1) Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels. (6) Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

Cardiff Capital Region

Working Towards a Child Poverty Strategy – CCR's Outline

Approved: <insert date>

Published: <insert date>

Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) is currently working towards developing a Child Poverty Strategy, in line with our requirements under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.

As per the legislation, CCR will consult the Welsh Ministers, local authorities, and other key stakeholders as appropriate as part of the strategy development process. To ensure this consultation is undertaken meaningfully and reflects our duties as a regional body, we will be publishing a Child Poverty Strategy by **October 2024.**

This timeframe will allow us to develop the best to approach to addressing child poverty across the region, by leveraging our new responsibilities and powers as a Corporate Joint Committee. We will ensure that our Child Poverty Strategy is aligned to, and supports, the Welsh Government's Child Poverty Strategy for Wales (2024) and the 5 objectives and priorities included, as well as building on the key elements of our current Working Towards a Framework for Addressing Child Poverty in the Cardiff Capital Region, published in March 2023. Our Strategy will build on the work established in our Strategic Equality Plan and utilise the tools and levers available to CCR to enact change across the region, remaining focused on our scope and activities.

Each of the 4 Public Services Boards in the South East Wales region have published Well-being Plans with integrated Child Poverty Strategies. Details of these may be found at:

1. Cardiff Public Service Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
2. Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
3. Gwent Public Service Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028
4. Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028

Future Generations Assessment Evaluation
(includes Equalities and Sustainability Impact Assessments)

Name of the Officer completing the evaluation:	**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal**
Natalie Hughes **Phone no:** 07980 952089 **E-mail:** natalie.hughes@cardiff.gov.uk	To share and receive approval of the finalised Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 and Biodiversity Compliance Plan to ensure CCR comply with their Duties. To provide an update on the development of CCR's Child Poverty Strategy.
Proposal: To approve the Strategic Equality Plan, Biodiversity Compliance Plan and the Child Poverty Strategy outline.	**Date Future Generations Evaluation form completed:** 19th February 2024

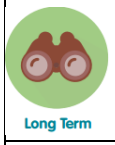
1. **Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	This Strategic Equality Plan sets out clear, long-term objectives to continue CCR's work to date in ensuring high-value job creation in innovative sectors while working with key partners to continue to develop skills initiatives that support future employer needs. This Biodiversity Compliance Plan sets out clear, long-term aims to continue CCR's work to date in ensuring biodiversity considerations go hand-in-hand with wider environmental and economic decision-making.	Further work is being undertaken to ensure that the outputs of our investments generate the right balance of impacts across the region, driving a healthy balance between economic, social, ESG and ethical considerations. Once published, CCR will have a responsibility to report against each objective within the Strategic Equality Plan and the Biodiversity Plan. By ensuring the correct data is available and regularly collected, CCR can remain agile and fit for purpose in its approach.
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	Responding to the climate crisis sits at the core of our activity. As highlighted in this Strategic Equality Plan, those who experience socioeconomic disadvantage are typically disproportionately affected by climate change – actions aiming towards equality therefore go hand in hand with our actions to mitigate the impact of climate change, recognising that these threats do not exist in isolation.	Collaborative working across local and national government to ensure unified activity and focus on delivering the right outcomes. Once published, CCR will have a responsibility to report against each objective within the Strategic Equality Plan and the Biodiversity Plan.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Economic development cannot be achieved to the detriment of our regions' health outcomes. The objectives within the Strategic Equality Plan set out a holistic approach to measure inclusive economic wellbeing, by measuring wider well-being indicators at a regional level. The objectives within the Biodiversity Compliance plan have been identified with an eye on the correlation between access to greenspaces and nature having a positive impact on people's overall health and mental wellbeing.	ESG and equality and diversity focus to ensure emphasis on societal and community needs. Once published, CCR will have a responsibility to report against each objective within both plans.
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	The objectives within this plan clearly demonstrate alignment with this goal, through the delivery of both the Regional Transport Plan and Strategic Development Plan. Although these are longer-term pieces of work, the requirement for equality, inclusion, biodiversity and wider environmental considerations within both is paramount, while embedding indicators to continuously measure progress.	Once published, CCR will have a responsibility to report against each objective within both plans.
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Work towards this goal will be covered in two main areas. Firstly, CCR will continue developing and maturing our regional data capability, working with best-in-class Academics and regional data assets to better understand the impact of our investments, interventions, and projects. Secondly, building on our work to date in developing strategic partnerships with other Regions, in similar size and scope to CCR, across the globe.	Further work has been done with bodies such as Universities Wales and SIACW to consider impact of UK working outside of Horizon Europe. Once published, CCR will have a responsibility to report against each objective within the plans annually. By ensuring the correct data is available and regularly collected, CCR can remain agile and fit for purpose in its approach.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Within the objectives, CCR has made a commitment to promote the Welsh language throughout the organisation and region, ensuring we not only comply with Welsh Language Standards, but encourage staff participation in Welsh events and Welsh language training.	Once published, CCR will have a responsibility to report against each objective within the plans annually. By ensuring the correct data is available and regularly collected, CCR can remain agile and fit for purpose in its approach.
A more equal Wales	Equality forms part of the core of CCR, with a clear focus within each plan on the interface between livability, inclusivity and the wider environment, as well as productivity across our Region. Gathering data at	Once published, CCR will have a responsibility to report against each objective within the Strategic Equality Plan and Biodiversity Compliance Plan annually. By ensuring

