

WLGA Corporate Plan Objectives 2024-27

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Priority Area

Digital

Strategic goal: The Digital Strategy for Wales sets out the ambitions for digital transformation of public services in Wales with the vision that digital in Wales will *‘improve quality of life, sustainability and economic growth, creating user-centred public services supported by effective leadership, data and a culture of innovation and collaboration’*. This need for digital transformation has been a reality in local government for several years and can bring significant benefits for the council, its customers and the wider community when implemented effectively. Digital transformation is a journey, through which digital tools, processes, technologies, and skills are embedded across the organisation to improve the way services are delivered to customers. Councils must also address broad and complex issues on this journey, such as data security and privacy, accessibility of digital services, legacy technology, and digital inclusion. Effective digital transformation requires a clear vision, strong leadership, skilled staff, collaboration, and investment.

The WLGA Digital Team, under the direction of the Chief Digital Officer, aims to foster collaborative digital transformation and innovation across councils in Wales. The team helps councils effectively adopt digital tools, technology, skills, and approaches to deliver services that meet their customer expectations and address identified problems; and help councils collaborate to achieve better outcomes for their customers.

Our Objectives

- Agree a shared strategic vision
- Deliver sector-led support
- Add value to WLGA policy areas
- Improve WLGA service delivery

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Agree a shared strategic vision	Work with members and senior leaders in local government in Wales to ensure they have a shared understanding of, and commitment to, the digital agenda for local government.	Local government senior leadership has clarity on, and understanding of, what digital means for local government in Wales. A shared digital vision exists for local government in Wales which facilitates identification of common priorities and challenges and enables resources to be focused appropriately.	Year 1 Development the shared vision and definition. Year 1 and 2 Ongoing work in 2025 to develop understanding, raise awareness, deliver training etc.	Chief Digital Officer for Local Government will lead on the work. Support from the digital team. Core / grant funding and external resource may be used to support individual projects to fulfil elements of the objective such as training.
Objective 2: Deliver sector-led support	Deliver a programme of support for sector-led digital change for local government services, which also contributes to the delivery of the Digital Strategy for Wales and works towards the shared digital vision for local government.	Council services meet their customer expectations and address identified service problems. Customers experience better outcomes. Councils effectively collaborate to bring added value to service changes. Digital tools, technologies, skills and approaches are embedded in councils.	Annual Annual programme of projects and activities to be delivered. Scale dependent on grant funding secured.	CDO and existing digital team WG grant programmes (e.g. Digital Transformation Fund and Skills). Further funding to support projects to be identified as required.
Objective 3: Add value to WLGA policy areas	Work with all WLGA policy areas to ensure the digital agenda is fully embedded in the work of all teams across the organisation. Identify areas of collaboration and joint working that will bring added benefits to the work of policy areas.	Councils in Wales deliver service change and improvement to address the identified challenges of local government across service areas, using digital tools, technologies, skills, and approaches. WLGA delivers added value across service areas in supporting councils and contributes to the delivery of Wales-wide ambitions such as those contained within Welsh Government's long-term plan for Health and Social Care, 'A Healthier Wales' and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.	Year 1 Work with at least 3 policy areas to identify and agree how the digital team can support change in the service / policy area. Year 2 Work with at least a further 3 policy areas.	CDO and existing digital team. Other WLGA teams.
Objective 4: Improve WLGA service delivery	Support WLGA as an organisation to plan and implement its own digital improvement priorities to ensure that the organisation is effectively deploying digital tools, technology, skills, and approaches that deliver effective and efficient services that meet internal and external customer expectations.	WLGA is an organisation that leads by example, embraces digital best practices, and can demonstrate efficiency and value for money. Staff have the tools, technologies, and skills to facilitate their work effectively.	Year 1 User research to identify priorities Preparation of a digital plan for the organisation. At least 2 digital improvement projects to commence.	CDO and existing digital team. Other WLGA teams. Additional resource may need to be identified to support the activities required internally.



Priority Area

Education

Strategic goal: Education is at the heart of our culture, and it’s an essential preparation for adult life. It is educating the next generation of informed citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said, and instilling in them a love of knowledge and culture for their own sake. Education is also about the practical business of ensuring that children and young people receive the preparation they need to secure a good job and a fulfilling career and have the resilience and moral character to overcome challenges and succeed.

We will continue to work with councils to ensure that children and learners are at the heart of all decisions taken within the education system. We will support councils to enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives, through the development of effective school/ learning communities that promotes well-being and equity throughout their learning journey.

Our Objectives

- Raise Educational Standards
- Enhance the Wellbeing of Learners
- Strengthen Education Workforce
- Promote the Education Reform Agenda
- Strengthen Funding for Education

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Raise Educational Standards	Support and promote councils' efforts to raise attainment and achievement by engaging learners, improving and broadening the education and skills offer.	To support councils' learning communities/schools to become learning organisations with the capacity for self-improvement effective schools with strong leadership, and an appropriate learning environment. To support councils' in ensuring the best possible experiences and progress for children and young people by delivering the Curriculum for Wales in all learning communities/schools across Wales. To support councils' in ensuring that universal and mainstream provision effectively supports all learners to achieve their potential. To support councils' to develop a broader educational offer to include both academic and vocational pathways and engage partners from public and other sectors. To support councils' in ensuring that their schools' estates are maintained to be suitable and safe for both current and future learners.	Year 1 Ensure the continuation of key network meetings with clear and appropriate agenda items linked to the objective. Appropriate information/data is shared in a timely manner with all stakeholders to inform agreed actions. Year 2 Reflect and build on actions to ensure they are appropriate and keeps to the direction of travel needed and agreed by all stakeholders.	Networks and contacts in place. WLGA Education Policy Officers. Councils.
Objective 2: Enhance the Wellbeing of Learners	Support and promote councils in their efforts to ensure the well-being of children and young people.	To support councils to maintain and further develop close working with other services and health colleagues. To support councils in improving collaboration and information sharing with stakeholders and agencies to ensure early identification and support to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people (and their families). To support councils' in ensuring that early identification of need is in place to ensure learners and young people have suitable provision. To support councils' with early intervention, for learners and young people to overcome barriers and enables them to access appropriate learning opportunities.	Year 1 Ensure the continuation of key network meetings with clear and appropriate agenda items linked to the objective. Appropriate information/data is shared in a timely manner with all stakeholders to inform agreed actions. Year 2 Reflect and build on actions to ensure they are appropriate and keeps to the direction of travel needed and agreed by all stakeholders.	Networks and contacts in place. WLGA Education Policy Officers. Councils.
Objective 3: Strengthen Education Workforce	Support and promote councils in efforts to ensure appropriate skill sets are present in the education workforce, including recruitment, retention and workforce development.	To support councils' learning communities/schools to become learning organisations with the capacity for self-improvement. To support councils' in ensuring strong leadership and an appropriate learning environment are a given in most learning organisations. To support councils' in offering appropriate Professional Learning opportunities that are valued and effective in developing and enhancing the skills of the education workforce. To support councils' in effective succession planning within all aspects of their education workforce.	Year 1 Ensure the continuation of key network meetings with clear and appropriate agenda items linked to the objective. Appropriate information/data is shared in a timely manner with all stakeholders to inform agreed actions. Year 2 Reflect and build on actions to ensure they are appropriate and keeps to the direction of travel needed and agreed by all stakeholders.	Networks and contacts in place. WLGA Education Policy Officers. Councils.

