
Making Lives Better: Caring for the Future

Laying the foundations for success

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. About Hafod	4
3. Hafod as a learning organisation	8
4. Hafod as a collaborator	11
5. Key development themes	12
6. Future challenges and opportunities	21

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2019, Hafod commissioned Insight Wales Consulting to document its transformation journey and to put forward an objective view on how the organisation was developing, its future direction and the challenges it will face.
- 1.2 The broad questions we were asked to address were:
 - (i) What sort of organisation was Hafod in the past?
 - (ii) What sort of organisation is it becoming?
 - (iii) What sort of organisation does it need to be in future?
- 1.3 The prime purpose of the exercise, as well as telling the story of Hafod's evolution, was to provide an independent commentary to complement the organisation's own views of how it has changed and continues to change.
- 1.4 Given the nature and size of the organisation, an exhaustive analysis of Hafod's transformation would be an enormous task, well beyond the resources available for the work. We were not commissioned to undertake a rigorous assessment or a detailed evaluation of Hafod, which would have been an altogether different scale of assignment. Our approach was designed to be sufficient to consider the breadth of Hafod's operations and robust enough to draw meaningful conclusions.
- 1.5 Over and above desk research, document reviews and introductory meetings with the Chief Executive and members of the Executive Team, we held meetings with groups of staff across the organisation. With the encouragement of the Executive Team, the meetings allowed staff to speak openly. They were able to engage freely in discussion and respond frankly to our searching questions. We also had a short update and discussion session with the Board.
- 1.6 We observed openness and candidness among the Board and Executive, with recognition of the issues identified by regulators and auditors and which needed to be addressed in the short-term. However, and encouragingly so, we saw a clear and strong commitment to identify and address other issues that have been overlooked for several years. We saw evidence of reviews deep into the workings of the organisation to improve the way it works and what it does for its tenants, service users, and staff.
- 1.7 This report brings together the findings from our desk research and our discussions and observations. It draws out key themes and these have been used to structure the report. It raises shortcomings and areas of concern as much as highlighting successes and positive attributes, of which there are a number. Alongside these, we have commented on how the organisation is positioned or needs to be positioned to take advantage of opportunities and to address the many challenges in its operating environment.

2. About Hafod

- 2.1 Hafod is a not-for-profit organisation providing affordable housing and high-quality social care and support across South and West Wales. In a nutshell, it makes people's lives better. It also reinvests any operating surplus for the benefit of those it serves.
- 2.2 As a Registered Social Landlord, it manages nearly 6,000 affordable homes and builds new ones, helping first-time buyers by providing homes for sale as part of its Low-Cost Home Ownership scheme. It is an innovator and was instrumental in creating the Welsh Housing Partnership, which has helped to attract more funding to build more affordable homes. Its work in housing is regulated by the Welsh Government.
- 2.3 As a Registered Care Provider, Hafod provides residential, nursing and domiciliary care and support. It has ten care homes across South Wales and three purpose-built Extra Care sites, which is the modern alternative to sheltered accommodation and residential care. In term of numbers, it is the second largest provider of care homes in Wales and the biggest in the not-for-profit sector.
- 2.4 Most of its homes provide long-term care for people with dementia but it also provides short-term respite care. Three are nursing homes for people with acute health care needs. It also has four retirement homes comprising individual self-contained flats. Its role in social care is regulated by the Care Inspectorate Wales.
- 2.5 With an almost equal split of turnover between housing and care and support, Hafod is rare among its peer organisations in Wales. This brings a different set of challenges to those faced by many organisations in the housing and care sectors.
- 2.6 Hafod has a long history of which it is proud and the people we spoke with were very respectful of its past. Over its 50-year history, it has created a strong financial platform, an extensive asset base and services with high satisfaction levels and strong external reputations. However, it also had limitations, which were the basis for embarking on major transformation in recent years. The main organisational challenges to be addressed were as follows:

Lack of integration

- The organisation functioned in two silos, one for housing and the other for social care and support, with a resources function working across the two. Governance structures mirrored these silos, as did service development and delivery.
- The policy and legislative landscape, however, has moved towards integration, deeper collaboration, seamless pathways for service users and more personalised services. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014) and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) have created legal requirements for services to work in an integrated way.

- From the commercial, organisational cost, and customer perspectives, working in these weakly connected silos would simply not have been sustainable for Hafod. Also, the increasing marginalisation of Hafod Care within the Group was seen as a significant risk to its longer-term sustainability.

Disconnection from customers

- Hafod had become gradually more distanced from its customers over time, neither communicating with them enough, nor effectively enough.
- There was a lot of good customer-facing work taking place in communities and care settings, commitment from staff, and good intentions and genuine attempts to engage. However, anecdotally we heard customers generally felt disengaged and distant from decisions that affected their lives, care services, homes and tenancies.
- This 'doing to' approach is certainly not unique to Hafod. The social housing sector generally is in the process of increasing engagement with tenants, rebuilding trust and reconnecting with communities.

Impetus for change

- While the organisation is financially stable and delivering good services, the feeling was one of there being a relatively fixed mindset with no strong impetus for transformation.
- Decision-making and leadership were not dispersed through the organisation. Staff did not feel empowered and new approaches and ideas could not easily penetrate from outside the organisation or arise from within.
- This was evident in the culture of the organisation, which we were told was not conducive to innovation and not sufficiently open to allow challenge to existing ways of working.

Collaboration

- The organisation was collaborative insofar it participated in a wide range of industry forums and sectoral groups. Generally, it communicated well with its stakeholders.
- Strategic collaboration to integrate and grow the business and make it more relevant to the changing world was comparatively lacking. It was rather inward-looking. In this sense, Hafod was something akin to a 'sleeping giant', which was not fulfilling its true potential.
- Internal collaboration was also weak. Commercial opportunities were undoubtedly missed by not working in an integrated way. A lack of integrated governance across the business was evident, without touching on the negative consequences of internal silos for staff and customers.

