Cyd-bwyllgor Corfforedig De-Ddwyrain Cymru | South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Report for:	ACTION / NOTING
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	YES / NO

For Consideration By	South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee
Report Title	Child Poverty Strategy 2026-2031
Report of	Colan Mehaffey, Strategic Director of Policy, Impact and Partnerships
Contact Details	colan.mehaffey@cardiffcapitalregion.gov.uk
Date to be Considered	13/07/2026
Implementation Date	Immediate
Affected Council Areas	All
Keywords / Index	CCR Child Poverty Strategy

1. Recommendations

1.1 The South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee is asked to:

(1) Consider and approve the CCR Child Poverty Strategy.

2. Report Summary

2.1. To present the CCR Child Poverty Strategy (see Appendix 1) to CJC for consideration and adoption. The Strategy will ensure statutory compliance and outline the approach taken by SEWCJC to help lift children and families in South East Wales out of poverty.

3. Reasons for the Report

3.1 To present the CCR Child Poverty Strategy (see Appendix 1) to CJC for consideration and adoption.

3.2. The adoption of the Child Poverty Strategy will ensure SEWCJC's compliance with the Child Poverty Strategy (Corporate Joint Committees) (Wales)

Regulations 2021. The Strategy will provide the overall approach SEWCJC will pursue to help lift children and families in South East Wales out of poverty.

4. Background

4.1. Under the Child Poverty Strategy (Corporate Joint Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2021, Corporate Joint Committees are subject to the Child and Families (Wales) Measure 2010. This requires CCR to prepare and publish a Child Poverty Strategy with objectives that relate to the 13 Broad Aims of the legislation, namely:

- To ensure that, so far as reasonably practicable, children in households with incomes below 70% of median UK income are not materially deprived;
- To promote and facilitate paid employment for parents and children;
- To provides parents of children with the skills necessary for paid employment;
- To reduce inequalities in educational attainment between children;
- To support parenting of children;
- To reduce health inequalities between children and parents of children;
- To ensure that all children grow up in decent housing;
- To ensure that all children grow in safe and cohesive communities;
- To reduce inequalities in participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities between children and between parents of children;
- To help young persons participate effectively in education and training;
- To help young persons take advantage of opportunities for employment, and;
- To help young persons participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities.

4.3. Child poverty remains a significant challenge. Around 84,000 children live in poverty in South East Wales, a third of all children in the region, defined as living in households with incomes below 60% of the UK median household income after housing costs. Poverty has also deepened over the past decade, with a growing proportion of households already living in poverty falling below more severe thresholds of 50% and 40% of the UK median household income after housing costs.

4.4. The effects of child poverty are long lasting and create significant social and economic costs for individuals, households and whole communities. Children growing up in poverty are more likely to experience poorer life outcomes long term – lower educational attainment, poorer health outcomes and, as adults, lower earnings; effects which carry second- and third-order costs for society and the wider economy.

4.5. The approach taken by SEWCJC for tackling child poverty considers the powers and functions available to the CJC, recognising both what it can and

cannot do, and focussing on the ways in which SEWCJC can add unique value regionally. This means focussing on, and applying a child policy lens to, SEWCJC's core economic development remit, namely the three statutory duties of Economic Well-being, Regional Transport and Spatial Planning.

4.6. The role of the CCR Child Poverty Strategy was further defined with reference to existing policy approaches at UK, Wales and local levels. This helps avoid duplication and ensures that the approach to child poverty identifies the wider policy objectives where SEWCJC can add the most value and impact through its economic development functions. Other strategies addressing child poverty include:

- UK Government Child Poverty Strategy (2025).
- Welsh Government Child Poverty Strategy (2024).
- The Well-being Plans of the four South East Wales PSBs.
- The standalone Poverty Strategies and/or Corporate Well-being Plans of the ten South East Wales LAs.

4.7. The economic circumstance of poverty is central to the Strategy given the economic development remit of SEWCJC, namely the causes and consequences of child poverty that can be linked to the economy. These include:

- In-work poverty and low pay: 72% of children in poverty live in households with at least one adult in paid word.
- Economic inactivity and unemployment: Although in-work poverty represents the greatest share of all children in poverty, above-average rates of child poverty are found in households with economically inactive or unemployed adults.
- Insecure work.
- Low relative skills profile of adults, children and young people in poverty.
- Low mobility and connectivity, especially in terms of transport.

4.8. This means continuing to address the relative under-performance of the South East Wales economy, creating more wealth and opportunities whilst ensuring more equitable access and inclusive development. It recognises the multi-facedness of poverty, how it impacts on health, education etc., but focuses on the economic determinants of poverty where SEWCJC is best situated to impact in terms of the powers within its control.

4.9. The Strategy identifies the following vision: "A South East Wales where every child, young person and family is supported to live well, get on in life and achieve their full potential, regardless of their background or where they live." This is supported by three priority areas, each accompanied by a suite of actions:

- **Good Work, Good Pay:** Creating good, inclusive jobs and maximising incomes.
- **Access to Opportunity:** Creating pathways out of poverty for children, young people and parents.
- **Conditions for Shared Prosperity:** Strengthening the regional economy and maximising social impact.

5. Work to Develop the Strategy

5.1. SEWCJC has done extensive work with respect to the following activities:

- Understanding the statutory context;
- Understanding the strategic policy context at UK, Welsh and local authority levels;
- Identifying good practice and relevant child poverty strategies at the Strategic Combined Authority level in England;
- Researching child poverty in South East Wales, including causes and consequences of child poverty, and other key characteristics;
- Stakeholder engagement;
- Engaging with SEWCJC colleagues to create buy-in and identify opportunities for cross-organisation collaboration, and;
- Preparing draft content and priorities.

5.2. In November 2025, SEWCJC colleagues were invited to three engagement sessions on the new Child Poverty Strategy to share views on key issues and provide feedback, particularly relating to delivery and how to have the greatest impact. This was followed by additional sessions in 2026 about draft content.

5.3. The Policy and Impact Team has also commissioned Wavehill Research Consultancy to assess the feasibility of making South East Wales a Real Living Wage region. The feasibility study will look at good practice across Wales and the UK, including the city-region level in England, and will identify practical steps for SEWCJC to promote the Real Living Wage in coalition with other key organisational actors across the South East Wales region, with the aim of increasing the lowest incomes.

5.4. Conversations with the Wales Centre for Public Policy (WCPP) have also taken place to identify good practice and key child poverty issues. SEWCJC will be engaging with WCPP following approval.

5.5. Externally, SEWCJC has engaged with a broad range of public, private and non-profit organisations across the region about key issues and draft content. A summary of key messages is included in Appendix 2. This includes:

- Welsh Government.

- 10 South East Wales LAs: Meetings with Lead Officers not only for economic services, but child/family services also.
- Wales Centre for Public Policy.
- Public Service Boards (Gwent and Cwm Taf Morgannwg).
- Community Voluntary Councils (Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf).
- HE Colleges (Cardiff and the Vale, and Bridgend).
- Federation of Small Business Wales.

5.6. SEWCJC also visited and directly engaged with six youth clubs across South East Wales, including Rhoose, Beddau, Abertillery, Penarth, Pontypool and Cwmbran. In addition to conversations about the climate, we engaged with young people and children on issues relating to their social and economic well-being, including transport, skills and work, what makes them happy, and what they would like to see change in their communities. This was broad enough to capture key issues without referencing child poverty directly.

5.7. The Strategy document will be designed graphically following adoption by CJC.

5.8. Much of the Strategy involves applying a child poverty lens to existing and future programmes and investments delivered by SEWCJC. However, financial allocation would support the following activities:

- Exploring new opportunities to promote South East Wales as a Real Living Wage region;
- Building a culture of possibility and supporting aspiration;
- Exploring SEWCJC's role in the foundational economy and ways to maximise impact on everyday businesses, and;
- Exploring how to support social enterprises and businesses operating in the social impact space.

SEWCJC will seek support from Welsh Government and other funding partners, allied to other duties, to make the case for funding support to deliver these activities. All funded activity will feed into SEWCJC's medium-term financial plan.

6. Comments of the Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

6.1. As set out in para 5.8 above this Strategy will apply "a child poverty lens" at a strategic level to our decisions with regards to our programmes and investments. Any potentially new and additional financial commitments in relation to this will need to be separately considered, with steps being taken as set out above to lobby Welsh / UK Governments and others for funding if additional activities are subsequently identified.

7. Comments of the Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

7.1. As described in the Report, under the provisions of the Child Poverty Strategy (Corporate Joint Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2021, SEWCJC is required to adopt, review and maintain a Child Poverty Strategy.

8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

8.1. The Corporate Joint Committee is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Socio Economic Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

8.2. The Committee must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

8.3. The characteristics protected under the Act are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

8.4. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

8.5. The socio-economic duty requires public bodies to, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the

desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

8.6. Officers are of the view that the decisions recommended in this report will have a positive equalities impact. An Equalities Impact Assessment appears in Appendix 5 to this report.

9. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

9.1. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development, meaning the process of improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action aimed at achieving the well-being goals of:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

and by acting in a way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

9.3. In order to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle, when exercising its functions, the Committee must take account of the following things:

- the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs;
- the need to take an integrated approach to achieving the well-being goals;
- the importance of involving others with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of the region;
- how acting in collaboration with others could assist to meet the region's well-being objectives;
- how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the region's well-being objectives.

9.4. In developing the Recommendations of this report, regard has been given to the well-being duty arising under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act').

9.5. A Well-being of Future Generations Assessment appears at Appendix 3 to this report.

10. Welsh Language Implications

10.1. In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, consideration has been given to the impact the recommendations made in this report may have on opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language, whether the proposals treat the Welsh Language more or less favourably than the English Language, and opportunities for increasing the positive effects, or decreasing the negative effects, of the proposals on the Welsh Language.

10.2. No negative impacts were identified which would prevent approval being sought to implement the recommendations of this report. A full Impact Assessment for the Welsh language is found in Appendix 4 to this report.

13. Consultation

13.1. See 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 above.

15. Appendices

- Appendix 1. CCR Child Poverty Strategy
- Appendix 2. Summary of Key Findings from Stakeholder Engagement.
- Appendix 3. Well-being of Future Generations Assessment (WBFG) Act Impact Assessment
- Appendix 4. Welsh-language Impact Assessment
- Appendix 5. Equalities and Socio-economic Duty Impact Assessment.

Report Author: **Colan Mehaffey**
Strategic Director of Policy, Impact & Partnerships

Date of Meeting: **13/07/2026**

GROWING UP WELL IN CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION

A Children's Well-being Strategy

Fairer Starts, Stronger Futures

FORWEWORD

South East Wales has the potential to be one of the best places to grow up, live well and raise a family. But for too many of our people, poverty is an everyday reality.

It means skipping meals and going hungry, living in the cold, being unable to fully take part in school life, learn and play, being cut off by transport, and bouncing between temporary accommodation. It cuts across a person's entire life, capping their life chances today and tomorrow. It robs children of opportunity and leaves potential unrealised, to the detriment not only of our children but our shared future in South East Wales.

Since 2000, children have consistently faced the highest rates of poverty in Wales, followed by working-age adults with children. It reaches into every part of our region, from our cities and towns to our rural communities. At times it is hidden; other times, it is plainly visible – and in far too many of our communities, it is deeply entrenched, long-term and persistent. Around 84,000 children live in relative poverty in South East Wales, a third of our children. They could fill Wales' largest stadium, the Principality Stadium, and 10,000 children would still be left waiting outside.