Objective 4: Promote the Education Reform Agenda	Facilitate engagement and discussions between Welsh Government and other key stakeholders with councils to develop strategies around the demands of changing reform agenda, policy direction and political drivers in the education field.	To facilitate and supports councils' led networks and partnership in relation to agreed Education Reform. To work with councils' and other partners, to inform practices, coherence and avoid duplication of resources and outputs regarding Education Reform. We will continue to influence WG policy on Education Reform. Aiming to secure additional resources for Local Government regarding Education Reform, especially when considering the needs of the leaners, (i.e. ALN, Well-being). Seek to influence political party manifesto in advance of the Senedd elections in 2026.	Year 1 Continue with evidence gathering and engagement with Leaders, members and key stakeholders. Year 2 Evaluate our approach to policy development and review position.	Networks and contacts in place. WLGA Education Policy Officers. Councils.
Objective 5: Strengthen Funding for Education	Facilitate engagement and discussions around the use of available funding and resources in a climate of doing more with less.	To support councils' to continue with the frequent opportunities for lobbying appropriate governments (WG and UK) for appropriate funding for councils to be able to continue to serve their communities appropriately. To support councils' on the sharing of good practice and ideas and to encourage innovative solutions. To support councils' on the sharing of resources and joint working to overcome possible capacity issues; be more solution focused. Seek to influence additional funding and resources for Local Government in Wales.	Year 1 Continue with evidence gathering and engagement with Leaders, members and key stakeholders. Year 2 Evaluate our approach to policy development and review position.	Networks and contacts in place. WLGA Education Policy Officers. Councils. WLGA Finance Officers. WLGA Comms Team.





Priority Area

Finance and Resources

Strategic goal: Councils will spend nearly £10bn of public money in 2024-25 that supports local economies and enhances the well-being of our communities. One of our main objectives is to provide the strongest possible case for additional funding so that councils can deliver more during the cost-of-living crisis. With Council Tax and Non-domestic Rates raising over £3bn from taxation we want a system of taxes that is buoyant enough to support local delivery, as well as being fair to the households and businesses that pay them. We will support councils to achieve maximum value for money on revenue and capital spending, as well as pursuing optimal social value for the £4.6bn that is spent on goods and services. We will also ensure the WLGA's own financial resources are managed to the highest standards of financial stewardship so that the WLGA can deliver all its priority areas.

Our Objectives

- A sustainable funding system
- Fairer local taxes
- Better value for local spending
- A fairer Wales
- Sound financial management of WLGA

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: A sustainable funding system	Sustainable funding and finances for local authorities across Wales. This objective covers revenue and capital and will focus on the LGF settlement, the level of funding, and how it is distributed equitably across councils.	The best outcome from the Welsh Government Budget: working collaboratively with Society of Welsh Treasurers (SWT) and other professional networks and keep WLGA leaders and Executive apprised of developments. A fairer funding formula: to be kept updated through the Distribution Sub-Group in line with terms of reference set by the Finance Sub-Group. Capital Finance and Investment Group to oversee capital investment needs and greater borrowing flexibilities. More hypothecated funding and a successful conclusion of the administrative burdens review. Greater financial resilience for council finances working SWT, Improvement Team and Audit Wales.	Between 2024-25 to 2027-28 depending on Spending Review Annual work programme Subject to WG decisions Finance peer review work is demand-led while Audit Wales on an annual programme	50% of FTE Policy Officer (Finance Manager) 60% of FTE Director Funding is provided by the WLGA for Wales Fiscal Analysis (£10k) for independent analysis of Welsh public finances Joint arrangement with Society of Welsh Treasurers to provide them with strategic policy advice and secretariat support.
Objective 2: Fairer local taxes	To influence WG's proposals for Local Taxation Reform and prepare councils for implementation.	A fairer system of local taxation. The Phase II consultation on Fairer Council Tax is accompanied by reviews of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) and a review of the reliefs and discounts (CTRS is considered under objective 4). Impact will be determined by WG policy. The Local Government Finance Bill will also include a review of the suite of reliefs and exemptions that apply in Non-Domestic rates (NDR) plus imposing new duties upon the ratepayer. NDR will also be undergoing a major transformation in the next few years as plans to implement Rates Retention are developed alongside a revaluation of all business premises effective from April 2026.	Between 2024-25 and 2027-28	10% FTE Director 70% FTE Policy Officer (welfare reform) With the collaboration and support of the Revenues and Benefits network and the Society of Welsh Treasurers.
Objective 3: Better value for local spending	To ensure that commissioning, procurement reform and social value are better embedded at a local level.	To ensure councils are prepared for the new Procurement Act and that policy is compliant and integrated with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act, the Health Service Procurement (Wales) Bill, and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Providing change leadership and collaborative coordination for the 22 Unitary Authorities in Wales. These organisations manage £4.6 billion of the £8 billion that is spent through procurement in Wales. Working with senior officers of Local Government, Welsh Government and other stakeholders, the WLGA represents the interests of Welsh Local Government, promulgate best procurement practice, and help to facilitate the process of improvement and reform.	Preparation to Autumn 2024 Implementation from Autumn 2024 Annual work programme	5% FTE Director 90% FTE Policy Officer (procurement) Working in collaboration with the Welsh Procurement Group and WG Commercial

Objective 4: A fairer Wales	To enable councils to better tackle poverty and inequality in their areas and understand what measures can be taken to tackle the cost-of-living crisis.	Ensuring better and more consistent policy advice is provided across the WG and the Association on this cross-cutting theme. Better briefing and support to elected members leading to better local policy Delivery of Welsh Benefits System and reform of the CTRS A new priority for the Welsh Government is the implementation of a Welsh Benefits Charter. The Benefits Charter is being driven by the Minister for Social Justice and has already met with the WLGA to outline her ambition. Reducing levels of unpaid benefits. Working alongside the Minister for Finance and Local Government and the Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales regarding unclaimed benefits, in particular Pension Credit. Latest estimates show this is worth approximately £3million per annum to potential recipients in Wales.	Annual work programme Between 2024-25 and 2027-28 2024-25	5% FTE Director 30% FTE Policy Officer (Revenues and Benefits) Contributions from across WLGA teams, WG and Wales Centre for Public Policy.
Objective 5: Sound financial management of WLGA	To ensure subscribers and grant funders get value for money. This covers the corporate finances of the WLGA and its audit and risk functions.	Ensure sustainable corporate finances for the Association and improve the control environment. Move to digital purchase ordering and invoicing. To improve the external and internal audit arrangements and enhance the scrutiny of the Audit Committee. Ultimately, we will ensure value for money for subscribers and grant funders.	Annual work programme	20% FTE Director – financial control, budget audit and risk 50% Policy Officer (Finance Manager) – financial control treasury management and budget 10% FTE Policy Officer (Procurement) – procurement and commissioning 40% FTE Contractor – management accounts £100k Administrative arrangement with Data Cymru to cover banking, budgetary control for grant teams, processing and exchequer functions. 60% of the WLGA corporate finance costs are funded by grant teams through internal recharges.





