

ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT & WELL-BEING REPORT 2025/26

HOW WELL ARE WE DOING?

CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY 2025/26



1 COMPLETED



26 ON TARGET



23 REQUIRE FURTHER IMPROVEMENT



0 HIGH RISK (RED)

54%

of actions completed or on target

46%

Require further work but have clear plans for improvement

0 actions were assessed as high risk (red)

DELIVERING CHANGE TOGETHER



Established the Federated Model with Torfaen Council
Stronger together to deliver better outcomes



First Marmot Councils in Wales
A long-term commitment to reducing inequalities and improving well-being



The Blaenau Gwent Deal launched extensive engagement with residents and Citizens' Assembly



Stronger community-led approaches empowering residents and building resilience



Continued focus on prevention, early intervention and tackling the wider determinants of health

HOW DO WE KNOW?



LEARNING, SKILLS & ECONOMIC WELL-BEING



2,032
young people engaged through Youth Services



Education outcomes improved, particularly at Key Stage 4 with improvements



200+
apprentices supported through Aspire Programme



School exclusions reduced overall



Increased STEM opportunities through HiVE Centre and schools



CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



28%
reduction in direct carbon emissions
(against baseline year)



Reuse and repair initiatives launched to help residents save money, reduce waste and make more sustainable choices.



Nature projects helped improve local green spaces and support wildlife



Flood resilience activity accelerated following Storm Bert



67.23% recycling rate (below 70% Welsh Government target)



SAFE, INDEPENDENT & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



Expanded Community Hub approach and warm spaces across the borough



102
Disabled Facilities grants completed



243
adults provided with assistive technology during the year



Corporate Parenting Strategy launched, co-produced with young people



Breastfeeding rates self-service use increased from 38.6% (2023) to over 52% (2025)



New Community Food Strategy developed



AN AMBITIOUS & INNOVATIVE COUNCIL



Balanced budget set for 2025/26



Corporate Safeguarding Board Established to strengthen corporate safeguarding arrangements



Digital improvements made Council services easier and safer to use, including better Council Tax forms and use of new technology



Improved communication helped more residents stay informed about Council services, priorities and local updates through social media, e-bulletins and new engagement channels.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Secondary school attendance remains below target.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Achieve 70% recycling target
- Deliver Waste Strategy 2026 - 2031

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Increase housing supply and reduce reliance on temporary accommodation
- Improve support for unpaid carers
- Improve placement sufficiency for Children Looked After

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Address financial sustainability challenges
- School deficits increased to £2.965m
- Children's Services overspend of £3.1m
- Improve timeliness of statutory accounts and reporting.

WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT? - OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2026/27



EDUCATION & SKILLS

- Improve school attendance
- Reduce NEET rates
- Improve school financial sustainability



CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

- Achieve 70% recycling target
- Deliver Waste Strategy 2026 - 2031
- Progress Net Zero ambitions
- Strengthen climate adaptation and community resilience



COMMUNITIES & WELL-BEING

- Embed prevention and early intervention across all services
- Support unpaid carers
- Improve support for vulnerable residents



COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT

- Deliver Accounts Recovery Plan
- Address medium-term financial pressures
- Continue federation with Torfaen
- Strengthen governance, risk management and safeguarding
- Improve customer access and digital services



OUR DEAL WITH RESIDENTS

- Deliver the next phase of the Blaenau Gwent Deal
- Increase opportunities for community participation and co-production
- Build trust and shared responsibility

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Council is making positive progress towards its corporate Plan and Well-being Objectives.

Strong foundations have been established through the Federated Model, the Blaenau Gwent Deal, Marmot approach and community-led solutions.

Continued focus is required on financial sustainability, attendance, housing, social care demand, recycling performance and workforce resilience.