The consequences for children experiencing poverty are profound. High poverty rates are correlated with poorer health outcomes, lower educational attainment, lower labour market participation, and lower long-term earnings potential. And with each of these challenges, the full potential of our people and our region is held back.

This is why our mission at Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) to create a Stronger, Fairer and Greener region requires action on child poverty. We have a clear statutory and moral duty to act, and a growing set of regional levers that can contribute to the reduction of child poverty. This Strategy is our commitment to making child poverty of mainstream importance across CCR investments and programmes.

This five-year Strategy outlines our vision for a South East Wales where every child, young person and family lives in an economy that supports them to live well, thrive and achieve their full potential, regardless background or where they live. It recognises that a strong, inclusive economy is fundamental to tackling child poverty and improving life chances, and that CCR's role is to influence the economic conditions that underpin these outcomes.

Delivering this vision requires CCR to focus on those areas where it is uniquely positioned to make the greatest difference. That distinctive contribution lies in applying a child poverty lens to the three statutory duties unique to CCR that can shape the economy – Economic Well-being, Regional Transport Planning and Strategic Spatial Planning. Through these levers, CCR can address the economic drivers of poverty, its causes and consequences, in ways other public bodies cannot.

Focusing on CCR's economic development remit and making a distinctive contribution, not duplicating existing activity, was strongly supported by partners. In fact, the Strategy has been developed through extensive engagement with partners across the region, from our Local Authorities to Welsh Government, the Public Service Boards, colleges, the voluntary sector and business representatives. It reflects what partners have told us about the drivers

of poverty that relate to the economy and, critically, how CCR can best address them and make a distinctive contribution.

The Strategy does this by setting out three priorities that focus on where CCR's statutory levers can deliver the greatest impact.

> Firstly, *Good Work and Good Pay*, creating good inclusive jobs and maximising household income.
>
> Secondly, *Access to Opportunity*, creating pathways out of poverty for children, young people and parents.
>
> Thirdly, *Shared Prosperity*, strengthening the regional economy and maximising our impact on economic well-being.

There is no shortage of aspiration and potential in our region. Our task is to ensure that more people can benefit from the economy, live well and realise their full potential, regardless of their background or where they live.

Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby
Chair of Cardiff Capital Region.

CREATING A STRONGER, FAIRER AND GREENER SOUTH EAST WALES

Our Vision

A South East Wales where every child, young person and family lives in an economy that supports them to live well, get on in life and achieve their full potential, regardless of their background or where they live.

Good Work & Good Pay

Creating good inclusive jobs, and maximising household income.

Continuing to create good jobs

Strengthening good work principles across job creation activities to make work more rewarding

Exploring new opportunities to promote South East Wales as a Real Living Wage region

Working to ease cost-of-living pressures where CCR has influence

Access to Opportunity

Creating pathways out of poverty for children, young people and parents.

Creating affordable and accessible up- and re-skilling opportunities

Creating inclusive pathways into work for young people and parents, as well as progression

Creating an affordable, accessible and reliable public transport network, and digital connectivity

Applying a child poverty lens to spatial planning

Building a culture of possibility and supporting aspiration

Shared Prosperity

Strengthening the regional economy and maximising our impact on economic well-being.

Exploring CCR's role in the foundational economy and ways to maximise impact on everyday businesses

Exploring how to support social enterprises and businesses operating in social impact space

Assessing existing funds and the opportunities to do more to support the reduction of child poverty

INTRODUCTION

CCR's work is guided by our Economic Well-being Statement, our vision to create a Stronger, Fairer and Greener South East Wales. So long as people are locked in poverty, fully realising this vision will be difficult.

1. POVERTY IS A LIVED REALITY

Poverty is an everyday reality for too many of our children, families and communities. It seeps into every aspect of a child's upbringing, forcing families into difficult decisions about life's essentials. Poverty means poor nutrition; damp, cold homes; and stress and uncertainty for parents and children alike. It cuts people off from opportunity and the chance to get on in life, from being able to take part in school life to the fullest, learn and play, afford transport or access good paid employment. It is a barrier to living well that no person should ever have to face.

The long-term evidence is clear. Poverty is a ceiling on the well-being of today's children and tomorrow's adults, and prevents our people, communities and region from realising their full potential.

Since 2000, children have consistently faced the highest rates of poverty in Wales, followed by working-age adults with children. Poverty exists across the whole region, from our cities and towns to our rural communities – sometimes hidden and existing alongside prosperity; other times plainly visible, deeply entrenched and stemming from long-term community deprivation. Across South East Wales, a whole third of our children live in poverty.

At CCR, we have a clear statutory and moral duty to act, and a growing set of regional levers that can help address child poverty. Under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, CCR must prepare and publish a strategy for contributing to the "eradication" of poverty. But this Strategy is more than compliance: it is our statement of purpose and our commitment to making child poverty of mainstream importance across CCR's work programmes.

2. AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR ALL

Our region is not short of ambition and potential. We have world-class industries, businesses and universities, and organisations across the public, private and non-profit sectors working tirelessly every day. But barriers to economic well-being remain, with too many of our people missing out on the benefits of the economy – the chance to live well, get on in life and realise their potential. Work is often characterised by low pay and insecure hours. And whilst strong progress has been made by CCR and its partners to strengthen the South East Wales economy, it falls short of the performance of peer regions across the UK, western Europe and the OECD.

The story within our region shows mixed fortunes also. By 2023, Cardiff and the Vale had reached 96% of the UK average for GVA per capita, compared with just 55% in the Gwent Valleys, the lowest-performing area in Wales. Poverty rates are especially high across the Northern Valleys, and very high concentrations of people living in poverty are found in our inner-city communities too. Even in areas where the economy is performing well, too many families are locked out of the wealth and opportunity around them. Creating an economy that works for all is critical.

3. HOW CCR CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Action on child poverty requires action on the economic conditions that drive hardship in the first place. This is where CCR is uniquely positioned to make a difference. With our strategic responsibilities for economic development and investment, CCR can act at a unique regional scale to improve economic conditions that touch everyday lives. **By concentrating on the economic drivers of poverty and the levers to address them that CCR alone holds,** the approach targets the conditions that determine both work and pay, opportunity and wealth, helping to improve outcomes for children and the adults that raise them. It means creating opportunity and ensuring that the benefits of the economy are more widely felt and accessible.

Our unique contribution lies in applying a child poverty lens to the three statutory duties that give CCR a distinctive role: Economic Well-being, Regional Transport Planning and Strategic Spatial Planning.

STATUTORY POWERS	WHAT ROLE CAN IT PLAY?
Economic Well-being	Prioritising secure, well-paid jobs, skills pathways and investments that benefit both parents and children. Influencing the quality, accessibility, and location of employment so that incomes, job security and progression opportunities improve. Creating new wealth and opportunity, and ensuring that both are felt by *all* people, regardless of background.
Regional Transport Planning	Improving connectivity and access to key opportunities and services. Reducing the time, cost and complexity of travel, helping parents to take up work or training, and enabling young people to access opportunities safely and reliably across the region.
Strategic Spatial Planning	Influencing where new developments – businesses, homes and infrastructure – are located, supporting the creation of more accessible, well-connected and resilient communities.

4. THE ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF POVERTY

With these powers, CCR is well placed to help prevent and mitigate many of the root causes or economic determinants of child poverty.

Low Pay & In-work Poverty	Two-third of children in poverty live in households with at least one adult in paid employment.
Economic Inactivity & Unemployment	While in-work poverty accounts for the largest share of all children in poverty,

	child poverty rates are higher in households with no adults in employment.
Cost-of-living Crisis	As costs climb, more families are pushed into poverty, and those already in poverty are driven deeper into hardship.
Low Access to Opportunity	Areas with high levels of child poverty correlate with low job density and a low number of active enterprises.
Low Mobility & Low Connectivity	Poverty limits people's ability to move and connect. Transport can be costly or hard to reach, and digital access is often limited or unaffordable.
Lower Skills Profiles	Educational attainment is lower for children in poverty, and adults in poverty who raise children are more likely to have fewer or low-level qualifications.
Lone-parent Households	Child poverty is more common in lone-parent households, where a single income must stretch further.
Early Years	Rates of poverty are highest during early years (aged 0-4), caused by high costs and the reduced earning capacity of adults.
Overlapping Inequalities	Ethnic minority households and disabled people experience higher-than-average levels of child poverty.

CCR is acting with the long-term interest in mind, addressing poverty today and disrupting the intergenerational cycles that keep it in place.

5. OUR APPROACH TO TACKLING CHILD POVERTY

The priorities have been designed through engagement with a broad range of organisations, from Welsh Government to our local authority partners, Public Service Boards and colleges, the voluntary sector and business representatives. The Strategy's three priorities and the activities planned around them focus on the unique contribution CCR can make, complementing not duplicating the work already being made to tackle poverty by partners.

Priority 1. Good Work & Good Pay

- *Creating good inclusive jobs, and maximising household income.*

Priority 2. Access to Opportunity

- *Creating pathways out of poverty for children, young people and parents.*

Priority 3. Conditions for Shared Prosperity

- *Strengthening the regional economy and maximising our impact on economic well-being.*

They priorities together form our roadmap for developing an economy that supports children, young people and families to live well, get on in life and achieve their full potential, regardless of their background or where they live. But CCR cannot do this alone. Designed with the input of our partners, this Strategy will be co-delivered with them. To our Local Authorities, to Welsh and UK Government, to our businesses, non-profit organisations and communities: CCR is ready to work with you to tackle child poverty.