Priority Area

Governance and Corporate Policy

Strategic goal: Good governance is the bedrock of democracy and is underpinned by the principles of openness and transparency. It is critical to ensure effective decision-making and maintain public trust in the local democratic process. In seeking to advance local democracy, the WLGA seeks to shape national funding, policy and legislation, to ensure as much local freedom and flexibility as possible to allow local councils to make service decisions according to local needs and priorities. Having a policy and lobbying position that is informed by evidence and engagement is crucial to the Association's ability to effectively influence Government policy at devolved and non-devolved levels and to ensure political leaders and our officers are supported in the work they do to represent the interests of local government.

Our Objectives

- Strengthened policy development
- Working in partnership with local government and stakeholders
- Improving our governance and decision-making
- Effective, proactive public affairs and communications

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Strengthened policy development	Through a process of research, evidence gathering and engagement, identify key forward-looking priority policy areas - where WLGA hasn't yet developed a proactive position.	WLGA will arrive at a corporate position on a number of agreed policy areas We will influence UK and/or WG policy on these areas Aiming to secure additional resources for Local Government in Wales Seek to influence political party manifestos in advance of the Senedd elections in 2026	Research, evidence gathering and engagement with Leaders (year 1) Development of corporate policy positions and materials for influencing Ministers and officials (year 1 & 2) Evaluate our approach to policy development and review position (year 3)	Policy Officer (Corporate) in post Networks and contacts in the policy areas to be developed
Objective 2: Working in partnership with local government and stakeholders	To support policy development and delivery of cross cutting priority and policy areas. Supporting the capture and sharing of practice to support improvement and transformation.	To facilitate and support councils' led networks and partnerships in relation to agreed WLGA priority policy areas: - Transformation & Innovation: (21st Century Public Service, User-designed services & digital innovation, Entrepreneurial councils, Citizen and Community Resilience) - Cost of Living To work with WLGA colleagues and multi-agency and other partners, to inform practices, coherence and avoid duplication of resources and outputs on the above.	Year 1 Established networks and governance arrangements Year 1 and 2 Development of programme of activities, allocated internal and/or internal & external resources Shared Learning Development Days	Policy Officer (Corporate) Support Officers: Improvement Senior Support for T&I - part -time Corporate Support Officer – part time Councils
Objective 3: Improving our governance and decision-making	To provide a range of accessible services relating to the WLGA's formal decision-making processes.	To ensure accountability and transparency in the WLGA's decision making processes. To enable good decision-making and support mechanisms for political leaders in Wales, maximising use of technology to promote accessibility and efficiencies.	Ensure continued compliance with the WLGA's Constitution and Governance Structures – establishing good practice measure to track our progress (years 1 to 3) As part of the planned review of the Constitution ensure it is fit for purpose in terms of effective decision making going forward (year 1) Improved recording of decisions. Develop effective and robust management practices. (year 1)	
Objective 4: Effective, proactive public affairs and communications	To transition to a proactive, forward-looking, strategic model of communications led by intelligence.	To better support the WLGA's new Corporate Plan and proactively promote the agreed strategic priorities by: Engaging with councillors, MSs, MPs, the media, and other stakeholders in relation to local government priorities and the WLGA's work. Supporting the priorities and work of leaders, spokespeople and SMT; and Co-ordinating local authority communications teams to help deliver the Communications Strategy.	communications priorities and develop a Communications Strategy and Communications Plan (Year 1) Develop and maintain a 'forward look' communications grid (Developed - Year 1, Maintained – Years 1-3) Further develop relationships with local authorities to support delivery of Communications Strategy (Year 1) Improved logging and reporting of WLGA's communications activities (Years 1-3) Improved communications with councillors (Years 1-3)	Communications Team: - Comms and Public Affairs Manager - Communications Officer (Media and Social Media) - Communications Officer (Events and Publications) Councils' communication network



Priority Area

Improvement

Strategic goal: Improvement support for local government over the next 3 years will be set within the context of the financial challenge. The role of the improvement team will be to keep councils safe by providing early intervention support to address identified ‘red flags’ and facilitate sector-led discussions on collective solutions to the greatest service challenges threatening financial sustainability.

We will continue to work with councils to develop a self-aware and sector-led support and improvement culture. We will seek to generate improvement capacity for councils through better co-ordination and closer partnership working and alignment with internal teams, including digital and data, and external organisations.

Our Objectives

- Delivery of Panel Performance Assessments
- Supporting Resilience in Councils
- Improvement Think Tank
- Developing the Peer Challenge offer
- Assurance & Improvement Map

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Delivery of Panel Performance Assessments	To support councils with the coordination and delivery of their Panel Performance Assessments and provide support to address corporate improvement recommendations. Identifying and sharing good practice and learning across the sector.	Supporting councils to meet their statutory performance duty. Identifying improvement priorities and assisting councils with improved performance. Promoting good practice and a culture of sector-led support and improvement.	First round of PPAs to be completed by June 2026.	Continued peer recruitment. Improvement Officers to manage individual PPAs, but demand will be intense, so need additional support from across the WLGA. All PPAs are delivered on a full cost recovery basis.
Objective 2: Supporting Resilience in Councils	Providing early support to councils to address ‘red flags’ that could lead to council failure. Skills based support and continuing development to establish and maintain strong professional and political leadership and good governance. Supporting risk management, and the evolving approach to performance management.	Raising and maintaining standards of leadership and governance to support performance and resilience and assist councils to achieve objectives in a challenging financial context. Better early intelligence on threats and opportunities, to inform decision-making and early intervention for improved outcomes.	Ongoing over the 3 years.	Mix of team capacity, peer support and commissioned support via the improvement grant.
Objective 3: Improvement Think Tank	Establishing and facilitating a ‘Think Tank’ approach to build capacity to support councils to reset in the context of current and future financial pressures. Establishing a top 3-4 priority areas with Leaders and Chief Executives. This will then involve bringing together senior political and professional council representatives with other internal teams and external bodies to assist in identifying solutions and a roadmap for change.	This would assist councils with sharing of common issues, improving collaboration across councils and with other external partners and bring economies of scale. There is limited capacity within councils to transform, so this approach builds capacity.	Establish in Year 1 and progress in years 2 & 3.	Team capacity to coordinate and facilitate. Wider WLGA capacity as and when needed to support with solutions. Sector support to lead and external bodies to support as and when required. Financial support via the improvement grant.
Objective 4: Developing the Peer Challenge offer	To work across WLGA service areas to develop a suite of peer challenge and support offers across the most significantly challenging service areas.	Providing an alternative assurance and improvement mechanism for critical service areas/corporate themes to drive continuous improvement and share good practice. Continuing to evolve the culture of sector-led improvement and support.	Years 2 & 3.	Success dependent on the availability of peers to support with delivery. Costs met from the improvement grant.
Objective 5: Assurance & Improvement Map	To develop and maintain an Assurance & Improvement map for local government in Wales.	A tool to support councils with their self-assessment and improvement approach. To provide clarity on the support available to provide assurance and improvement, and to sign-post to the most relevant provider. To ensure better collaboration with external partners on collective improvement priorities.	Year 1.	Team time and engagement with the sector.



