



SCRUTINY REPORT

NEWPORT LIVE PARTNERSHIP

July 24th 2024

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 provide the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships with a report on the 2023-24 performance of the Council partner and Non-Profit Distribution Organisation and registered charity Newport Live.

2.0 Background

2.1 Newport Live was established by Newport City Council

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 into the scope of Newport Live.

Newport Live was created and registered with the Charities Commission and a Board of eleven Non-Executive Directors/Trustees was 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 Newport City Council and reviewed each year following the Council's Annual General Meeting and appointment to external bodies.

A 25-year funding and management agreement was created with associated leases for buildings, together with business transfer agreements, all commencing on 1 April 2015. Newport City Council's objectives were to address medium-term financial pressures, create significant financial efficiencies, whilst maintaining service provision, alongside creating a dynamic and innovative organisation that can deliver services on behalf of the Council and the residents it serves.

Newport City Council's Sport, Leisure and Theatre facility-based services and community sport and art services are operated by Newport Live. The client service was moved to Regeneration & Economic Development in 2022 and the relationship and contract management between the Council and Newport Live through 23-24 has become significantly stronger, Council Officers have a much better understanding of the services, challenges, opportunities, effectiveness and efficiencies of the operation of the services and the charity as a whole.

2.2 The four key objectives established for Newport Live to deliver.

- 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 and these remained constant through 2023-24:

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, strategise and review business operational performance using information from monthly management accounts, key performance indicators, business plans and reports highlighting strategic opportunities and challenges. The sub-groups govern the following areas:

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

A Strategy sub-group was in operation until January 2024 when the Board undertook a strategic planning event and determined the whole Board would now be engaged in the development of a new strategy for the charity.

In 2023-24 the Board's membership was made up of 6 male (54.5%) and 5 female (45.5%) Trustees with Newport City Council having an 18% representation with 2 (maximum number) of 11 Trustees as per charitable law. The Council Trustees during 23-24 were Cllr Forsey and Cllr Hughes, both of whom held Cabinet Member

portfolios. There is a change for 24-25 from the 1st of April 24 where the Council have replaced Cllr Hughes with Cllr Drewett on the Board following their annual general meeting. One community Trustee retired from the Board on the 31st of March 24 and will be replaced via external recruitment during 24-25.

The Newport Live Board continues to operate and recruit on a skills basis, whilst continuing to ensure that it prioritises the equality and diversity of the Board membership. Increased Board diversity in 23-24 significantly challenged, helped and supported planning and decision making to ensure inclusion of all communities within the city are considered and prioritised, particularly regarding how we improve participation opportunities, programming and very importantly access for under-represented communities; helping Newport Live to improve equity to services including delivering our first Ramadan Iftar event with community leaders within the city at the Riverfront Theatre in March 24.

One of the UK's Top 15 firms of Chartered Accounts and Registered Auditors, Haines Watts has been appointed in March 24 and will commence its role for the Newport Live Board undertaking the annual audit exercise commencing in September 2024. Haines Watts has extensive experience in the not for profit and charitable sector and charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), grant compliance and tax treatment. An important factor as Newport Live seek to explore the further efficiency opportunities of the Agency Model for leisure trust partnerships with Newport City Council.

2.5 Partnerships

The overriding strategic rationale for Newport Live is to continue 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 and takes forward the leadership of 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. Newport Live represents Newport City Council in a number of national forums and partnership boards and advisory panels and feedback the outcomes and opportunities to appropriate officers within the Council for service design, insight, improvement and crucially to maximise inward investment into the city e.g. identifying, applying for grant aid and charitable funding.

The Committee can refer to the detail included within the Annual Trustees report created for 22-23 to comply with the Companies Act and Charities Commission requirements and this can be viewed via the following link: [charity-search \(charitycommission.gov.uk\)](https://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/charity-search)

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

2.6 Facilities

Newport Live is the contracted operator directly aligned to the Newport City Council funding and management agreement. Current facilities are:

- Newport International Sports Village - comprising the following:
 - 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 23 with Newport City Council entering heads of terms with Newport Live for new city centre facility to be managed once developed)

Additional facilities have been leased which are not named within the funding and management agreement and these are:

Station Wellbeing - opened in April 23 as part of an agreement to surrender the lease on the Newport Centre and opportunity to lease and operate the new city centre facility once constructed. Station was developed and included as part of the partnership with the City Council on a 3-year lease as an interim wellbeing and gym facility whilst the development of the new city centre and the redesign and tendering of the construction of the facility continues.

Connect Centre - leased for a period of 10 years from the Cardiff YMCA Housing Association, during 23-24 the facility was subleased by Newport Live to Newport City Council to provide a temporary school for St Andrews Primary whilst the school's Corporation Road site is redeveloped.

2.7 Pricing Policy

Newport Live's pricing policy has not been changed since creation in 2015. It balances charitable and commercial objectives and remains completely aligned to the Funding and Management Agreement requirements, this includes the operation of a concession pricing policy. For the 2023-24 year with the significant financial pressures and reduction in funding from the City Council the strategy has driven a significantly greater requirement for increased earned income, greater yield from product sales including memberships and maximising the occupancy of all spaces and assets together with increased ticket sales volume and yield for performances in the Riverfront Theatre.

Whilst recognising the need to operate commercially and as a charitable business, very importantly, access to services for all and value for money remain the key drivers in pricing of products and services and is discussed with the Council's Client Officers and also appropriate Cabinet Members to identify the implications of reducing management fee, cost pressures and grant reductions can have on pricing which leads

to establishing a budget which balances or makes a financial surplus as agreed by the Board.

The Concession Pricing Policy was maintained throughout the 23-24 year which provided inclusive pricing with discounts for qualifying residents as defined by Newport City Council and includes discounts for young people, students, people aged 60 and over, people not in employment and residents in receipt of benefits. This together with upholding national pricing policies apply including National Exercise Referral Scheme, Free Swimming and 60 plus initiatives which operate universally across Wales.

As the report references in the financial reporting section, the ability to maintain the concession-based pricing model is becoming increasingly more challenging with reductions of public subsidy available and the need to offset cost and employment cost increases. A review of the concession pricing policy and alignment with Council priorities and policy will be key to maintaining financially sustainable services in future years and would be part of good practice policy review.

2.8 Strategic Engagement

The Chief Executive of Newport Live, together with the Director of Finance and Resources, met monthly during 23-24 for partnership monitoring with Council Officers 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 and associated targets including financial management, carbon reduction, asset management and maintenance.

Newport Live's Chief Executive attended and provided monthly Cabinet Member briefings and provides performance reports to meet contractual and partnership requirements and best practice. During 23-24 it was agreed that on a quarterly basis the Chair of Newport Live would also attend such meetings to ensure strategic alignment with the Cabinet Member and Council.

The Chief Executive completed the role of Co-Chair of the One Newport Partnership's Newport Offer with the Council's Leader. Newport Live has senior officer representation on a number of One Newport partnership groups, as this changes with the creation of the Gwent Public Services Board and the need to deliver against the regional Well-being Plan 23-28. Newport Live contributed to the creation of a Newport Local Action Plan for 23-28 and will now be a key strategic delivery partner with Council and other public service organisations and third sector partners.

The Chief Executive remains the Non-Executive Director for Wales of the charity Community Leisure UK, the trade organisation for Leisure Trusts in the UK, and chair of the Wales group, which works together to maximise efficiencies, impact and improve services for public benefit, health and wellbeing improvement. The Director of Business Development became a Non-Executive Director of the Welsh Sports Association, a membership body for the sport and leisure sector in Wales, with the responsibility of leading advocacy and developing resilience in the sector. These Non-

Executive Director posts provide Newport Live with representation at both Leisure Trust and National Governing Body level.

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 advisory board for National Exercise Referral Scheme to Public Health Wales. The increasing impact and need for intervention upon Newport population wellbeing has been identified at a strategic level for Newport Live and partnerships and outputs linked to physical and mental health increasing significantly during 23-24.

National relationships are maintained and managed with Sport Wales, Arts Council of Wales, Disability Sport Wales, Welsh Sports Association, Public Health Wales, UK Active, Community Leisure UK, Alliance of Sport, Active Communities Network, Street Games UK, Sport for Development Coalition, Creu Cymru, Arts & Business Cymru and a large number of National Governing Bodies of sport.

Regionally, Newport Live represents the City of Newport 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. During 23-24 a large amount of work was undertaken with Newport City Council on the Sport Wales Regional Partnership model and putting Newport into a position to consider leading a partnership for the Gwent region. The partnership is to be created in the summer of 2024 and the determination for the model in Gwent via the Chief Executives of the local authorities is one of a hosted partnership, which would be hosted by one local authority and or their defined partner. Work is ongoing on the opportunities and options for the delivery model for the partnership, this will be a hosted option for a partner, or a new company specifically established for the purpose by Sport Wales.