- 2.7 In 2017, a change of leadership saw a new chief executive join Hafod. This triggered a programme of major change across the business, which is reflected throughout this report. The programme of transformation, which is ongoing, recognised the strong legacy and heritage of the organisation and the skills, knowledge and assets that exist within it. It sought to build on these foundations to make the business not only fit for the future for the challenges it faces, but also to position itself as a leader and innovator in the field.
- 2.8 The transformation programme was not an end in itself. The organisation's purpose of 'Making Lives Better' was central to the work and the vision for the organisation. The emphasis of the organisation was shifted to its customers, which is covered later in the report.
- 2.9 In summary, the significant changes which have taken place since the organisation came under new leadership are:
- (i) **Dismantling silos** - Although integration is ongoing and there will always be areas where it works better than others, the organisational silos were replaced by integration reasonably quickly. Previously disparate functions came together, decisions were taken on a group-wide basis and a shared purpose and vision for the future was put forward, which made a strong case for amalgamation.
 - (ii) **Strategic direction** - A new strategic direction was established, which focused on improving health, well-being, and prosperity in communities through the integration of housing, social care and support. This marked a change in emphasis for Hafod, which set out its manifesto for change in the form of 'Caring for the Future'. This comprised a series of events and campaigns which brought together partners from across the housing, health, and social care landscape to scope out a future and to identify a route map for a more integrated approach to delivering services. One of the key challenges for the future is following up this work to turn participants' enthusiasm and commitment into the development and testing of new models of service.
 - (iii) **Reconfiguration of the housing front line** - The move from the more traditional tenancy and income-based model to a neighbourhood model, with Neighbourhood Coaches who work more closely with communities in smaller patches, build relationships and help customers work towards their own goals. This approach has been in operation since April 2019. The feedback we have received shows senior managers have been open to making further improvements to the model as a result of staff views from their operational experience. One such example is to strengthen the approach to income management and universal credit. This was welcomed by the staff concerned.
 - (iv) **Amalgamation** - The service silos at Hafod were reflected in the complexity of its decision-making processes and governance structures. These have been rationalised to what is now an over-arching Board, an operational Board, an audit

and risk committee and several smaller, more focused committees such as, for example, the Tenant Scrutiny Panel. The group structure of Hafod with Hendre as its parent organisation was legally amalgamated in 2019, making Hafod a single entity.

- (v) **Senior leadership changes** - The make-up, skills and backgrounds of the Executive Team have changed quite dramatically and strengthened, mirrored by changes in the Board, where skills-based recruitment has been used to bring in particular expertise, and changes in senior and middle management levels. This has diversified thinking, given new direction and improved Hafod's outward focus.
- (vi) **Reforming and restructuring** - One of the most significant changes has been to reshape the HR function and redefine how it supports the organisation. The new model was very positively endorsed by staff in our discussion groups. A new Research and Innovation function was established in 2018 and, at the time of writing, the Asset Management function was undergoing a significant restructure. Significant structural changes have also taken place in Care, mainly in relation to central coordinating roles.
- (vii) **Redefined approach to customers** - In response to the increasing disconnection from customers, Hafod set out a new Customer Charter in 2018-19, which it co-produced with its customers. At its core is a desire to achieve a more equal balance in the relationship between Hafod and its customers, giving them more opportunities to influence decisions which affect them and improving communications. It formed the basis of the strategic priority of 'Placing Customers at the Heart', which is in the process of pervading the way the organisation works. This is a significant shift in mind-set and practice, which is reflected later in the report.

2.10 As in any organisation, the pathway of change can be a rocky one. The scale and pace of change at Hafod has not been without its challenges and consequences. However, the feedback we obtained from staff identified some successes in improving how Hafod works, the tools to do the work and how it has strengthened its ability to respond to future challenges in a changing operating environment.

2.11 The following sections explore themes emerging from our analysis.

3. Hafod as a learning organisation

- 3.1 We saw substantial evidence Hafod is committed to learning as individuals, within teams and as an organisation. Learning is consistently the top-rated attribute in the regular organisational culture surveys Hafod undertakes, which it has based on a Harvard Business School method identified through its own learning networks.
- 3.2 Hafod has a clear ambition to be recognised for excellence in work-based learning. It launched “Academi Hafod” to provide its workforce with access to work-based learning opportunities to support their development needs in line with their ambitions. It hosts learning and development programmes from induction, technical skills training, and development programmes such as leadership, to apprenticeships and health and social care qualifications.
- 3.3 Hafod also has a bespoke leadership development programme, developed in conjunction with the Cardiff and Vale College and the University of South Wales. It is aimed at managers at all levels of the organisation and seeks to instil a common set of leadership principles and skills, and common language around leadership. It also gives managers an opportunity to step back from the day-to-day running of the organisation to reflect on their own effectiveness and their further development.
- 3.4 Hafod’s Nursing Care Assistant programme, developed in partnership with the University of South Wales and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, is a particularly impressive example of its commitment to learning. The need for career pathways for care workers has long been recognised as being vital to helping to tackle the recruitment problems in the sector and to maintaining the social care workforce. The programme aims to provide career progression for senior carers and at the same time is helping to address some of the challenges associated with a general shortage of nurses. To date, 31 carers have completed the programme. Although there are challenges in the implementation and issues to be ironed out, the new skills are helping to free up clinical nurses to focus more on high-level care.
- 3.5 There is a dedicated quality and compliance function for care services, which is based on a rolling programme of audits across care settings and frequent data collection to generate performance and assurance reports. There is a substantial evidence base underpinning the care operation and systems for turning this evidence into practice to ensure the organisation continues to learn and improve. Hafod has chosen to invest in this function to complement the statutory auditing and inspection regime. It has proven important in the early identification of issues and the maintenance of high standards in the periods between formal inspections.
- 3.6 Perhaps the most obvious sign Hafod is becoming a learning organisation is its focus on research and evidence and how it uses this to drive innovation. Significant investment has been made in a Research and Innovation function. This has strengthened the organisation’s capability and changed its way of thinking in several ways. Building up this function has brought in out-of-sector industry experience and

new skills. They include, for example, design and testing, social research and evaluation, quality management and data analysis. They complement existing skills and will help to sustain the organisation's continued development in the long-term. The research and innovation function has stimulated fresh thinking, challenged assumptions and long-held ideas. It has invigorated Hafod's approach to problem-solving. The intentions behind the function are bold:

- To scan the external and internal horizons for opportunities and challenges to which Hafod may need to respond.
- To develop and test solutions to problems in a structured and evidence-led way.
- To coordinate and improve customer engagement and involvement.
- To streamline and simplify Hafod's operations to deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness.
- To develop partnerships beyond what might be the usual ones to support innovation and improvement.
- To overhaul the way the organisation collects, uses, and learns from data.