Priority Area

Economic Development and Regeneration, including Planning

Strategic goal: Ensuring Corporate Joint Committees develop in ways that reflect councils’ views and priorities has been identified as another of Leaders’ top three priorities. As well as Regional Transport Plans (see under Climate Change priority area below) CJsCs have statutory duties to produce Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) for their areas. They have also been given powers to promote economic well-being concurrently with councils. It is important that SDPs are developed alongside transport and economic plans, so that there is an integrated approach to regional development. That approach also has to be developed in a way that is consistent with, and supportive of, climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives above. Achievement of the outcomes will be subject to councils having adequate resources (funding, staff with right skills and knowledge).

The ultimate goal is to achieve a ‘well-being economy’ that supports community resilience. A well-being economy is associated with inclusive growth. It operates within safe environmental limits, is efficient in its use of resources and prioritises the collective well-being of current and future generations. It is therefore compatible and consistent with the objectives in the Climate Change priority area (and the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act).

Our Objectives

Ensure benefits of various UK and WG economic programmes and initiatives are maximised, including opportunities for collaboration and information sharing internationally	Support development of the economic well-being role of CJsCs in context of WG’s Regional Framework for Investment and OECD multi-level governance proposals
Ensure the specific economic needs of rural areas are understood and supported	Support the development of SDPs that facilitate development of a well-being economy
	Revive our European engagement work

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Ensure benefits of various UK and WG economic programmes and initiatives are maximised, including opportunities for collaboration and information sharing internationally	Support for councils in their economic development work, sharing good practice and lobbying UK and Welsh Governments to ensure views of local government influence the operation of grant regimes and to maximise potential benefits for communities thorough better multi-level governance, co-operation and co-ordination	Successful delivery of the UKG Levelling Up Funds (SPF & LUF), working with lead authorities and regional groups Local government will be seen as a proven, trusted and well-respected delivery vehicle and partner with a key role in economic development programmes and initiatives, including tourism and skills. UKG and WG will involve local government in their pre-planning of successor economic development programmes. Councils will benefit from wider UK funding programmes e.g. Innovate UK	LUF Rounds 1-2 and SPF operate until the end of March 2025 (Round 3 to March 2026) The successor programmes to LUF and SPF will be in development during 2024 ready for introduction in 2025/26 All other areas will require ongoing support	Input from two core funded WLGA posts (both in post)
Objective 2: Ensure the specific economic needs of rural areas are understood and supported	Continued support for the WLGA Rural Forum, finding ways to take forward the ‘asks’ in the WLGA’s Rural Manifesto	Rural Manifesto priorities and key asks to be fully adopted by WG WG to fully apply their rural proofing tool when developing new policy, legislative and funding proposals, with a rural impact assessment measure added to their policy gateway tool for new policy, legislative and funding proposals. Recommendations of the WG Commission for Welsh Speaking Communities to support the economic needs of rural areas to be taken forward. Learning from the ARFOR 2 Programme to influence a successor programme to support economic needs of rural areas. A dedicated vehicle to drive the economic needs of rural areas to be considered/identified. Learning to be shared on how other rural areas have addressed challenges of delivering public services in rural communities and benefited from various funding initiatives to boost their rural economy.	Much of this work will be ongoing but some of the learning and recommendations need to influence new programmes during 2024	Input from core funded WLGA post
Objective 3: Support development of the economic well-being role of CJsCs in context of WG’s Regional Framework for Investment and OECD multi-level governance proposals	Work with the four CJsCs and constituent councils in developing their concurrent economic well-being role, sharing learning and good practice	Arrangements that reflect the different landscape in each of the 4 region, building on existing and emerging arrangements in each of the 4 regions. Recognition of the key role of councils in delivering economic development within agreed regional priorities, strategies and frameworks. Devolution of funding and finance tools to the regional and local levels to enable them to improve the economic wellbeing of their areas.	Throughout 2024-25.	Input from two core funded WLGA posts (both in post)

Objective 4: Support the development of SDPs that facilitate development of a well-being economy	Work with C.JCs and constituent councils to progress Strategic Development Plans, making links with RTPs and embedding climate change mitigation and adaptations consideration (see Climate Change priority area below)	A shared understanding of what a well-being economy is in the context of C.JCs. Improved alignment over time of the timetables for and content of RTPs and SDPs. LDPs kept up to date ensuring that investment and sustainable development can continue to take place in a Plan-led way, providing confidence to all stakeholders including investors, developers and our communities. Satisfactory dual track of SDP development and LDP review/ renewal, allied to alignment with WG policy.	Throughout 2024-25 and ongoing	Input from core funded WLGA post and work commissioned under the Climate Change Support Programme
Objective 5: Revive our European engagement work	Rebuilding links with Europe as and where this can benefit Welsh councils' economic development activities	Regular engagement and participation in key meetings and events e.g. UK-CoR Contact Group, CEMR Policy Committee and the annual UK-France Local Government Forum. Recognition of the added value of engaging with local government colleagues from across Europe. Opportunities to showcase good practice and case studies from Welsh councils at various meetings and events and learn from good practice with similar areas.	Ongoing.	Input from core funded WLGA post





Priority Area

Housing, including Migration

Strategic goal: Access to affordable, good quality housing with security of tenure is a vital part of being able to build and maintain a healthy, fulfilling, and happy life for individuals and families. This is important for those from within existing communities and those newer households establishing a safe, secure future within Wales.

Housing and Homelessness services within Councils are experiencing unprecedented pressures, with the numbers of people numbers of people presenting as homeless to Councils at record levels since the pandemic, and the challenges of providing and maintaining appropriate levels of suitable temporary accommodation, along with difficulties in securing long term homes for people to move into, means that the numbers of people in emergency accommodation continue to increase. Part of the response to is the need to build more social rented homes and councils and their partners are making significant efforts to meet the Programme for Government target of 20,000 new low carbon homes for social rent.

The cost of living crisis means that, as well as increased household and energy costs for everyone, there have been significant increases in private sector rents in most areas, with an increasing gap over Local Housing Allowance support meaning that the Private Rented Sector is increasingly difficult for many households to access and afford. Councils have a key role in providing advice, support and assistance for those in all forms of housing need.