Newport Live during 23-24 developed new and maintained corporate relationships with businesses across the city, where there are opportunities for strategic partnerships where there is a common objective. This may include opportunities to engage with the workforce to support physical and mental wellbeing, through engagement with key Newport Live projects and programmes. Examples during the year included partnerships with Newport Bus, Mercure Hotel, Newport Now, Office of National Statistics, Intellectual Property Office, Newport City Homes, Newport City Council, Newport County, Dragons RFC, and Friars Walk. We are currently engaging with over 110 businesses in the city and will continue to growth is work in and around corporate wellbeing, active travel and strategic partnerships.

Newport Live delivered services and contributed positively across several key Newport City Council strategies, partnerships, and priorities during 23-24 this included:

Newport's Wellbeing Plan

Participation Strategy

Organisational Climate Change Plan, Corporate Plan

Welsh Language Strategy and Strategic Equality Plan

Pillgwenlly Masterplan

Strategic Equalities Group

Safer Newport (Community Safety Partnership)

Children, Families, & Communities Partnership Board

Newport Youth Justice Board - YJS Inspection preparation

Children & Young People PPEYP Review – Prevention & Inclusion Service

Education – bi-monthly updates for Cabinet Member, Headteachers, Estyn Inspection

2.9 Risk Management

The Newport Live Trustees in their role as Non-Executive Directors and Board Members, manage risk with Trust's Executive Team via review at bimonthly 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 and also recorded as part of budget and financial management processes to highlight the specific financial and commercial risks from certain activities.

Operational risks are managed on a day-to-day basis by the Executive Team at Newport Live. During 2023-24 the Trust were shared this information as and when appropriate with the engagement through the City Council's client management in monthly meetings or specific direct engagement.

3.0 Performance

3.1 Performance Management

The performance of the Newport Live partnership is reported via a number of channels using various monitoring tools for quantitative data collection e.g. ticket sales or participation in activities at leisure facility locations, whilst also undertaking significant qualitative impact reports for our community and wellbeing programmes. Reporting of performance and its scrutiny is undertaken through includes bimonthly reports to the Newport Live Board, an annual external audit and external partner audits. There are also a number of layers from strategic monitoring to day-to-day monitoring, via:

Monthly Reporting

- Newport Live Executive Team
- Newport Live Board or Board Subgroups
- Partnership Board meetings
- Newport City Council Partnership Liaison meeting and Cabinet Member briefing

Quarterly Reporting

- Financial budget and grant monitoring, claim and reconciliation with partners.
- Contract and Grant Funding Reconciliations: Children's Services (Disabled Children's Team – Sport & Physical Activity programme), Education & Prevention & Inclusion (Aspire Alternative Education programme), Prevention & Inclusion (PPEYP multi-agency youth engagement),
- External grant partner returns including Arts Council of Wales, Sport Wales, Disability Sport Wales, OPCC, Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association

3.2 Service and product specific

In 23-24 operational reporting continues to be undertaken at a product level including Aquatics, Health & Fitness, Cycling, Tennis, Community Sport & Wellbeing and Theatre, Arts & Culture. This is complimented by additional reporting across other services within Newport Live including Customer Service, Sales & Marketing, IT and Systems, Finance and Human Resources, insight which provides for key performance indicator management, benchmarking against targets and objectives, overarching management of service delivery and performance. During 23-24 we have been able to undertake the incremental transformation of service delivery in a number of business areas, the largest being the opening of the Station Wellbeing facility in the Station Quarter of the City Centre on 1st April 2023.

The Services delivered by Newport Live in 23-24 included:

- Facility management and Operation at 6 distinct facilities of up to 104 hrs per week per facility
- Free Swimming for 60+, Under 17's, serving Military Personnel and Veterans
- National Exercise Referral Scheme
- Indoor, Outdoor and major sporting events to international levels of significance
- City wide community facility or public space located Sport, Physical Activity & Wellbeing programmes
- Coach, volunteer and leadership development programmes
- Sports Club Development Programmes
- Disability Sport, Wellbeing & Arts and Inclusion programmes
- Ethnically Diverse programmes across our centres and in Community settings
- Community Arts Development Programmes
- Education and Arts Programmes in Community and School settings
- School curricular and extracurricular sport programmes
- Physical activity in park settings including Wheels for All and Tredegar Park Tennis Programmes
- Theatre, Arts & Cultural Projects and Events including Windrush Film Festival, The Big Splash, Black Lives 365, International Roma Day and International Women's Day
- Theatre performances, including the annual Riverfront Pantomime

- Live music, Concerts & Co-Productions
- Mainstream and art house cinema screenings
- Artist Development – supporting new and emerging talent across the city
- Art Gallery & Exhibitions
- Televised events and productions
- Early Years physical literacy training to nurseries, Flying Start settings, & schools
- Aspire branded alternative education programme
- Positive Futures youth engagement, referral, early intervention, open access community programmes
- Disabled Children’s Team (Children’s Services) children and young people referrals for sport, physical activity and wellbeing support
- SPACE wellbeing panel children and young people referrals for Positive Futures and Disability sport, physical activity and wellbeing support
- ABUHB Disability Health Pathway referrals for children, young people and adults signposted with support to sports and physical activity opportunities
- Education, training, and learning programmes, including vocational qualifications.
- Café, bar, and food services
- Sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing activities
- Corporate parent and, carer, young carer, and respite programmes
- School holiday activity programmes
- Momentwm Active Travel – Burns Commission Behaviour Change programme
- Newport Boot Room and Sports Equipment Lending Library projects for children and families living in poverty
- Mental Health and physical activity – sport & support programme
- Christmas Cwtch children looked after fundraising events with children’s services
- City Centre event delivery
- Civil contingency services - emergency situation rest centre provision
- Workforce to support Coroner’s Inquest at the Civic Centre

3.3 Newport Live Workforce

Highlights to provide context for the Partnership Scrutiny Committee:

- Newport Live, as reported to the Office of National Statistics in 23-24, provided employment to over 423 colleagues across 640 full-time, part time contracted and casual posts. This is a reduction on 22-23 due to a reduction in casual posts within the business. The Scrutiny Committee will recognise that the leisure industry is a people / employee intensive sector, with teaching, coaching, health and safety, cleaning, operating and managing buildings and delivering services to end users, many children, young people and vulnerable customers. The Trust’s employment profile in 23-24 demonstrates that over 65% of colleagues qualifying for the payment of the Living Wage Foundation rate of pay.
- Newport Live paid all colleagues at least the Living Wage Foundation wage of £10.90 during 23-24 and looking forward will pay £12.00 per hour in 24-25. This aligned with the City Council’s vision of being a Living Wage Foundation.

- The Living Wage Foundation rate is a condition of the Funding and Management Agreement (FMA), and this is to be paid to the Trust by the Council for those in receipt of the payment. However, the FMA agreement states this is due only to transferring employees, so those who transferred on the 1 April 2015 to the Trust. Newport Live has not only provided this to transferring colleagues but to all. The Trust does not advocate a two-tier workforce with differentiated terms and conditions. Newport Live has also maintained the Local Government Pension Scheme for colleagues to be able to access. The Trust has demonstrated it has maintained equity in pay for the 9 years of operation and the gap between graded salary and living wage payments, putting our colleagues first and continuing to do so is now making the service longevity challenging without significant price increases to end users.
- The Council during the first 5 years of operation funded the whole of the Living Wage “top up” but since exiting the Coronavirus pandemic this has been reduced within a cash flat management fee, effectively creating a double pressure upon the Trust. One which through 23-24 the Trust has navigated through increased business and efficiency. However, this is now a significant challenge and reflects pricing and charging policies to achieve a balanced budget.
- The budgeted spend on salaries is £6.6 million for 24-25. This has risen by £2.4 million from £4.2 million (57%) since the first year of Trust operation 2015-16. The increase is the result of pay increases which in 23-24 was 3% for 35% of colleagues not receiving Living Wage Foundation top up payments to the minimum pay of £12. However, for context the Living Wage Foundation qualifying colleagues receive a pay award in 24-25 of a further 10% (similar levels in 22-23 and 23-24). This has over three years eroded the pay scale with colleagues on pay scales just above the Living Wage Foundation level and impacts colleague retention, job satisfaction and requires regrading of colleague salaries to reflect responsibility differentials above the Living Wage Foundation threshold.
- Newport Live supports the continuing professional development of its staff by delivering internal and external training sessions throughout the year, maintaining statutory and compliance qualifications together with supporting personal and professional development where appropriate, possible and affordable.
- During the year Newport Live faced significant recruitment challenges in several areas of the charity. Like other Trusts across the UK, a major shortage of Swimming Teachers, Food and Beverage Team Members, Sports Coaches, Recreation Assistants and Theatre Technicians. Responding to the challenges of delivering services we developed a range of supportive tactics to target people to consider the roles in the industry. This includes working with partners in diverse communities to encourage people to join training programmes that are available. We are also working across every Secondary School in the city encouraging young people to engage with School based sport and arts activities. This includes the Young Ambassador programme striving to encourage people to consider roles in

the industry and the benefits of the career available as well as Train to Teach for swimming and also attending job and recruitment events operated in the city.

- Newport Live is a member of the Careers Wales Cluster for the city, working with Careers Wales and other large employers in the city to support and encourage conversation and decisions around career opportunities in the Sport & Leisure and Theatre, Arts & Culture sector. Further work is required in 24-25 to ensure our workforce remains resilient and work towards the right skills and volume of colleagues for the opening of a new facility, likely to be in the financial year 26-27, especially relevant and challenging with the position of Swimming Teacher.