3.7 Over and above this, the intention is to make the organisation think differently, be prepared to experiment, and take calculated risks to achieve better outcomes. As a form of learning, this is said to be in its infancy. Inevitably, it will take some time to bed in and become a natural way of working. That said, there are early indications of success. We saw evidence of data being collected and demonstrating returns on investment of working in this way.

3.8 Learning comes in many different forms. External reviews and surveys, customer involvement, complaints and colleague engagement all generate useful insights and information, which Hafod responds to in different ways. In 2018, Hafod was subject to an adverse regulatory judgement by the Housing Regulator. The judgement cited failings in leadership, management and governance processes. This judgement was a real test of the organisation's ability to reflect and recognise its shortcomings, as well as a test of its resilience and determination.

3.9 There is a definite sense of humility regarding the judgement. There is no attempt to downplay or hide from the issues it raised, uncomfortable though they were. The focus of learning around the judgment relates to how the organisation is governed from the top and the response has been substantial:

- The structure and composition of the Board was reviewed and skills deficits on the Board have been addressed through recruitment.
- Governance processes, particularly around HR governance, have been subject to intense review and reformed.
- Development programmes and an appraisal system have been introduced for Board members.
- A stakeholder mapping exercise has been commissioned to improve how external influences are factored into decision-making.

- A network of external advisers around governance has been used to inform improvement plans and the organisation has been subject to several independent reviews from which it has learned and acted.

3.10 Although the necessary improvement actions were encompassed by a voluntary undertaking with the Welsh Government, it is clear the review and reflection activity has extended well beyond the improvements identified by the regulator. Other opportunities to improve governance, systems and processes have been sought voluntarily to pre-empt similar issues in future and to improve the organisation.

3.11 The fact the organisation has been able to learn from this experience without compromising its services, threatening the organisation's financial viability, or losing focus on implementing its strategy is testament to its resilience. Taking some constructive lessons from the experience and using them as a catalyst for wider improvement shows a level of maturity as a learning organisation. It is vital this is not lost in the future and, with a commitment to continuous improvement, becomes embedded as an organisational trait.

4. Hafod as a collaborator

- 4.1 We heard many good examples of joint working with other organisations at operational level including the NHS and social care, property developers, local authorities, service commissioners and regulators. As in any organisation, this varies across different areas of the business. Our discussions did identify some concerns and problems. These included concerns about the ability to engage stakeholders and gain traction for serious consideration of joint action and new developments and service models, including digital solutions, and the time it can take. Also, the challenges of operating in different geographical areas with different organisations and considerable variation in systems and approaches. This is by no means unusual. Hafod is in the process of undertaking an independent stakeholder mapping exercise to better understand the perceptions of its stakeholders and to inform future action.
- 4.2 In terms of strategic collaboration, Hafod is targeting the more ambitious areas of its strategic plan, such as the integration agenda, new funding models for supporting future developments and securing the future viability of its care estate. Coupled with the diversity of the business, which spans nine local authority areas and a broad range of services, this has meant Hafod has not always been well represented in the regular sector forums, interest groups and conferences in recent years.
- 4.3 Strategic effort on collaboration is mainly focused on:
- Health boards - around co-design and co-delivery of 'Caring for the Future' and the integration agenda, which is a priority for Hafod, as well as competing for new contracts and maintaining existing ones.
 - Key politicians, local authorities, professional advisers, and social investors – around the future of the care estate and affordable housing development.
 - Being politically informed and horizon-scanning, informed through a network of advisers.
 - Universities and colleges – in respect of career pathways, leadership development, training and Academi Hafod.
 - Supporting innovation and transformation through partnerships with the financial sector, universities, manufacturing industry, technology specialists, the Life Sciences Hub, Regional Innovation Hubs and others.
 - Continuing to engage in industry forums around universal issues, such as rent policy, welfare reform, decarbonisation, housing finance, social care and support services, digital transformation, workforce development, customer engagement and others.
- 4.4 Hafod is keen to develop strategic partnerships across organisational and sector boundaries to identify and pursue co-ventures, and to co-design new and improved service models and new ways of funding them. It is trying to engage new and existing partners to stimulate innovation and fresh thinking from sectors outside housing and care. This does not necessarily come easily or quickly. Success will require ongoing thinking, investment of time and effort, and effective marketing and communications.

5. Key development themes

Governance

- 5.1 As an organisation operating across several regulated functions and drawing significant amounts of public funding to deliver new homes, housing services and care and support services, good governance is vital. It is an ongoing requirement to which adequate time should be devoted.
- 5.2 While it is fair to say the trigger for the high-profile that governance now has in the organisation was the housing regulatory judgement in 2018, the approach taken in response has gone well beyond the regulator's requirements. It has extended much deeper into the organisation. From the trigger point of the judgement, the investment and sequence of actions aimed at reinforcing governance has been robust. A senior director was brought in to oversee the governance reforms. Deep reviews have taken place on many aspects of the organisation, its culture and the way it works. This has been instrumental in identifying other aspects of the business where there is scope for improvement, such as health and safety, landlord compliance, data integrity and procurement, all of which impinge on the governance of the organisation.
- 5.3 The housing regulatory judgement had significant implications for the Board, which responded with a programme of work aimed at increasing its overall effectiveness and that of individual members. Role descriptions have been revised and aligned to best practice. A comprehensive programme of Board development was introduced with support from external experts. The Board has committed to an annual review of effectiveness and appraisals of Members using 360° review. The planning and systems that support the Board have also been reviewed and enhanced, to maximise the use of its time and to provide it with clear oversight of the key elements of the business.
- 5.4 Membership of the Board was refreshed through a skills-based recruitment programme and this has both extended Hafod's sphere of influence and improved the quality of debate and scrutiny of decisions. The governance structures themselves were also revised in 2019. This was partly a response to the legal amalgamation of the group, but also to allow further streamlining and clearer accountabilities.
- 5.5 The judgement also had implications for the day-to-day operation of the business, primarily in terms of HR governance, which has seen a radical overhaul, been subject to legal scrutiny and been firmly embedded in recruitment processes. It is important to report work to reform HR governance was already underway before regulatory intervention. The HR function was in the process of being overhauled to address a series of legacy issues and processes that were no longer fit for purpose and causing the organisation difficulties. The turnaround of the function is acknowledged by staff internally and externally it was recognised by a CIPD Wales Award in December 2019 for the best in-house HR team.