CHILD POVERTY IN SOUTH EAST WALES*

- *In 2023-24, 32% of children in South East Wales were living in relative poverty after housing costs, up from 29.5% in 2014-15. This rate varied regionally from 24.3% in Monmouthshire to 35.6% in Blaenau Gwent.*

- *The percentage of children living in income deprivation ranges from 23.9% in Monmouthshire to 48.6% in Blaenau Gwent. Some LSOAs (small areas of 1,000 - 3,000 residents) display levels as high as 100%, as shown by the figure on page 10.*

- *There were 71,523 children living in absolute low income and 83,968 living in relative low income in South East Wales in 2023-24. This is an increase of 18.2% and 15.0% from 2015-16, respectively.*

- *In South East Wales there is a 77.7 point-score gap in Key Stage 4 achievement between free school meal eligible and ineligible pupils. This attainment gap ranges from 53.9 in Blaenau Gwent to 113.8 in the Vale of Glamorgan.*

Key Metrics Correlating to Child Poverty:

- *In 2025, South East Wales's economic inactivity rate was 24.4%, compared to 21.6% for the UK. The rates in South East Wales range from 19.6% in Monmouthshire to 29.2% in Blaenau Gwent.*

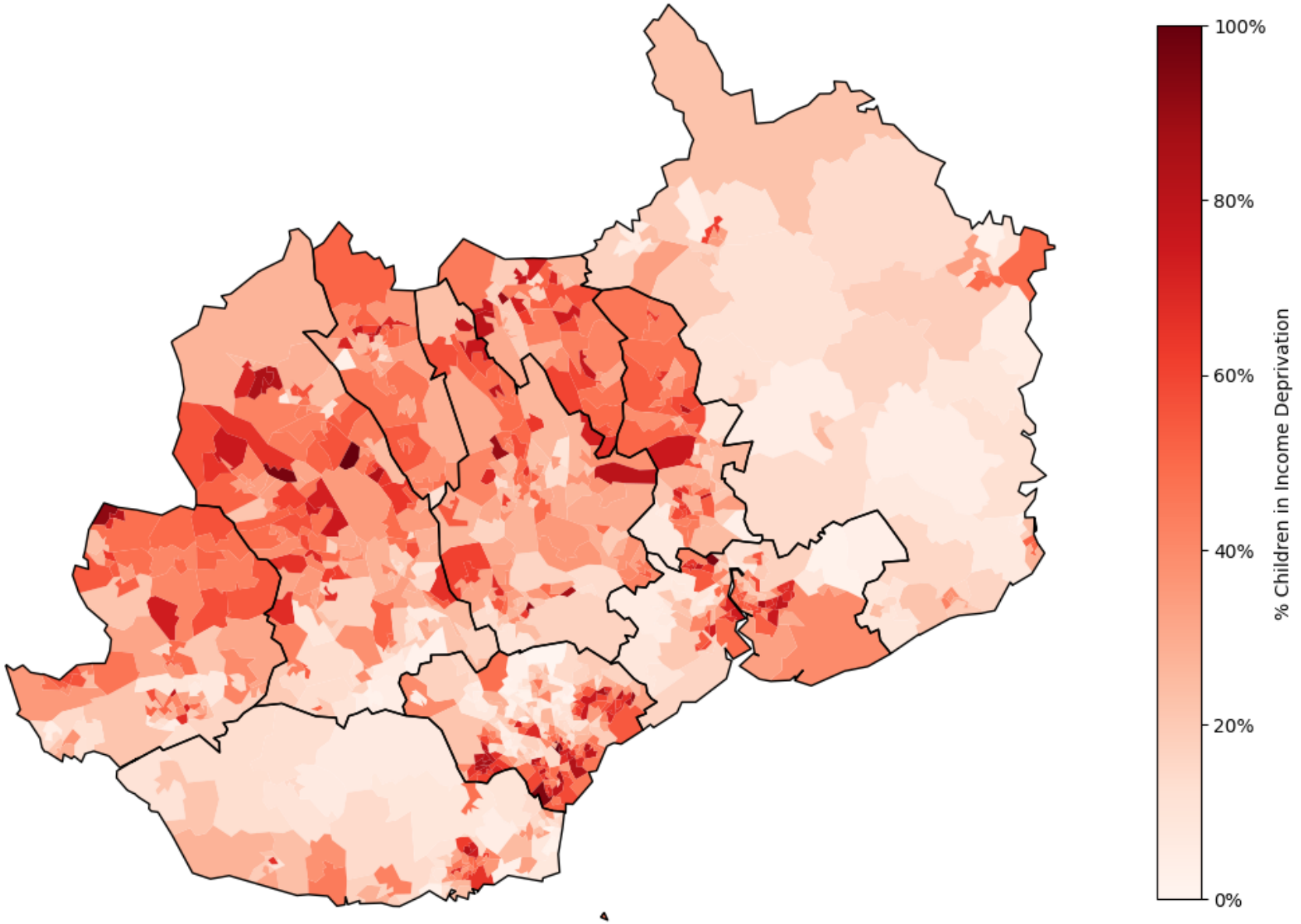
- *In November 2025, 22.5% of the working age population of South East Wales was on Universal Credit, compared to 19.6% in Great Britain. Regionally, the rate ranges from 15.0% in Monmouthshire to 30.3% in Blaenau Gwent.*

- *In 2023, gross disposable household income per head in South East Wales was 81% of the UK average, ranging from 66.9% in Blaenau Gwent to 104.8% in Monmouthshire.*

- *In 2024, 8.3% of South East Wales working age population had no qualifications, compared to 6.1% in the UK. Regionally, the rate ranges from 3.9% in Monmouthshire to 13.8% in Blaenau Gwent.*

***TO BE PRESENTED AS INFOGRAPHIC**

Percentage of Children in Income Deprivation by LSOA in South East Wales (WIMD 2025)



Thematic Area 1. Good Work, Good Pay

Creating good, inclusive jobs and maximising household income

Causes and consequences being addressed: **Low pay, insecure work, low access to opportunity.**

Activity Areas *Short (S), medium (M) and long (L) term*	**How can CCR achieve this?** *Resources and scope*	**Ownership** *Team*
1. Continuing to create good jobs (L)	- Core activity across CCR investments and work programmes.	Regional Growth (RG)
2. Strengthening good work principles across job creation activities to make work more rewarding (M).	- Application of key tools such as ESG Scorecard and Responsible Investment Policy. - Exploring opportunities to strengthen our promotion of the Real Living Wage through investments. - Exploring opportunities to favourably view investees with strong fair work practices, e.g., long-term, flexible jobs, maternity and paternity policies.	PIP
3. Explore new opportunities to promote South East Wales as a RLW region (L)	- Exploring ways to action recommendations and findings of the RLW feasibility study, which identifies good practice elsewhere in the UK regarding RLW promotion at the regional level. - Exploring opportunities to co-promote the RLW with key partners, organisations and sectors across South East Wales.	PIP

4. Working to ease cost-of-living pressures where CCR has an influence (L) ▪ Energy ▪ Housing ▪ Transport	- Exploring areas where CCR can impact supply-side dynamics, particularly where it relates to household circumstance (e.g., Housing Viability Gap Fund; energy projects, particularly retrofit if that could be explored; RTP).	RG, PIP

Thematic Area 2. Access to Opportunity

Creating pathways out of poverty for children, young people and parents

Causes & consequences being addressed: **Low access to opportunity, access to transport, low relative skills profile, economic inactivity, intersectional barriers, intergenerational cycles.**

Activity Areas *Short (S), medium (M) and long (L) term*	**How can CCR achieve this?** *Resources and scope*	**Ownership** *Directorate*
5. Creating affordable and accessible up-/re-skilling opportunities (L). ▪ Supporting people from all backgrounds into new opportunities and key sectors. ▪ Access to new qualifications.	- Application of key tools such as ESG Scorecard and Responsible Investment Policy. - Conditions of contracts / investments.	RG, PIP
6. Creating inclusive pathways into work for young people and parents, as well as for progression (L). ▪ Apprenticeships ▪ Exploring work experience placements ▪ Exploring internships.	- Application of key tools such as ESG Scorecard and Responsible Investment Policy. - Conditions of contracts / investments.	RG, PIP
7. Creating an affordable, accessible and reliable public transport network, and digital connectivity (L)	- Identifying key elements of the Regional Transport Plan and applying a child poverty lens.	PIP
8. Applying a child policy lens to spatial planning (M).	- Applying child poverty lens to Strategic Development Plan throughout development stages and monitoring.	PIP

9.	Building a culture of possibility and supporting aspiration (L).	- Upstream interventions at an early age to inspire culture of aspiration and possibility, including youth entrepreneurship. - Outreach and access work in industries receiving investment, e.g., Investment Zone. - Targeting underrepresented and unrecognized groups, favourably viewing investees that make specific provision for less privileged groups, e.g., automatic interviews to care leavers.	PIP

Thematic Area 3. Conditions for Shared Prosperity

Strengthening the regional economy and maximising social impact

Causes & consequences being addressed: **Low relative performance of South East Wales economy across a number of indicators.**

Possible Activity Areas *Short (S), medium (M) and long (L) term*	**How can CCR achieve this?** *Resources and scope*	**Ownership** *Directorate*
10. Exploring role in foundational economy and ways to maximise impact on everyday businesses (M).	- Scope feasibility of an Everyday Economy Fund. - Supporting local suppliers in CCR investments.	PIP
11. Exploring how to support social enterprises and businesses operating in social impact space (M).	- Scope feasibility of a Social Impact Fund. - Positively reviewing investments with wider positive social impact.	PIP
12. Assessing existing funds and the opportunities to do more to support the reduction of child poverty (M).	- Revisiting ESG strategy for Sites and Premises Fund. - Explore opportunities to refresh ESG strategy for Innovation Investment Capital.	PIP

Prifddinas Ranbarth Caerdydd | Cardiff Capital Region

CCR Child Poverty Strategy

Key Themes and Findings from External Stakeholder Engagement

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report outlines stakeholder engagement undertaken to inform the development of the CCR Child Poverty Strategy. Between October 2025 and April 2026, meetings were organised with a broad range of organisations across the South East Wales region to inform the Strategy and gather insights on the poverty-related challenges facing children, young people and families.

2. EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

2.1. A broad range of stakeholders were mapped, with representatives from across the public, private and non-profit sectors. We shared a scoping document ahead of each meeting which included a draft action plan, together with a set of prompt questions for stakeholders to consider beforehand. Some stakeholders provided written feed-back before or after the meeting.

2.2. Stakeholders provided their perspective on key issues, highlighted gaps in existing provision and identified areas where regional action could strengthen efforts to reduce child poverty and improve outcome.

Under the Child Poverty Strategy (Corporate Joint Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2021, CJCs are required to consult Welsh Ministers, local authorities, and any other stakeholders considered appropriate in developing their Strategy. CCR has fulfilled this duty by engaging with the following stakeholders:

- Lead Officers for Economic Development and Child/Family Services across the 10 South East Wales LAs;
- Welsh Government;
- Wales Centre for Public Policy
- Gwent Public Service Board;
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Service Board;
- RCT County Voluntary Council (Interlink);
- Merthyr Tydfil County Voluntary Council (VAMT);
- Cardiff and Vale College;
- Bridgend College, and;
- Federation of Small Businesses, Wales (FSB).

3. THEMES

3.1. Analysis of the stakeholder engagement feedback revealed several recurring themes that across the discussions. These themes are highlighted below.

