



SCRUTINY REPORT

NEWPORT LIVE PARTNERSHIP

NEWPORT LIVE
CASNEWYDD FYW

Inspiring people to be happier and healthier
Ysbrydoli pobol i fod yn hapusach ac yn iachach

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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the report is to inform the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships of the history and current performance of the Non-Profit Distribution Organisation and registered charity Newport Live.

2.0 Background

2.1 When and why was Newport Live established?

Newport City Council (NCC) Cabinet took the decision in May 2014, following a review and subsequent recommendation by the Learning, Caring and Leisure Scrutiny Committee, to commence the establishment of a new Non-Profit Distributing Organisation for the delivery of the existing in-house sport and leisure facilities and sports development services. In December 2014, Cabinet also took the decision to include The Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre, and the arts development service.

Newport Live was created and registered with the Charities Commission and a Board of 11 Non-Executive Directors/Trustees selected following an external recruitment process to create a skills-based Board. Newport City Council has the right to make up a maximum of 20% of the board representation. As such, two Trustees are appointed by NCC.

A 25-year funding and management agreement was created with associated leases for buildings, together with business transfer agreements, all of which commenced on 1 April 2015. NCC's objectives were to address medium-term financial pressures and create significant financial efficiencies, whilst maintaining service provision, alongside innovative development of products and services for the city and its residents.

Newport City Council's Sport, Leisure and Theatre facility-based services and community engagement services are operated by Newport Live. Initially, the client service was within Streetscene & City Services. However, following a restructure in 2022 the client function transferred to Regeneration & Economic Development.

2.2 The four key objectives established.

- i. To provide or assist in the provision of both indoor and outdoor facilities in the interests of social welfare or recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, financial hardship, or social circumstances or to the public at large with the object of improving their conditions of life.
- ii. To promote community participation in healthy recreational services.
- iii. To provide or assist in the provision of community facilities to be available to all sections of the community without distinction, including use for meetings, lectures, and classes and / or other forms of recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for all those who use the facilities.

- iv. To promote the education of the public through the provision of facilities for performing art and / or such other charitable purposes as the Trustees in their absolute discretion may determine.

2.3 Mission, Vision and Values

Newport Live colleagues, together with the Board, established the charity's Mission, Vision and Values:

Our Mission

To be the people's first choice for sport, leisure, culture and entertainment, delivering inspirational programmes and events in high-quality facilities, with skilled and enthusiastic staff who create happier and healthier lives.

Our Vision

Inspiring People to be Happier and Healthier

Our Values

Caring – Passionate – Teamwork – Innovation – Inspiration – Inclusivity

2.4 Governance

The Non-Executive Directors / Trustees govern the organisation in accordance with Company and Charitable Law. The Trustees meet on a bi-monthly basis and in the intervening months sub-groups of the Board meet to scrutinise and strategise business operations using information from monthly management accounts, key performance indicators, business plans and reports highlighting strategic opportunities and challenges. The sub-groups cover the following areas:

- Finance and Human Resources
- Marketing and Communications
- Strategy
- Arts Advisory Panel (Advisory group to the Board)

Recent Trustee recruitment has focused upon addressing the equality and diversity of the Board. This has already had a significant benefit and supported better decision making, particularly in regards to how we improve participation and programme access for under-represented communities; helping Newport Live to improve equity to services.

The overriding strategic rationale for Newport Live is to be an exemplar partner for Newport City Council, delivering against Strategic and Wellbeing Priorities, working to achieve the charity's vision, and ensure the City Council's responsibilities under the Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) are delivered.

Newport Live interfaces and partners with Newport City Council, working with national, regional and other key stakeholders to ensure services are delivered and aligned to national strategy and best practice within the sectors in which we operate.

An Annual Trustees report has been completed for each year of operation since 2015. The reports ensure compliance with the Companies Act and Charities Commission requirements and these are available to view via the following link: [Charity overview, NEWPORT LIVE - 1162220, Register of Charities - The Charity Commission](#)

In addition to Newport City Council, the report is also shared with national and regional stakeholders and partners including Welsh Government, Sport Wales, Arts Council of Wales, Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

The facilities Newport Live are privileged to operate through the Newport City Council funding and management agreement are currently as follows:

- Newport International Sports Village
 - Geraint Thomas National Velodrome of Wales
 - Regional Swimming Pool & Newport Tennis Centre
 - Newport Stadium
- Active Living Centre
- Riverfront Theatre & Arts Centre
- Newport Centre - closed March 2023
- Station Wellbeing – opened April 2023 (temporary replacement for Newport Centre leisure services)

2.5 Pricing

Newport Live's pricing strategy balances charitable and commercial objectives and remains aligned to the Funding and Management Agreement requirements. Importantly, access to services for all and value for money remain key drivers in pricing of products and services. The policy of access for all is underpinned by a range of payment methods including a "Pay and Play" philosophy for most activities, performances, and services we provide. Furthermore, we offer a comprehensive sector leading and inclusive "concessionary" pricing which offers discounts for qualifying residents as agreed with NCC, and funding partners where national pricing policies apply including National Exercise Referral Scheme, Free Swimming and 60 plus initiatives.

2.6 Strategic Engagement

Non-Executive Directors and the Chief Executive of Newport Live regularly meet with the Cabinet Member for Community Well-being and the Regeneration and Economic Development Team to ensure that the Trust is meeting, and exceeding, expectations through positive partnerships and seeking to use leisure, physical activity, sport, arts and culture for positive outcomes linked to the Council's Corporate Plan and relevant service plans.

Newport Live attends Cabinet Member briefings and provides performance reports to meet contractual and partnership requirements and best practice.

The Chief Executive is Co-Chair of the One Newport Partnership's Newport Offer and a number of officers represent Newport Live on One Newport partnership groups; e.g. Safer Newport.

The Chief Executive is a Director for Wales of Community Leisure UK, the charity which is the trade organisation for Leisure Trusts in the UK, and chair of the Wales group, which shares and works together to improve services for public benefit, health and wellbeing improvement.

Newport Live represents the City of Newport on a number of National partnership boards and provides the intelligent link to policy with Council services in areas where service delivery has been discharged to Newport Live, examples include National Advisory Board for 60+ physical activity and the National Exercise Referral Scheme.