- 5.6 Action taken as part of the ‘Transforming Governance Improvement Plan’ has involved the workforce and drawn on the results of several independent reviews, including this one. In seeking to be the best it can be in terms of governance, Hafod has also drawn in advice, mentoring and best practice from other similar organisations, the health sector, manufacturing industry and academia, to ensure it was open to a wide range of possibilities and not constrained by established ways of doing things. In doing so, new ground has been broken, robust cultural metrics have been developed, which are reported on a 6-monthly basis and there is a dedicated Safeguarding Panel chaired by an independent expert. These are signals of an organisation taking governance very seriously.
- 5.7 In all, Hafod’s current approach to governance can be characterised as a ‘no stone unturned’ approach. Of course, this does not mean there is no room for further improvement; there is. While the reforms have been swift and extensive, inevitably there is a bedding-in period for new governance arrangements and some areas remain under-developed. The latter include stakeholder and customer involvement in governance, on which there is some way to go. The Board and Executive Team are working to achieve a balance between over-governing, which can slow down decision-making and agility, and the risk appetite, and proportionate governance, which allows for the smooth and efficient running of the organisation. Moreover, the governance arrangements are still being subjected to continual external scrutiny, each element of which can prompt more change.
- 5.8 The progress made on governance, the effectiveness of the Board and relationships with regulators are clear. Hafod has chosen to learn from what could have been a profoundly negative experience. It has held a mirror to itself, going further than issues raised with it to dig deep into the organisation in search of improvements needed. It has examined its effectiveness, its processes, its resources, and skills and not been afraid to make radical changes where necessary.
- 5.9 The organisation is undoubtedly stronger, more resilient, and more robust as a result. During the time work was underway for this report, the Housing Regulator revised Hafod’s regulatory judgement for governance upwards to the level of ‘increased’, recognising the progress made in the year. This is testament to the comprehensiveness of the response, the commitment of the Board to improvement and the resilience of the organisation, which was able to absorb the shock and negative impact of the original judgment and remain on-track.
- 5.10 Hafod is also looking to spearhead innovation in regulation, driven by the necessity of the integrated organisation it is evolving into. It is engaging international experts in exploring new perspectives on risk and how to reconcile innovation and regulatory compliance. This is testing new ground. Hafod is engaging with the ideas put forward in the 2019 *Regulation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution* piece published by the Department for Business, Energy, Industry and Strategy, which talks about re-framing regulation in a way that supports innovation for social and economic benefit and creates ‘safe spaces’ where experimentation can take place, free from regulatory

censure. This is highly relevant to an organisation increasingly driven by a desire to innovate and which straddles the boundaries of more than one regulated area.

The customer journey

- 5.11 Hafod's strategic plan for 2019-2024 states it will place customers at the heart of everything it does. This sentiment is strong in national policy, and in legislative and regulatory terms. A strong commitment to customers is expected in any strategic document from a housing association. But how and where Hafod has started its customer journey, what it has done and where it wants that journey to lead offers an interesting case study.
- 5.12 Hafod has been through a period of self-reflection regarding its treatment of customers. In the care and support arms of the business, being customer-centred is a natural and unavoidable part of how services are delivered. Contact with customers is personal and frequent. Although legislation has strengthened the commitment to self-determination and co-production, these have always been part of the ethos of these services and customer voice and choice has always been respected. The legislation helps ensure this is not only maintained but is enhanced wherever possible. In the housing and community-facing services, Hafod, like many other public service organisations, had lost the strong connection with its customers it once had.
- 5.13 Customers' trust has gradually been eroded by organisations behaving paternalistically; that is, acting in what it believes are the best interests of the customer but inadvertently 'doing unto' and making decisions with minimal or tokenistic consultation. There is abundant evidence that this kind of approach creates a cycle of dependency and when resources come under pressure and the level of support for communities is restricted, gaps begin to open up and a lack of resilience pushes communities into decline.
- 5.14 Over many years lack of communication and lack of respect for customers' needs and expectations damaged relationships and distanced Hafod from those who ought to be its most influential stakeholders. Hafod has recognised this and its whole approach to customers is now geared towards rebuilding trust and giving ownership back to customers. This is evidenced in several ways.
- 5.15 A Customer Charter was developed in 2019. More than 700 customers were engaged in setting out the kind of relationship they would like to have with Hafod and what it should mean in practice. In short, the ask was for a more equal relationship where nothing about customers is done without customer involvement, where open communication exists, and where communities and individuals are supported to do the things that are important to them, not what Hafod believes is right or important. Hafod and its Board have adopted this Charter but acknowledge it is early days. Embedding it throughout the business is work-in-progress, which requires a significant shift in mindset and culture. While there is evidence of this shift beginning to happen, to be a truly customer-centred organisation will take time to achieve. There is always a

risk while this is happening that parts of the organisation will continue to operate with its 'old ways' and further distance Hafod from its customer base.

- 5.16 Front-line housing services have been reconfigured. The roles of housing officers have been re-cast into those of Neighbourhood Coaches and, more recently, Income Coaches to offset the negative impacts of universal credit and austerity on people's finances. This is perhaps the most significant development in Hafod's customer journey to date. Grounded in research around similar approaches and operating with the principles of asset-based community development, the coaching roles have prevention and early intervention at their heart. The roles are predicated on being more present and visible in communities and building stronger relationships with customers, assisted by smaller patch sizes which allow more time to interact. Coaches are trained to listen, encourage, and empower people to build on their strengths to act, be that in a housing matter, health and well-being, learning and skills or any other personal goal that matters to them.
- 5.17 Hafod sees this approach as a short-term investment with a long-term pay-off. It has recognised some early challenges and tweaked the model to cater for increasing financial hardship amongst its customers, but its commitment to coaching as a philosophy is strong. As yet there is little hard evidence of the effects this new approach is having on customer outcomes, but evidence from elsewhere is encouraging. Hafod is in the process of building its evidence base through structured case studies that show how coaching has altered people's pathways, as well as surveys to gauge customers' community connections, use of skills and assets, health and general well-being, and measures of job satisfaction and fulfilment amongst coaches.
- 5.18 The Scrutiny Panel refreshed its membership to reflect Hafod's new governance structures and Customer Charter. The panel is modest in size but provides an important point of contact between the Board and Hafod customers around key strategic and operational issues. A Board member sits on the panel. She acts as the link and she has worked with the Panel to co-produce a programme of work for 2020, bringing the customer voice to key decisions and strategies. Our discussions indicate this is welcomed, with acknowledgment of the need for further development.
- 5.19 The Hafod 24/7 app was set up in 2018 as a digital portal for customers to report repairs, update contact details and manage rent accounts. It has been downloaded by over 1,000 customers. It allows them to interact with Hafod at times and in places that suit them and their needs. Hafod is developing an "expert-by-experience" model in care services, which will allow customers to be part of internal care quality monitoring processes as well as recruitment interviews.
- 5.20 Efforts to engage customers and involve them directly in decisions which affect them are increasing, although engaging people in this way can be challenging. Groups of customers have been involved in reviewing an estate landscaping contract, the procurement of a new reactive repairs service and assessing rent affordability, amongst other things, using different channels and methods of engagement.