3.4 Volunteering Opportunities

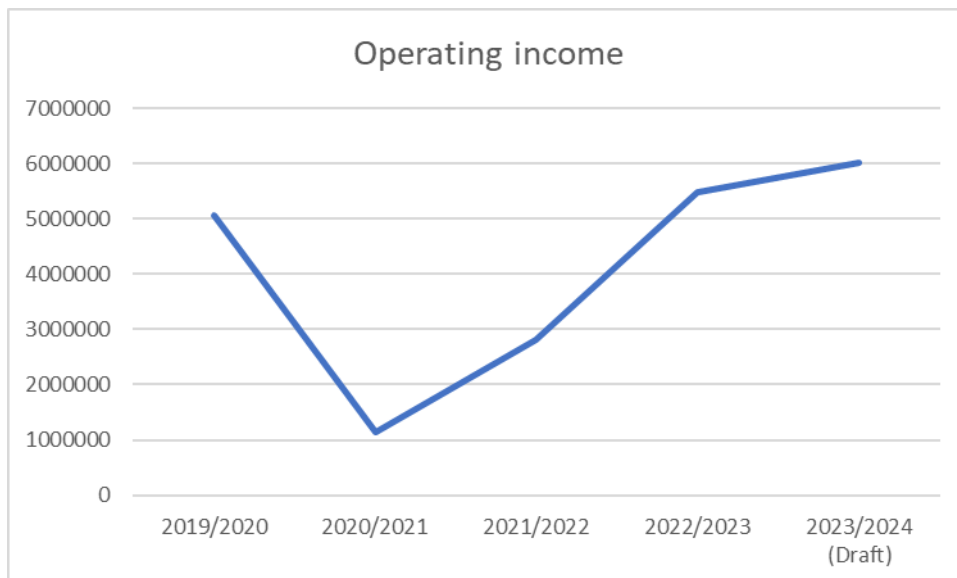
- Newport Live has provided tailored pathway volunteering opportunities for 18 young people, who access mentoring and guidance as well as training, culminating in 61 qualifications (e.g. Sports Leaders Level 1 and 2) being delivered in the year. We provided training courses for people of all ages, connecting schools, colleges, local people, and with Council Services such as the Newport Youth Academy, to the volunteering and employment pathways. Volunteers have gained vital experience alongside our development professionals at events, in communities or at our facilities, supporting development and progression towards employment, qualifications, and future career opportunities with Newport Live and employers in Newport, they have become better citizens in many ways and advocates for Newport.
- Newport Live in 23-24 operated a thriving Young Ambassador Volunteer Programme in primary, secondary, and special schools across the city. These programmes offer young people their first opportunity to train as future leaders and coaches, learning at primary age the Playmakers Award which develops 'playground leadership' skills, peer mentoring, progressing to Sports Leaders Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications counting towards their Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. An example this year, at Maes Ebbw Special School, saw tertiary students train as Playmakers, then peer leading mainstream Primary School Children at Newport Live pupil enrichment events.
- Newport Live introduced a Train to Teach initiative in 23-24 to proactively address the challenge of a lack of swimming teacher resource within the business. The initiative has been deployed as closed group recruitment to existing employees or volunteers and an external recruitment tool. All candidates complete 30 hours of voluntary swimming lesson delivery alongside an assigned mentor in return for funded professional training and a guaranteed interview for the role of swimming teacher. 23-24's programme created 5 new colleagues, all of which are now in contracted employment positions.

3.5 Financial Performance

Newport Live was established in 2015, commencing with zero financial reserves. The management fee which provides a baseline of income for the Trust received from the Council quarterly in advance.

The graphs and commentary that follows in the report provides the Performance Scrutiny Committee for Partnerships with an analysis of income and surplus level with a split between Operational income, Grant income and Management fees. A number of the graphs in the report reference draft. This is the reference used as they are subject to Newport Live's external audit for 23-24. This is taking place in September 2024 post the presentation of this report to the Council's Partnership Scrutiny Committee.

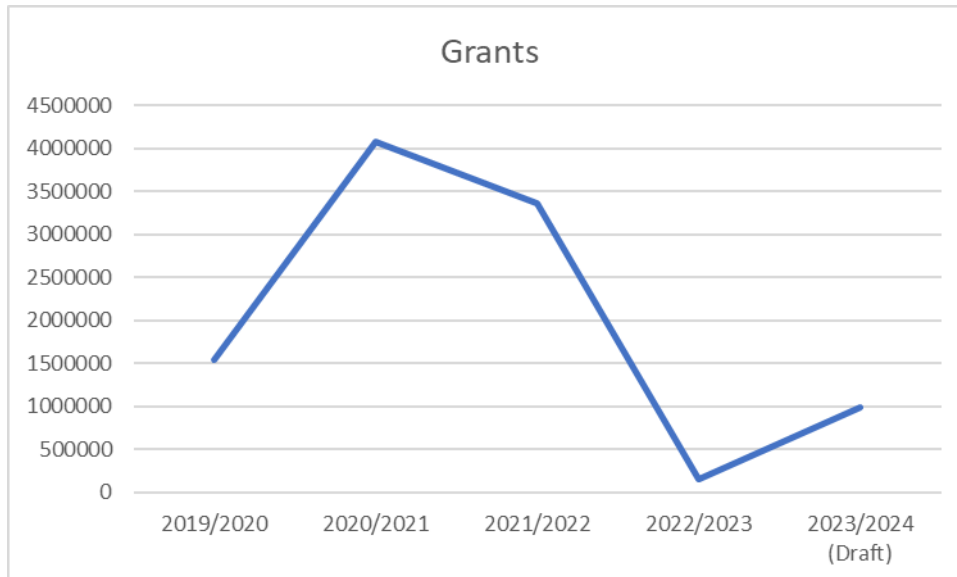
3.6 Operating income



The graph above demonstrates the significant fluctuations in operating income. For the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 years this relates to the Covid-19 pandemic where the sport, leisure arts and cultural sectors were severely hit by closure and then subsequent restrictions on activities and capacities when allowed to take place. 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 providing tough decisions for the Newport Live Board, aligned to many such public sector decisions at this time. The need to ensure equity of access with affordability is a priority for the Board and they are fully aware of the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living challenges and the impact this is having on disposable income for many Newport residents.

2023-24 income increased by £250,380 (4.3%) to £5,740,405 and this is including the closure of the Newport Centre and associated loss of income from the that facility. Income increased within all other areas of business including the new Station Wellbeing facility supporting maintenance of membership revenue and included is income relating to the delivery of Aspire Alternative Education Programme contract together with the Momentwm Active Travel Programme.

Grant income



The operating income graph is opposed by that of the above for grant income. 2019-20, 20-21 and part of 21-22 reflects access to the Coronavirus grant support linked to salaries and enforced closures.

In 23-24 grant funding was secured from Children’s Service (Disabled Children’s Team) £40k, Children & Communities Grant (PPEYP Positive Futures) increase of £40k, and the introduction of Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) £17k Positive Futures which has contributed to the Newport Cycling Festiva and Velo Cymru Cup event of £25,000. Arts Council of Wales – The Big Splash - £50,000, Celebrating Romani Culture £9,640, Arts Council of Wales – Carbon Reduction Project Core Theatre Lighting £30,000, Cardiff Capital Region – Creative Industries Cluster Hubs £2,500, Principality Building Society - £6,500 – Roots & Roofs Art Engagement and Shared Prosperity Funding of £150k was accessed for support for the additional development of the Station Wellbeing facility and work completed by March 24. The associated £150k spend in relation to this project is also included in the 23-24 expenditure.

Projecting forward into 24-25, Newport Live will lose further grant funding provided by Sport Wales via Newport City Council, this will reduce by £18k. Another major reduction in grant is from the Arts Council of Wales, they are reducing their Arts Portfolio Wales grant to £70k, a reduction of £55k which is making the year ahead more challenging. Newport Live is continually looking for opportunities to maximise income from grant funding and multiple applications have been submitted for revenue and capital projects within quarter 1 of 24-25.