National relationships are maintained and managed with Sport Wales, Arts Council of Wales, Welsh Sports Association, Public Health Wales, UK Active, Community Leisure UK, Creu Cymru and a large number of national governing bodies of sport.

Regionally, Newport Live represents the city as a member of the Active Gwent partnership, working with other Leisure Trusts and Local Authorities to deliver on regional priorities and sharing best practice, reporting to Sport Wales on performance and partnership outcomes.

Newport Live delivers services and contributes positively across a number of key Newport City Council strategies including Newport's Wellbeing Plan, Participation Strategy, Organisational Climate Change Plan, Corporate Plan, Welsh Language Strategy and Strategic Equality Plan. Our work is embedded into a number of service plans including Regeneration and Economic Development, Education, Social Services, Prevention and Inclusion, Infrastructure, and delivering projects and operational services for targeted groups, communities and residents.

2.7 Risk Management

The Non-Executive Directors manage risk with Newport Live's Executive Team via review at regular Board and associated Board Sub-group meetings. Principal risks and uncertainties are identified and reviewed to ensure that timely action and procedures are taken to mitigate the risks which are identified. All risks are included in the Newport Live Corporate Risk Register.

3.0 Performance

3.1 Performance Management

The performance of the Newport Live partnership is monitored at a number of levels using various monitoring tools. This includes bimonthly reports to the Board, which contains two Newport City Council Cabinet Members, an annual audit and external

partner audits. There are also a number of layers from strategic monitoring to day-to-day monitoring, via:

Monthly Review

- Newport Live board / subgroups
- Partnership Board meetings
- Reporting to NCC Service Managers

Quarterly Review

- Reporting performance to Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
- Finance Budget Monitoring
- External partner Monitoring

3.2 Service and product specific

At a service level there are a significant number of weekly service and product level developmental meetings, this includes Swimming, Health & Fitness, Cycling, Tennis, and Theatre, Arts & Culture which include reviews, and management of service delivery and performance, including a focus on continuous improvements.

The Services delivered by Newport Live include:

- Facility management and operation
- Sport, Physical Activity & Wellbeing programmes
- Theatre, Arts & Culture Activities
- Free Swimming for 60+, Under 17's, serving Military Personnel and Veterans
- Theatre performances, including the annual Riverfront Pantomime
- Live music, Concerts & Productions
- Art Gallery & Exhibitions
- Community Sport & Arts Development Programmes
- Education Sport & Arts Development Programmes
- School Sport programmes
- Indoor, Outdoor and major sporting events
- Televised events and productions
- Disability and Inclusion programmes
- Ethnically Diverse Community Engagement programmes
- Early Years physical literacy training to nurseries, Flying Start settings, & schools
- Community Sports Development and Club Development Programmes
- Alternative Statutory Education services
- National Exercise Referral Scheme
- Positive Futures youth engagement and inclusion programmes
- One to One and Early Intervention Group Support linked to schools, multi-agency meetings, and SPACE wellbeing panel.
- Volunteer development and training programmes
- Education and learning programmes, including vocational qualifications.
- Café, bar, and food services

- Health and wellbeing activities
- Corporate parent and, carer, young carer, and respite programmes
- School holiday programmes
- Active Travel – Burns Commission Behaviour Change programme
- Event planning, delivery, and co-ordination
- Civil contingency services - emergency scenarios

3.3 Newport Live Workforce

In summary:

- Newport Live provides employment to over 450 colleagues across 720 full-time, part time contracted and casual posts.
- Newport Live pay all colleagues at least the Living Wage Foundation wage of £10.90 per hour.
- Newport Live has budgeted to spend £5.8 million on salaries during 2023/2024, this has risen £1.9 million from £3.9 million in 2015/2016.
- Newport Live supports the continuing professional development of its staff by delivering internal and external training sessions throughout the year.

There have been recruitment challenges in several areas of the business including, but not limited to Recreation Assistants, Swimming Teachers, Food & Beverage Assistants, Riverfront Theatre Café & Bar Manager. Covid 19 had a major impact on these sectors and roles. We saw many colleagues leave Newport Live citing better rates of pay, terms and conditions and also a number of students returning to and concentrating on their studies. Recruitment is more stable now and Newport Live continues to maintain excellent terms and conditions aligned to those of Newport City Council, including being a Real Living Wage employer and continuing to provide access for colleagues to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Volunteer Activities:

- Newport Live provides local volunteering opportunities and training courses for people of all ages, connecting schools, colleges, local people, and Council Services such as the Newport Youth Academy, to the volunteering pathway. Gaining vital experience alongside our development professionals at events, in communities or at our facilities, supports development and progression towards employment. We have trained primary school peer mentors, secondary school ambassadors, young adults from ethnically diverse communities, and retired steelworkers in recent months.

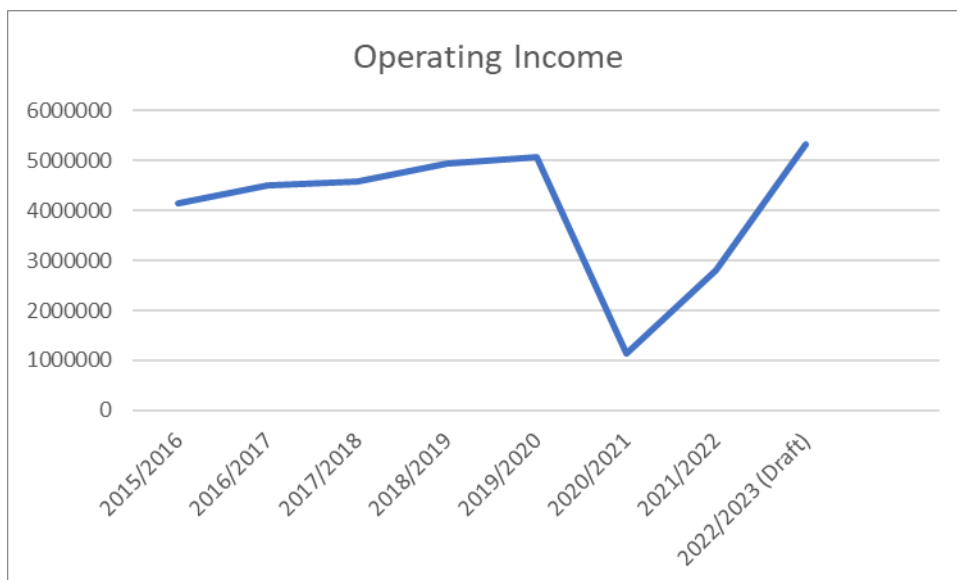
- Newport Live has developed and continues to provide a Young Ambassador Programme in schools across the city, these programmes offer young people the opportunity to complete key training opportunities which also counts towards their Welsh Bacalaureate Qualification.