- 5.21 Hafod's first 'Transformation Summit' in November 2019, which focused on income and financial resilience in communities, is another example of an organisation looking forward and outward in search of improvement. The customer voice was integral to the summit and delegates heard first-hand accounts of the impacts of universal credit on customers. Follow-up action will be the key to putting ideas into practice.
- 5.22 Trying to reinvent an organisation's approach to customers is huge undertaking but also a very worthwhile one, which is likely to pay dividends in the long run. If an organisation becomes too distant from its customers and does not have the ability to engage them meaningfully, it will become increasingly irrelevant and poorly attuned to their changing needs and expectations. In the competitive environment in which housing and care organisations operate, this is a bad strategy for long-term sustainability. Although Hafod has a way to go on its customer journey and does not claim to have transformed its approach overnight, there are signs of positive change and early successes across the organisation and genuine efforts to work differently with customers.

Financial strength and economic leverage

- 5.23 From the information available to us, Hafod has reported strong financial performance over a long period and is working hard to maintain this, despite the fragility and very narrow margins of the care market, which make up over 50 per cent of its turnover. The business generates a surplus, which is used to attract lending and used to develop more affordable homes, grow the business, and provide better services.
- 5.24 The group overall generates a turnover of just over £50 million per year, which gives Hafod a significant economic influence, which it tries to maximise in various ways. The legal amalgamation of the group structure in 2019 has consolidated the business and, although the care market is considered a relatively risky one for investors, this move should give Hafod more leverage in the markets and allow it to attract more investment.
- 5.25 In terms of financing some of its more ambitious objectives, Hafod is exploring social investment, joint ventures, and other innovative finance approaches to deliver its vision for integrated care. While these are still in their developmental stages, we were struck by the level of ambition and how Hafod is reaching out beyond the usual array of funding options to carve out a niche to support integrated care and develop more affordable homes.
- 5.26 In our discussions, we heard how the business is contending with a raft of financial challenges, which will make the coming few years challenging. These include, but were not limited to:

- The combined impacts of austerity and welfare reform, which have impacted on customers' ability to meet rent obligations and driven up arrears and bad debt, which the organisation must underwrite.
- The need to address an ageing care estates infrastructure, which sees several care homes in need of significant investment to remain safe and pleasant living spaces for customers.
- The increasingly tight margins in care, driven by local authority pricing policies, high labour turnover leading to relatively expensive agency usage and the increasing frailty of residents and complexity of needs, which requires higher staffing levels.
- Maintaining existing housing stock and investing in decarbonisation.
- The need to invest further in the infrastructure and skills required to support the kind of business Hafod is becoming, which includes ICT infrastructure, digital skills, and systems development.

5.27 Hafod is confronting these financial challenges head-on and we heard about several work streams. The Board is fully engaged with these challenges and there is confidence Hafod is laying the foundations to navigate them and secure the long-term viability of its services. This is commendable when many providers have been forced out of business by the cold financial climate in care.

5.28 Hafod is also trying to maximise its economic influence in numerous ways. With care being a key foundational sector and Hafod being the largest not-for-profit care provider in Wales with over 1,000 employees across residential and domiciliary services, it is now beginning to realise the extent of its influence – and potential influence - in the care market and the foundational economy. More thought is needed about how it can maximise its influence and turn influence into changes and developments. In 2019, the Board made a commitment to enhance the terms and conditions of front-line care workers above market rates. Although the increase was modest, the benefits to individuals and the multiplier effects for local economies are not to be underestimated. This was a decision made in the interests of Hafod's social purpose, but in net terms it will undoubtedly have a wider economic benefit. In some local communities, Hafod is a major employer.

5.29 The 'Dream Big' initiative has been launched, which is another key intervention in the foundational economy. It is basically a call for ideas from people in communities - for example, starting a business or establishing a community interest group – for which Hafod will sponsor and provide back-office support. Evidence shows micro enterprises tend to have clustering effects and small communities of businesses can become self-supporting and generate a positive contribution to local economies. As such, a small amount of seed-funding can be a catalyst to small-scale economic growth and help communities become more financially resilient over time. It will be interesting to see the types of ideas that come forward and how Hafod plans to support them.

5.30 On a more functional level, value for money is a key consideration, as for any other organisation in Hafod's position. Value for money goes beyond procurement, but this is the most obvious area for driving value, given Hafod's buying power and the supply chains it supports in construction, food, medicines, and other areas. Procurement has been overhauled with a new framework, which is being rolled out across the business and driving down costs to maximise the value of the "Hafod pound".

Caring for the Future

- 5.31 Hafod's ambitions for integration were outlined earlier in this report, but warrant further comment. The early thinking on integration for Hafod was formed around its 'Caring for the Future' movement, launched in 2018. A series of workshops brought together over 250 people from local and national government, social housing, and public health to discuss the future of integrated housing, health, social care and support. With the subsequent launch of 'A Healthier Wales', the Caring for the Future approach is even more relevant today. It offers a platform for more inter-organisation and inter-sectoral dialogue, with the clear objective of generating much-needed partnership working and joint ventures to work up and test new models of care. Hafod has attempted to fill what it saw as a void in convening partners around this agenda and, having successfully built support politically and operationally, is now trying to turn the principles and good intentions of Caring for the Future into reality.
- 5.32 There is a national drive towards more integrated public services where organisations work together seamlessly, to ensure people receive the help they need, when they need it, without being passed 'from pillar to post', and without delays caused by gaps between agencies. Change has perhaps been slower than needed at the national level with pockets of good practice that have not achieved sufficient scale. The breadth of Hafod's service offer, which spans care, health, support, and housing affords it the rare advantage of being able to identify duplication or gaps between services and align them to produce better outcomes for customers. The Neighbourhood approach is pivotal in this, in theory allowing changing circumstances, such as emerging care needs, to be identified earlier and integrated pathways put in place to protect customers' independence.
- 5.33 There is an example of integrated care, support, and landlord service in Merthyr Tydfil, with more sites identified for the development of integrated services. Faced with the challenges of addressing an ageing care estate, which will inevitably require tough decisions, Hafod is turning its attentions to potential re-provision on existing sites to offer integrated and more specialised services.
- 5.34 Key to mobilising Caring for the Future is Hafod's evolving relationship with health stakeholders. While relationships with other key partners in the system, such as local authorities, are generally more developed, relationships with health have not historically been productive and joint initiatives have been difficult to get off the

ground and sustain. This is true not only of Hafod, or even other housing associations, but is a systemic issue.