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	investment and intervention level, coupled with regional data will ensure better insights and well-informed developments to this Plan.	the correct data is available and regularly collected, CCR can remain agile and fit for purpose in its approach.

2. How has your proposal embedded and prioritized the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future	Yes, both plans by nature look to the longer-term, which must be reported on annually. The Action Plans against each objective demonstrate how we will aim to respond to some of the largest regional challenges through a series of specific and targeted actions.	Continuous monitoring and evaluation will be key to ensure the Plans is having its desired effect and that any unintended consequences are mitigated and minimised.
Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	Working with partners is key to the success of CCR. Between publication and December 2024, additional consultation will take place on the Strategic Equality Plan and strategic partnerships are expected to be formalised to ensure the Plan is delivered.	As above.
Involving those with an interest and seeking their views	As highlighted above, additional consultation is key to ensure the Plan remains fit for purpose and has the intended positive impact of those identified within the Strategic Equality Plan. Additional consultation with existing groups, such as the Climate Coalition, is key to ensure the Plan remains fit for purpose and has the intended positive impact.	Discussions are ongoing to understand how the work of the CJC can be structured to ensure full future engagement with the communities and citizens of the Cardiff Capital Region.
Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	Working effectively internally across key functions such as Policy and Impact, PMO, Marketing and Comms and Energy and Infrastructure will ensure the successful development, implementation and communication.	Continuous monitoring and evaluation will be key to ensure both the Strategic Equality Plan and Biodiversity Compliance Plan are having their desired effect and that any unintended consequences are mitigated and minimised.
Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies	Regional partnership working and close liaison with UK and Welsh Governments and the private sector, within and outside Wales, will help ensure we meet this goal. Work underway on economic wellbeing measures and benchmarks to ensure inclusive economic growth and prosperity at the heart of the Strategic Equality Plan. Work underway on wider wellbeing measures, as linked to the environment and nature.	As above.

3. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	Ensuring positive impacts across those with protected characteristics is at the heart of the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028. As set out within each objective, we have identified those with protected characteristics we wish to positively impact, along with the specific actions, anticipated timelines and monitoring data.	No intended negative impacts are expected. However, if the evidence and data collected over the next year does indicate there have been negative impacts, our Annual Report will provide specific actions to ensure this is minimised. This will be kept under constant review.	CCR will be able to adjust objectives during a lightweight review period, from April to December 2024. In addition, annual reporting requirements will ensure CCR's approach has been fit for purpose and is having a positive impact.
Disability	As above	As above	As above
Gender reassignment	As above	As above	As above
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	As above	As above
Pregnancy or maternity	As above	As above	As above
Race	As above	As above	As above
Religion or Belief	As above	As above	As above
Sex	As above	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	As above	As above	As above
Welsh Language	As above	As above	As above

4. Safeguarding & Corporate Parenting. Are your proposals going to affect either of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Not directly relevant; however, building the future economy and effecting the well-being elements of the SEW CJC should have a profoundly positive impact on the region's ability to safeguard the future of its residents.		
Corporate Parenting	Not directly relevant; however, building the future economy and effecting the well-being elements of the SEW CJC should create opportunities for all of the young people entrusted in our care.		

5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

- Legislation as set out by UK Government.
- Legislation as set out by Welsh Government.
- Discussion and advice from EHRC.
- National, regional and investment level data and evidence.

6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The main positive impacts should be felt across those with protected characteristics across the region where CCR has a clear role and interface. As the proposal has developed, the requirement for a clear evidence base has grown to ensure we can effectively measure the impact our activities are having. We have conducted a benchmarking exercise to ensure we have both more traditional economic measures, coupled with wider wellbeing measures to provide a holistic overview.

7. MONITORING: The impacts of this proposal will need to be monitored and reviewed. Please specify the date at which you will evaluate the impact, and where you will report the results of the review.

The impacts of this proposal will be evaluated on:	April 2025 – in line with annual reporting requirements.