THEMES	KEY FINDINGS
1. FOCUSSING ON THE DISTINCTIVE POWERS AND LEVERS OF CCR	A key message from stakeholders was the need for CCR to focus on its distinctive role, how it can contribute to tackling child poverty in ways that other public bodies cannot, particularly by addressing the economic drivers of poverty in South East Wales. It was consistently emphasised that CCR's added value lies in focussing on, and applying a child poverty lens to, the statutory duties of Economic Well-being, Regional Transport Planning and Strategic Spatial Planning. By embedding child-focused considerations into these core functions, CCR can influence the structural conditions that shape families' economic prospects. This economic development remit means CCR is uniquely positioned to address many of the underlying drivers of child poverty that relate to the economy – low pay, barriers to good jobs and progression, limited access to opportunity, transport constraints and uneven development. It means creating wealth and opportunity that improves the lives of children, young people and parents, regardless of background. In doing so, it is an approach that complements rather than duplicates the work of LAs and social services, adding a distinctive regional economic dimension to efforts to reduce child poverty. Stakeholders noted that this approach must be defined with reference to, and co-operation with, other poverty-related strategies at local, Welsh Government and UK Government levels. It should focus on ways in which new wealth and opportunity can be created in tandem with these other levels.
2. MAXIMISING HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND PARENTAL EARNINGS	Increasing household income, particularly through parental employment, progression and the promotion of increased pay, was identified as a critical route out of poverty. Children in poverty depend on the adults that raise them. Emphasis was placed on the added challenges faced in households with young children (aged 0-4). There was a

	clear recognition that opportunities must be accessible, flexible, and designed with families' needs in mind. Stakeholders noted the importance of: ▪ Tackling structural barriers that prevent parents from accessing training, new jobs and employment, career progression, and; ▪ Ensuring new jobs created through regional investment are high-quality, sustainable, future-proofed and accessible.
3. ECONOMIC INACTIVITY	Whilst most children experiencing poverty live in households with at least one adult in paid work, above-average rates of poverty are found in economically inactive households. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of supporting this group into work by providing tailored support. This includes behavioural aspects about the culture of work and intergenerational poverty cycles.
4. BUILDING ASPIRATION AND A CUTLURE OF POSSIBILITY	A recurring theme was the importance of fostering aspiration and demonstrating that pathways out of poverty are achievable. This included: ▪ Inspiring and supporting young people to pursue education, training, and employment opportunities (e.g., NEETS), and; ▪ Helping economically inactive adults and young people into work. Stakeholders emphasised that cultural and social barriers can impact engagement and progression, and must be addressed alongside economic interventions.
5. COST-OF-LIVING PRESSURES	Stakeholders highlighted the increased pressures on households due to increasing costs. This worsens poverty for those already experiencing poverty and can push more people below the poverty line. This includes energy, housing and transport, *inter alia*.
6. TRANSPORT	The affordability and accessibility of transport was identified by stakeholders across the region as one of the most important barriers to supporting people out of poverty. It was

	consistently identified as a barrier to opportunity, particularly in deprived or marginalised communities. Improved connectivity could create pathways out of poverty by enabling access to employment, education, childcare, and essential services, for young people and parents both alike. North-south travel was said to have improved, but more needs to be done in terms of east-west travel. Taking child poverty into account as part of the Regional Transport Plan was viewed as critical, and it was highlighted that areas with high levels of poverty and deprivation are less likely to have accessible transport links and connectivity.
7. HOUSING	Affordability of housing emerged as a challenge impacting families across the region. Stakeholders noted that rising housing costs significantly increase financial pressure on low-income households, limiting their ability to achieve stability and resilience.
8. RECOGNISING THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION AND DYNAMICS OF POVERTY.	Stakeholders across the region underscored the long-term and deeply entrenched nature of deprivation in many communities, particularly the contiguous arc of deprivation across the Northern Valleys linked to post-industrial economic decline. The Strategy was viewed as a means of strengthening the case for sustained investment in these communities and addressing the persistent underperformance of local economies. This includes low job density and a low number of active enterprises, meaning fewer employment opportunities within these areas. Stakeholders also highlighted the concentration of deprivation within parts of Cardiff and Newport. These pockets of disadvantage are often located in close proximity to more affluent neighbourhoods, reinforcing the importance of ensuring that economic and social opportunities within and around these areas are accessible to the people who live there.

	In more affluent parts of the region, stakeholders observed that poverty is often hidden. Children and parents experiencing poverty in these areas may be acutely aware of their circumstances relative to others, which can intensify feelings of stigma. Similarly, in rural areas, stakeholders noted that poverty is frequently less visible, reflecting both geographic isolation and limited access to support and services.
9. HIGH-GROWTH, HIGH-VALUE SECTORS	Stakeholders noted the importance of high-growth, high-productivity sectors for creating new wealth and opportunity, and to address the relative economic underperformance of South East Wales, but emphasised that new opportunities should be as accessible as possible, regardless of background. Stakeholders saw the Strategy as a way to strengthen poverty-related considerations into existing and future CCR programmes.
10. FOUNDATIONAL, EVERYDAY ECONOMY	In addition to high-growth, high-productivity industries, stakeholders highlighted that most people work in more foundational parts of the economy. This includes SMEs, which account for a large share of employment in South East Wales. Stakeholders saw a role for the Strategy in strengthening CCR's activity within this part of the economy.
11. SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS	Stakeholders noted issues of staff retention among some employers. This means supporting businesses to be able to retain staff, particularly after investing in their training. This is particularly significant given changing cultures of work among young people, and to retain previously economically inactive persons within the workforce, which is important to reduce poverty. Getting people into work must sit side-by-side with retention.
12. INTERSECTIONALITY	Stakeholders highlighted the value of direct engagement with communities most impacted by, or presenting above-average rates of, child poverty. This included consideration of groups at higher risk of poverty, including but not exclusive to:

	▪ Families with young children; ▪ Disabled people and households; ▪ Young carers and care experienced children and young people; ▪ Minority-ethnic headed households; ▪ Individuals experiencing generational poverty, and; ▪ Neets.

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Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG) Act Impact Assessment

1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Proposal Name	**CCR Child Poverty Strategy**
Department	Policy, Impact and Partnerships
Service Director	Colan Mehaffey
Officer(s) Completing WLIA	Osian Elis, Policy and Impact Lead Leanna Davies, Senior Policy Analyst
Date Assessment Finalised	17/04/26
Version Control	V.1.

Policy / Strategy Description (key aims): Growing up well in Cardiff Capital Region: A Children's Well-being Strategy CCR's aim is for every child, young person and family in Southeast Wales to be supported to live well, thrive and achieve their full potential, regardless of their background or where they live.	
Section 1	**Complete the table below to assess how well you've applied the 5 ways of working.**
Long-term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs	**1. How does your Policy / Strategy balance short-term need with the long-term and planning for the future?**
	The Strategy balances action to increase household incomes with longer-term planning to break intergenerational cycles of poverty. It prioritises access to good quality employment, fair wages and secure contracts, alongside affordable upskilling and reskilling opportunities in future-proof sectors. By improving income security now, while supporting progression into sustainable employment, the Strategy helps families meet present needs and build resilience for the future.
Prevention How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives	**2. How does your Policy / Strategy put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse?**
	There is a strong emphasis on preventing poverty-related problems from arising or worsening. Investment criteria will be used to promote fair work and better employment practices, reducing the risk of in-work poverty. Targeted support for transport as part of the Regional Transport Plan, skills development and access to opportunity helps prevent exclusion from employment, education and services, particularly for communities experiencing the highest levels of deprivation.
Integration Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies	**3. How does your Policy / Strategy deliver economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes together?**
	The focus of the Strategy is on the economic circumstances of the poverty. This is where CCR can make a unique regional contribution to tackling poverty, in addition to the work already underway by other public bodies and partners across the region in other policy areas. This means applying a child poverty lens to the unique levers and functions available to CCR, namely its three statutory duties of Economic Well-being, Regional Transport Planning and Strategic Spatial Planning. Its purpose is to further economic well-being and drive conditions for shared prosperity. Doing so will have positive indirect effects on other policy areas, including social and cultural participation. By improving the accessibility and affordability of transport, and increasing household

	income, this will better allow households and children to partake in social, community and cultural activities that they might not otherwise be able to afford or access.
Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body meet its well-being objectives	**4. How does your Policy / Strategy involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?**
	Delivery of the Strategy is based on close collaboration across CCR teams and with external partners. Internal programmes, projects, and investments are aligned to maximise benefits for communities experiencing deprivation. The Strategy is further shaped through active partnership with local authorities as part of the CJC structure, to identify areas facing persistent challenges and to coordinate targeted, place-based responses.
Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves	**5. How does your Policy / Strategy involve stakeholders with an interest in achieving the well-being goals? How do these stakeholders reflect the diversity of the area?**
	A broad range of stakeholders have contributed to the development of the Strategy to ensure it reflects the diversity and needs of the region. Engagement has included partners from social services, children and family services, economic development, further education and Public Services Boards, alongside third sector organisations working directly with children, young people and families at a community level. This collaborative approach ensures the Strategy is informed by delivery professional expertise and a strong understanding of regional circumstances. To capture lived experience, CCR engaged directly with six youth clubs across the region. CCR did not enquire about child poverty specifically, but asked young people what they would like see change in their communities, what makes them happy, their needs and wants, and what a good future would mean to them.

Section 2	Assess how well your Policy / Strategy will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals	
Description of the well-being goals	**How will your Policy / Strategy deliver benefits to our communities (the Region) under the national well-being goals?**	**Is there any way to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to national well-being goals)?**
A Prosperous Wales An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	The Strategy supports inclusive and sustainable economic growth by promoting fair work, security and flexibility, and progression pathways that deliver long-term productivity gains. Investment in skills, upskilling and reskilling is targeted towards future-focused sectors, supporting a skilled workforce that is resilient to economic and environmental change. By improving access to good quality employment while encouraging more sustainable working practices, including accessible and affordable transport, the Strategy contributes to increased household income, workforce productivity and the transition to a greener, more sustainable regional economy.	Aligning delivery with regional growth, skills and employability programmes and prioritising future-focused sectors will help maximise long-term economic benefits.
A Resilient Wales A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the	By addressing economic insecurity and improving access to essential services, the Strategy strengthens individual and community resilience. Investment in affordable transport also supports more sustainable travel choices.	Alignment with climate and transport strategies will strengthen resilience and ensure positive environmental outcomes are maximised.

capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).		
A Healthier Wales A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.	Reducing child poverty supports improved physical and mental health outcomes by reducing financial stress and improving access to education, employment and support services, which are key social determinants of health.	Application of Health Impact Assessments in 2027.
A More Equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).	The Strategy directly addresses socio-economic inequality by targeting resources towards families and communities experiencing disadvantage, supporting fairer access to opportunity and improved life chances.	Ongoing use of deprivation data and equality monitoring will help ensure resources are targeted effectively and inequalities are reduced. *See Equalities and Socio-economic Duty Impact Assessments for more details.*
A Wales of Cohesive Communities Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.	Improved access to transport, skills, education and employment supports stronger, more connected and inclusive communities and encourages participation in local economic and social life.	Place-based delivery and partnership working could further strengthen cohesion and responsiveness to local need.

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.	Reducing financial barriers could support participation in education, culture, and community life, including Welsh-medium education and cultural activities. Increasing pay helps to support people to access and afford Welsh language or bilingual spaces, as well as cultural events and opportunities.	*See Welsh-language Impact Assessment for more information.*
A Globally Responsible Wales A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.	The Strategy supports a globally responsible approach by addressing child poverty through sustainable, preventative action that reduces long-term social, economic and environmental costs. By promoting fair work, supporting sustainable travel choices through more accessible public transport, and encouraging access to skills programmes aligned with future-focused sectors, the Strategy helps foster behaviours that support economic and environmental sustainability.	Embedding considerations of environmental sustainability and responsible investment will further strengthen alignment with global well-being objectives.