- 5.35 Hafod is trying to broker a different kind of relationship with health partners, using its breadth and diversity of services to propose practical solutions to bed-blocking and delayed transfers of care, which are costly to the NHS and erode patients' independence and well-being. While the partnerships are at the early stages, there are promising signs that a workable pilot project could be made to happen reasonably quickly.
- 5.36 While integration is difficult territory and requires the brokering of new relationships, new forms of funding and new forms of regulation which recognise the emergence of an integrated organisation, Hafod is attempting to make ground. It is using its rather unique set of circumstances and broad geography to potentially offer a wide range of practical solutions and is keen to experiment and test these solutions as soon as the right partnership arrangements can be struck.
- 5.37 Hafod is displaying a commendable and impressive ambition around integration. The very individual path it is having to tread to achieve a step-change is not without risk but is equally laudable given one of the goals of national policy and legislation is to rebalance social care towards the third sector.

Investing in people

- 5.38 In the same way Hafod is trying to transform its relationship with customers to shift the balance of power back to them, it is also investing in the people it employs to make their work as enjoyable and fulfilling as possible.
- 5.39 In addition to the investment in terms and conditions for front-line care workers mentioned earlier, we were struck by the level of investment directed into reconfiguring the housing front-line. In order to create the space for Neighbourhood Coaches to develop coaching skills and build relationships and trust within communities, the estate was carved up into a larger number of patches with much smaller average size and a programme of training and development was put in place to smooth the transition from formerly specialist roles into generic, far broader ones. Remuneration was also increased for this cohort, all amounting to a significant investment in people, to secure better outcomes for customers.
- 5.40 This clearly comes at a cost to the business, but a worthwhile one if it is to deliver its strategic objectives around coaching. And while it would be fair to say there have been challenges and the model has been tweaked to account for the loss of income through escalating arrears, it is a model Hafod intends to stand by and is likely to reap the long-term benefits.
- 5.41 Investment in people has also taken other forms in Hafod. In 2019, a new employee assistance programme, "Lifeworks", was introduced, offering a range of support,

access to professionals and rewards in the form of discounts and special offers in retail and leisure.

- 5.42 The cultural evolution at Hafod, given the pace and scale of transformation that have happened since 2017, is interesting. The metrics gathered to assess culture consistently identify learning and purpose as the dominant attributes and this is the view shared by the Board, the Executive and a wider sample within the organisation. Although this is the overall direction and it is one the organisation is actively working to foster and encourage, the increased focus on governance throughout the regulatory intervention inevitably pulls in the other direction and has cast a shadow over the organisation. Although the staff we met were generally positive in their outlook and hopeful for the future, the reverberations of the regulatory judgement were evident.
- 5.43 The culture around change did give rise to a somewhat contradictory set of messages. On the one hand, the change of leadership and call to arms around a new vision for the organisation was galvanising and refreshing. The fast-paced integration of the organisation that followed and the momentum gathered through Caring for the Future whetted the appetite further. But the inevitable loss of urgency for change when the emphasis suddenly shifted onto governance issues left some feeling the momentum had been lost and the leadership team driving the changes had become less visible and overwhelmed by the governance agenda. Our discussions with members of the leadership team confirmed this, but there was also a sense that the pace of change was beginning to increase again, having worked through a significant programme of governance improvements.
- 5.44 There was a sense that the organisation is listening and learning and while some staff felt decisions sometimes take too long and have to pass through layers of bureaucracy, the general feeling was that challenge is welcomed and decisions will be revisited in the light of sound evidence. Staff called for earlier involvement where affected by changes and a number commented on the what they perceive as a lack of follow-up when areas for change are identified. Although there are undoubtedly some who feel less positive about the pace of change and leadership culture emerging at Hafod, our discussions did not suggest this was a predominant view.
- 5.45 Change was a word used frequently in our discussions with staff, which, in cultural terms presents a unique set of challenges. The Research and Innovation function is intended to be an engine of change in the organisation, but for it to succeed it will require the culture to be receptive to experimentation and risk – at Board, Executive and operational levels – while not overlooking regulations and established ways of doing things, which people are often close to and sometimes protective of. While this is a delicate balance to strike, there is evidence that Hafod is beginning to show these characteristics and overcome the inertia which large, complex organisations often show in the early stages of transformation.

6. Future challenges and opportunities

- 6.1 Hafod operates in two particularly challenging policy areas, housing and social care, which are subject to a raft of external factors and influences outside its control. This section outlines the main challenges, of which there are many, but also some of the opportunities. Hafod's readiness to address them is the key to its long-term survival and sustainability and, significantly, to be able to do even more for the people and communities it serves.
- 6.2 There is a considerable body of research on businesses and organisational culture, change and development. Much of this is set in the context of social, economic and technological change. One of the dominant themes is that change is not an option. Only by adapting and improving can organisations manage the pressures and challenges, deliver for their customers, and compete in the jobs market. In the case of Hafod, it includes the potential for doing even more to help Wales to be healthier and more prosperous.

Gearing up for the future

- 6.3 All organisations, statutory and third sector, need to step up a gear to play an even bigger part in developing and delivering the more integrated public services and support Wales needs. They need to be more proactive, reaching out to people and communities and engaging with them in meaningful ways to identify how they can be helped to meet their personal needs and achieve their ambitions.
- 6.4 Organisations should evolve, building on strengths and becoming more agile. If a private business does not get its offer to its customers right, and if it does not anticipate and act to meet changing needs and demands, it will fail and go out of business. The consequences for publicly funded and third sector organisations, particularly those in the third sector delivering services directly to the public, are significantly less. This can inhibit their desire, motivation, and ambition to change and transform what they do. Without change and improvement, public services will fail to keep pace with delivering what matters to people, the services they need when and where they need them, and in way which is acceptable to them.
- 6.5 Organisations should continually improve what they do and how they work, adapting and developing what they offer to people and to organisations. There is a need to think big, think differently and "outside the box", and sometimes contrary to norms or expectations. Some of this is already evident in Hafod.
- 6.6 Drawing on research, particularly into the public sector, to gear themselves up for the future, organisations need to have several key characteristics and qualities:
- **Innovative** - Working close with customers, stakeholders, and other organisations to improve services and design new ones, fulfilling unmet needs, and focusing on the end user. There needs to be rapid testing and evaluation of new ideas to roll

out what works. This should be done at pace, avoiding the temptation to keep holding back a new development until it is “perfect” which, of course, it never will be. A development needs to be in as good a shape as possible and launched, with monitoring and evaluation to refine and reshape it if necessary.

