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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Rebecca Barrett
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Date: 27th May 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Tuesday, 2nd June, 2015** at **5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

Chris Burns
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of Interest Councillors and Officers are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.	
To approve and sign the following minutes: -	
3 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 14th April 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 15).	1 - 10

A greener place Man gwyrdach

Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat



- 4 Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.
- 5 To receive a verbal report by the Cabinet Member(s).
- 6 To receive and consider the following Cabinet Reports*: -
1. WHQS and Sheltered Housing Complexes - 29th April 2015;
 2. NPS for Wales Progress Report - 29th April 2015;
 3. Draft Shared Parental Leave Policy - 29th April 2015;
 4. Improving Governance Programme Update - 20th May 2015.

**If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above Cabinet reports to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Rebecca Barrett, 01443 864245, by 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 1st June 2015.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| 7 | Anti Poverty Strategy. | 11 - 28 |
| 8 | Discretionary Housing Payments Policy. | 29 - 40 |
| 9 | Equalities and Welsh Language Annual Reports. | 41 - 116 |
| 10 | To record any requests for an item to be included on the next available agenda. | |

To receive and note the following information items*:-

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 11 | Consultancy Costs. | 117 - 120 |
| 12 | Write-Off of Debts 1st April 2014 - 31st March 2015. | 121 - 122 |
| 13 | Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance Revenue Grants 2015-16. | 123 - 126 |
| 14 | Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance Revenue Budgets 2015-16. | 127 - 134 |
| 15 | Caerphilly Homes Task Group Minutes - 2nd April 2015. | 135 - 140 |
| 16 | Pensions/Compensation Committee Minutes - 13th April 2015. | 141 - 142 |
| 17 | Summary of Members' Attendance - Quarter 4 - 1st January 2015 to 14th May 2015. | 143 - 146 |
| 18 | Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. | |

**If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above information items to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Rebecca Barrett, 01443 864245, by 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 1st June 2015.*

Circulation:

Councillors L.J. Binding, Mrs P. Cook, C.J. Cuss, H.W. David (Chair), Miss E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, C.J. Gordon, C. Hawker, Ms J.G. Jones, G. Kirby, A. Lewis, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan (Vice Chair), D. Rees, R. Saralis and J. Taylor

And Appropriate Officers

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
TUESDAY, 14TH APRIL 2015 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor S. Morgan - Vice Chair

Councillors:

C.J. Cuss, Miss E. Forehead, C. Hawker, Ms J.G. Jones, G. Kirby, A. Lewis, C.P. Mann,
D. Rees, R. Saralis, J. Taylor

Cabinet Members:

Mrs C. Forehead (Cabinet Member for HR and Governance/Business Manager),
D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), Mrs B. Jones (Corporate Services)

Together with:

N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer), P. Davy (Head of Programmes), G. Hardacre (Head of Workforce and Organisational Development), S. Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance), E. Lucas (Head of Procurement), H. Rees (Programme Manager), P. Cooke (Team Leader), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

Also present:

Ms. A. Lewis and Mrs S. Jones (Caerphilly Homes Task Group)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Binding, H.W. David, J.E. Fussell, D.M. Gray and Mrs J. Summers, together with Cabinet Member G. Jones.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 3RD MARCH 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 3rd March 2015 (minute nos. 1 – 13) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

The Scrutiny Committee received reports from Cabinet Members Mrs B. Jones and D.T. Hardacre.

Councillor Mrs B. Jones, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, presented her report and was pleased to inform Members that the Procurement Team had recently achieved the Outstanding Contribution Award at the Welsh National Procurement Awards 2015. In addition, the Team are still in competition for a further award.

The Information Technology Team are currently involved in a number of projects which are progressing well. These include a package of support technology (such as mobile devices) to WHQS surveyors, and the ongoing PC replacement and email archive programmes. The Cabinet Member also advised of a forthcoming visit from the Office of Government SIRO, which will examine the Authority's Information Governance work on risk management.

Members were informed that the bi-annual Household Survey would be distributed in June 2015. On this occasion it will be issued via Newsline to reach as much of the public as possible. There is also an ongoing public consultation at present in regards to the proposed road closures for the forthcoming Velothon in June 2015.

The Cabinet Member explained that all departments within Corporate Services are currently holding meetings to look at achieving potential savings for the financial year 2016/17. Finally, a training session for Members was held in March 2015 regarding Data Protection and Freedom of Information. A second session is to be arranged for September with all Members who have not yet attended the training urged to make every effort to attend.

Members were pleased to note the achievements of the Procurement Team and asked for their congratulations to be placed on record.

Councillor D.T. Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management, presented his report and referenced the Authority's proposal to retain the Improvement Objective for "Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities", a report on which would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee later in the meeting. The Cabinet Member stressed the importance of this Objective in relation to the achievement of the Welsh Quality Housing Standard (WHQS) programme of works.