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Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)

GUIDANCE

Welsh Language Impact Assessments enable Cardiff Capital Region to assess the impact of its decisions on the Welsh language. They are required under the Policy Making Standards (Standards 84-97) set out in the Compliance Notice issued to CCR on 24 April 2024 by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

These Standards fall under the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015, to which CCR is subject under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. It requires CCR officers preparing WLIAs to consider:

a) What effects, if any (and whether positive or negative), the policy decision would have on –	i) Opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and/or;
b) How the decision might be made so that it would have positive or increased positive effects on –	ii) Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.
c) How the decision might be made so that it does not have adverse effects on, or so that the decision has decreased adverse effects on –	

It is a legal requirement to make an evidenced conscientious effort to identify the effects of a policy decision on the Welsh language and Welsh speakers. The Commissioner has communicated that any kind of tick-box exercise based on minimum effort, unevidenced impact assessments, and/or assessments only identifying negative effects will be insufficient. This means:

- Considering the impact of the policy decision on the Welsh language, on opportunities to use the Welsh language, and Welsh speakers, in South East Wales, both now and in the future;
- Identifying positive and negative impacts, both direct and indirect, and;
- **Considering how to promote positive impacts and mitigate adverse impacts.**

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1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Proposal Name	**CCR Child Poverty Strategy**
Department	Policy, Impact and Partnerships
Service Director	Colan Mehaffey
Officer(s) Completing WLIA	Osian Elis, Policy and Impact Lead Dafydd Sedgwick, Policy and Project Support Officer
Date Assessment Finalised	17/04/26
Version Control	V.3.
Please outline who this proposal affects? (e.g., Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)	The purpose of the Strategy is to contribute to the reduction of poverty in South East Wales. The proposal is therefore likely to impact persons that fall within this deprivation category.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

Under the Child Poverty Strategy (Corporate Joint Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2021, Corporate Joint Committees are subject to the Child and Families (Wales) Measure 2010. This requires CCR to prepare and publish a Child Poverty Strategy with objectives that relate to the 13 *Broad Aims* of the legislation, namely:

- To increase income for households with one or more children to ensure that, so far as reasonably practicable, no households are below 60% of the median UK income;
- To ensure that, so far as reasonably practicable, children in households with incomes below 70% of median UK income are not materially deprived;

- To promote and facilitate paid employment for parents and children;
- To provides parents of children with the skills necessary for paid employment;
- To reduce inequalities in educational attainment between children;
- To support parenting of children;
- To reduce health inequalities between children and parents of children;
- To ensure that all children grow up in decent housing;
- To ensure that all children grow in safe and cohesive communities;
- To reduce inequalities in participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities between children and between parents of children;
- To help young persons participate effectively in education and training;
- To help young persons take advantage of opportunities for employment, and;
- To help young persons participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities.

The approach taken by CCR for tackling child poverty considers the powers and functions available to the CJC, recognising both what it *can* and *cannot* do, and focussing on the ways in which CCR can add unique value regionally. This means focussing on, and applying a child policy lens to, CCR's core economic development remit, namely the three statutory duties of Economic Well-being, Regional Transport and Spatial Planning. The economic circumstances of poverty are central to the Strategy given the economic development remit of CCR, namely the causes and consequences of child poverty that can be linked to the economy. These include:

- **In-work poverty and low pay:** 72% of children in poverty live in households with at least one adult in paid word.
- **Economic inactivity and unemployment:** Although in-work poverty represents the greatest share of all children in poverty, above-average rates of child poverty are found in households with economically inactive or unemployed adults.
- **Insecure work.**
- **Low relative skills profile** of adults, children and young people in poverty.
- **Low mobility and connectivity,** especially in terms of transport.

This means continuing to address the relative under-performance of the South East Wales economy, creating more wealth and opportunities whilst ensuring more equitable access and inclusive development. It recognises the multi-facedness of poverty, how

it impacts on health, education etc., but focuses on the economic determinants of poverty where CCR is best situated to impact in terms of the powers within its control.

The Strategy identifies the following vision: *"A South East Wales where every child, young person and family is supported to live well, get on in life and achieve their full potential, regardless of their background or where they live."* This is supported by three priority areas, each accompanied by a suite of actions:

- **Good Work, Good Pay:** Creating good, inclusive jobs and maximising incomes.
- **Access to Opportunity:** Creating pathways out of poverty for children, young people and parents.
- **Conditions for Shared Prosperity:** Strengthening the regional economy and maximising social impact.

3. INFORMATION GATHERING

What are the aims of the policy and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?	The aims of the Strategy do not relate directly to the Welsh Language, but consequences of activities relating to each aim may indirectly impact the use of the Welsh language.
Who will benefit? Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? **If so, list them here.**	Children, young people and households; people in poverty; businesses and industry.
Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned	The following analysis outlines the linguistic profile of South East Wales, the CJC region covered by Cardiff Capital Region. Using 2011 and 2021 Census data, it analyses the following characteristics: ▪ The spatial distribution of Welsh speakers (i.e., gross numbers and percentages) and key trends between 2011 and 2021;

	▪ The age profile of Welsh speakers; ▪ Language use and continuity by age; ▪ The distribution of Welsh speakers by socio-economic classification (NS-SEC), and; ▪ The distribution of Welsh speakers by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). These characteristics have been identified as most relevant given their link to age, child poverty and associated inequalities, and their direct relevance to CCR's core functions over economic development. **Spatial Distribution of Welsh Speakers in South East Wales & Key Trends** According to the 2021 Census, 17.8% of people aged 3 and over could speak Welsh, a decrease from 19.0% in 2011. Across the ten LA areas of South East Wales, the proportion was lower still at 10.3% in 2021, down slightly from 10.6% in 2011. However, despite the decline in the proportion of Welsh speakers, the total number of Welsh speakers in South East Wales increased from 150,792 in 2011 to 152,863 in 2021, an increase of 2,071 people. South East Wales was the only region in Wales to record an overall increase in the number of Welsh speakers during this period, with Wales reporting fewer Welsh speakers in terms of gross numbers also. Welsh speakers in South East Wales accounted for 28.4% of all Welsh speakers in Wales in 2021, up from 26.8% in 2011. This shift highlights the changing linguistic geography of Wales and underscores the growing relative importance of South East Wales to the future of the Welsh language, particularly as the other three CJC regions experienced a decline in their % share of all Welsh speakers in Wales over the same period. Notably, after North Wales (36.1%), South East Wales holds the second highest % share of Welsh speakers in Wales.

Table 1. *Percentage and Number of Welsh Speakers per CJC Region in 2021, and change (-/+) since 2011.*

Region	No. of Welsh Speakers in 2021	% of Welsh Speakers in 2021	Change (-/+) in the number of Welsh Speakers since 2011	Percentage Point Change (-/+) since 2011
South East Wales	**152,863**	**10.3%**	**+2,071**	**-0.22**
North Wales	194,293	29.1%	-10,113	-1.70
Mid Wales	53,046	26.5%	-5,908	-2.50
South West Wales	138,122	20.5%	-9,742	-1.80

Table 2. *Percentage Share of all Welsh Speakers in Wales per CJC Region in 2021, and change (-/+) since 2011.*

Region	% of all Welsh Speakers in Wales in 2021	Percentage Point Change (-/+) since 2011
South East Wales	**28.4%**	**+1.6**
North Wales	36.1%	-0.3
Mid Wales	9.9%	-0.6
South West Wales	25.7%	-0.7

The Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities (2025) classifies areas as having high, medium or low densities of Welsh speakers according to the following thresholds.

- **High density:** More than 40% of the population able to speak Welsh

- **Medium density:** Between 20% and 40% of the population able to speak Welsh
- **Low density:** Less than 20% able to speak Welsh.

South East Wales classifies as a low-density Welsh-speaking region, with all 10 LA areas also falling into this category. In 2021, the highest percentages of Welsh speakers in South East Wales at LA level were recorded in Rhondda Cynon Taf (12.4%) and Cardiff (12.2%), while Blaenau Gwent recorded the lowest percentage at 6.2%.

Together, Cardiff (27.9%) and Rhondda Cynon Taf (18.6%) account for almost half of all Welsh speakers in South East Wales. Moreover, Cardiff also has a higher number of Welsh speakers than the high-density Welsh-speaking county of Anglesey (Cardiff, 42,753; Anglesey, 37,416), as does Rhondda Cynon Taf with the medium-density Welsh-speaking county of Denbighshire (RCT, 28,551; Denbighshire, 20,942).

Between 2011 and 2021, South East Wales was the only region in Wales in which LA areas recorded increases in both the percentage and number of Welsh speakers.

Table 3. *Percentage and Number of Welsh Speakers per CCR LA in 2021, and change (-/+) since 2011.*

LA Area	No. of Welsh Speakers in 2021	% of Welsh Speakers in 2021	Change (-/+) in the number of Welsh Speakers since 2011	Percentage Point Change (-/+) since 2011
Cardiff	**42,753**	**12.2%**	**+6,018**	**+1.07**
Vale of Glamorgan	**14,735**	**11.5%**	**+1,546**	**+0.71**
Rhondda Cynon Taff	**28,551**	**12.4%**	**+772**	**+0.10**
Merthyr Tydfil	**5,078**	**8.9%**	**+50**	**+0.02**

Newport	11,604	7.5%	-1,398	-1.76
Blaenau Gwent	4,035	6.2%	-1,249	-1.57
Torfaen	7,362	8.2%	-1,279	-1.56
Monmouthshire	7,866	8.7%	-914	-1.23
Caerphilly	17,836	10.4%	-1,415	-0.75
Bridgend	13,043	9.2%	-60	-0.47

The concentration of increases in South East Wales again highlights the changing linguistic geography of Wales and the growing relative importance of South East Wales to the future of the Welsh language.

This trend is further evidenced by analysis at the Lower-layer Super Output (LSOA) level. While the majority of LSOAs in South East Wales experienced a decline in the proportion of Welsh speakers, 43.6% recorded an increase, the highest share among the four Welsh CJC regions and above the Wales-wide average of 33.4%.

Table 4. *Percentage Point Changes in the Percentage of Welsh Speakers at LSOA level in South East Wales between, 2011-2021.*

Percentage Point Change (-/+) between 2011 and 2021	Share of LSOAs in South East Wales
Increase of 5 or more percentage point	**1.6%**
Increase between 2 and 5 percentage points	**11.4%**
Increase between 0 and 2 percentage points	**30.9%**
Decrease of between 0 and 10 percentage points	56.1%

This includes a few LSOAs in Cardiff and Rhondda Cynon Taf that have shifted to medium-density Welsh-speaking classifications since 2001, despite accounting for a small share of LSOAs in South East Wales (2.7%). There are no high-density LSOAs in South East Wales.

Table 5. *Medium-density (>25%) LSOAs in South East Wales in 2021*

LSOA	LA Area	% of Welsh Speakers in 2021
Canton 6	**Cardiff**	**35%**
Whitchurch and Tongwynlais 1	Cardiff	31%
Canton 7	Cardiff	28%
Canton 5	Cardiff	27%
Canton 8	Cardiff	27%
Creigiau / St. Fagans 2	Cardiff	27%
Pont-y-clun 2	RCT	27%
Church Village 2	RCT	26%
Whitchurch and Tongwynlais 10	Cardiff	25%
Llantwit Fardre	RCT	25%

The analysis highlights South East Wales as increasingly central to potential future growth in both the number and percentage of Welsh speakers across Wales.