Management Fee

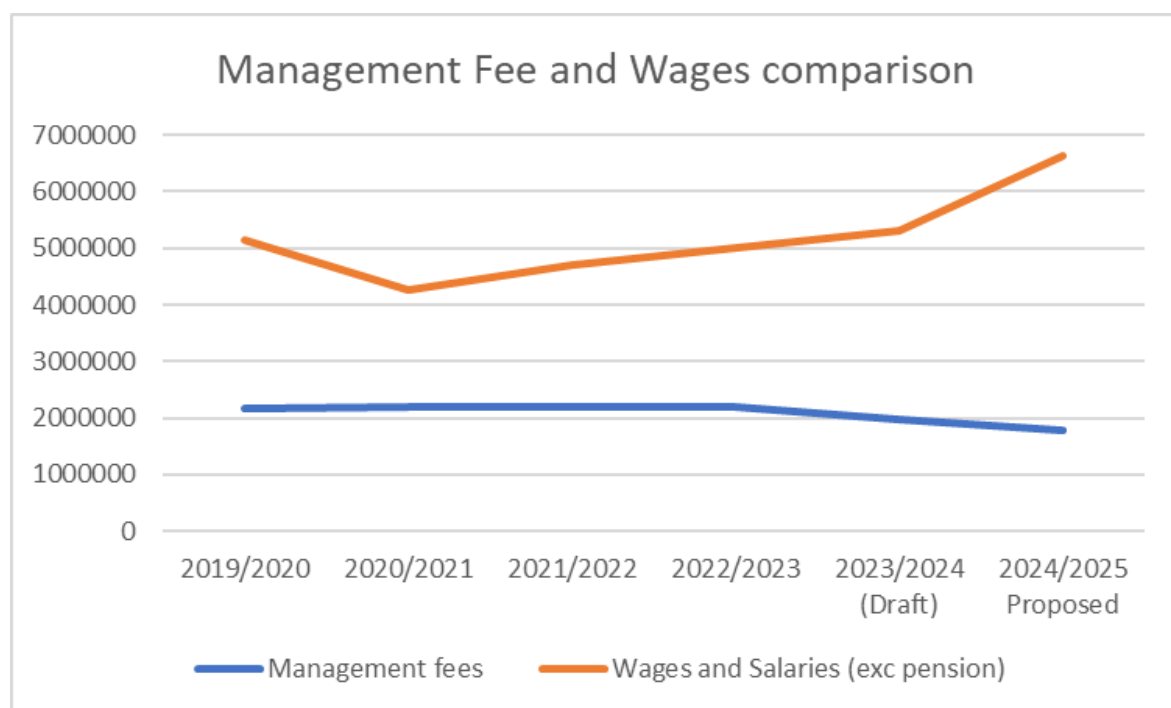


In 22-23 the annual management fee paid to Newport Live was £2,170,700 aligned to the Funding and Management Agreement and as mentioned in the earlier narrative in the report includes funding for Living Wage Foundation payments to colleagues. As part of public sector funding reductions, the Council's budget consultation and reductions determined that a 10% reduction in the management fee was to be levied in 23-24 and therefore reduced the management fee to £1,965,442 by £217k. The reduction was against a backdrop of inflation busting rising costs from suppliers, a 10% rise in Real Living Wage for over 65% of colleagues and 3% for those above that threshold. Through the year 23-24, Newport Live proactively and positively navigated this major challenge with the management of vacancies, maximising external funding and increasing fees and charges to customers at a level of 8% to balance the increased supplier costs also driven by the high levels of inflation.

The graph below plots the relationship between Management Fee received by Newport Live and the overall wages and salaries paid by Newport Live to our colleagues.

The increase from £3.9m to £5.3m demonstrates a 25% increase, salary costs would have been significantly higher should the Newport Centre have remained in operation and the workforce not reduced whilst awaiting the development of a replacement facility. Although income would also have been significantly higher e.g. events, group exercise, swimming lessons and sportshall income, as an offset to overall costs.

The Management Fee can be seen to be at the same level now as in 2015 and demonstrates a significant efficiency and saving for the City Council, an objective the partnership established from the outset. Other costs not shown within the operating budgets of Newport Live have also been able to have been encashed by Newport City Council over the course of the last 10 years and certain costs associated with the Newport Centre have been saved, avoided or mitigated but these are within budgets held by companies such as Newport Norse.



3.8 Reserves policy

The Board guided by Charity Commission guidance, established that a reasonable level of unrestricted non-designated reserves is required between £1,200,000 and £1,400,000. This should allow the Trust to absorb short-term setbacks, loss or delays in funding, unforeseen expenditure requirements, to finance working capital needs, and to cash flow any time delays between developing projects, obtaining approval and funds being received, and to cover the capital and revenue costs of developing new and existing services.

Two other reasons are to allow for new or planned investments, and for cyclical maintenance expenditure for which Newport Live has an obligation under property leases, the property maintenance matrix agreement with Newport City Council and equipment and infrastructure that Newport Live owns or operates.

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
2022/2023	877	1,656
2023/2024	877 subject to 23-24 Audit	1,656 subject to 23-24 Audit

The reserves currently held by Newport Live provide operational and organisational confidence that any short term cashflow problem can be navigated. The reserves also provide an opportunity for small-scale operational and capital investment into the assets operated by Newport Live.

3.9 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 as referenced in the previous paragraph of the report.

In 23-24 the forecasted financial outturn which is subject to external audit confirmation predicts that Newport Live will report a break-even position in relation to its unrestricted activities.

4.0 Newport Live outputs in 23-24

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 to be developed to demonstrate the social value of sport, physical activity, arts and culture on the wellbeing of residents. This has not been forthcoming, for 24-25 Newport City Council and Newport Live is now developing a suite of new key performance indicators. For the purposes of this 23-24 report, national strategic indicator formula data has been used 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 at Sport and Leisure facilities

Year	Physical Activity participation	Spectators at Events	Non Physical Activity use of facilities	Total
2022-23	733,001	68,744	140,508	942,253
2023-24	915,899	96,671	97,695	1,110,265

The outputs demonstrate a further return to participation post the Coronavirus pandemic and rebuilding of the physical activity, sport and wellbeing provision, especially within indoor leisure settings including events and competitions returning to more normal levels. Newport Live have reductions to non-physical activity use of facilities due to the nature of change of facilities operated, the closure of the Newport Centre and the room and event-based business v's the Station wellbeing facility operation coming into play.

4.3 The Riverfront Theatre & Art Development performance

Year	Ticket Sales & Participation Data
2022-23	138,557
2023-24	221,192

Participation under the banner of the Riverfront Theatre includes performance and event ticket sales, workshop attendances, gallery and community, education and school engagement. Reporting in the arts to include wider participation is different in 23-24 to 22-23, bringing in participation external to the traditional theatre setting, as such data is not directly comparable. However, the Riverfront Theatre saw growth in ticket sales and participation, reflecting an innovative approach to programming theatrical content for local people.

4.5 New Leisure Facility

Newport Live whenever provided the opportunity during 23-24 worked closely with Newport City Council, on the design and delivery of the new leisure facility. Several workshops were hosted by Newport City Council and Newport Live attended to shape the opportunities within the envelope of the evolving facility design. Newport Live has provided feedback, insight and intelligence for incorporation into the design concepts which will then allow revised business plans and alternative strategies for long term participation in physical activity across the city.

5.0 Strategy & Budget

5.0 Strategy

The Newport Live Board undertook a number of actions within 23-24 to address the development of a new strategy for Newport Live.

The Board undertook a strategic development event, externally facilitated and including participants from Public Health, Sport Wales and Newport City Council. The outcome was the agreement to develop a new strategy for 2025-2030. The focus will be upon using the assets, programme, infrastructure and people to deliver core

services together with developing the preventions agenda to address the wellbeing and health challenges faced by residents in the city and the services currently unable to cope with increasing pressure and demand, namely social services and the NHS.

The Board determined that they would remove the strategy subgroup and make strategy the focus of the whole of the Board. A number of scoping events will take place during 2024 to build upon outcomes included in a developing cultural strategy, sports strategy and importantly the new facility development context and timescales. All of these factors will be used to shape and influence the Newport Live strategy to ensure the partnership with Newport City Council is strengthened and aligned.

5.1 Budget 2024-2025

The table below provides a high-level summary of the Newport Live Board approved budget for 2024-2025, the budget assumes confirmed management fees, grant and earned income forecasts by the Trust.

NEWPORT LIVE			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT			
DEPARTMENT: TOTAL NEWPORT LIVE			
	Budget to Budget		
	2024-2025	2023-2024	Variance
Sport & Leisure	£3,883,795	£3,413,629	£470,166
Theatre & Events	£1,899,552	£1,679,002	£220,549
Newport City Council	£3,047,064	£2,752,541	£294,523
Other Income	£424,085	£482,145	(£58,060)
External Grants	£372,025	£96,483	£275,542
Internal	£0	£0	£0
Sales	£9,626,520	£8,423,800	£1,202,720
Salaries & Wages	£6,715,858	£5,817,410	(£898,448)
Premises and Equipment	£534,947	£457,481	(£77,466)
Operational Costs	£1,585,992	£1,374,989	(£211,003)
Administration	£545,327	£544,890	(£437)
Advertising & Marketing	£149,200	£105,570	(£43,630)
Governance Costs	£9,500	£9,000	(£500)
Depreciation	£78,248	£66,905	(£11,343)
Overheads	£9,619,072	£8,376,244	(£1,242,828)
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	£7,449	£47,556	(£40,107)

Note – included within the income from Newport City Council 2024-2025 above is £623k relating to the delivery of the Aspire Alternative Education Programme and the Momentwm Active Travel Programme.

5.2 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.

During 23-24 this included capital investment into areas of critical business which generate income and participation outcomes.

The Newport Live will be developing the investment policy which aligns with the 2025-30 strategy to ensure investment into assets and business plan objectives can be met, investing into existing facilities and ensuring investment into people and facilities of the future is included in both policy, objectives and plans which complement those of our partners Newport City Council and also ensure that we maximise sources of external funding, leveraging any investment for a greater return and impact.