- **Streamlined business processes** - The financial pressures, particularly austerity in the public sector means there is a constant pressure to do more with less. A commitment to continuous improvement and deep reviews into how the organisation operates, its systems and whether they remain fit for purpose without unnecessary action and waste, will increase productivity and make people’s jobs easier. Harnessing the real power of IT, with more investment in its use for the workforce to do their jobs and for customers to access services and support is vital. There are examples of this in Hafod but also the view there is scope to do more, particularly where paper-based systems are still in use.
- **Well-connected internally and externally** - All parts of an organisation working seamlessly together to deliver the best possible outcomes for customers. High level of awareness of the whole customer journey and the contributions different parts of an organisation will make at different points. Externally, building stronger collaboration with organisations across sectors and professional / organisational boundaries to identify and pursue co-ventures and co-design and production of new or improved service models.
- **Agile** - Strategically more aware, monitoring trends and developments to identify new opportunities and to manage threats and risks to the organisation and its business. Flexible and adaptable with the leadership and senior managers encouraging and supporting change, and a healthy attitude to taking risks. Greater operational awareness across all functions and services being delivered, with a clear focus on links and interdependencies. Much more alert to potential “red flags” which might indicate the need for, and trigger action on, early intervention to prevent errors or problems before they get worse or reach a crisis point.
- **Open and transparent** - Proactive in seeking feedback internally and externally to fuel continuous improvement; prepared to face up to problems and criticism and to act upon it. The ability to build and maintain trust and to be accountable for decisions, action, and outcomes. Showing exemplary stakeholder engagement
- **Excellence** - As an employer, a good place to work, with good terms and conditions, pay and benefits, and a commitment to well-being and personal development and learning. Only this way can an organisation recruit and retain its staff and compete in labour markets. As a provider of public services and support, particularly those funded by the public purse, a well-run organisation with strong governance

6.7 Hafod has successfully bridged the gap between housing, health, and social care. It has integrated its business, recognising the importance of citizen-centred services and the need for joined-up action. There is more to be done. However, with this and other action taken to date, there are solid foundations for further progress. Like all

organisations, the dedication, skills, and commitment of the workforce is fundamental to effective service delivery to the public and indeed, the ability to embrace and run with change, sometimes radical, transformational change.

Challenges

6.8 The key challenges in the short, medium and longer term are:

- **Demand vs funding** - underfunding and financial pressures in the social care sector have resulted in much lower operating margins which threaten service sustainability and viability. There is clear evidence of some care providers exiting or planning to exit the market. If it happens, this will increase the problems of insufficient capacity in some areas and create gaps in care provision and support which simply must be filled if people's needs are to be met. While there is evidence that Hafod has felt the effects of this acutely, it is working hard on financial, regulatory, and operational fronts to maintain, and preferably grow, its market share in social care and to protect the services it offers its customers.
- **Economic uncertainty** - while the political uncertainty at the UK level has been resolved, it will take some time for the detail of the new government's policies and any replacement for structural funding to emerge. Brexit too was a source of some uncertainty. Thus, it will be a while before the full impact of the policies, positive and negative, work their way through to people, organisations, and communities in Wales. Organisations like Hafod, and their customers, will need to respond to the emerging circumstances and position themselves accordingly, which will require agility, imagination, innovation, and a high degree of resilience.
- **Affordable housing supply** - evidence shows that the need for social housing will continue to increase quicker than the supply can cater for it and there is already a backlog of people waiting for homes. Even if the significant further public investment which is needed is forthcoming, given the scale of the challenge it will take many years to catch up, if it ever can.
- **Decarbonisation and climate change** - there is increasing recognition of the need for action and housing providers can make an important contribution; for example, via the move to carbon neutral status for new homes. It will require new and innovative approaches to balance new building methods with the cost, which is fundamental given the current shortage of public funds for new social housing.
- **Welfare reform and poverty** - UK Government policy on welfare reform has created significant difficulties for residents in social housing and for landlords like Hafod, for whom the impact is evident in several ways. There has been a marked increase in rent arrears because of driven by welfare reform generally and the transition to Universal Credit specifically. An estimated 7 out of 10 of Hafod's residents on Universal Credit have increased arrears after moving to it. This has created a significant need for help and support, without which there is a serious risk of homelessness. While the impact on customers is foremost in Hafod's mind,

there are inescapable implications for the business if welfare reform continues to compromise one of its main income sources.

- **Mitigating homelessness** - through new legislation and increased funding, the Welsh Government has already done much to prevent homelessness from happening in the first place and further action is planned in response to increasing risks of homelessness generally and the increasing street homelessness which is being seen in some towns and cities. This provides the foundation for reducing homelessness but it is front-line organisations, not just landlords but local authorities, community organisations, and other public sector organisations, including health services – the “whole system” - that can make the difference on the ground.
- **Demand for support** - the need for support is increasing in volume and acuteness, with some people requiring more intensive support to manage chaotic lifestyles and complex, high-end, needs, some of which arise from substance misuse. At the front-line, people are faced with gaps, delays or waiting lists to receive specialist help. Unfortunately, some people fall through gaps in provision if a person must meet certain criteria to be eligible for help. Day in day out, the front-line support teams in Hafod do a sterling job in helping and supporting people to meet their needs, often having to manage situations when someone cannot access the specialist support needed. This puts people at risk of not achieving the outcomes they need. It also puts considerably more pressure on front-line staff to help people work through their difficulties.
- **Demographic changes** - these are well documented, and the impact is huge, putting existing services and systems under considerable stress. Ageing populations create new demands for care, services and products, new technologies, and new housing models. Increasing life expectancy – and increasing proportions of lives lived in poor health - brings with it an increase in age-related chronic illnesses. Coupled with the consequences of loneliness and isolation, and an ageing carer population, there is considerable extra demand on already stretched health and social care services.
- **Social care investment needs** - the social care system is under immense pressure not only because of the demands of an ageing population but also from markets and infrastructure. With very narrow operating margins, typically 2-3%, the sector is unattractive to new entrants, and there is evidence of some providers exiting the market in both nursing care and residential care. At the same time, the physical condition of many care homes, often dating back to the 1960s, is cause for concern. Space and access standards lag behind more modern homes and even with considerable investment, they will continue to do so, eventually becoming not fit for purpose and needing to be replaced. Back-filling shortfalls in local care provision, even using alternative models, requires serious capital investment, not to mention new models of finance and development to enable it to happen. This is a live and prominent issue for Hafod.