3.4 Financial Performance

Newport Live was established in 2015 and started with no financial reserves. The management fee received from Newport City Council was paid in advance and grant payments received in accordance with payment schedules.

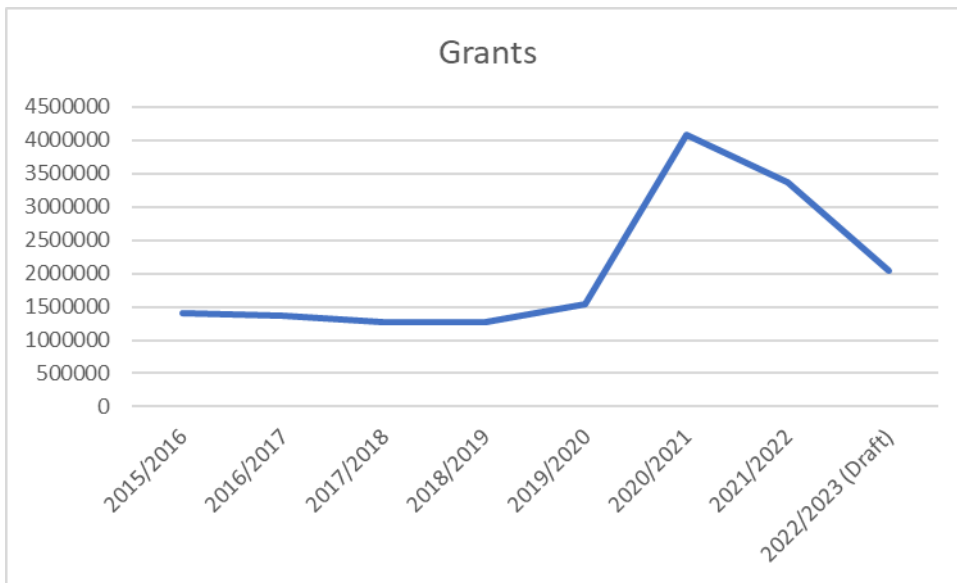
The graphs and commentary that follows, provides the Performance Scrutiny Committee with an analysis of income and surplus levels since incorporation, split between Operational income, Grant income and Management fees.

Operating income



The significant fluctuations in operating income for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 years relate to the Covid-19 pandemic where the sport, leisure arts and cultural sector were severely hit by closure and then subsequent restrictions on activities and capacities when allowed to take place, especially within indoor settings. While the graph above would suggest that operating income is back to pre-Covid levels, this has been managed through both volume and price increases – the latter being a very difficult decision for the Newport Live Board. The need to ensure equity of access with affordability is a priority for the Board and they are fully aware of the current cost of living crisis and the impact this is having on disposable income.

Grant income



The previous table which reflected the trend in operating income is somewhat mirrored for grant income, albeit in the opposite direction, as shown above. This is due to Newport Live being able to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) among other sources of funding during the pandemic.

The trend on grant income is one that demonstrates the decline in some grant areas where programmes have come to an end, such as Families First and Welsh Government's Healthy and Active Fund. Newport Live are continually looking for opportunities to maximise income from grant funding .

Management Fee



In 2022/23 the annual management fee paid to Newport Live was £2,170,700. As part of the original Funding and Management Agreement, this annual fee is expected to

reduce and for financial year 2023/24, the management fee reduced by £217k. With the rising costs of operating including the rise in Real Living Wage and Employer Pension Contribution levels, this has been a challenge for the Trust but we are looking at ways to increase income from service users and grant funding.

3.5 Reserves policy

The Board established that a reasonable level of unrestricted non-designated reserves is required between £1,200,000 and £1,400,000 to absorb short-term setbacks such as loss or delays in funding and unforeseen expenditure requirements, to finance working capital needs, such as delays in receipts, and to fund the anytime delays between developing projects, obtaining approval and funds being received, to cover the capital and revenue costs of developing new and existing services. Two other reasons are to allow for planning investments or similar new investments and for cyclical maintenance expenditure for which Newport Live has an obligation under property leases and the property maintenance matrix agreement with Newport City Council.

Reserve levels

Date	General £000	Restricted £000
2015/2016	317	72
2016/2017	495	100
2017/2018	685	254
2018/2019	685	465
2019/2020	685	565
2020/2021	787	774
2021/2022	1,056	1,216

The reserves now held by Newport Live not only provide a level of comfort that a short term cashflow problem can be overcome, but it also provides a base of small-scale capital investment as it has done since its incorporation, described in the asset investment area later in this report.

3.6 Gain Share

The funding and management agreement includes for a 50% gain share with Newport City Council and as such reinvestment back into Newport City Council services. After the initial 5-year period of operation of Newport Live, a gain share became claimable which equates to 50% of any unrestricted surplus made, this was deferred to allow Newport Live to generate reserves in line with Charity Commission best practice guidance. To date this has equated to payments back to Newport City Council of £160k. Any financial surplus generated through Newport Live operations are reinvested into services delivered by Newport Live and held in reserves.

Throughout the period 2015/16 to 2022/2023, external auditors have confirmed that, in their opinion, Newport Live operates as a going concern. Their opinion is based both on historic results and forward budgets / forecasts but, more importantly, the view

of the Trustees who confirm this stance as appropriate. It is the prudent stewardship that is provided which gives assurance and confidence that Newport Live remains a viable business and is able to deliver much needed wellbeing, physical activity, sport, leisure, art, cultural, diversionary, education and community engaging services, outputting significant social value for the city.

3.7 Partnerships

To deliver the scale and span of work that we deliver, Newport Live work in partnership with a very large number of national, regional and local organisations to enable the delivery of programmes, project services for the benefit of local residents. Many of the partnerships leverage grant and aid investment into the city together with in-kind value, training, equipment and wider partnership opportunities for service delivery, growth and quality assurance and good practice.