5.3 Asset Maintenance and Capital Investment

The Newport Live leases with Newport City Council are on a non-repairing basis and the Trust take a proactive approach with Newport City Council to prioritise and deliver investment into our assets. Newport City Council allocated £105k from Corporate Strategic Asset Maintenance Funds.

The funding in 2023-24 was principally invested into the replacement roof of the Newport Stadium which was end of life and also repairing the failure of the engineering of the moveable floor in the NISV Regional Pool.

Newport Live successfully supported programmes securing investment from Sport Wales into capital equipment for the Newport Stadium's athletics infrastructure for high jump and pole vault of over £40k and a further £55k investment for the complete refurbishment of the indoor tennis courts flooring surface. The Newport Live Board identified the opportunity to invest reserves funding to support the Council investment into assets which supported the partnership approach to delivering services and maximising funding available.

Additional investment of £150k was secured by Newport Live through the partnership with the Council linked to the City Centre wellbeing provision in Station.

23-24 concluded with an agreement with Newport City Council to create a strategic plan for investment into the leisure facility estate together with the Council's property agents Newport Norse and Newport Live.

5.4 Carbon Reduction and Sustainability

Newport Live have worked proactively in partnership with Newport City Council's Carbon and energy reduction colleagues to target the strategic climate change 22-27 objectives and maximise the decarbonisation opportunities and maximise the fiscal savings. Firstly, our focus on buildings has delivered sector leading projects in 23-24 with the introduction of Air Source Heat Pumps at the Newport International Sports Village Regional Pool. In addition, swimming pool covers were installed on the main pool and teaching pools, LED lighting installed throughout the building with the only area remaining in the building is the lighting within the indoor tennis hall which is under development and consideration.

NISV Pool Gas Use Kwh reduced significantly from 2,513,974 in 22/23 to 1,767,432 in 23/24.

NISV Velo Gas Use Kwh reduced from 704,192 in 22/23 to 571,486 in 23/24.

Newport Live supported and energy saving event at the Riverfront Theatre including Active Travel engagement support through the Momentwm project. The Riverfront Theatre in 23-24 was proactively targeted to reduce the carbon footprint of an energy intensive building. The lighting was replaced within the building with LED, an 81kWp solar array was installed on the roof and motors and building management systems optimised. Newport Live developed grant applications for the Council to access to replace the speciality theatre lighting to LED alternative, accelerating projects which otherwise were not affordable on payback and borrowing methods, this results in long term financial savings being able to be forecast within medium term financial plans for the City Council. Carbon reduction is anticipated to be over 101 tonnes of Co2 per annum.

Riverfront Electricity Kwh reduced from 617,940 to 555,974 in 23-24 based on a partial period of savings.

The Riverfront Theatre & Arts Centre 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.

The Newport International Sports Village benefited from 24 electric vehicle chargers being installed with 8 chargers in each of the car parks across the 60 acre site.

Newport Live removed the use of a motorbike for pacing activities within the Velodrome, introducing an electric derny bike through a partnership with British Cycling, a further carbon reduction at the facility.

Secure external cycle storage was also introduced at the Regional Pool and Tennis Centre to encourage greater active travel to the site.

Newport Live introduced a free cycle hire scheme for colleagues to encourage active travelling to works and between sites.

In September 2023 the Station wellbeing facility opened the secure cycle storage facility for 30 cycles and includes e-bike charging facilities in the city centre, immediately adjacent to the Train Station. The facility included within all Newport Live memberships and also accessible to non-members for a fee aligned to other secure cycle storage facilities in the city centre. This service provides users with confidence that their bike is secure when leaving it in the city centre.

Referenced later in the report the Momentwm active travel project now in year 2 of operation has significantly contributed to carbon reduction and air quality improvements in the city. Whilst focusing upon behaviour change which also delivers physical and mental health wellbeing outcomes.

Creation of the “Newport Boot Room” project was developed and launched in 23-24 to address the challenges of tackling poverty and sustainability theme. Working with community partners, schools, council family support services and other organisations, Newport Live have collected old pre-loved boots and trainers from families, which are donated to our Boot Room bins at clubs, schools, and leisure facilities. These are recycled, cleaned and re-sold for just £5, or in lots of cases given free to families, refugees, some schools where families of children and young people simply have no means to purchase essential footwear to allow the children to be active and not excluded from physical activity.

5.5 Capital Investment

Additional capital investment opportunities have also been secured by Newport Live, these are external to funding accessed through Newport City Council partnerships. Major capital investment is most efficient when procured through the Council partnership for tax purposes, however there were opportunities where this was not possible or practical to progress. The Newport Live Board therefore approved the following capital investment in 23-24.

Newport International Sports Village

Year	Item	Value
2023-24	Stadium – Pole Vault Bed and Hurdles	£28k
2023-24	Indoor Tennis Court refurbishment	£52k
2023-24	Electric motorbike – deryn purchase	£4k
Total		£84k

Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre

Year	Item	Value
2023-24	LED Theatre Lights – additional funding contribution	£30k
Total		£30k

Station wellbeing facility

Year	Item	Value
2023-24	Station gym equipment, digital and CCTV security upgrade	£150k
Total		£150k

Active Living Centre

Year	Item	Value
2023-24	3G Pitch development (project pending project cost evaluation)	£460k
Total		£460k

- Newport Live secured £400k on behalf of Newport City Council for the redevelopment and extension of the all-weather pitch at the Active Living Centre. The project including a capital contribution from Newport Live of £60k is on hold at the construction of this report. The costs due to the requirement for additional sustainable drainage has driven the price beyond the overall budget with secured funding of £675k to over £1.2m for the project. The result is discussions with funding partners including Sport Wales, Welsh Government and Newport High School are seeking solutions to reduce the scope of the project to within the cost and budget envelope and therefore improve the asset and generate additional revenue as per the Newport Live business plan for 24-25.

5.6 Other benefits of the Newport Live partnership include:

- Newport Live remains an efficient, very cost-effective, intelligent and agile model for the delivery of sport, leisure and cultural services on behalf of Newport City Council.
- Newport Live delivers major events for the city at the Riverfront Theatre and Newport International Sports Village, which includes Track Cycling, Swimming, Tennis, Athletics, Triathlon, Football, Rugby and allows other clubs and sports such as Cricket to flourish and run events. We also support for other exhibitions and major events located in and around the city.
- Newport Live will continue to support the wider development and cultural shift towards creating more sustainable travel behaviours within the city. A collaborative approach with the Newport City Council Active Travel Team and wider services to engage with residents, businesses, and community groups to act upon the Welsh Government's Active Travel Strategy and the priorities of Transport for Wales – Burns Commission delivery team.
- In March 2024, Newport Live became the first leisure trust / local authority in Wales to achieve Gold insport award status for its disability and inclusion programmes, strong workforce, and partnership approaches. This includes partnerships with

Newport City Council through Education, Social Services, and monitoring via the Council's Strategic Equalities Group, as well as other organisations across the city. Newport Live have set high standards for others to follow, feedback from Disability Sport Wales was that 'Newport Live is a benchmark for all things disability and inclusion in Wales'.

- In August 2023 we positively responded to a call to action from the City Council to partner with Education and Prevention and Inclusion service areas, to take over the operational deliver, and continuously improve the Aspire alternative education programme, previously delivered by the Youth Service. Newport Live have managed Aspire since September 2023, working closely with colleagues at John Frost, Llanwern, and Lliswerry High Schools, Education, and the Youth Service to support 36 pupils in community settings to develop, learn, and achieve, outside of their usual mainstream environment. There is opportunity to widen this support to other schools in the future and evaluation at the end of the school year will provide strategy for action.
- In 2023-24 Newport Live secured a further £30k for community projects, sports clubs, and youth groups working in ethnically diverse communities with young people, to add to the previous year's funding, as part of the London Marathon Trusts 'Levelling the Playing Field' initiative, which works to tackle disproportionality in the UK criminal justice system, through our UK partners the Alliance of Sport.
- We will continue to engage with and submit applications to trusts and foundations who support charities, together with national organisations to improve services and maximise the inflow if investment into assets within the city, leveraging the charitable and not for profit status.
- Seeking new opportunities for external contracts generating revenue which is subsequently beneficial to 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 performance outcomes and driven through a number of core programmes, a summary of the core programmes and context follows:

6.1 Health, Fitness & Wellbeing

Newport Live continued to develop its health, fitness and wellbeing programmes through its membership offer alongside welcoming all residents to inclusive services and facilities as pay and play customers. The focus in 23-24 was upon growth in participation and on retention of existing members, striving to improve the mental and physical health and wellbeing of everyone across the city whilst achieving financial targets and improving financial sustainability, growing the Station business model.

The Newport Live offer includes a limited class timetable as the area is small and not a purpose design Studio with sprung flooring and sound proof. We provided readily available interactive and important health checks together with personalised programmes for customers to improve their wellbeing. Newport Live provided significant value to customers when compared with the commercial sector where profit remains the purpose of operation and not wellbeing and health improvement outcomes which are achieved through regular attendance and not simply regular payment for a membership and not attending.