The Age Profile of Welsh Speakers in South East Wales

Census data records Welsh-language proficiency among people aged three and over. Comparison of age distributions shows that Welsh speakers in South East Wales are, on average, younger than those in Wales overall. Children aged 3 to 15 account for a substantially larger share of all Welsh speakers in South East Wales (38.1%) than nationally (29.1%). This is also true among those aged 16 to 25 (South East Wales, 18.1%; Wales, 14.6%). By contrast, Wales has a higher proportion of Welsh speakers in older age groups, particularly among adults aged 65 and older (South East Wales, 6.7%; Wales, 14.8%). This indicates that the Welsh-speaking population in South East Wales is much younger than the

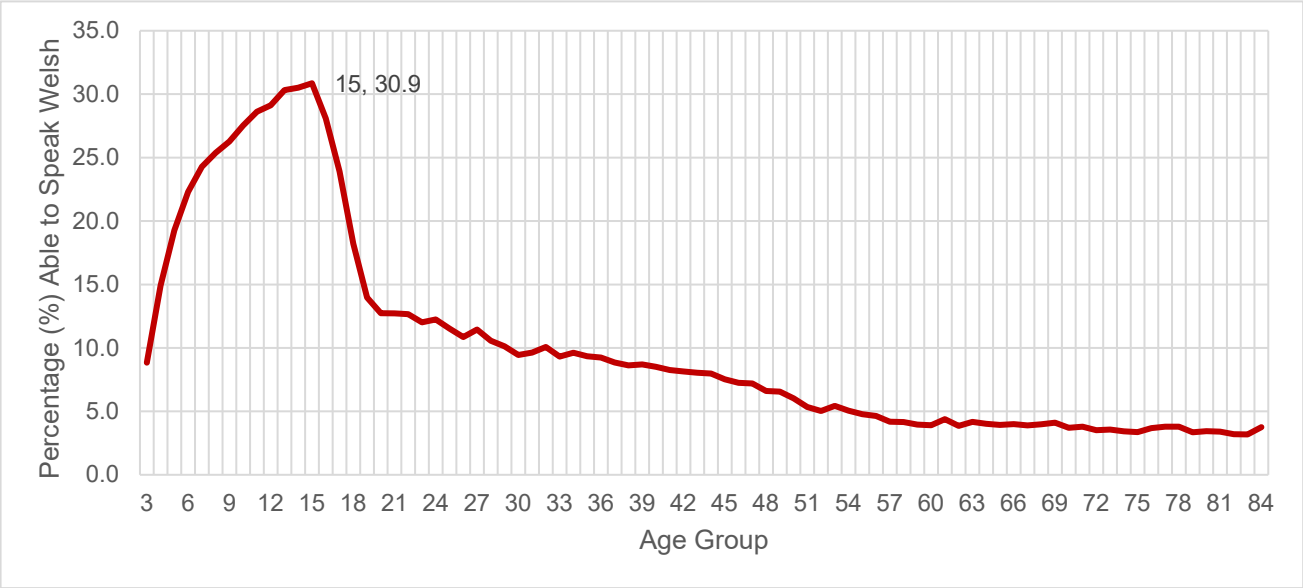
national profile, with children and young people making up a disproportionately large share of Welsh speakers in the region.

Table 6. *% Share of Total Welsh Speakers in South East Wales and Wales per Age Group in 2011.*

	3-15	16-24	25-49	50-54	65+
South East Wales	**38.1%**	**18.1%**	**28.3%**	**8.8%**	**6.7%**
Wales	29.9%	14.6%	27.2%	13.5%	14.8%
Percentage Point Difference (-/+)	8.2	3.5	1.1	-4.7	-8.1

Language Use and Continuity by Age

Figure 1. *Percentage Able to Speak Welsh by age (3 to 84) in South East Wales in 2021*

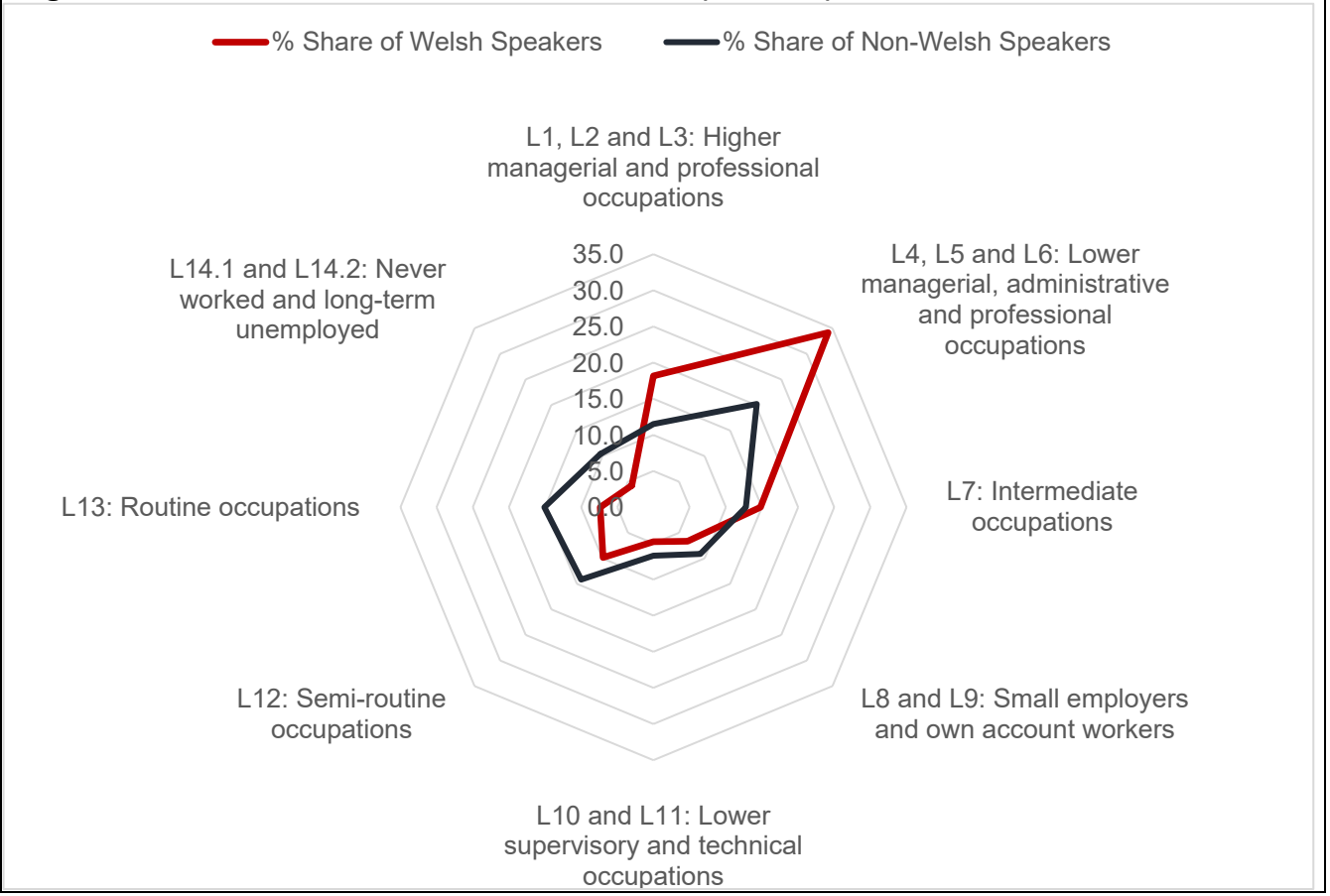


	According to the 2021 Census, the proportion of Welsh speakers in South East Wales increases steadily by single year of age from age 3 to age 15, reaching a peak among 15-year-olds, at 30.9%. After this point, the percentage declines sharply, more than halving to 12.7% by age 21 and continuing to decrease at older ages. This pattern points to a substantial loss of Welsh speakers during the move from childhood into adulthood, particularly the transition into post-school environments such as HE/FE, the workplace and wider civic life. It highlights a break in language continuity, suggesting that opportunities to use and maintain Welsh beyond school are insufficient to sustain speakers' active use of the language into adulthood. This presents a particular challenge to the resilience and vitality of the Welsh language in South East Wales, as the age profile of Welsh speakers in the region is younger than that of Wales as a whole. **The Distribution of Welsh Speakers by Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC)** The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) data groups 2021 Census respondents into classes based on occupation and employment status. This data helps assess Welsh language ability across different socio-economic backgrounds. There are 14 NS-SEC classifications, namely: ▪ L1, L2 and L3: Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations ▪ L4, L5 and L6: Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations ▪ L7: Intermediate occupations ▪ L8 and L9: Small employers and own account workers ▪ L10 and L11: Lower supervisory and technical occupations ▪ L12: Semi-routine occupations

- L13: Routine occupations
- L14.1 and L14.2: Never worked and long-term unemployed

Comparison of the distribution of Welsh and non-Welsh speakers by NS-SEC classifications shows that Welsh speakers tend to be more concentrated in higher occupational categories.

Figure 2. *Distribution of Welsh and Non-Welsh Speakers per NS-SEC Classification in 2021*



	The six highest socio-economic categories account for 52.4% of Welsh speakers in South East Wales, compared with 31.7% of non-Welsh speakers. This contrasts with high-density Welsh-speaking areas like Gwynedd and Anglesey, where non-Welsh speakers are more strongly represented in the highest socio-economic categories (Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, 2024). At the other end, only 4.2% of Welsh speakers in South East Wales have never worked or are long-term unemployed, compared with 10.4% of non-Welsh speakers. The reasons for these patterns are complex, not fully explained and have been said to require research and explanation (Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, 2024, 2026). However, lower Welsh-language ability in the lowest categories is particularly relevant to the Child Poverty Strategy. Explanations include: ▪ Children from lower-income households in Wales are less likely to attend bilingual or Welsh-medium education, shown by the fact that in South East Wales, Welsh-medium schools, on average, have lower percentages of children on free school meals (WISERD, 2017). ▪ Families experiencing poverty face greater barriers to engaging with Welsh-medium activities and community spaces due to socio-economic barriers such as travel costs and distances (Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, 2024, 2026). ▪ Being out of work or economically inactive can reduce exposure to, and opportunities to use, the Welsh language in everyday life (*ibid*., 2024, 2026). ▪ Substantially lower rates of Welsh-language transmission from parent to child in lower NS-SEC households, including in the economically inactive group (Statiaith, 2023). This suggests that people experiencing poverty and those in the lowest socio-economic classifications are less likely to learn Welsh, be exposed to it, use it regularly, retain it over the long-term, or transmit the language from parent to child. This relates to the structural

disadvantages of poverty and barriers to full social, cultural and economic participation, limiting opportunities for sustained language acquisition and use over the life course, from childhood through to adulthood.

The Distribution of Welsh Speakers by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)

In the 2021 Census, people in employment were classified by industry using the UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities (SIC). This classification records the main economic activity of the organisation or business in which a person is employed, and is presented at a high level through 18 broad industry categories.

Table 7. *Distribution of Welsh and Non-Welsh Speakers in Southeast Wales by Industrial Classification*

Industry	% of Welsh Speakers	% of Non-Welsh Speakers	% Point Difference (-/+)
P. Education	**19.47**	**8.71**	**10.75**
O. Public administration and defence; social security	**12.51**	**9.30**	**3.21**
J. Information and communication	**4.81**	**3.18**	**1.64**
R., S., T., U. Other	**5.46**	**3.94**	**1.52**
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	**5.63**	**4.79**	**0.85**
B. Mining and quarrying	0.07	0.13	-0.05
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.66	0.76	-0.10
E. Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.91	1.07	-0.16

A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.29	0.47	-0.18
K. Financial and insurance activities	3.46	3.72	-0.26
L. Real estate activities	1.17	1.44	-0.27
I. Accommodation and food service activities	4.23	4.68	-0.45
Q. Human health and social work activities	15.71	17.01	-1.30
N. Administrative and support service activities	2.69	4.42	-1.72
H. Transport and storage	2.14	4.16	-2.02
F. Construction	5.66	8.55	-2.90
C. Manufacturing	5.09	9.10	-4.00
G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10.04	14.57	-4.53

While Welsh speakers in South East Wales show concentration within a narrow range of industries, non-Welsh speakers are more evenly spread across the economy as a whole. Welsh speakers are significantly under-represented in large parts of the private sector, e.g., services, transport, construction, manufacturing, wholesale and retail. As these industries account for a significant share of regional employment, Welsh is likely to be less visible, spoken and heard across the given parts of the economy, reducing spaces that can otherwise support language interaction – the workplace, business dealings with customers and professional networks.