Some of our Partnerships



4.0 What has been achieved by Newport Live

The funding and management agreement requires that Newport Live maintains performance and participation data in accordance with National Strategic Indicators. This was a unified approach to reporting, managed through the Welsh Local Government Association for sport, leisure, and physical activity services. This national approach to reporting was terminated in March 2022 with a new model being developed to demonstrate the social value of sport, physical activity, arts and culture on the wellbeing of local residents. This has not been forthcoming and Newport City Council and Newport Live are now developing a suite of new key performance indicators. For the purposes of this report, national strategic indicator data has been provided to demonstrate performance in the following areas:

4.1 Sport & Leisure

National Strategic Indicators included a prescribed format for the collection of usage information, agreed per activity, these are listed below, segmenting participation in physical activity, ticketed spectators attending events and non-physical activity use.

4.2 Summary of Performance in Sport and Leisure

Year	Physical Activity participation	Spectators at Events	Non Physical Activity use of facilities	Total
2015-16	1,384,381	145,579	101,442	1,631,402
2016-17	1,272,733	172,349	139,137	1,584,219
2017-18	1,250,822	266,895	147,892	1,665,609
2018-19	1,345,419	265,099	124,734	1,735,252
2019-20	1,218,010	168,698	171,053	1,557,761
2020-21*	206,417	1,920	104,246	312,583
2021-22*	655,798	13,393	342,730	1,011,921
2022-23	733,001	68,744	140,508	942,253

*This data is reflective of the changes in participation levels, enforced closures and utilisation and occupation limitations due to the Coronavirus legislative restrictions in Wales. Also note the pool at Newport Centre did not reopen in 2020-2021 when the legislation allowed for physical activity to return because of issues with the fabric of the building and a revised reporting system, software and process 22-23 and return of activity and events post Covid-19 restrictions.

With the exception of swimming, which is due to the closure of Newport Centre, participation is returning to, and in some areas exceeding, pre Covid participation levels.

The leisure management solution moved to a cloud-hosted environment in mid-2022 and this has caused issues with reporting of participation data. However, new reports are being developed and refined with the software provider to allow accurate reporting of participation and financial performance, which is reconciled to the financial management system for accounting purposes.

4.3 The Riverfront Theatre & Art Development performance

Year	Ticket Sales & Participation Data
2015-16	103,514
2016-17	98,323
2017-18	108,356
2018-19	134,711
2019-20	127,090
2020-21	2,713 (Covid 19)
2021-22	28,864 (Covid 19)
2022-23	138,557

Participation includes ticket sales, workshop attendances, gallery and community and education engagement. The changes in tickets sales and participation levels relate to changes in programming and Covid 19 enforced closures. The pandemic significantly limited capacities for a sustained period as theatres were the last sector in Wales to be allowed to reopen to the public under the Coronavirus legislation. The impact of the pandemic meant that there were limited productions touring the UK and Newport Live took the difficult decision not to produce a pantomime based on financial risk and unknown Coronavirus status through early 2021 when decisions need to be taken.

2022-2023 has seen significant growth in programming of opportunities for family participation, cinema, tribute acts as well as the return of the pantomime. All of this has driven participation and attendance towards record levels of engagement, attendance, and participation in the arts.

4.4 Newport Centre

The Newport Centre swimming pool did not reopen in 2020-2021 after the first round of Covid 19 closures, due to the structural surveys and investigation works which were undertaken within the building. In August 2021 the closure of the swimming pool was made permanent following the confirmation of the major structural works required. The Newport Centre continued to operate as a dry side leisure facility, including operating as a vaccination centre, until 26 March 2023 when it closed to the public prior to demolition commencing on the 17 April 2023.

Newport Live surrendered its 25-year lease on Newport Centre to support the development of a new and modern Leisure and Well-being Centre on the opposite side of Usk Way. The Council have entered Head of Terms for the leasing of the new leisure facility to Newport Live once built, to run coterminous with existing Newport Live leases on other assets which form part of the agreement with Newport Live.

4.5 New Leisure Facility

Newport Live continues to work closely with Newport City Council, on the design and delivery of the new leisure facility. Several workshops have taken place to shape the design of the facilities. Newport Live has provided feedback, insight and intelligence for incorporation into the design concepts which will feed through to functionality, programming capability, business use, customer journey, integration of technology, carbon and energy reduction, inclusivity, and commercial sustainability in the original business plan.

In order to reduce the impact on Newport Live members arising from the closure of the Newport Centre and the completion of the new leisure facility, Newport Live worked in partnership with Newport City Council and identified a facility within the Cambrian Centre in the Station Quarter of the City which was suitable for use as a gym. A major refurbishment of the facility was undertaken to create a 12,000 sq ft gym which opened to the public in April 2023. Indoor sports hall activities and other dry side non gym based activities have been displaced and where possible relocated to other Newport Live facilities including Newport International Sports Village, Active Living Centre and The Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre. The lease on the interim facility, 'Station' is initially for a period of 3 years with the opportunity to extend beyond this period should the business opportunity be sustainable.

5.0 Strategy & Budget

5.1 Strategy

The principles of Newport Live's 2017-2020 strategy were originally extended in the first and second years of the Coronavirus pandemic. These continued to be used during 2021-2022 whilst the future for the sport, leisure and cultural sector remained vulnerable within Wales. The business and charitable operations were based on:

- Developing Participation and Sales
- Customer Service and Motivation
- Developing Partnerships
- Organisational Development
- Financial Sustainability
- Asset and Product Management

5.2 Budget 2023-2024

A high-level summary of the approved budget for 2023-2024 is included below.

NEWPORT LIVE			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT			
DEPARTMENT: TOTAL NEWPORT LIVE			
	Budget to Budget		
	2023-2024	2022-2023	Variance
Sport & Leisure	£3,413,629	£3,132,440	£281,189
Theatre & Events	£1,679,002	£1,500,274	£178,728
Newport City Council	£2,752,541	£3,099,038	(£346,497)
Other Income	£482,145	£545,656	(£63,511)
External Grants	£96,483	£159,406	(£62,923)
Internal	£0	£0	£0
Sales	£8,423,800	£8,436,814	(£13,014)
Salaries & Wages	£5,817,410	£5,928,456	£111,046
Premises and Equipment	£457,481	£543,052	£85,571
Operational Costs	£1,374,989	£1,312,300	(£62,688)
Administration	£544,889	£469,099	(£75,790)
Advertising & Marketing	£105,570	£134,217	£28,647
Governance Costs	£9,000	£8,000	(£1,000)
Depreciation	£66,905	£76,281	£9,376
Overheads	£8,376,244	£8,471,405	£95,161
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	£47,556	(£34,591)	£82,147

5.3 Investment policy and objectives

To sustain and enhance the assets owned by and leased to Newport Live, the charity has invested capital funding into our infrastructure to deliver efficiencies and improvements.

