

# **PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT - ACTION PLAN**

**Final - January 2026**

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### **1. FEDERATION – progress so far in 2025/26...**

Joint Executive Leadership Team in place and organisational design and operating structure aligned to the delivery of Marmot principles.

Current Joint roles include Chief Executive, Strategic Director Economy & Place, Strategic Director Adult & Communities, Director of Neighbourhoods & Environment, Director of Transformation, Head of HR & OD, Head of Public Relations & Resilience. Review of leadership tiers 3 & 4 Jul scheduled for completion by December 2025.

The Future Blaenau Gwent and Future Torfaen extended leadership events have been brought together to create Future BGT. The newly formed group has met twice in the past 4 months covering key corporate topics aligned to the Federation, Marmot, and The Deal.

A Federation Transformation Plan has been developed.

Report received by full Council (October 2025), with a agreement for:

- The Heads of Terms for the development of a Section 113 Agreement to enable the lawful sharing of senior officers while maintaining the sovereignty and accountability of each Council
- The establishment of a Joint Pay Structure for senior joint roles with dual accountability to both Councils.
- Engagement work around the Torfaen deal will take place during the Autumn of 2025 including a Future BGT event and all staff Town Hall in November 2025.

Relationships have been established at a national level and a transformation fund secured for 2025/26. Chief Executive planning to share plans and position with professional networks during Autumn 2025. Partnership working with the WLGA and WG to seek funding to support transformation for 2026/27.

Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen are working together to align their Performance Framework and Risk Management processes with the intention of introducing Software across both authorities to monitor Projects, Service Planning and Risk Monitoring.

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Recommendations	Response	Timeframe
- The federated model should be accelerated and delivered faster and deeper.	A clear roadmap for the implementation of the federated approach is in place (activity for 2025/26 includes): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear vision &amp; purpose – Our Deal launched with three-year transformation plan</li> <li>- Established joint leadership and governance structures</li> <li>- Defined legal frameworks and destination organisational models</li> <li>- Co-designed cultural values and workforce development plans</li> <li>- Initiated financial modelling and resource pooling strategies</li> <li>- Develop performance and risk management frameworks</li> <li>- Develop solutions for operating systems to enable Federation</li> </ul>	Q4 2025/26
- The Corporate Risk Register should be extended to include known risks, the major mitigation for which is prompt implementation.	Amend the Council’s existing risk management policy to clearly set out the roles of Risk Group and PMO in the risk identification, monitoring and reporting of risks, clarifying and communicating the PMO role.	Q4 2025/26
	Develop a single harmonised performance and risk management frameworks across the federated model.	Q4 2025/26
- A further formal approach to Welsh Government be made to seek agreement not only on forward funding but also importantly, to	Formalise and leverage Welsh Government & WLGA networks to gain support, share learning and influence	2025/26

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grant flexibility to allow for new service models.	national policy direction  Ongoing engagement with WG & WLGA to support the programme of change, share learning and influence national policy direction	2026/27
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### 2. MARMOT & COMMUNITIES - progress so far in 2025/26...

The Council is working toward the Launch of a Torfaen Deal and the Marmot-aligned vision. We will need to embed and integrate the five missions of the Deal in the Council's work and ensure staff and partner organisations are trained to understand what the Deal means for them.

The Torfaen Deal has developed to far include

- Phase 1 communications on the Torfaen Deal has taken place with key stakeholders including staff via CE Town Hall meetings and members via briefing session and through scrutiny. Partners including community councils have been receiving presentations on The Deal.
- Phase 2 engagement with the public has started. Plans in place to hold a Citizen's Assembly engaging 40 members of the Community early in 2026. An Elected Member Development session will take place in November 2025

We are beginning to help tell our story through the development of detailed case studies. Work has been undertaken to identify case studies for the November edition of Torfaen Talks, which also resulted in some press releases.

A volunteering process has been developed and tested that is scheduled to go live in Quarter 3.