While industries with higher concentrations of Welsh speakers are more likely to support sustained language use, other parts of the economy where Welsh speakers are under-represented are likely to make exposure to Welsh and retained use of the language difficult, particularly for young people transitioning from education to work.

Other Relevant Policies and Research	Other relevant local, regional and national strategies, policies and research relating to the Welsh language include: Local – ▪ Blaenau Gwent, Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27. ▪ Merthyr Tydfil, Welsh Language Strategy 2022-27. ▪ Rhondda Cynon Taf, Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27. ▪ Cardiff, Bilingual Cardiff Strategy 2022-27 ▪ Vale of Glamorgan, Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022-27. ▪ Bridgend, Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021-26. ▪ Newport, Welsh Language 5-year Promotion Strategy 2022-27. ▪ Caerphilly, Five-year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-27 ▪ Torfaen, Welsh Language Strategy (2024-29). ▪ Monmouthshire, Five-year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-27. Regional – ▪ CCR, Compliance Notice by the Welsh Language Commissioner. National – ▪ Welsh Government, Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers. ▪ Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. ▪ The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025. ▪ Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, The Report of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities on Communities with a Higher Density of Welsh Speakers (2024); The Report of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities on Communities with a Medium or Lower Density of Welsh Speakers (2026).

	▪ Welsh Language Commissioner, Our Time to Act: 5-year Report on the Position of the Welsh Language.

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO USE WELSH

Impact – Positive, Negative or Neutral	Describe why it will have a positive, negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language,	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts and/or better contribute to positive impacts?
Addressing poverty-related barriers to using Welsh and accessing Welsh-language or bilingual spaces and activities.			
POSITIVE *Children and families in poverty.*	The Welsh Government *Cymraeg 2050* strategy identifies socio-economic inequality as a significant barrier to increasing the number of people able to speak and use Welsh. It emphasises the importance of ensuring fair and equitable access to Welsh-language opportunities for all communities. The CCR Child Poverty Strategy will help address these poverty-related barriers indirectly, particularly those	With one-third of children in South East Wales living in poverty, and a further 25% of working-age adults with children also experiencing poverty, a substantial proportion of the population faces additional socio-economic barriers to using Welsh and maintaining language use. This presents a particular challenge for the Welsh language in South East Wales, given the young relative age	See below, pp. 19-21.

	linked to low household income and limited connectivity. By working to increase pay through the Real Living Wage and other mechanisms, creating new pathways into work and better employment, and improving transport through the CCR Regional Transport Plan, the Strategy helps remove many of the structural obstacles that prevent people experiencing poverty from fully accessing Welsh-language or bilingual spaces. These improvements will make it easier for individuals and families to access Welsh-medium or bilingual education, and engage in community life and cultural events where Welsh can be seen and heard, allowing for greater use of, and exposure to, the Welsh language. It has the potential to *indirectly* impact the following areas positively: ▪ The use of Welsh; ▪ The number and percentages of Welsh speakers;	profile of Welsh speakers in the region (see above, pp. 9–11). In the lowest socio-economic categories (NS-SEC), people are less likely to learn Welsh, be exposed to it, use it regularly, retain it over the long-term, or transmit the language from parent to child. This relates to the structural disadvantages of poverty and barriers to full social, cultural and economic participation, limiting opportunities for sustained language acquisition and use over the life course. Low pay and limited mobility are key contributing factors, and they help explain the following patterns (See above, p. 13): ▪ Children from lower-income households in Wales are less likely to attend bilingual or Welsh-medium education. ▪ Families experiencing poverty face greater barriers to engaging with Welsh-medium activities and community spaces.	

	▪ Fluency and confidence of Welsh speakers and learners; ▪ Transmission of Welsh at home / from one generation to the next, and; ▪ Promoting the Welsh language in everyday life and its status.	▪ Being out of work or economically inactive can reduce exposure to, and opportunities to use, the Welsh language in everyday life. ▪ Substantially lower rates of Welsh-language transmission from parent to child in lower NS-SEC households.	
Welsh Language Use and Visibility across the Economy			
NEUTRAL *Young people, parents and others recruited to new jobs; businesses and investees; workers and customers.*	As a public investment body for the South East Wales region, CCR has a core role in supporting economic and business growth across a wide range of sectors. Through these activities, new jobs and economic opportunities are created. These jobs are created within industries that have established linguistic profiles, with levels of Welsh use and visibility varying between sectors and locations. In practice, new jobs and opportunities are therefore likely to broadly reflect the prevailing language profile of the industry or locality in which they are	Linguistic profiles vary across the South East Wales region (see above, pp. 7-9) and between industries (see above, pp. 14-15), with some areas and sectors having higher or lower shares of Welsh speakers. This means that different parts of the economy present varying opportunities to use Welsh. This is particularly relevant in the context of child poverty. People who experience poverty are more likely to face barriers using Welsh, and evidence indicates that Welsh language retention declines for young people in the region as they	Given the potential indirect impacts which may be positive or negative, consideration must be given to ensure that positive effects are maximised. CCR will develop the following mechanisms in addition to the Child Poverty Strategy to maximise positive effects on the Welsh language within the economy. **A.) CCR WELSH LANGUAGE GRANTS POLICY.** CCR is required, under Standard 94 of the Compliance Notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner, to have a Welsh Language Grants Policy. This

	based. As a result, the overall impact can be considered neutral, although expansion within industries that have either above- or below-average use and visibility of Welsh may have differing effects on opportunities to use Welsh, e.g., in the workplace or in customer-facing contexts. Local and national strategies identify the significance of workplaces for sustaining language use, e.g., *Cymraeg 2050*. Given the potential indirect impacts which may be positive or negative, consideration must be given to the ways in which positive effects on Welsh can be maximised through investments. In particular, the link between Welsh, investments and new jobs has the potential to impact: ▪ The use of Welsh in the work-place, and; ▪ The status of Welsh, as language use and visibility within business and economic spaces can increase positive attitudes	transition from education into employment. It means that new jobs created by CCR can impact language use.	policy will require organisations receiving grant funding to consider and describe the potential impact of the grant on the Welsh language. CCR will assess this impact as part of its grant decision-making and monitoring processes. Where appropriate and proportionate, this may inform grant conditions or expectations designed to support or strengthen the use and visibility of Welsh within funded organisations or activities. **B.) CCR RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT POLICY.** The CCR Responsible Investment Policy is used to screen and guide investment decisions to maximise positive social outcomes and long-term sustainability. CCR will review this policy to incorporate consideration of the Welsh language to operationalise within the existing decision-making framework the statutory Grants

	towards the language (i.e., diglossia).		Policy. This will support a more consistent approach to recognising opportunities to strengthen the use and visibility of Welsh across CCR-supported investments, where relevant and appropriate, while remaining proportionate to the nature and scale of each investment.
4.2. TREATING WELSH NO LESS FAVOURABLY THAN ENGLISH			
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards			
POSITIVE	The Welsh Language Standards are intended to ensure that public bodies do not treat the Welsh language any less favourably than English. In line with these requirements, the Strategy will be made available in both Welsh and English, and any programmes delivered by CCR as a result of the Strategy will provide Welsh-language services that are equivalent in quality, availability and accessibility to those provided in English, for any Welsh speaker who		See above, pp. 19-21, especially the new CCR Welsh Language Grants Policy.

	wishes to access the service in Welsh.		

5. STRENGTHENING THE PROPOSAL

What will CCR do?	By when?	By whom?
A.) **CREATE A WELSH LANGUAGE GRANTS POLICY.** CCR is required, under Standard 94 of the Compliance Notice issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner, to have a Welsh Language Grants Policy. This policy will require organisations receiving grant funding to consider and describe the potential impact of the grant on the Welsh language. CCR will assess this impact as part of its grant decision-making and monitoring processes. Where appropriate and proportionate, this may inform grant conditions or expectations designed to support or strengthen the use and visibility of Welsh within funded organisations or activities.	**2026-27 FY.**	Policy and Impact Team, Legal Services.
B.) **REVIEW CCR RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT POLICY.** The CCR Responsible Investment Policy is used to screen and guide investment decisions to maximise positive social outcomes	**2026-27 FY.**	Policy and Impact Team, Legal Services.

and long-term sustainability. CCR will review this policy to incorporate consideration of the Welsh language to operationalise within the existing decision-making framework the statutory Grants Policy. This will support a more consistent approach to recognising opportunities to strengthen the use and visibility of Welsh across CCR-supported investments, where relevant and appropriate, while remaining proportionate to the nature and scale of each investment.		

Prifddinas Ranbarth Caerdydd | Cardiff Capital Region

Equality Impact Assessment Form Including Socio-Economic Duty

1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Proposal Name	**CCR Child Poverty Strategy**
Department	Policy, Impact and Partnerships
Service Director	Colan Mehaffey
Officer(s) Completing WLIA	Osian Elis, Policy and Impact Lead Leanna Davies, Senior Policy Analyst
Date Assessment Finalised	30/04/2026
Version Control	V.1.

Prifddinas Ranbarth Caerdydd | Cardiff Capital Region

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) template

Cardiff Capital Region are committed to ensuring equality in all their activities, whether internal, or via external stakeholders. As per the Public Sector Equality Duty, Cardiff Capital Region shall have due regard to:

- eliminate **unlawful discrimination.**
- **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
- foster or **encourage good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

An equality impact assessment must be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support CCR in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a *More Equal Wales* within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The following form is to be used to ensure our policies, practices, events and decision making (henceforth termed 'activities') are fair and do not disadvantage or present a barrier to participation for any groups or individuals with protected characteristics (as defined under the Equality Act 2010).

An EIA should be conducted whenever:

- The need for a new policy or practice is identified.
- An existing policy or practice is reviewed.
- Organisational change is being considered.
- Any new or changing activity is being considered.
- Service delivery is being developed or changed.
- Services are being procured.
- Projects are being developed.