5.4 Asset Maintenance and Capital Investment

The Newport Live lease with Newport City Council is on a non-repairing basis and the Trust take a proactive approach with Newport City Council to prioritise and deliver Corporate Asset Management investment into our assets. The Performance Scrutiny Committee will note many works were carried out during the second round of the Covid-19 enforced closures in order to maximise the availability of capital grant aid and also to minimise disruption to service users.

5.5 Carbon Reduction and Sustainability

Carbon and energy reduction planning with Newport City Council's Climate Change Team as part of the commitment to carbon zero 2030 targets are an important priority. The Riverfront Theatre and the Regional Swimming Pool & Newport Tennis Centre were identified as being two of the highest energy consuming buildings within the ownership of the Council. Plans were developed to maximise carbon savings, meet organisational carbon reduction targets, reduce annual expenditure on energy bills, including readiness for future energy price rises, improving building environmental comfort for customers, addressing maintenance and equipment backlog, which included the replacement of failing plant and machinery as a result the work highlighted below have been undertaken.

Carbon and energy reduction works undertaken through the Newport City Council and Newport Live partnership include the following developments:

Geraint Thomas National Velodrome of Wales

- April 2020: Rooftop Solar Panel Installation
- March 2021: Inner Arena & Track lighting replacement and upgrade to LED fittings
- April 2021: 3G Artificial Pitch LED Lighting Upgrade

Regional Swimming Pool & Newport Tennis Centre

- June 2021: LED Pool lighting upgrade
- September 2021: Solar Panel Installation
- January 2023: Air Source Heat Pumps installation
- March 2023: Air Source Heat Pumps installation
- March 2023: Air Handling motor upgrade
- Ongoing: Full building LED lighting upgrade

Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre

- May 2023: Air handling motor upgrade

- Ongoing: LED lighting upgrade

Additional areas of Newport Live estate are being considered for additional Solar Panel installation, including the Regional Swimming Pool and Newport Tennis Centre, Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre. Further improvements, including the installation of electric vehicle charging units, is also being considered and when sources of funding become available.

5.6 Capital Investment

Additional capital investment opportunities have also been secured by Newport Live, including:

Newport International Sports Village

Year	Item	Value
2016	Pump Track installation	£10k
2016	Geraint Thomas Velodrome Indoor Group Cycling (Spin) Studio upgrade	£65k
2019	Geraint Thomas Velodrome arena floor replacement via Sport Wales Grant	£65k
2020	Regional Swimming Pool & Tennis Centre Gym	£120k
2020	Newport Stadium Athletics Track refurbishment via Welsh Athletics Grant	£101k
2020	Newport Stadium Internal Throwing cage replacement via Welsh Athletics Grant	£30k
2020	Newport Stadium External Throwing Cage installation via Welsh Athletics Grant	£23k
2022	Geraint Thomas Velodrome Dance Studio extension and upgrade	£87k
Total		£501k

Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre

Year	Item	Value
2017	Sound Desk & Sound System Update	£44k
2021	Box Office and Café Upgrade	£50k
Total		£94k

Station

Year	Item	Value
2023	Station gym equipment	£111k

Future works agreed to be undertaken in 2023

- Newport Stadium Pole Vault bed and hurdles replacement via Sport Wales grant.
- Active Living Centre pool hoist via Sport Wales grant.
- Newport Tennis Court resurfacing and back drop replacement via Sport Wales grant.

5.7 Other benefits of the Newport Live partnership include:

- Newport Live remains an efficient, cost-effective and agile model for the delivery of sport, leisure and cultural services on behalf of Newport City Council.
- Newport Live leased the Newport YMCA (renamed the Connect Centre) and has subleased the building to the Council in support of a temporary home for St Andrew's School.
- Newport Live delivers major events for the city at the Riverfront Theatre and Newport International Sports Village, which includes Track Cycling, Swimming, Tennis, Athletics, Football and Rugby. We also support for other exhibitions and major events located in and around the city.
- In 2023 we have positively responded to the opportunity to partner with Education and Preventions service areas to deliver, improve and grow the Aspire Programme, previously delivered by the Youth Service. Newport Live will begin this contract in September 2023, working with Education to support 36 pupils who will develop, learn, and achieve outside of their usual mainstream environment. There is opportunity to widen this support to other schools in the future.
- We are seeking to grow cultural and artistic services with the support of Arts Council of Wales Arts Portfolio Wales Investment Review, an application for increased funding has been submitted with the growth targeted at community engagement to develop further engagement and participation further.
- We will continue to engage with and submit applications to trusts and foundations who support charities, together with national organisations to improve services and assets within the City, via these funding partners.
- Undertaking new external contracts generating revenue which is subsequently shared with the Council through the gain share agreement.
- Innovating and developing proactive programmes with local communities with support for local clubs, groups, charities, arts, civic projects, and community initiatives, whilst being advocates of Newport being a great place to live, learn and participating in leisure, cultural and wellbeing activities.

6.0 Core Programmes

Newport Live's programmes span many business areas, a summary of the core programme is below:

Health, Fitness & Wellbeing

Newport Live continues to develop its health, fitness and wellbeing programmes through its membership offer alongside welcoming all residents to access services and facilities as pay and play customers. The focus remains on growth in participation and on retention of existing members, striving to improve the mental and physical health and wellbeing of everyone across the city.

The Newport Live offer includes a comprehensive class timetable, readily available free personal support, interactive and important health checks and programming sessions accessible across all facilities. These make access to services affordable and provide significant value to customers when compared with the commercial sector where profit remains the purpose of operation and not wellbeing and health improvement outcomes.

The closure of Newport Centre has been used as an opportunity to further enhance the wellbeing of residents at our newly opened 12,000 sq ft Station facility in the city centre. The purchase and installation of additional cardiovascular, functional gym equipment further increases the experiences as well as capacity. These were significant investments that will meet member demand and create a wider but more rounded training experience and providing a modern and more financially sustainable model for health and wellbeing.