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Recommendations	Response	Timeframe
- Identifying actions already embedded in plans that contribute.	The Council's service planning process demonstrates linkages between activity and the Council's Marmot principles	Ongoing
- Decide which principles input most at a local level and prioritise.	The developing Torfaen Deal prioritises 5 missions to bringing to life our aspiration of sustainably reducing inequality and inequity in Torfaen	Ongoing
- Set clear activity plans and targets for specific outcomes.	Alongside the new 'Deal' we will implement a new evaluation framework for our work, further strengthening our ongoing and continuous self-assessment and review processes in order to have the greatest impact on improving the well-being of our residents.	2025/26
	Place based priorities within each Town Council / Community Council locality will be defined and agreed. Community delivered solutions (case studies) will be developed and shared internally.	Q2 2025/26
	The development of a Volunteering process and strategy will be developed promoted and implemented	Q3 2025/26
	In depth engagement and stakeholder (staff, member, town and community councils, other partner organisations) workshops. Developing wider understanding that at its heart, The Deal is about sharing power - through devolved budgets,	September / October 2025

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<p>In line with the later recommendation on communications and engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarify for users and residents the changes that flow from the principles.</li> <li>- To create a narrative tailored to stakeholders, especially staff that details the specific operational changes.</li> </ul>	<p>local decision-making, and a belief that communities know best what works for them.</p> <p>Torfaen Deal – Consultation and Public Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a Citizen Assembly of approx. 40 local residents taking part in the development of the Torfaen Deal. Outcome of having a deal designed and tested by the community giving it more credibility and support prospect of delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Getting ready for the Deal will require training for both Torfaen staff and Partners.</p>	<p>October – November 2025</p> <p>From January 2026</p>
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### 3. EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION - progress so far in 2025/26...

As of March 2025, our new Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP) Hub Team relocated into a new office space that encourages knowledge, experience and skills to be shared, as well as providing an opportunity to discuss the best pathway for referrals. All referrals for preventative support are now dealt with by the hub, where the team will triage each case and assess what support might be needed, including any community delivered activity and support.

A draft performance framework for EIP has been developed, and we have commenced the use of live data to test the effectiveness of the framework. Work is taking place to ensure that we are collecting the right information in a consistent manner which is tested for effectiveness. Once this has been tested and necessary changes made then we will begin working on designing a Balanced Scorecard for all of the Community Prevention Directorate in Power BI.

As noted previously, we are beginning to help tell our story through the development of detailed case studies.

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Recommendations	Response	Timeframe
- The developing draft of the performance framework is given visibility across the organisation as it evolves.	We will finalise the draft performance framework for EIP, and will use live data to test its effectiveness as a framework	Q1 2025/26 (testing throughout 2025/26)
- A need to rapidly ensure that the systems and data required to support this programme are fully in place as soon as possible.	Final amendments. We will ensure that this is given prominence within the Balanced Scorecards that are presented to the <i>Councils Executive Team as part of the quarterly cycle</i> .	Q1 2026/27
- That the Performance Framework incorporate specific activities and outcomes.	The performance framework will be shared with the Councils' Leadership Teams for further dissemination.	Q1 2026/27
- That to inform all stakeholders a tailored narrative is developed and supported by 'stories' relating to real life impacts.	As part of the Communities approach we will develop community delivered solutions (case studies) developed and shared (internal)	Q2 2025/26
	Case Studies will be developed and used to publicise the Torfaen Deal and used for internal training workshops	2026/27

### 4. Communications & Engagement - progress so far in 2025/26...

We have drafted an online participation training module originally although this couldn't be delivered through the the Council's online training tool, Thinki, we now plan to see how the principles of effective participation can be incorporated into staff training on The Deal.

The staff participatory group meets regularly and was recently asked to discuss and suggest practical ways in which the Deal can be communicated

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internally and externally.

As noted previously phase 1 engagement work on the deal has been complete with work well underway on phase 2.

Recommendations	Draft Response	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is vital that the narrative around the change is tailored to the various stakeholder groups and targeted to meet the needs and interests using appropriate language and style.</li> </ul>	<p>In depth engagement and stakeholder (staff, member, town and community councils, other partner organisations) workshops, helping everybody to understand that at its heart, The Deal is about sharing power - through devolved budgets, local decision-making, and a belief that communities know best what works for them and that this is what people can expect the Council to look like in the future.</p>	Q3 2025/26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is evident that principles are widely understood across stakeholders. In key areas the specifics are not yet clarified.</li> </ul>	<p>As part of the Investing in our People workstream (Theme 3: Empowering Staff as System Leaders), we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Train staff in Marmot principles, prevention-first thinking and understanding the Deal.</li> <li>- Encourage participation in community leadership initiatives and co-design of services.</li> <li>- Provide permissions to work differently—backed by leadership support and enabling functions.</li> <li>- Use data and insight tools to empower staff with evidence for decision-making.</li> </ul>	Ongoing and continuing into 2026/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The commitment to define the 'Torfaen Deal' is an essential element that should be completed at the earliest opportunity.</li> </ul>	<p>Torfaen Deal to be developed and adopted by Council</p>	April 2026

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### 5. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & WORKFORCE WELL-BEING - progress so far in 2025/26...