Prifddinas Ranbarth Caerdydd | Cardiff Capital Region

1) General information (to be completed by the activity owner)

Question	Response
1. Name of the activity being assessed	Child Poverty Strategy
2. Summary of the aims and objectives of the activity being assessed	CCR's aim is for every child, young person and family in Southeast Wales to live in an economy that supports them to live well, thrive and achieve their full potential, regardless of their background or where they live.
3. Has there been any consultation with relevant groups or stakeholders during the design of the activity?	Yes
4. What stakeholders are affected by the activity?	None

2) Impact on specific protected characteristics (to be completed by the activity owner)

Protected characteristic	Describe any positive impacts the activity may have on the listed characteristic.	Describe any negative impacts the activity may have on the listed characteristic.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?	What evidence has been used to support this?
Age	Supporting NEETs and encouraging people of all ages into education and training improves access to	No direct negative impacts identified.	Ongoing promotion of age-inclusive training opportunities, alongside fair pay and stable contracts to maximise positive outcomes for all age groups.	ONS data identifies that young people aged 16–24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) face significantly poorer long-term employment and income

	employment, income and career progression for both younger and older people.			outcomes. JRF evidence shows that people in employment—particularly full-time employment—are less likely to experience poverty, and that improving access to education, training and skills development supports improved outcomes across age groups, including older workers seeking to upskill or change careers. **References** Office for National Statistics (ONS), Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), UK (2024–2025). Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), UK - Office for National Statistics Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. https://www.jrf.org.uk/poverty-in-wales-2025
Disability	The strategy supports improved access to opportunity, alongside commitments to more affordable and	No direct negative impacts identified.	Continued emphasis on accessible transport, inclusive employment practices and fair investment conditions will help ensure disabled people are able	JRF evidence shows that disabled people face higher poverty rates than non-disabled people, with 37% of disabled children in Wales

	accessible transport and inclusive workplace terms and conditions. This benefits disabled people by improving access to opportunities and reducing barriers.		to fully benefit from the opportunities created.	living in poverty compared to 31% of non-disabled children. ONS labour market data highlights the importance of accessible employment, skills development and transport in improving outcomes for disabled people. **References:** Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. Office for National Statistics, Labour Force Survey (2022-23) https://www.ons.gov.uk/surveys/informationforhouseholdsandsurveyrespondents/householdandindividualsurveys/labourforcesurvey
Gender reassignment	Fair employment practices, access to training and good-quality jobs with stable contracts and fair pay support improved economic outcomes and inclusion for transgender and gender-diverse people.	No direct negative impacts identified.	Encouraging inclusive employer policies and fair working practices as part of investment and employment expectations.	JRF and ONS analysis indicates that inclusive access to secure and fairly paid employment reduces poverty risks for marginalised groups, supporting the importance of inclusive labour market participation. **References:** Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK Poverty 2024 and Poverty in Wales 2025. https://www.jrf.org.uk/poverty-in-wales-2025

				https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2024 Office for National Statistics, Labour Market Statistics. https://www.ons.gov.uk/surveys/informationforhouseholdsandsurveyrespondents/householdandindividualsurveys/labourforcesurvey
Marriage or civil partnership	Stable jobs, fair pay, reduced living costs and improved access to opportunities support household financial security for all people, including those who are married or in civil partnerships.	No direct negative impacts identified.	Promoting equitable opportunities for all, ensuring fair access to opportunities and employment.	JRF and DWP analysis shows that poverty is driven primarily by employment status, pay levels and housing costs rather than marital or partnership status. Stable employment and adequate income reduce poverty risks across household types, including couples and families. **References:** Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. https://www.jrf.org.uk/poverty-in-wales-2025 Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/households-below-average-income-hbai--2

				https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics
Pregnancy or maternity	The strategy promotes fair investment conditions, including good maternity policies, parental leave and flexible working, supporting parents to remain in or return to employment and progress in their careers.	No direct negative impacts identified.	Continued encouragement of family-friendly employment policies and working arrangements. Ensuring opportunities are accessible during this period of time as well.	Bevan Foundation and JRF evidence shows that families with young children, particularly those with children aged 0-4, experience the highest poverty rates in Wales. Low maternity pay, reduced working hours and childcare costs are identified as key drivers. EHRC research shows that poor maternity practices negatively affect employment retention, reinforcing the importance of fair maternity, parental leave and flexible working policies. **References:** Bevan Foundation, Ending Poverty in Early Years. https://www.bevanfoundation.org/resources/poverty-early-years/ Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. https://www.jrf.org.uk/poverty-in-wales-2025

				Equality and Human Rights Commission 2018 Pregnancy and maternity discrimination research findings. https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/business/pregnancy-and-maternity-discrimination-research-findings
Race	Improved access to education, reskilling, training, transport and fair employment supports better outcomes and income for people from ethnic minority backgrounds, helping to reduce inequalities.	No direct negative impacts identified.	Promotion of fair pay, encouraging real living wage adoption, stable contracts and accessible opportunities across all communities.	JRF evidence shows that 47% of ethnic minority-headed households in Wales are in poverty, compared to 22% of white-headed households, with higher rates of deep poverty. IPPR analysis highlights persistent ethnic inequalities in income and employment, indicating that improved access to skills, fair employment and transport can help reduce disparities. **References:** Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. https://www.jrf.org.uk/poverty-in-wales-2025 Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), Child Poverty and Devolution in North East England

				Child poverty and devolution in North East England | IPPR
Religion and belief	Better transport and stronger community connectivity support access to employment, education and community, cultural and faith-based activities.	No direct negative impacts identified.	Investment in affordable, accessible transport and community-based opportunities that enable participation for all.	Evidence from JRF and Bevan Foundation research highlights that accessible transport and community connectivity are key enablers of participation in employment, education and community activities, supporting social inclusion across diverse communities. **References:** Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK Poverty 2024. Bevan Foundation, Ending Poverty in Early Years
Sex	Fair pay, stable contracts, flexible working, parental leave and reduced living costs support equality and improve outcomes for working families.	No direct negative impacts identified.	Encouraging employers to adopt real living wage, stable employment and family-friendly policies to sustain positive impacts.	JRF and Bevan Foundation analysis shows that women are more likely to experience low pay, part-time work and poverty, particularly when caring responsibilities are present. Evidence highlights that fair pay, stable contracts, flexible working and parental leave are essential in improving outcomes for women and reducing child poverty. **References:**

				Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. Bevan Foundation, Ending Poverty in Early Years. Office for National Statistics, employment and earnings data. Labour market overview, UK - Office for National Statistics
Sexual Orientation	Inclusive access to education, training, employment and community opportunities supports improved economic security and wellbeing for LGBTQ+ people.	No direct negative impacts identified.	Promotion of inclusive employment practices, inclusive access to community, encouraging awareness and good practice among employers.	National labour market analysis indicates that secure employment, fair pay and inclusive workplace practices are central to reducing economic disadvantage. JRF analysis emphasises the importance of inclusive labour markets in improving income security and wellbeing across communities. **References:** Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK Poverty 2024. Office for National Statistics, labour market participation and earnings analysis. Labour market overview, UK - Office for National Statistics

3) Evaluation (to be completed by the activity owner)

Question	Justification
Will the proposed activity have a negative impact, discriminate, or cause unfair disadvantage? In your opinion have actions been proposed to will adequately mitigate the impacts?	The Strategy is not expected to have a negative impact, to discriminate, or to cause unfair disadvantage. Its primary purpose is to address and remove barriers, improve access to opportunities, and support people from all backgrounds and communities to access fair work, increase income, and improve living standards. The actions set out within the Strategy are designed to promote equality, enable access to education, training and employment, and help alleviate living costs, and are therefore considered sufficient to mitigate the risk of adverse impacts.

4) Socio-economic duty (Strategic decisions only)

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

• Single parents and vulnerable families • Pensioners • Looked-after children • Homeless people • Students • Single adult households	• People living in the most deprived areas in Wales • People with low literacy and numeracy • People who have experienced the asylum system • People misusing substances • People of all ages leaving a care setting • People involved in the criminal justice system

Socio-economic disadvantage	**Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?**	**Provide detail of the impact**	**What evidence has been used to support this?**
Low-income / Income Poverty *(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)*	Positive	The Strategy aims to increase incomes by encouraging investors and employers to offer the real Living Wage, supporting people to develop skills that allow them access to better job opportunities or to progress in current roles, and creating high-growth, higher paid jobs. Improved access to affordable transport further supports people in low-income	Evidence shows that people in employment, particularly in stable, well-paid jobs, are less likely to experience poverty. Low pay and insecure work are identified as key drivers of income poverty, while transport costs act as a barrier to sustaining employment. Improving access to affordable transport, upskilling/re-skilling opportunities, stable working contracts and encouraging the real

		households to access and sustain employment, helping to reduce income poverty.	living wage will all be contributing factors to addressing income poverty. **References** Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. DWP, Households Below Average Income
Low and / or No Wealth *(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)*	Positive	By supporting access to better paid, more secure and future-proof jobs, the Strategy helps individuals increase earnings over time, improving economic wellbeing and the ability to build financial resilience. This supports those with little or no wealth and helps reduce financial vulnerability. The Strategy seeks to create wealth that is more widely felt and accessible.	Evidence shows that households in low-paid or insecure employment are less able to build savings or financial resilience, increasing vulnerability to shocks. By enabling fair pay, better working conditions and access to opportunities, this should support people with living costs and reduce financial vulnerability. **References** JRF, UK Poverty 2024.
Material Deprivation *(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance,*	Positive	Increased income through better wages, improved progression opportunities, and access to training and employment supports people's	Evidence demonstrates that low incomes and high living costs restrict access to essential goods, services and opportunities, with improved

repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)		ability to afford essential goods and services. Improved transport accessibility also reduces financial barriers to employment, training, and everyday activities, helping to reduce material deprivation.	wages and transport affordability identified as key mitigating factors. **References** Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. Bevan Foundation, Ending Poverty in Early Years
Area Deprivation *(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport)*	Positive	The Strategy focuses on enabling people in areas of deprivation to access better jobs, education, training, and employment opportunities. Improving transport accessibility and affordability helps address geographic barriers that often limit access to work and services in deprived or poorly connected areas.	Evidence shows that people living in deprived or poorly connected areas face reduced access to employment and services, contributing to persistent economic disadvantage. By improving connectivity and access to employment, this should reduce some of these barriers. **References** ONS, labour market and transport accessibility data Labour market overview, UK - Office for National Statistics JRF, UK Poverty 2024
Socio-economic background *(social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income)*	Positive	The Strategy aims to break down barriers to opportunity by supporting skills development, access to education and training, and progression into high-growth industries. This	Children and young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds experience poorer outcomes linked to parental education, employment and income. JRF analysis demonstrates that children from

		helps mitigate the impact of disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and supports greater social mobility.	low-income households are more likely to have lower educational attainment and reduced access to higher-paid employment later in life. **References** Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales.
Socio-economic disadvantage *(what cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)*	Positive	The Strategy seeks to support communities experiencing higher levels of poverty, unemployment, and economic inactivity. By focusing on better pay, skills development, accessible transport, and future-proof employment, it aims to break cycles of deprivation and generational poverty, creating long-term improvements in opportunity and economic wellbeing for disadvantaged groups.	Research shows that socio-economic disadvantage is often cumulative and multi-dimensional. Poverty is closely linked with other disadvantages such as disability, ethnicity, lone parenthood, caring responsibilities and insecure employment. JRF analysis demonstrates that households experiencing multiple disadvantages are more likely to experience persistent and deep poverty. Bevan Foundation research highlights that barriers including low pay, economic inactivity, childcare costs and transport accessibility reinforce each other, contributing to long-term and intergenerational poverty. Through better working practices, fair pay, access to opportunities and affordable transport, there is an ambition to break down as many

			barriers as possible to create routes out of poverty. **References** Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Poverty in Wales 2025: The essential guide to understanding child poverty in Wales. Bevan Foundation (2024), An examination of the impact of policy interventions designed to reduce poverty in Wales https://www.bevanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Modelling-report-final.pdf