Innovative collaboration continues within the service, providing the benefits of physical activity within the health setting through partnerships such as those with National Exercise Referral Scheme and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Muscular Skeletal Physiotherapy Team. We are supporting a health board in the de-medicalisation of services by hosting clinics within the facilities allowing patients access to services in high-quality facilities, enabling them to receive care and be signposted to preventative or supportive products to assist with long-term mobility. This work is underpinned by Newport Live collaborating with UK Active and Good Boost, of which we are the only Welsh leisure pilot partner as part of the UK Research and Innovation funding application. The programme overall has proved incredibly popular, especially the pool-based classes with customers. The approach taken and network in which the programme is being marketed and promoted demonstrates the One Newport way of working with public service partners efficiently and effectively.

6.1 Swimming

The closure of the Newport Centre pool has provided a huge challenge to accommodate the demand from customers for aquatic activities. Closing the pool has vastly reduced participation opportunities in learn to swim programmes, aqua classes

and recreational swimming for families, young people, older people, and the resident population. Activities are delivered at the Active Living Centre and Newport International Sports Village's two pools, being the main 25-metre pool and smaller teaching pool.

Fast forwarding after closure and the Covid 19 pandemic, in March 2022 Newport Live was teaching 1,817 children to swim each week. At March 2023, we were teaching 2,292 children each week. This growth has now plateaued as we are restricted with very limited pool space and swimming instructor availability. Additional talent identification and training is taking place in June 2023 to mitigate the challenge with instructors. We will continue to innovate on the use of space to enable people to enjoy the benefits swimming offers.

A range of aqua-based classes have been established at the Regional Swimming Pool. These have somewhat mitigated the overall reductions but access to the facility remains a challenge for residents who rely upon public transport. While the classes are beginning to gain popularity, a lack of shallow access to pool and colder temperature of water is a barrier to some participants with mobility issues. We will continue to work with our customers and partners to encourage participation and seek solutions.

Recreationally, we have been able to re-establish much of our aquatics offer with a range of weekly and holiday-based sessions available alongside regular public swimming and free swim sessions catering for all. Newport Live continues to deliver Welsh Government Free Swimming Initiatives for people aged 60 plus, 16 and under, and Armed Forces personnel including Veterans.

A focussed piece of work within the aquatics sector has seen a collaboration with a community organisation to provide swimming for women only, from a predominantly Muslim faith. Work continues to further welcome people to attend public sessions hosted at times with female-only lifeguards. Integration into the adult lesson programme will develop in time and will be supported by partners including the Black Swimming Association.

Through our partnership approach, the City of Newport Swimming & Water Polo Club continues to flourish under the vision and guidance of a new Head Coach recruited by Newport Live. The return of structured competition and a redesigned performance programme is yielding the retention and development of swimmers within the sport. Refinement within the top tiers of the programme ensures that the performance programme is balanced with focus being placed on ensuring the learn to swim pathway is producing high-quality swimmers who can continue onto competitive swimming opportunities.

6.2 Cycling

Newport Live's Cycling Programme includes the management and operation of the Geraint Thomas National Velodrome of Wales, the national facility in Wales. Structured

programmes are offered within the track centre as well as inner arena. We also reach further across the city through programmes at our other centres as well as within communities across the city. In 2020 we also launched Newport Wheels for All, with Momentwm launched in April 2023.

Following a highly successful HSBC British National Track Championships from 27 – 30 January 2022, Newport Live were approached to host the competition for a second year. March 2023 saw the return of the British National Track Championships, which proved to be another successful event with Newport Live receiving positive feedback with regards to hosting national level track events, with positive economic benefit to the city. The National Youth & Junior Track Championships will also be hosted at the Geraint Thomas Velodrome for the third consecutive year in July 2023.

The track cycling programme continues to grow as people return to the sport in addition to refining the pathway to getting on to track and progressing through the stages. Newport Live has reduced its age for children attending track sessions to 9 years which improved the junior offer through learn to ride and cycle skills sessions delivered during weekends and holidays. The programme has developed a seasonal approach to account for the summertime in which road riding takes prominence. Development of a cycle skills programme in collaboration with Welsh Cycling will see the introduction of skills development sessions for all ages later in 2023.

2022-2023 saw the return of track league, providing a competitive opportunity for local and national riders. Both sprint and endurance cyclists were catered for with riders attending from Derby, London and the southwest of England.

Newport Wheels for All continues to operate a weekly programme from Tredegar Park. The inclusive cycling project in partnership with Newport City Council provides residents with a variety of additional needs the opportunity to access a fleet of adapted cycles. The initiative which is free of charge to residents provides a vital physical activity provision for its users in addition to supporting the PE lessons of Maes Ebbw Special School and Ysgol Bryn Derw (ASD Special School). Usage and retention of users clearly demonstrates the need for the provision and highlights that cycling within a supportive and accessible environment is conducive to independence, physical activity, and wider wellbeing.

6.3 Behaviour Change

Newport Live is working in partnership with Newport City Council and Transport for Wales, Burns Delivery Team. Newport Live is leading the partnership to implement and evaluate a city-wide behaviour change programme with the aim of increasing the number of Newport residents walking or cycling for either commuting or recreational purposes.

The initiative will underpin the cultural shift towards infrastructure redevelopment within the city, the introduction of the city's hire bike scheme, and the move towards reducing traffic within the city centre and improving air quality.

The 'Momentwm' initiative will work towards supporting the aims of the Burns Commission by encouraging residents to make more sustainable travel choices or to become more active in their method of travel. The 3-year initiative will see engagement across the city with businesses, communities, and self-referring residents, whereby individuals or groups can access learn to ride, and learn to maintain workshops, or participate in facilitated group walks and rides.

There are some ambitious objectives with proposed engagement of around 3% of the Newport population per year, the development of 8 community walking and cycling hubs, and the engagement of over 100 businesses over the duration of the initiative. As well as engagement targets there are KPIs relating to sustainability with training courses available to community leaders to ensure local level engagement remains. These elements will greatly increase social engagement for residents, providing local and accessible opportunities to engage in physical activity that promotes social and mental well-being.

Newport Live has also invested in the infrastructure available within the city. The move to Station has allowed for the installation of a secure cycle storage facility, conveniently located opposite the train station and the new footbridge. The facility will serve both Newport Live customers and members of the public, providing a cost-effective secure storage solution along a designated active travel route. An interim hire bike scheme will also be operated from the facility for people looking to access a bicycle on a short basis for their commuting needs, providing access to traditional and e-bikes.