The 'Investing in our People' development programme has been established as one of the 3 corporate development themes across both councils. This will include the development of Rebel Culture & Values Framework to promote curiosity, collaboration, and courage, developing Rebel BGT as a mindset—encouraging staff to challenge norms, share ideas, and co-create solutions. This work will be supported by the development of BGT Teams channel for the idea sharing, voting, and collaboration across departments and the formation of strategic groups to focus on big issues within each local authority.

A Chief Executive's Leadership programme has been established with the first events being held in the new year. The initial programme includes;

- AI driven leadership programme.
- A workstream focused on Reducing Parental Conflict Across Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen.
- Leadership development: Aligning Leadership & Purpose

The initial 4 apprentices have been recruited. A further 6 are in the process of being recruited. The apprentice support network has been set up which is being refined with lesson learned.

The Council has begun the process of Developing an information hub, accessible for all staff so that information can up available and staff signposted to where this can be accessed. Mental Health First Aiders Trainers trained and developing a programme of Mental Health First Aiders across the Council.

Recommendations	Response	Timeframe
<p>The workforce development plan needs revisiting to ensure it adequately supports staff in the following areas, and no doubt more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dealing with uncertainty/personal resilience.</li> </ul>	<p>Strengthening our workforce effectively by, developing a Wellbeing Programme for all staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introducing mental health first-aiders</li> <li>- A Well-Being day with partners to provide advice and support on well-being issues</li> </ul>	<p>April 2026 January 2026</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Well-Being website launched, providing advice and support</li> </ul>	January 2026
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change management.</li> </ul>	<p>To ensure the sustained success of the federated model of working, a joint cultural 'architecture' is being developed to underpin the federated model, ensuring that shared values, leadership behaviours, and collaborative practices are embedded across both councils. This framework will guide the integration of teams, support joint leadership development, and foster a culture of innovation and resilience essential for the success of the federation</p>	Phase 1 Q4 2025/26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skills analysis and acquisition.</li> </ul>	<p>Federated approach (year 1 deliverables):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rebel Culture &amp; Values Framework co-designed and embedded across teams</li> <li>- Collaborative Workplace Plans Established, promoting cross-functional working</li> <li>- Investment Plan for Workforce Development launched, including training and retention strategies</li> </ul>	2025/26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital/data and information.</li> </ul>	<p>Designing and agreeing a digital skills programme to increase capabilities of our workforce targeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agree a definition of the digital skills and literacy requirements of the workforce – June 2025</li> <li>- Design a programme of learning that is required to ensure that all staff are digitally enabled – June 2025</li> <li>- Develop a delivery programme, resource requirement for discussion with Leadership – Sep</li> </ul>	2025/26

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a succession plan, including for senior leaders.</li> <li>- There is a need to pursue a non-hierarchical leadership development programme seeking to create a leadership cadre throughout the Authority, reducing reliance on a number of individuals.</li> </ul>	<p>2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include core digital skills as appropriate to grade in JD/PS as part of the recruitment process e.g. Innovation, Growth Mindset, Change Management</li> </ul> <p>A Chief Executive's Leadership programme has been established with the first events being held in the new year.</p> <p>The initial programmes includes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AI driven leadership programme.</li> <li>• A workstream focussed on Reducing Parental Conflict Across Blaenau Gwent &amp; Torfaen.</li> <li>• Leadership development: Aligning Leadership &amp; Purpose</li> </ul> <p>The 5 missions set out within the Torfaen Deal will be supported by 3 corporate development themes, one of which is Investing in Our People workstream. As part of this workstream (Theme 1: Develop the foundations for unlocking potential) we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch a Workforce Development Investment Plan with training, career pathways, and retention strategies.</li> <li>• Embed the Rebel Culture &amp; Values Framework to promote curiosity, collaboration, and courage.</li> <li>• Deliver a Leadership Development Programme focused on behaviours, competencies, and inclusive practice.</li> </ul>	<p>Q4 2025/26</p> <p>Ongoing, continuing into 2026/27</p>
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