- **Customer expectations and technology** - in parallel with increased demands and funding pressures, people's expectations of services, whether delivered by public, private or third sector organisations, are increasing. Technology is driving expectations on quality and speed of service. So too is knowledge of rights. People expect quality, more personalised services and timeliness, and better access whether by digital or more traditional means. The pace of technological change is rapid and Hafod acknowledges the ground it needs to make up in this area, as well as restoring its connections with customers to better understand their needs and expectations.

6.9 All the above present significant challenges for organisations like Hafod. The increasing demands and pressure on organisations requires new thinking, new ways of working and even greater co-operation between organisations. It calls for organisations to step up to play an even bigger part in the more integrated public services Wales needs, which is articulated so clearly in the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and elsewhere. It also means reaching out to people and communities, and being proactive to engage with them in meaningful ways to identify what they need and what can help them achieve their ambitions.

Opportunities

6.10 Aside from opportunities which arise from new and expanded grant programmes and initiatives, such as investment by the Welsh Government in preventing homelessness, new building methods for social housing, and the foundational economy, there are two strategic themes which will create opportunities

- **Favourable policy and legislation** - the Welsh Government has made its intention clear on integrating health and social care services, with new funding to support developments and key legislation providing for it. The desire to see more integrated approach to delivering public services and greater use of third sector organisations like Hafod is set out in the Welsh Government's national policy, key elements of which are "Prosperity for All" and in the "whole system" approach set out in "A Healthier Wales".
- **The re-balancing agenda** – this is topical, with consideration being given to the rebalancing of social care between the in-house services provided by local authorities, and private and third sector providers. It reflects a commitment made by the First Minister in his leadership manifesto and the Welsh Government's policy, which is set out in Part 2 of the Statutory Code of Practice (General functions) for the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The policy clearly states the Welsh Government's public services policy is for greater diversity in the delivery of services through mutual organisations, in-sourcing, joint commissioning, and community ownership. This could be a significant opportunity for an organisation such as Hafod, which has a track record in social care and is becoming itself an integrated organisation, by bringing together the once-separate housing and care parts of its business and forging new service delivery models.

- 6.11 A greater role for housing, community organisations and voluntary organisations is envisaged, particularly in delivering social care and community support, helping people maintain their independence, and improving health and well-being by tackling the social determinants of health.
- 6.12 Three of the key factors which affect people's health are the social, economic, and physical conditions in which they live, the choices people make, and the services received. Hafod's work covers all three. It knows what good housing and social care means for people. Its day-to-day engagement with people in its homes and in communities it serves provide numerous opportunities to respond to people's needs and to expand what it can do to help them.
- 6.13 Few public sector organisations have the reach into communities and to people, whether residents of its houses or not, that Hafod has. The importance and logic of prevention and early intervention is increasingly recognised. So too are the benefits of a far more proactive approach in taking help to people rather than waiting for them to come forward first, which often doesn't happen, leaving people's circumstances and in some cases their health and well-being to deteriorate to the extent it then takes much longer and is more complicated to help them.
- 6.14 A proactive approach is essential to tackle the consequences of loneliness and isolation but can also help people who are unsure as to their rights and entitlements and those who need help but who struggle to navigate their way through what can sometimes be a complicated web of services. The approach is increasing but it's fair to say that not all public sector organisations realise this or are not driving it forward as much as they could, or should, as a means of helping people to address their problems at a much earlier stage thus reducing demands for more complex, and sometimes more costly, help later.
- 6.15 The challenges, pressures and problems people are facing cut across organisational boundaries. So too must the solutions, particularly if the benefits of prevention and early intervention are to be realised. Only by organisations working even more closely together will people get the help they need when they need it. There is a greater emphasis on co-productive approaches to designing and delivering services, and social value. Similarly, there is more emphasis on providers becoming the intermediary between those who use services and those who commission them.
- 6.16 New service models, more integrated working and more prevention and early intervention are essential to manage demand and costs, to help more people and to deliver the help people need when they need it. The move to community-based care and prevention calls for new approaches to manage or mitigate demand and to avoid unnecessary costs. It needs to be accelerated and with this will be opportunities for organisations like Hafod, which has boosted its innovation capabilities by strengthening its research and innovation function and bringing into the organisation new people from other industries with skills of transforming organisations, systems thinking and product and service development.

- 6.17 The housing sector has been said by some to be somewhat insular. Hafod’s approach is a direct response to the need for new thinking and new ideas from outside the sector. This is essential if organisations like it are going to be able to meet future challenges, become more resilient and play a leading part in shaping the type and nature of the services and support which will be needed in future.
- 6.18 A considerable injection of pace is required, and a significant shift in thinking, approach, and investment to develop and test new models for public services and where they work, and to roll them out to all areas. People deserve consistently good quality public services irrespective of where they live or which organisation delivers them. Yet at present, this is not always the case. There is some way to go. For several reasons, good practice doesn’t spread easily and more catalysts are needed.
- 6.19 Organisations like Hafod are very well placed to respond. Aside from a solid track record in housing and care, it now has the capacity and capability to help statutory and third sector organisations to identify needs and to work up cost-effective and sustainable solutions.
- 6.20 There is also a considerable and important role for organisations which serve as anchor institutions in communities; that is, organisations which are large employers or have a significant presence in a community. They make an important contribution to the local economy as employers, holders of land and property, helping improve community conditions through investment, training and by creating jobs with good benefits.
- 6.21 Tackling health inequalities and poverty, and promoting economic growth are national priorities. Organisations like Hafod already do much for people and communities, including helping them into employment. There is scope for more to be done on employment and to harness the talents of local people to realise the benefits of developing their own businesses and creating social enterprise.