6.4 Tennis

Newport Tennis Centre continues to grow and develop participation in the sport, engaging with almost 300 Juniors and 46 adults on a weekly coaching programme, plus casual and member use of the courts.

We have recently hosted a series of regional competitions for wheelchair, visually impaired and learning disability events and the LTA Fast Four competitions. The success of this has resulted in Newport Tennis Centre being awarded annual LTA calendar events alongside British Tour and regional Tennis Wales events.

The Tennis Team were recognised for their work by Tennis Wales by winning the Communities and Parks Award and Disability Award in 2023. More recently the team have been the recipient of the Competition the Year for the regional disability's series and shortlisted by the LTA for the UK National Awards in July 2023.

The progress made with the tennis programme has seen significant development within the team itself with the creation of a participation and performance strand to the programme. This allows for young people to access club and county competitions ensuring that the Newport Tennis Centre has full sporting pathway in place. Newport Live will also partner with Newport City Council to provide a structured Tennis coaching programme at the redeveloped Tredegar Park Tennis Courts, this will greatly enhance the offering for residents but also promote increased court usage.

The future focus will be on the redevelopment of the current infrastructure and facility, this has happened initially following redevelopment of the viewing area and programme rebrand. A Sport Wales capital grant has been secured with an investment of around £52,000 supporting the resurfacing of the 4 indoor courts, and replacement of the court backdrops and netting, creating a significantly improved playing and spectator environment at the Tennis Centre.

6.5 Theatre, Arts and Culture

The Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre is the only professional theatre in the city and provides an opportunity for people across the city to engage with our programmes, both at the Riverfront and across the city in the community settings.

While the Riverfront remained closed for almost 15 months due to the Covid 19 pandemic, which also resulted in the cancellation of the Big Splash and Pantomime for 2020 and 2021, our audiences have returned in high numbers. The 2022 performance of Robin Hood saw 68 performances being welcomed by audiences totalling almost 26,000 people. This included school and community performances as well as public shows. Beauty and the Beast has been announced for the 2023 Pantomime, with work well underway.

The Big Splash Festival, curated by the team at Newport Live, is now in its 11th year and is the largest outdoor street theatre festival in Wales. Funding is secured from the Arts Council of Wales as well as through corporate sponsorship and kicks off the School Summer Holidays in the city with a wonderful weekend of performance and arts. The Big Splash remains free to those who attend and welcomes more than 20,000 people into the city centre across the weekend. It is important to note the economic benefits to the city through tourism and spend across the Big Splash weekend.

Our professional performances span Arts and Drama, music ranging from Tribute Acts to Opera and Orchestral performances, dance including a successful partnership with Ballet Cymru and other dance genres including Contemporary Dance. Comedy is a popular genre as is new and emerging theatre through our Cultivate programme.

The Riverfront has a broad community arts engagement programme both across the communities of Newport as well as within Education settings. Several important events are included in the annual programme, which includes International Women's Day and the Windrush Film Festival, the only other location for this festival outside of London. Pride in the Port is an important partner event in the Riverfront calendar, so too is the weekly Crafty Saturday which offer free arts and crafts at the Riverfront for families every Saturday.

Recent events in 2023 have worked to engage with underrepresented groups across the city with a Gypsy Roma Traveller group meeting weekly, which has also resulted in the development and hosting of a Conference which was a celebration of Gypsy Roma Traveller Culture, and how our interventions support this community.

The Arts Advisory Panel is now established, and further support the arts community and business networks with the Riverfront, influencing Arts Strategies and widening engagement.

The Riverfront works extremely closely with a range of partners and engaged arts organisations both across the city, as well as Wales and UK wide, this includes:

- G-Expressions
- Urban Circle
- The Place
- Tin Shed Theatre
- Newport Youth Council
- Connor Allen – Children’s Laureate Wales
- Theatre Iolo
- Newport Can
- Le Pub
- Gwent Levels
- Newport’s Gypsy Roma Traveller Community
- The Westgate
- Ballet Cymru
- Operasonic
- Creu Cymru
- Arts & Business Cymru
- National Dance Company Wales
- National Youth Arts Wales
- Symphonia Cymru

6.6 Positive Futures

Positive Futures continues to be delivered in areas of higher deprivation throughout Newport and wider Gwent. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Sport Wales are the principal funders of the programme, with partner agencies including Youth Justice Board and Youth Service workers with sessions delivered in Shaftesbury, Somerton, Bettws, Ringland, Alway, Duffryn, Pillgwenlly, Maesglas and Victoria. In addition to open access opportunities, Positive Futures focused on providing targeted support to identified groups of young people who are vulnerable to Child Criminal Exploitation and are at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour, delivered in areas including Ringland, Bettws, Tredegar Park, Victoria and Pillgwenlly. Referrals for engagement to the programme are received via the Police, Social Services, Youth Justice Service and Schools.

6.7 Community Sports Development

Newport Live delivers multiple community-focused wellbeing, sport and physical activity programmes which include: -

- Support to Private Nursery settings and Primary Schools via Newport Live's physical literacy and active tots programme with foundation phase children.
- Delivery in Primary Schools with sports coaching and wellbeing activities, including Daily Mile Destinations, Move and Motivate, Playmakers Training, and Get Active Monthly Challenges.
- Secondary Schools programmes including the Young Ambassadors volunteer development programme.
- Delivery of 'holiday hunger' interventions ahead of the Summer Holidays providing a mixture of sport and physical activity engagement opportunities to specific communities with a variety of partners in education, Families First, Flying Start, local clubs and community associations, and health partners to include food provision.
- Community club and sport development programmes to support community sports clubs, volunteer development and club infrastructure and partnership.

6.8 Marketing and Communications

We have a range of campaigns to support Newport Live to drive awareness, engagement, and participation with our wide range of programmes, activities, events and new venues across our core service areas. We use a range of communication channels and PR to reach our current and potential customers and ensure that we utilise the most cost-effective channels to support both our brand and marketing strategy.

The website, our main channel, received 339,000 visitors during April 2022 to March 2023, an increase of 17% compared to the previous year. Of these visitors 15% were new, which we believe is reflective of the move of population into and across the city.