Our Objectives

Tackling Homelessness	Workforce – Homelessness & Housing Support
Housing Supply	Migration
Homelessness legislation reform	

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Tackling Homelessness	The Ending Homelessness National Advisory Board's Annual Report to Welsh Minister (Aug 2023) identifies the need "...to secure senior local and national leadership behind the ambition to end homelessness in Wales."	Support the development of wider corporate ownership of homelessness across Councils and wider partners, including health and social care Development of resources, including case studies to support this objective	Year 1: wider corporate ownership within Councils Year 2: working with wider partners	Funding to commission development of resources. Capacity to commission and oversee/ manage the work
Objective 2: Housing Supply	Following the Essex Review (2008) and the Affordable Housing Supply Review (2019), and the implementation of many recommendations..... Identify the capacity in local authorities to fulfil the roles and expectations in delivering the required significant increases in affordable housing supply, via the strategic housing and development functions (and planning?). - Link to Ending Homelessness National Advisory Board priorities & report - Link to 20,000 PfG target - Link to WG's Scale and Pace project	Commission independent study/report Establish current capacity in strategic housing and development functions Identify any gaps in overall capacity and/or particular skills required to fulfil current and future roles and expectations Develop recommendations to support or strengthen strategic housing and development functions	Ongoing	Funding to Commission independent study/report with recommendations . Development of Action Pan Capacity to commission and oversee/ manage
Objective 3: Homelessness legislation reform	The current Programme for Government has a commitment to "reform housing law and implement the Homelessness Action Group's recommendation to fundamentally reform homelessness services to focus on prevention and rapid rehousing". To support this a White Paper on ending homelessness in Wales was published in Autumn 2023.	Support Councils to understand and prepare for the impacts of legislative and other changes related to the transformation of homelessness services	Following and during publication and approval of legislation Ongoing	Set up and facilitation of workshops and network meetings and forums Resources to obtain detailed review of legislation by a lawyer and identification of all implications for councils
Objective 4: Workforce – Homelessness & Housing Support	Building on key priorities identified by the Ending Homelessness National Advisory Board: Workforce Task Group and their annual report to Welsh Ministers in supporting the homelessness and housing support workforce	Engage with sector on workforce issues and develop an action plan, with agreed actions by WLGA, to promote and address the recommendations.	Discussions to commence in 2024 and action plan to identify timescales	Housing Policy Officer, supported by colleagues in Workforce and Executive Business Team
Objective 5: Migration	Continue to monitor and respond to the impact on local housing markets of asylum, refugee and humanitarian protection cohorts	Influence Local Housing Market Assessments, and Councils' Housing Prospectus' to better reflect the housing needs of new communities, including within identified development priorities	Ongoing	Housing Policy Officer with support and input from the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership



Priority Area

Community Safety

Strategic goal: Community safety is a priority concern for many people in Wales, and the public services delivered by local councils directly influence how safe people feel in their local area. Core local authority services such as education, housing and environment all help to deliver safer communities and working in partnership across the public service through Community Safety Partnerships, local councils address a range of issues including anti-social behaviour, violence against women and domestic abuse, substance misuse, serious violence and counter terrorism.

Our Objectives

- Supporting councils to respond well to issues of VAWDASV
- Active promotion of Civility in Public Life campaign
- Promoting good practice in supporting cohesive communities across Wales

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Supporting councils to respond well to issues of VAWDASV	Develop a good practice guide highlighting the role and responsibilities of local authorities in addressing, tackling and preventing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence supporting victims and tackling perpetrators.	Good practice examples gathered, shared and replicated highlighting the current policy and legislative agenda, the expectations around the role of local authorities and the different ways local authority services address and tackle VAWDASV with the aim of supporting improvements.	Year 1 Identify/gather good practice; map VAWDA services Year 2 Develop good practice guide/document	Community Safety Policy Officer working with Wales Safer Communities Network and Wales Association of Community Safety Officers
Objective 2: Active promotion of Civility in Public Life campaign	To undertake proactive work in relation to the Promoting Civility in Public Life campaign and exploring abuse in public life and its potential impact on democracy, working with WG, LGA, policing in Wales and also COSLA, NILGA and the Jo Cox Foundation as appropriate.	Evidence gathered of abuse/threats made to Councillors; Engagement with community safety/policing partners to explore and share good practice; awareness campaign to raise awareness and develop consistent messaging	Year 1 Scoping/evidence gathering Year 2 Engage with CS/policing partners to identify and share good practice Year 3 Awareness campaign	Community Safety Policy Officer working with the Head of Corporate Policy and Services, the Improvement Team and the Communications Team
Objective 3: Promoting good practice in supporting cohesive communities across Wales	Working with WG and WSMP to identify and share challenges and good practice around tackling tensions/ hate incidents and promoting cohesion within and across communities, with a focus on the effects of migration	Clarity of the challenges being experienced in maintaining community cohesion and good practice examples gathered, shared and replicated helping to assist authorities to learn from each other and take proactive steps promote cohesion and feelings of safety within developing communities	Year 1 Identify challenges and gather good practice Year 2 Develop good practice guide/document to showcase work of councils Year 3 Gather new practice and share via original method	Community Safety Policy Officer working with WSMP



Priority Area

Regulatory and Frontline Services

Strategic goal: Regulatory Services (or Public Protection) and frontline services are the combined animal health, burials and cremation, environmental health, emergency planning, licensing, registrars, and trading standards services within local authorities. Together they provide a social safety net, of often unseen but essential council’s work. They protect communities from cradle to grave and aim to prevent and animal and human disease and suffering. They ensure food is safe and legal for humans and animals; ensure houses meet standards and are maintained appropriately, improve the quality of life for some of our most vulnerable; tackle businesses who profiteer and cut corners, endanger life and rob people of personal savings; prevent illnesses and injury by inspecting, examining and helping businesses to comply with their legal obligations, and investigate and prosecute those who endanger others or who seek an unfair advantage or to profit unfairly by criminal or detrimental practices.

The Covid Pandemic brought out the best in all of these services. Their knowledge, compassion, competence and skills in public health, enforcement and investigation made them a key asset for local government, and the wider response mechanism to the outbreak. However, concerns regarding resilience and capacity of the current workforce (inside WLGA and Councils), combined with recruitment, retention, and professional entry requirements for new officers could mean that the same response may not be available for future civil emergencies, or to fulfil current and future business as usual work.

Our Objectives

Projecting Long-term Future Demands on Services	Workforce planning
Future Costs of Meeting Demand for Services	Member engagement
Workforce planning	