Station is now established as one of the best equipped health and fitness facilities within the city. 2023/24 saw investment into cardiovascular, resistance and interactive training equipment as well as improvements to the changing facilities to remove barriers to female participation. The facility provides access to equipment and classes that can cater for some of the cities more vulnerable and less mobile residents while also serving the needs of our junior through to senior members. Newport Live moved exercise referral and programmes for people with disabilities from Newport Centre successfully into Station. A significant increase in the number of junior and young adults accessing the facility was achieved and required the introduction of a new young adult membership to cater for 17 – 23-year-olds. Of the 94,000 attendances recorded at Station within 2023-24, 25% (23,000 attendances) of the customer base was under 25 years of age. Our key demographic which was a risk during the inception of Station remains a key consideration for retention. Impacting positively on the health longevity of our aging population and ensuring city centre facilities and services are accessible is the utmost priority as they cater for nearly 12,000 attendances at Station alone.

Collaboration within the service is paramount with Newport Live continuing the work within the health setting with National Exercise Referral Scheme and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's Muscular Skeletal Physiotherapy (MSK) Team. This work continues its aim to de-medicalise out-patient care by hosting physiotherapy clinics at the Regional Pool and Tennis Centre allowing physiotherapists access to high quality equipment and an environment that encourages patients to remain physically active.

The MSK team consists of 3 onsite physiotherapists and 1 administration colleague who are responsible for patient volume of 24 appointments per week.

Following a highly successful UK Active trial with Goodboost, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board’s Muscular Skeletal Physiotherapy Team procured the platform for Newport Live. This partnership increases the referral options for patients but also ensures the platform and Newport Live integrate further into the Move Better initiative. The programme has proved incredibly popular, especially the pool-based classes with customers. The scheme provided 370 bespoke rehabilitative support sessions for 55 customers during year, of which 73% reported an improvement in their health.

Capital investment into new equipment across the gym facilities has provided a new digital option for members allowing them to access personal training advice and programmes from key locations within Gyms, touchscreen TV consoles or directly to a smart device. Other investment contributed to the replacement of 10 items of cardiovascular equipment and addition of 12 items of resistance equipment providing a balanced training environment that meets the needs of the new and developing customer base.

6.1 Swimming

In March 2024, Newport Live were teaching 2,561 children each week across the Learn 2 Swim Programme at Newport International Sports Village and the Active Living Centre which is currently very limited following the loss of the Newport Centre facility and the multi-functional water spaces which offered significant swimming lesson opportunities. Growth within the programme is possible but determined by swimming teacher availability and an ongoing reduction in available pool space across the city. The wider sector is still dealing with a short fall following the loss of teachers during the pandemic who have moved to other industries. Recruitment has been and continues to be an ongoing priority, with Newport Live investing heavily in training opportunities through its Train to Teach programme.

Recreationally, we continue with strong 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 Free Swimming (AFFS) personnel including Veterans. This is significantly impaired by the limitations of the available public swimming pool space within the city. However, the following outputs were achieved:

Free Swimming Attendance 23-24						
	AFFS		U17		60+	
	ALC	NISV	ALC	NISV	ALC	NISV
Q1	1	82	273	769	42	255
Q2	1	107	243	1083	36	314

Q3	2	96	174	379	17	136
Q4	5	131	273	878	45	387
Total	9	416	963	3109	140	1092

Our long-standing partnership approach with the City of Newport Swimming & Water Polo Club continues to offer high performance aquatic opportunities. The last 12 months has seen the restructuring of the club to begin to operate safely, effectively and efficiently whereby we have been retaining swimmers and creating a stable aquatic pathway from participation to performance, reflecting the fact that the Newport International Sports Village 25m pool is the best shortcourse (25m) pool in Wales and the only venue with a high performance timing system and 700 seats for competitors and spectators. Through support from Newport Live the City of Newport Swimming & Water Polo Club and Head Coach were nominated and shortlisted for Club and Coach of the Year awards at the Swim Wales National awards 2023.

The introduction of a female only social swimming sessions was introduced in 2022 and this programme has continued to develop in 23-24. The 125 women of Muslim faith who are registered to attend have been accessing sessions on weekly basis with three opportunities now available. This work will continue as focus area with options for swimming lessons and swim teacher training for identified volunteers advertised and cultivated with the support of community organisations. The programme has also challenged our longer-term thinking around programming across a variety of areas, especially linked to health and fitness but very much around equality of access in the city which is becoming more culturally diverse year on year.

During 23-24 we reprogrammed the Regional Pool timetable to meet increasing wellbeing demand in the form of a variety of wellbeing aqua-based classes and self-guided water based movement programmes such as Goodboost. Current pool stock and design limits high volume participation spaces, limited pool space availability. These factors together with colder water temperatures compared to a Newport Centre type pool are an ongoing barrier to participation for people as the temperature negatively affects medical and movement conditions. Continuation of our work with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board resulted in the introduction of a pre-natal aqua classes, the only location in the city for such provision.

6.2 Cycling

Newport Live's Cycling Programme includes the management and operation of the Geraint Thomas National Velodrome of Wales, the national facility and only indoor Velodrome in Wales and one of five in the whole of the UK. Structured programmes were 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.

Highlights included the 20th Anniversary of the Geraint Thomas National Velodrome of Wales, coupled with the 50th Anniversary of Welsh Cycling in November 2023. This milestone was celebrated with a Cymru Velo international competition and Newport Festiva. Both events were made possible by securing Shared Prosperity Funding accessed through Newport City Council. The events brought the country's best riders in addition to the Women's sprint world champion from Germany whilst encouraging community participation in cycling within the NISV facilities.

Following the successful HSBC British National Track Championships the year prior Newport Live welcomed the National Youth & Junior Track Championships to the Geraint Thomas Velodrome for the third consecutive year from 8 to 12 August 23. These events also positive impact on the economic benefit with hotel accommodation and hospitality access to the city in addition to the profile of hosting high profile competition.

To address the need to increase participation in track cycling, in 23-24 our programme developed a seasonal approach to account for the summertime in which road riding takes prominence. The pathway provided opportunities for social and competitive riders, this all fed into a winter Race Night calendar for adults and juniors. The focus remains on bringing people into the track cycling pathway and retaining them in high quality opportunities, in addition to working with external organisations to increase utilisation of the track. 2023-24 achieved 41% occupancy which has significant opportunity for development, although it is difficult to develop the sport as the operator of a venue, something we are committed to doing.

The Newport Wheels for All programme was delivered 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 in 23-24 was free of charge to residents provides a vital physical activity provision for its users in addition to supporting the access for Maes Ebbw and Ysgol Bryn Derw Special Schools (ASD Special School), 61 pupils have benefitted from access to the scheme. The 948 recorded participations in 23-24 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. The provision has been included in the wider Tredegar Park redevelopment with installation of new location and pathways. A collaboration with our Momentwm has created the opportunity to host learn to ride sessions for adults alongside the existing programme at Tredegar Park.

6.3 Behaviour Change

Newport Live continued to work in partnership with Newport City Council and Transport for Wales's Burns Delivery Team. Newport Live is the delivery partner in the relationship 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, simultaneously contributing to improvements in air quality within the city.

Year two of the programme saw the implementation of the key delivery strands of the programme, whereby providing free of charge access to structured adult bike skills coaching sessions, fix your bike workshops and weekly walking groups around key routes in the city. The provision is accessible through self-referral process which extends to both social and employer routes. The formal launch of the programme has been challenging with legislative changes to speed limits resulting a short-lived negative reaction to the principle of actively travelling. 2023-24 saw the team teach 94 adults how to ride a bike and delivered maintenance workshops to over 100 people in both open and closed group workshops. The walking network was also established, providing 88 walking opportunities during the winter months whilst also providing walk leader training to local partner groups.

In 23-24 Momentwm launched a bespoke marketing campaign using all forms of media to reach people across the city. Engagement directly with businesses has been mixed and this has been largely the result of cultural changes regarding sustainability and the emphasis placed on it within a business or community group. Several high-profile city employers have been very proactive most notably Newport City Homes, Intellectual Property Office and Newport City Council. These businesses have provided staff engagement events allowing the team to highlight the initiative and provide bespoke follow up programmes.

The investment into infrastructure has also been welcomed with the development of the Newport Live wellbeing facility, Station's bike storage offering residents and customers access to over 30 secure bike racks and e-bike charging, opening in September, between Q3-4 of 2023-24 there were 43 people using the facility with over 370 bookings made. Momentwm are also providing access to loan bikes from the maintained fleet to partner businesses who are encouraging their employees to travel more actively either to work or just local level incidental journeys in their personal time, while also contributing to the sustainability agenda of the business and seeking to improve air quality within the city.

6.4 Tennis

Newport Tennis Centre continued to grow and develop participation in the sport, engaging with almost 341 Juniors and 46 adults on a weekly coaching programme, plus casual and member use of the courts. Annual utilisation of the 4 indoor courts was 60% with the underutilised early morning and daytime provision, which is compared to only 3% utilisation across the 3 outdoor courts. This is primarily down to the deteriorating condition of the playing surface and age of the courts. Redevelopment of the outdoor courts through a wider facility redesign would provide greater opportunity

to increase utilisation in physical activity through tennis, pickleball, padel or multisport activity.