Our Newport Live App continues to drive engagement with 34,772 live users to date. We had a 4% increase of downloads during April 2022 to March 2023 compared to the previous year. We are currently working to relaunch the App with a fresh look and enhanced user experience in September 2023.

We continue to increase our followers on our social channels which include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Our social media platforms have helped drive 30% of visits to our website. This year we aim to further develop our engagement.

During 2023-24 we aim to increase our fundraising and sponsorship across our core service areas as we develop a strategy to help raise awareness of opportunities with existing and new partners.

7.0 The Future

7.1 Strategic and Operational objectives for 2023–2024 include:

1. To partner with Newport City Council to develop requirements, specifications, and plans for the new leisure facility to replace the Newport Centre, developing associated indicative business plans.
2. To create a new 5-year strategy for Newport Live aligned to a new sporting strategy and cultural strategy for the city of Newport.
3. To continue to work with Newport City Council to utilise allocated Corporate Asset Management funding for 2023-2024 and maximise available external match funding to maintain customer experiences, business continuity and quality of the assets.
4. To procure and replace Health and Fitness equipment across the Newport Live estate whilst also creating an enhanced digital fitness solution within facilities and community settings to provide a connected experience for customers to support their health, fitness and wellbeing goals and provide Newport Live with greater insight into customer behaviours.
5. Work with Newport City Council to agree the strategy by which the Funding and Management fee for services delivered by Newport Live is structured and aligned with the Newport Centre replacement leisure facility and transition the operation linked to the Station facility and displaced services continue.
6. To review all areas of operational expenditure within the charity and create procurement and efficiency targets for the whole business which contribute to Strategic development priorities as established by the Strategy Subgroup of the Newport Live Board.
7. To support the Newport Live Board Advisory Group for the Arts and Cultural services to provide advice, guidance and strategy to the Newport Live Board and be a partner for Newport City Council in the creation of a new Cultural Strategy.
8. To strengthen and grow our theatre and arts links in formal education and community settings, and to ensure full equality in, and access to, the arts and culture across the diverse communities in Newport.
9. To maximise the digital benefits of our Gigabit broadband network across all Newport Live buildings for the charity and the benefit of customers and stakeholders.

10. To continue to innovate digitally to meet raised consumer expectations, drive innovation, actionable insights and deliver enhanced value and efficiencies through revised processes and systems, services and experiences (online, in-venue and in community settings).
11. Newport Live will continue to engage with Welsh Government Major Events Unit, Newport City Council and other key partner organisations to develop business plans for national and international events of cultural and sporting significance.
12. To develop a commercial, fundraising and sponsorship strategy leading to identifying sponsorship, charitable and grant aid sources of funding to enable Newport Live to create new sport, physical activity, artistic and cultural experiences which are sustainable for the City of Newport.
13. To work with Newport City Council to achieve and exceed Carbon Reduction, energy efficiency & air quality improvement targets for facility and community-based programmes.
14. To introduce behaviour change programmes in the city to encourage greater cycling, walking and active travel strategies.
15. To determine the future strategy for the Connect Centre (Newport YMCA) and associated lease separately held by Newport Live with the Cardiff YMCA.
16. Achieve sustainable growth and generate a financial surplus.

7.2 Challenges

1. A large proportion of customers qualify for concession pricing, the current cost of living crisis and inflation price pressure is a risk to maintaining levels of participation and associated income. Customer engagement is already proving very challenging and retention more difficult based on price together with scarcity of swimming instructors.
2. Navigating the next few years without Newport Centre and with the interim Station facility will prove challenging with the reduction in indoor sports hall provision and the associated impact on pathway development programmes. We will, however, continue to review programme demands and work with local partners to find alternative accommodation.
3. City Centre car parking for group exercise is a challenge for relocated services at The Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre, as well as a reduction in capacity at Station due to the available Group Exercise spaces. This will also provide a challenge when seeking to retain customers and attract new customers.

4. Loss of business from the Newport Centre and retention of customers, events and utilisation has a significant impact on income generation and achieving 2023-2024 targeted financial performance.
5. The Arts Council of Wales has undertaken an open application process for the renewal of Arts Portfolio Wales funding. This is currently worth £126k per annum to the Newport Live operation and subsidy of Theatre and Arts Development operations. There is a risk that funding could reduce based on a huge volume of additional applications, although there is an opportunity that Newport Live could receive increased funding, as our application has been submitted to reflect annual funding of £230k.
6. Sourcing capital funding for investment and replacement of 3G pitches at NISV with pitch surface replacement required and the redevelopment of Newport High School / Active Living Centre pitch.
7. Management of customer and colleague safety and customer / business retention at Newport International Sports Village due to large number of unauthorised encampments of Travellers. Partnership working to manage the risk and find solutions are being discussed with Newport City Council and Gwent Police.

7.3 Opportunities

1. Integration with wider health services in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. This will build upon the work being undertaken with Good Boost and ABUHB Physiotherapy Teams. This collaboration is aiming to de-medicalise some NHS services allowing patients to receive the same level of specialist care from their physiotherapist but have access to a range of equipment at Newport Live facilities which can be used to aid their rehabilitation.
2. To significantly increase the number of customers and members using Station, focussing on commercial yet inclusive health and wellbeing and supporting the economic regeneration of the Station Quarter in the city centre.
3. To secure Olympic and Paralympic training camps leading into Paris 2024, securing inspirational spectator experiences for residents and the associated economic benefits for the city.
4. To introduce new and improved digital technologies to support the customer journey and swimming lesson management and movement of children through the lesson programme, as well as an improved and revised joining process through the developed Newport Live app.

5. Introduction of new cloud-based theatre ticketing system which can also ticket events in other Newport Live facilities and provide options for partners including Newport City Council for event ticketing and management.
6. To deliver the Aspire Education programme in partnership with the Council's Education and Preventions services together with Llanwern, Lliswerry and John Frost High Schools.
7. To complete major energy (air source heat pump) and (LED lighting) carbon reduction capital projects at Newport International Sports Village and the Riverfront Theatre.
8. The development of a new key performance indicator dashboard for Newport Live management, Board and client utilisation and contract performance management.
9. To agree with Newport City Council a priority plan for asset investment and replacement based on building condition surveys.
10. Establishment of social value management metrics to demonstrate the value of sport, leisure, events, culture and arts services provided by Newport Live to the city and partner stakeholders and funders.

End of Report