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Projecting Long-term Future Demands on Services	To gain an understanding of future challenges facing our public protection services, examining what future pressures lie ahead and what implications these will have. By understanding what challenges lay ahead, to help to identify what is needed to plan for in the longer-term, what models of services are likely to be needed, what is required to help improve our services and the make-up of the workforce to provide them.	Linked to the ongoing work of the Directors of Public Protection; to create an independent, evidence-based report that will identify and describe the likely future demands, problems and challenges likely to face over the next decade, and that also sets out recommendations on what responses are likely to be needed.	Initial research to be completed within 12 months.	Funding to commission research. WLGA Temporary Head of Regulatory Services Policy Officers will coordinate the work.
Objective 2: Future Costs of Meeting Demand for Services	The budget for public protection is typically less than one percent of a local authorities budget. Given the wide range of statutory, legal and health related preventative activities undertaken by them, any cuts to budget will have a disproportionate impact and lead to the cessation activity or service. The list of Acts, Regulations and Orders continue to grow, while funding has not kept pace with the demand for new activity from Governments. As other services recognise the need for a long term sustainable funding outlook, the same is true with public protection.	Continue to work with the Directors of Public Protection to present an evidence-based case that identifies the future funding levels needed for public protection in order to meet future demand. The business case will provide evidence of what is needed as part of implementing a fully costed, long-term, sustainable plan to fund public protection, helping to inform discussions and lobbying around resource requirements.	Research to be undertaken in Year 1.	Funding to commission research. WLGA Temporary Head of Regulatory Services and the Finance Officer will work together on this objective.
Objective 3: Workforce planning	WLGA has been provided with two reports from DPPW outlining the current difficulties facing the public protection workforce. Leaders have already endorsed the first report and recognise the critical nature of the resilience and capacity of the workforce. The second report and associated action plan is due to be presented to WLGA Exec Board for discussion and approval.	To gain a better understanding and support a plan of actions that can be taken to assist recruitment and retention across the Public Protection sector. To support the sustainability of the public protection workforce, working with a variety of partners, including educational and professional establishments, to promote the value of the workforce.	Research to be undertaken in Year 1.	Additional funding to support year 1 scoping work and officer time to continue to work and engage with key partners on actions being taken forward in relation to the workforce.
Objective 4: Workforce planning	Emergency Planning services are encountering similar workforce pressures. WLGA has seen and approved an initial paper from EP managers across Wales highlighting these issues. The policy resource for EP within WLGA amounts to a small percentage of the Head of Regulatory Services time. In light of events such as the Covid pandemic and increasing numbers of civil emergencies, for both internal and external reasons, consideration should be given to increasing this resource further.	To create an independent, evidence-based report that will identify and describe the future demands, workforce forecasts and plans, problems and challenges likely to be faced over the next decade, and that also sets out recommendations on what responses are likely to be needed. To create an independent, evidence based report that will examine the need to expand the policy resource for emergency planning within WLGA. The outcome would provide assurance of internal mechanisms and procedures for responding to emergency events, and also deliver expert emergency planning policy for the organisation.	Initial research to be completed year 1. Initial research to be completed within year 1.	Funding to commission research. WLGA Temporary Head of Regulatory Services Policy will coordinate the work.
Objective 5: Member engagement	Recently, Cabinet Members have gathered to be updated on Public Protection policy developments. There is a need to ensure this continues, and is expanded to other Member portfolio areas such as emergency planning.	Will ensure Cabinet Members across Wales are better engaged with current and future policy development. To embed regular Cabinet Member engagement for public protection. To provide members with the emergency planning portfolio the regular opportunity to receive and discuss policy updates.	To continue 6 monthly. To begin in new financial year, 6 monthly thereafter.	WLGA Temporary Head of Regulatory Services to coordinate.



Priority Area

Social Services and Health

Strategic goal: Social services is one of our most vital public services supporting children, families and adults of all ages across a wide spectrum of need, enabling people to live independent and lead fulfilling lives. But councils continue to have significant concerns for the future sustainability of these essential services.

Financial investment has not kept pace with increasing demand for services and the increased complexity of need; workforce challenges in recruitment and retention and the limited value placed on such roles in comparison to the NHS requires urgent attention. There is also a need to increase the pace in shifting to prevention and early intervention services, centred around community services and the needs of the individual in both social care and the health services as set out in our local government vision for social care.

Significant change is proposed by Welsh Government, including the creation of a National Office and a National Care and Support Service, ‘further, faster’ integration of community-based services and the transformation of Children’s Services. It is crucial that the views and voice of local government is heard in influencing the future direction. The commitments below have been identified to support local government in this endeavour providing opportunities to develop evidence-based positions and identify key actions that will support councils as they play a central role in the delivery and transformation of social services in Wales.

Our Objectives

- Projecting Long-term Future Demands on Services
- Digital Services
- Future Costs of Meeting Demand for Services
- Building the case for identified public health functions transferring to local government
- Workforce

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Projecting Long-term Future Demands on Services	To gain an understanding of future challenges facing our social care and health services, examining what future pressures lie ahead and what implications these will have. By understanding what challenges lay ahead, this will help to identify what it is we need to plan for in the longer-term, what models of services are likely to be needed, what is needed to help improve our services and the make up of the workforce needed to ensure good quality care and support is available when needed.	An independent, evidence-based report that will identify and describe the likely future demands, problems and challenges social care is likely to face over the next two decades, but that also sets out recommendations on what responses are likely to be needed. It is anticipated that this will lead to or could be supplemented by further research into specific areas, for example, in areas such as learning disabilities and mental health to better understand current challenges and likely levels of future demand (with feedback from the recent financial outlook survey identifying increasing demand and costs in these areas) giving consideration to any future projections and the likely impact on particular service areas.	Initial research to be completed within 12 months.	Funding to commission research. WLGA Social Service Policy Officers will coordinate the work.
Objective 2: Future Costs of Meeting Demand for Social Services	A long-term, sustainable solution to the way social care is funded is essential if we are to deliver a system that is organised around the individual and their family, which meets their needs and promotes their wellbeing with safe and high-quality services, in line with local government's vision for social care in Wales ¹ . The inadequacy of the current funding model for social care has been well documented and there is a real need to focus time and resources to bring coherence and design a system which is able to effectively meet any new and existing additional demands which social care will face in the future. Building on the work undertaken between 2018-2020 by the Inter-Ministerial Group on Paying for Social Care, there is a need for a comprehensive view of the funding needed to address the pressures facing social care, projecting the cost of meeting growing demand for social care in Wales.	An evidence-based report that identifies the future funding levels needed for social care in order to meet future demand, as well as addressing the growing rise in current unmet need. It will provide evidence of what is needed as part of implementing a fully costed, long-term, sustainable plan to fund social care, helping to inform discussions and lobbying around resource requirements in relation to the development of a National Care Service in Wales. This could be supplemented by the development of an annual 'State of the Nation' report into social services which focuses on presenting current social care data, identifying relevant trends and demand information, supported by a survey of key officers and councillors in councils to understand their priorities and challenges for social care.	Research to be undertaken in Year 2 following on from research examining future demands.	Funding to commission research. Social Services Policy Officers and the Finance Officer will work together on this objective.
Objective 3: Workforce	To support the sustainability of the social care workforce, working with a variety of partners, we will promote the value of the social care workforce, highlighting the need for parity of esteem with NHS workers, including ensuring the workforce is appropriately rewarded for the invaluable work they do and have a pathway to career progression within a professionalised care sector.	A better understanding of actions that can be taken to support recruitment and retention across the social care sector.	The Phase 1 review looking at scoping the development a national approach to pay and career development for social workers within local authorities will be published in Summer 2024 which will inform future timescales and approach for any Phase 2 work. Social Care Wales will publish their 2023-2026 delivery plan to support the next phase of implementation of the Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care which will help to determine further work and priorities in this area over the next 3 years.	Additional funding to support Phase 2 scoping work and officer time to continue to work and engage with key partners on actions being taken forward in relation to the workforce. The Interim Head of Social Services will lead on this work, with support from colleagues in HR.