Newport in 23-24 hosted 2 rounds of the British Tour and county cup alongside a comprehensive calendar of LTA regional competitions for wheelchair, visually impaired and learning disability events. We also introduced a series of grade 5 Welsh Tour events following the training of internal referees.

Ensuring Tennis remains accessible and inclusive continues to be a driving factor in the progress made within the programme. Development of wheelchair and autism friendly opportunities continues, and the centre is widely recognised for this provision. The school's roadshow now operates twice per year providing taster opportunities for all schools in the city in addition to large scale open days 2023-24 saw 19 schools attended with over 2200 children engaged. The team also provide continued access to regular pathway opportunity for young people and adults to participate in competitive and social coached programmes. Wider development of the pathway is ongoing ensuring that people can remain physically active through tennis in other forms of racket sport.

The Tennis Team supported Newport City Council with the operational setup of the Tredegar Park Tennis Courts, providing advice and guidance on programming and the setup of the LTA's club spark booking system. The team have also worked closely to build a weekly coaching programme at the park. This programme is supporting the engagement of residents to access locally accessible programme at an affordable price and acts as a feeder centre to the programme based at the Newport Tennis Centre and also overflow venue when events take place at the Newport Tennis Centre.

2023/24 has seen the completion of redevelopment work of the Tennis Centre, creating a high quality playing and spectating experience. The 4 indoor courts were resurfaced and coloured including the installation of back drops, netting and courts associated equipment. The redevelopment works cost £54,000 which was secured in part by a successful Sport Wales Capital Funding Grant application and £14,420 match funding capital from Newport Live, further in-kind purchases were made by Tennis Wales. Future focus will be on the decarbonisation of the court lighting through installation of LED lighting. Longer term planning will be focused on the 3 outdoor courts and options for varied facilities that could incorporate Padel or multiuse indoor facilities.

6.5 Other Sports

Newport Live has worked with a number of sporting partners across the year to develop stronger partnerships alongside increasing use of spaces across the Newport Live portfolio. This includes increased use at Newport Stadium through the introduction of supporting new teams, this includes Newport Rugby, Gwalia Women's Football

Team who during 23-24 we relocated from Cardiff and are now playing in the 3rd tier of the English football pyramid.

Local clubs and groups that utilise Newport Live centres on a regular basis include:

- NUTS (Newport Under 16 Triathlon Club)
- Newport County AFC
- Newport Rugby Football Club
- Newport Harriers
- Welsh Cycling
- Newport Kyokushin Karate Club
- Newport Badminton Academy
- Newport County Academy
- Newport Taekwondo Club
- United Sport Karate Organisation
- Newport Judo Club
- Newport Specials
- South Wales Goal Keepers
- Caerleon AFC
- Newport District Schools
- Lliswerry AFC
- Newport City FC
- Newport Corries
- Newport District Junior Youth League
- Newport Octopush Club
- Croesyceiliog Canoe Club
- Newport East Wales Triathlon
- Multisport (providing active sessions for adults with additional needs)
- Western Storm – Professional Ladies Cricket
- Play Netball
- Torfaen Puffins
- Newport Girls Gymnastics Club
- Newport Badminton Club
- Bettws Gymnastics Club
- Malpas United Junior Football Club
- Riot City Ravens (Roller Derby Club)
- Welsh Diving
- Newport Aces Basketball Club

6.6 Theatre, Arts and Culture

The Riverfront Theatre & Arts Centre in the heart of the city centre can report for 23-24 a record-breaking year when the Pantomime returned during the Christmas of 2023, with Beauty and the Beast welcoming record audiences of over 27,000 to the performance across the 63 shows, produced in house and provided a wonderful opportunity to enjoy high quality professional theatre affordably in Newport. Its many local resident's first ever experience of the theatre and demonstrates the Riverfront and the arts are accessible to everyone in Newport.

During 2023/2024 we continued to drive core programming creating opportunities for family participation, cinema, high quality music and tribute acts as well as more emerging and new theatre. During the year we worked to develop and support the offer of the future through our programme of Reflekt, where we encourage audiences to participate in new theatre and genres that they any not have previously experienced, and take a risk in seeing something that may make them Reflekt on the experience or performance.

We have seen our Cultivate shows progress to Co Productions and tour, the UK including Tigerface and A brief History of Difference which will be performing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in the Summer of 2024.

Importantly the commercial programme often generates the revenue from tickets also food and beverage which is required to support Arts Engagement, across our school, community and settings. Our series of workshops was extensive and had grown significantly throughout 2023/2024, the increased development has driven participation and attendance towards record levels of engagement, attendance, and participation in the arts. The Riverfront has a proven track record of developing audiences and welcoming all to the theatre during the year also included hosting a diverse range of events :

- International Women's Day
- Windrush Caribbean Film Festival
- Black Lives 365
- Welsh Music Nights
- National Armed Forces Day Exhibition and Activities
- International Roma Day and Celebrations
- Creative Roots, a project supporting a group of prisoners from Parc Prison
- Lullaby, supporting musicians and young mums in the city
- Playhouse, a partnership with Theatre lolo providing development opportunities for teachers and young people across schools in the city
- Reality Theatre, creating a Disability Pride Performance
- National Theatre Connections – Hatch Performance
- Hosted Pride in the Port
- Hosted Gŵyl Newydd Festival - live performances, workshops and interactive activities, all in the Welsh language

One of the highlights of the year was the introduction of the first Lunar New Year Celebration on a wider city-wide scale that we curated by the Riverfront team, in partnership with Newport City Council. The event was a wonderful celebration of the diverse culture in the city and an enormous success, celebrating the Chinese Community across South Wales at an event that traversed the city centre, contributing very significantly to the economic and tourism vibrancy of the city on the day.

The Riverfront worked hard to ensure that the Welsh Language continues to thrive and that the culture of Wales is celebrated by increasing audiences to Welsh Language performances and maintaining and creating more Welsh medium spaces.

A series of Welsh Language programmes have been developed and are now key elements of the weekly programme. Including Lle Crue, Canu Casnewydd, Arad Goch, Swyn and Gwyl Newydd. There are additional elements that were developed in 2023/2024 including increased use of Welsh Language in the Pantomime, and support for the development of new pieces in the Welsh Language.

The Arts Advisory Panel was established and operational during the year, providing insight, advice and guidance from the arts sector to the Newport Live board to aid strategic and operational planning.

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, it holds a pivotal position within the City in the arts sector, active partners include:

- G-Expressions
- Urban Circle
- The Place
- Tin Shed Theatre
- Newport Youth Council
- Connor Allen – Associate Artist
- Theatre lolo
- Newport Can
- Le Pub
- Gwent Levels
- Newport's Gypsy Roma Traveller Community
- Chartist Rising
- Ballet Cymru
- Operasonic
- Creu Cymru
- Arts & Business Cymru
- National Dance Company Wales

- National Youth Arts Wales
- Symphonia Cymru

Unfortunately, after applying to the Arts Council of Wales for ongoing funding has been reduced from £125k per annum to £70k per annum from 24-25, this will have a material impact on the opportunities that Newport Live can create and efficiencies will have to be found to balance the budget.

6.7 Positive Futures

Positive Futures continued to deliver intervention programmes in 23-24 in areas of the city with higher levels of deprivation, the work is predominantly by the Office of the Gwent Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Sport Wales, and Newport City Council. The programme in the year moved to embed a Youth Justice Worker within the workforce and Education Psychologist from ABUHB, supporting trauma informed approaches by trusted role models, who are sport and youth work qualified, and work evenings at our open access youth and sport engagement sessions in Pillgwenlly, Bettws, Ringland, Duffryn, St Julians, and Maindee. In year this programme attracted 3103 individual children and young people to take part, with a total of 9367 participations this year.

The team supported 54 individual young people, totalling 384 one to one engagements, with staff role models mentoring and challenging behaviours using sport as a tool to engage them with. The young people were referred from our partners in Preventions, Youth Justice Service, Schools, Bridge Achievement Service, and Social Services where they are at risk of or involved in criminal exploitation. Positive Futures and Aspire, along with other multi-agency meetings have formed an improved approach to sharing information, support and intelligence to the benefit of young people, Education, Gwent Police, and our communities.

The Newport Live team also played a significant role in delivering ethnically diverse youth engagement programmes through its open access youth engagement and sport provision, and with activities such as the weekly Refugee Football project in partnership with Safer Newport, GAP / Sanctuary Project, Youth Justice Service, and Positive Futures which has engaged 65 individuals, totalling 289 participations since November 2023 when Newport Live took it over from the Youth Service.

Positive Futures and Aspire alternative education programmes and teams work closely as part of multi-agency group meetings, and with a range of partners both across the Newport, Gwent, Wales, and the UK, including with:

- Safer Newport (Community Safety Partnership), ASB and Contextual Safeguarding Group, Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Group, OPCC quarterly contract meetings, and Active Gwent Positive Futures regional operational meetings.
- Prevention & Inclusion, Education, Children's Services, Youth Justice Service, Youth Service, and Preventions.
- OPCC, Gwent Police, Probation Service, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service
- Sport Wales
- Alliance of Sport, Active Communities Network, Street Games, Sported
- St Giles Trust and Fearless
- University of South Wales
- Urban Circle, Community House, GAP / Sanctuary Project, Newport Yemeni Association, etc.

6.8 Community Sport and Physical Activity Development

Newport Live in 23-24 also delivered multiple community-focused wellbeing, sport and physical activity programmes which include: -

- Support for children and families with disabilities and impairments, totalling 1581 participations, providing inclusive activities and targeted provision in schools and communities, working with Sparkle, ABUHB, and Children's Services Disabled Children's Team. Peer leadership volunteer and coach education was provided to students at Maes Ebbw, and 6 of the students now deliver activities to other children in special schools and mainstream primary schools.
- Support to cost of living hit families living in poverty in Newport, through initiatives such as the Newport Boot Room, which was established in 2023, and received 400 donated boots in its first year, of which 320 have been reused and given out to those that need them the most.
- At our community-based holiday sport and physical activity programmes and camps, over 2500 packed lunches were given out to children and young people, tackling 'holiday hunger' where free school meals are not available. Newport Live have also again played a pivotal role in support Children Looked After within Children's Services, with the Christmas Cwtch Appeal over the period of November and December, which raised £6.5k via our Go Fund Me page from willing residents and small businesses. Children were invited to a partnership Christmas Party event at the Celtic Manor, where Newport Live community sport staff delivered party games, fun activities and a Christmas experience they may not have otherwise received.
- Support to Early Years settings, in the form of training and building confidence in teaching staff and early years workers has been a success throughout the year. Working in Private Day Nurseries, Flying Start settings, and Nurseries in Primary

Schools, Newport Live also provide physical literacy programmes with resources for staff and parents, as part of the foundation phase.

- Partnership Agreement with the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) grows from strength to strength. The WRU agreement into Newport provides investment (£10k) for us to fund a Female 'Development Coach' within our team, with access to our network in schools and communities. We achieved success with the growth of engagement amongst girls (linking to local community clubs), areas of poverty (linking to Positive Futures open access sessions), and ethnically diverse community engagement (linking specifically to Maindee Primary and Wicked Wednesday youth project). In addition, we are providing in partnership with the WRU and Dragons, 'Fit and Fed' holiday camps which provide free rugby and free packed lunches in the holidays at local community rugby clubs.
- Delivery in Newport Primary Schools included 9 sports festivals totalling 1151 participations from 36 Primary Schools, after school sports coaching and wellbeing activities were provided and developed positive relationships with Headteachers and school health and wellbeing leads. The Daily Mile initiative grew in a further 6 schools in Newport, with total engagement being 68,411 participations, thus increasing the amount of physical movement each day amongst pupils, contributing to an increased focus and wellbeing amongst pupils.
- We specifically prioritised Girls Football this year with 3 x festivals taking place for the very first time, attracting 600 participations amongst primary age girls, and in addition we have delivered a first ever Secondary School Girls Competition attracting 140 participations, a huge growth area in sport and one which we'll continue to support in growing the girls game.
- Secondary Schools programmes of sport and physical activity across 10 schools, attracted 7130 participations whilst supporting the development of peer leadership and coaches of the future.
- Our Young Ambassadors volunteer development programme and pathway to employment, delivered 61 qualifications to young people, with an outcome of 5 newly appointed Casual Sports Coaches now working on Community Sport and Positive Futures programme as coaches of the future.
- Community sports development programmes to support community sports clubs, volunteer development and club infrastructure and partnership have taken place with 22 Newport voluntary sports clubs receiving their share of £190k of Sport Wales 'Be Active Funding' through supported small grant applications Newport Live staff have supported.

The Community Sport and Physical Activity Development programme and team worked collaboratively locally, regionally and nationally and with a range of partners across the Newport, Gwent, and Wales this included:

- Education, Schools, Nurseries, Disabled Children’s Team, Looked After Children, Parks & Recreation, Play Service, Early Years Service.
- Sport Wales
- Disability Sport Wales
- National Governing Bodies of Sport – Welsh Rugby Union, Football Association of Wales, Welsh Rugby Union, Welsh Netball, Basketball Wales, Welsh Boxing, Welsh Cycling, Tennis Wales, Swim Wales, etc.
- University of South Wales and Coleg Gwent
- Community Sports Clubs
- Sparkle

6.9 Marketing and Communications

During 23-24 Newport Live delivered a wide and diverse a range of campaigns to support and drive awareness of sport, wellbeing, physical activity and theatre and arts, room hire and event venue options in the City together with seeking to drive engagement, sales, and participation with our wide range of programmes, activities, events and new venues including Station Wellbeing and core service offering. We used 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 marketing strategy.

The website, our main channel for digital content and engagement www.newportlive.co.uk received 279,000 visitors during April 2023 to March 2024, which is a reduction of circa 78,000 visitors in website traffic on 22-23. However, this was due to the change in ticketing platform, as during 2023/24 we migrated to Ticketsolve a cloud-based system who now operate the ticketing element of the website. Previously this had sat within Newport Live’s website pages for the purchasing of Riverfront tickets. Therefore when working through the ticket purchasing process a user leaves www.newportlive.co.uk and migrates across to www.ticketsolve/newportlive.co.uk

The Newport Live app was relaunched with a fresh look in October 2023 and continued to provide booking, information and customer engagement opportunities with 34,023 live users to date. During the year there was an average of just over 800 new app downloads per month, with the bookings page for gym and fitness classes the most used tiles within the app.

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 28% of visits to our website. In 24-25 it is our aim to further develop our engagement across social media channels, with the introduction of a TikTok channel for Newport Live, whilst reducing Facebook pages that are returning low engagement with customers.

7.0 Strategic and Operational highlights from 2023–2024 include:

1. Newport Live continued to partner with Newport City Council to develop requirements, specifications, and plans for the new city centre leisure facility to replace the Newport Centre.
2. The development of a new 5-year strategy for Newport Live aligned to a new sporting strategy and cultural strategy for the city of Newport was deferred to 2025 as the sporting and cultural strategies together with other major asset development projects were delayed. It is key for Newport Live as a delivery and operations partners for the Council to be aligned with strategy.
3. External funding was secured for the redevelopment of the indoor tennis courts as the Regional Pool and Tennis Centre together with investment into athletics equipment for high jump and pole vault in the Newport Stadium. Significant funding was secured through grants by Newport Live for the installation of energy efficiency measures and lighting into the Riverfront Theatre to realise significant utilities savings and fastrack carbon reduction savings.
4. Enhanced digitally connected equipment was purchased and installed in the Station Gym, providing a connected experience for customers to support their health, fitness and wellbeing goals and provide Newport Live with greater insight into customer behaviours. A pilot project to understand equipment use utilising AI and CCTV footage has been commissioned and will be used to inform future procurement and segmentation of customer use, behaviour and investment into colleagues as well as equipment.
5. The work 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 was not concluded due to ongoing works with the design, development and tendering of the new facility. These works are to be carried forward into 24-25.
6. The Newport Live Arts Advisory Panel provided advice, guidance and strategy to the Newport Live Board and are ready to input into the cultural strategy for the city.
7. We introduced very successfully the Momentwm branded active travel behaviour change programme in the city. The Burns Commission via Welsh Government and

in partnership with Transport for Wales and Newport City Council agreed a further year of funding as a result of project success. 24-25 was funded and 25-26 programme is in development for submission.

8. The future strategy for the Connect Centre (Newport YMCA) was not resolved in 23-24. Newport Live did, however, agree to support Newport City Council and extend the term of the lease for St Andrews School through to 2025.
9. We continued to strengthen our contribution and impact within the health and social care sector through effective partnerships linked to preventable health issues that can be managed through improved physical activity.

7.1 Challenges

1. An increasing proportion over and above those in 22-23 saw customers qualify for concession-based pricing with Newport Live. This is positive that they are investing in their health and demonstrates the need to maintain such a policy, the challenge is whether the magnitude of the concessionary discounts can be maintained in current financially challenging circumstances.
2. The ability to maintain sustainable financial resources and fees and charges that are inclusive to local residents will require proactive efficiency conversations between the Trust and the City Council. Maximising all opportunities available including exploring models such as “Agency” which can delivery efficiencies and or funds for reinvestment and sustainability of service standards.
3. The major challenge is the availability of capital funding to reinvest and maintain existing assets. Several of the assets have distinct structural, mechanical or electrical infrastructure which is overdue replacement. A number of facilities including the NISV 3G is now reducing levels of performance which is negatively impacting the standards of sport that can take place on the facility and having a significant economic impact upon the Newport Live income target. A review of asset prioritisation and a strategic plan for investment into cultural and sporting assets within the ownership of the City Council will benefit long term planning and sustainable delivery.
4. Newport Live continue to be a Living Wage employer and should the rate for 24-25 and future years be above the rate of pay inflation for other Newport Live colleagues there is likely to be an sustainability of budget without significant price increases or employee retention if not addressed by Newport Live and recognition by Newport City Council as to the impact being an exemplary employer aligned to the City Council.

End of Report