1 [Download.aspx \(wlga.wales\)](#)

Objective 4: Digital Services	Welsh Government's 'A Healthier Wales' sets out an ambition to provide an online digital platform for citizens, to give people greater control and enable them to become more active participants in their own health and well-being. In response to some of the current pressures Welsh Government are currently looking at how to build community capacity and develop whole-system place-based care. It is proposed that this will involve taking a 'Digital First approach', in the sense that the opportunity for the application of digital technology and other innovative technologies must be part of everything, noting digital as an enabler rather than the purpose of the work. The opportunities to support service efficiency, safety and quality by improving access to information and introducing new ways of delivering services and care supported by modern information and digital technologies are increasingly being examined and implemented and there is a need to better understand the work progressing within local authorities and consider what digital technology and other innovative technologies can support this endeavour, helping to facilitate service improvement	Through knowledge gained through the research, we will have greater clarity on how best to further develop the direction of digital approaches in social care and local authorities having knowledge of the local digital solutions available that they could utilise as a workforce to improve service delivery solutions		Dependent on funding arrangements / priorities through the Local Government Digital team, requiring support from officers from within WLGA (social services and digital teams) as well as engagement with council officers and key partners including ADSS Cymru and Social Care Wales
Objective 5: Building the case for identified public health functions transferring to local government	To undertake a scoping exercise, learning from experience elsewhere in the UK, to identify appropriate public health functions that would better be delivered by local government and develop a business case, building on a long-held view, to lobby Welsh Government on achieving this outcome	A well-considered and evidence based business case, including resource implications will be developed and agreed with members. A lobbying and communications strategy will also be developed with the aim of influencing Welsh Government and/or other Senedd parties to obtain commitment to make the changes proposed.	Business case to be built during 2024/5 and lobbying to be undertaken over remainder of time	To be undertaken in partnership between Social Services Policy Officer and Public Protection Policy Officer, with support from the Communications Team





Priority Area

Sustainable Development, including Circular Economy, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and reversing nature loss

Strategic goal: Addressing climate change has been identified as one of council Leaders’ top three priorities. It is an issue that impacts on, and requires responses from, all council service areas. All services need to take steps to decarbonise their activities to contribute to the goal of net zero emissions in the public sector by 2030. Likewise, all services need to consider well-researched risks associated with climate change and adapt, so they are resilient in the face of climate change impacts. As community leaders, councils also need to support mitigation efforts throughout their territories and work with communities to help them adapt and build resilience in the face of the threats associated with climate change. Achievement of the outcomes will be subject to councils having adequate resources (funding, staff with right skills and knowledge).

Climate change and nature loss are closely related and ways need to be identified to tackle both in an integrated way. Likewise, the move to a circular economy can maximise utilisation of resources already in use and reduce carbon and biodiversity impacts of extraction and production of new materials and products. The strategic goal here is to provide joined-up support for circular economy development, reversing nature loss and tackling climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Our Objectives

Help councils achieve emissions reductions and adapt to climate change	Help councils increase resilience to flood and coastal risks and adapt against climate risks.
Ensure councils meet statutory recycling targets and optimise benefits	Support councils in placing environmental protection and enhancement at the heart of land use planning and decision-making, supporting sustainable forms of development and reversing nature loss.
Support the achievement of Wales’ modal shift target	

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Help councils achieve emissions reductions and adapt to climate change	WLGA will continue to roll out its climate change support programme	The outcomes sought – all subject to resource availability – are (i) a reduction in emissions via a number of strategic interventions helping to deliver on commitments made in Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 (2021 to 2025) GOV. WALES and (ii) more resilient communities, capable of withstanding climate change impacts (by highlighting risks and potential adaptation actions by councils, partners and communities).	Progress with emissions reduction is reported annually by each council as part of net zero reporting requirements. Efforts to improve community resilience will be ongoing in nature.	The Support programme is funded by WG grant at c€300K p.a. (including procured framework of 5 consultants). This supports 3 dedicated posts and there is wider support from within the RSD team in WLGA (2 in post; 1 being replaced). An additional climate change post is to be funded by WLGA to reflect corporate priority (in process of recruiting
Objective 2: Ensure councils meet statutory recycling targets and optimise benefits	WLGA will continue to deliver its Waste Improvement Programme for councils, evolving it to reflect developments such as Extended Producer Responsibility and Deposit Return Schemes, as part of the move towards a more circular economy	A key outcome is for (i) councils to progress towards the 70% recycling targets or have improvement plans agreed and in place. Another outcome to be pursued is for Extended Producer Responsibility to fully fund the packaging element of an increasingly net zero carbon service, including street litter, on track towards zero waste. Elected members will be driving any regional collaboration through regional CE Ministerial programme boards. WLGA will gather, analyse and provide data to councils to assist decision making at the local level on the best option to achieve objectives.	Councils are required to meet 70% statutory Recycling targets by 2024/25. The goal is for a net zero carbon waste / circular economy (CE) service by 2030 and for zero waste by 2050. National and Regional CE Ministerial Programme Boards will meet at least 3 times a year. Finance and benchmarking data will be provided to councils annually.	The Waste Improvement Programme (WIP) is funded by a WG grant (c€340K p.a.) and this supports the WIP team of 5 (all in post).
Objective 3: Support the achievement of Wales’ modal shift target	Key areas here include working with CJs on their Regional Transport Plans, supporting councils in relation to changes in public transport arrangements and helping to respond to Welsh Government policy requirements in relation to creating more people-friendly and less carbon intensive forms of travel	An important outcome will be to see progress with Regional Transport Plans (RTPs), with readily identifiable climate change adaptation measures. Support for establishment of viable (post- Covid) bus networks in all 4 regions will be crucial, providing a foundation for proposed franchised bus services, integrated with rail and active travel routes. Another important outcome will be making the streetscape safer and more inclusive for walking/cycling. This will involve support for additional infrastructure, giving Councils powers to enforce unnecessary obstruction of the road (including the pavement) and the bedding in and enforcement of 20mph. Improving previously unadopted roads to become public assets will improve local environments and encourage safer access and movement. Measures have been implemented aimed at stopping new unadopted roads being created and easing the adoption process for Local Highway Authorities. Working with Welsh Government it is hoped to set up an annual all-Wales funding programme to supersede current pilot programmes, to start to meaningfully tackle the Unadopted Roads backlog.	RTPs have to be produced by CJs by June 2025 Bus networks need to be supported into and throughout 2024, whilst legislation on bus franchising is expected in 2025, coming into force in 2026. Legislation on unnecessary obstruction is expected to be laid in the Senedd before the summer 2024 recess, coming into force in autumn 2024. The work on unadopted roads is ongoing (subject to funding), with the aim of having an annual funding programme for 2025 onwards.	CJs are being allocated £125K+ to work on RTPs. Within WLGA there is one core WG-funded policy post in place at present. Councils can get funding for 2024/25 for additional speed management measures for 20mph roads where compliance remains low. Engagement and enforcement will continue to support people behaviour change. A part time post funded by WG (for 1 day a week) is working on the unadopted roads project

Objective 4: Help councils increase resilience to flood and coastal risks and adapt against climate risks.	WLGA will continue to develop its programme of support for councils in relation to flooding, sustainable drainage and wider adaptation measures to improve resilience	It will be important to ensure councils meet their statutory requirements and are improving service delivery and resilience in relation to flood risk management. Improvements to community resilience can be built through support for adaptation and the promotion of integrated water management and sustainable drainage approaches. An important outcome will be for all the above measures to be taken forward in ways that facilitate development in line with the final version of TAN15 (further work to be undertaken with WG and councils to on TAN 15 to arrive at a mutually agreed outcome) Councils will be supported as new coal tip legislation and statutory process emerges. WLGA will remain active members of the Task Force Group and support Welsh Government with the drafting of secondary legislation.	Work with councils on their flood risk management strategies and projects is ongoing Some the SUDs review recommendations will be implemented by December 2024 and the rest will follow after that date. Final version of TAN 15 expected during 2024 Coal tips feature in the third year of the WG's legislative programme (thereafter for continued support)	WLGA is funded by WG for a Flood and Water officer (in post) and with a small development budget
Objective 5: Support councils in placing environmental protection and enhancement at the heart of land use planning and decision-making, supporting sustainable forms of development and reversing nature loss.	Engagement and involvement in a wide range of environmental topics/fora, including helping to manage the vitally important relationship with Natural Resources Wales. Specific work is currently focused on water quality and the issues of phosphates and nitrates, and implications for development.	Improvement in working relations with NRW is a key outcome, via regional and national meetings on environmental matters. Support for work on reducing levels of phosphate/nutrient levels in rivers will be ongoing, as part of seeking increased opportunities for sustainable development and reversing nature loss. The work on reducing nutrient levels contributes to efforts to make suitable land available to develop 20,000 new, low carbon social homes and make them available for rent.	The rounds of meetings with NRW will be ongoing (up to three rounds a year) The work on phosphates will continue through 2024-25. The goal of 20,000 new homes is by 2026	WLGA has one core funded officer (in post) working on Planning. A WG grant funded officer works on environment / biodiversity (in post until July 2024; the core funded Climate Change post will cover their areas of work post-July 2024)





Priority Area

Workforce and Executive Business

Strategic goal: The WLGA is the employers’ organisation for Local Government in Wales, supporting local authorities on workforce related matters and representing local government employers in Wales in independent pay review arrangements and national negotiations on pay, terms and conditions. Managing strategic relationships and working in partnership with key stakeholders including Government and our recognised trade unions to influence workforce related policy and initiatives to deliver better outcomes for local government, our workforce and the communities they serve.

The WLGA will work with partners to strengthen social partnership and promote fair work, representing councils in national pay negotiations and supporting authorities to effectively manage their workforce through our role as the Employers’ Organisation. We will support our staff and promote effective people management by improving human resource management and enable our organisation to be fit for purpose by developing effective business systems and processes to maintain the highest possible standards.

Our Objectives

- Fair Work
- Policy development and Partnership
- Supporting Improvement and Best Practice
- Effective People Management
- An Organisation that is Fit for Purpose

Priority Area	Summary of the key area or work commitment to be taken forward	Anticipated Outcome and Impact (what will be achieved, what will be different)	Timescale (year 1, year 2, years 1 & 2 etc)	Resources Required (in place or to be developed)
Objective 1: Fair Work	The WLGA will represent councils in Wales in independent pay review arrangements and national negotiations on pay, terms and conditions across local government services, fire and rescue services, teachers, youth and community services, Soulbury and coroners.	Local government is a fair work employer where staff are supported and developed, rewarded fairly and their rights are respected. Local government can compete for talent and is viewed as an employer of choice, able to attract and retain a workforce to meet current and future needs.	Ongoing Continue to represent councils as a part of collective bargaining arrangements and deal with matters affecting pay, terms and conditions, including industrial action. Manage and prepare submissions to the Independent Welsh pay Review Body (IWPRB) for Teachers on the review of pay, terms and conditions. Year 1 Expand workforce data collection to inform and develop national pay modelling.	Head of Workforce and Executive Business and Policy Officer (Workforce)
Objective 2: Policy development and Partnership	The WLGA will further develop and strengthen relationships with key stakeholders, working in partnership to support policy development and influence outcomes for local government.	Local government has effective employee relations with trade unions and our wider social partners through strengthened social partnership. Employee voice and participation is increased. Stakeholder relationships and outcomes for local government are improved due to effective partnership working. Workforce policy and legislative developments are informed by local government priorities and influenced for the benefit of local government. Councils are supported with implementation and any implications for employment practice.	Ongoing Work proactively with our membership, Government and our trade unions, to strengthen social partnership. Represent local government on national and sectoral social partnership and fair work fora Work proactively with the LGA and colleagues across the regions and nations to share intelligence and best practice. Year 1 Chair the National Association for Regional Employers (NARE) at both member and officer level. Commission a review of the Joint Council for Wales and work with partners to make the necessary changes to improve efficacy. Support the implementation of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act and the introduction of the new Statutory Social Partnership Council and Social Partnership Duty. Support the delivery of the Workforce Partnership Council (WPC) work programme. Year 2 Work with partners to take forward recommendations following the Joint Council for Wales (JCW) Review.	Head of Workforce and Executive Business and Policy Officer (Workforce)

Objective 3: Supporting Improvement and Best Practice	The WLGA will support councils and their professional networks to address workforce challenges and achieve sector led service improvement.	Local Government will have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time and within available resources to meet demand and deliver good quality services. Councils have effective people management, collaborate and share knowledge, intelligence and best practice to address workforce challenges and make sector led improvements.	Year 1 and beyond Work with Leaders, spokespersons to agree workforce priorities. Work with the HRD Network to assess and address emerging issues that impact employment. Conference for HR Directors exploring the future of HR, digitalisation and EDI, to inform future priorities and implications for practice. Support for the HR Directors Network and work programme. Working with local authorities in their efforts to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, address recruitment and retention challenges and improve workforce data and intelligence. Delivery of a national pay policy framework for teachers. Research to establish national data on skills shortages within local government and priorities and action to support recruitment and retention. Support councils with the implementation of equalities action plans and the implications for employment practice.	Head of Workforce and Executive Business and Policy Officer (Workforce)
Objective 4: Effective People Management	The WLGA will develop and deliver a workforce strategy with targeted improvements that will empower, enable and develop the workforce to meet current and future demands.	The WLGA is a great place to work and an employer of choice, able to recruit, develop and retain a resilient, agile and skilled workforce focused on the delivery of member priorities.	Year 1 Complete a pay and grading review including job evaluation, HR policies review and implementation, including performance management, introduce a corporate induction programme and support the organisation to undertake workforce planning as a part of business planning and refresh business continuity plans. Year 2 Introduce a line managers development programme, produce a workforce development plan, relaunch the employee consultative forum and implement improvements to recruitment and onboarding. Work with the digital team to introduce digital solutions to make the service more effective, efficient, and accessible.	Head of Workforce and Executive Business and HR Officers.

Objective 5: An Organisation that is Fit for Purpose	The WLGA will deliver improvements to business systems and processes to ensure the organisation is fit for purpose and maintains high standards of information governance and data management including ICT security.	The WLGA has effective business systems, processes and support in place to deliver services, mitigate risk, ensure compliance and maintain the highest possible standards	Year 1 Independent information governance audit undertaken and action plan developed. Provide targeted staff training and new staff resources to improve data management and cyber security. Introduce new systems and processes to ensure GDPR compliance. Introduce quarterly monitoring of compliance to ensure high standards are maintained. Review and renew ICT and telephony contracts to ensure value for money. Refresh business continuity plans. Year 2 Deliver improvements to functionality and use of SharePoint system. Deliver information governance action plan and work towards Cyber essentials plus. Ongoing quarterly monitoring.	Head of Workforce and Executive Business and Workforce and Executive Business Officer
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