A query was raised regarding underspends within the WHQS programme and the need for these to be regularly reported to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. The Vice-Chair advised that this query would be addressed later in the evening when the report on WHQS and Sheltered Housing Complexes was considered by the Committee.

6. CABINET REPORTS

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE: INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOMES TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND COMMUNITIES

In that representatives from the Caerphilly Homes Task Group were in attendance to address the Committee in relation to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme of works, this item (together with the report immediately following on WHQS and Sheltered Housing Complexes) was moved forward on the agenda.

Phil Davy, Head of Programmes, presented the report, which provided Members with the details of the proposed Council Improvement Objective for 2015-2016 relevant to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and sought the approval of Members on this proposed objective.

Officers advised that Cabinet has undertaken a review of the Council's existing Improvement Objectives and a new set of objectives for 2015/16 (one per scrutiny committee) is in the process of being finalised (as listed in Appendix 2 of the report). For the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet has decided to recommend to Council that the current Objective for **Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities** be maintained. The report outlined the criteria to be considered when selecting an improvement objective, and Officers explained that this Objective was chosen because the WHQS is a corporate priority and there needs to be an acceleration in the pace due to slippage of the programme of works that arose in 2014/15.

Discussion of the report ensued and a query was raised regarding the reporting and monitoring of this Objective. Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report, which outlined the details of the Objective, the difference that is planned to the quality of council housing, how success will be measured, and the resources available to deliver this Objective. Officers explained that progress reports would be brought forward on a regular basis to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. Officers advised that the acceleration in the rate of weekly internal/external works completions presented a number of challenges but that there were extensive contractor arrangements to minimise further slippage and that the progress of this completion rate would continue to be monitored and reported.

Following consideration of the report, it was unanimously agreed that the Improvement Objective detailed in the report be supported and that delivery progress of the Objective be monitored by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

8. WHQS AND SHELTERED HOUSING COMPLEXES

Phil Davy, Head of Programmes, presented the report, which sought the views of Members on a proposed WHQS programme delivery change relating to the sheltered housing complexes, prior to its presentation to Cabinet for determination.

In addition to its presentation at Scrutiny, the report had also been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 2nd April 2015, and two representatives from the Group, Ms Anna Lewis and Mrs Sandra Jones, were invited to the table to report on the deliberations arising from that meeting.

Members were reminded that arising from a number of setbacks, the WHQS programme is under severe pressure to complete by 2020 and subsequently additional measures are under active investigation to expand the capacity to cope with the volume of work. The report therefore advocated an alternative approach to implement the WHQS programme in relation to the sheltered housing complexes.

The report proposed that the management and delivery of the WHQS works on the sheltered schemes be outsourced to a suitable multi-disciplinary consultancy, leaving just the client role in-house. Officers explained that the separate internal and external programmes of works were not considered to be the most appropriate course of action for sheltered housing complexes, and that packaging the sheltered schemes together into a separate programme of work and delivering this independently of the main programme could potentially minimise further slippage of the WHQS programme. This proposal also included an option to include the tenant liaison role in the outsourcing of the WHQS works on the sheltered schemes.

Members were also advised that the WHQS business plan included provision for the conversion of bedsits to flats at two schemes. Three other schemes have since been identified for possible remodelling, and there are concerns about the long-term sustainability of a fourth complex. Officers explained that the remodelling is not a WHQS requirement but that expenditure on WHQS works on the existing schemes could be abortive if it is the intention to remodel the schemes at a future date. The feasibility of conversion/remodelling has yet to be undertaken, and no capital funding has been identified. In addition, due to a borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account and increased tender/programme works costs, there are limitations in relation to the budget expenditure available for such works in the period to 2020. In view of these considerations, the report proposed that the six schemes affected be removed from the WHQS programme and addressed after 2020 (with the exception of essential health and safety/emergency works).

Ms Anna Lewis and Mrs Sandra Jones, representatives of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group, were then invited to summarise their deliberations arising from the meeting held on 2nd April 2015 in relation to the report recommendations. Ms Lewis explained that the Task Group considered the recommendations contained in the Officers report and by the majority present, endorsed part of recommendation 9.1 (the outsourcing of the sheltered schemes). However, the Task Group felt that outsourcing the tenant liaison role could affect quality assurance measures and therefore recommended that the option to outsource the role be withdrawn and that the tenant liaison role remains within the Authority.

Mrs Jones outlined the concerns of the Task Group regarding recommendation 9.2 of the report (remove 6 complexes from the WHQS Programme until a decision is made on the long-term future of these properties). She acknowledged the pressures faced by the WHQS programme but raised concerns regarding the effect of the proposed delay on these tenants. Mrs Jones cited a need for a special meeting of the Task Group to discuss this proposal, together with a need for further information (including costings for WHQS/remodelling works, details of previous works carried out at these schemes, occupancy levels and consultation with tenants). Mrs Jones explained to the Committee that with these considerations in mind, and by the majority present, the Task Group had been unable to endorse recommendation 9.2 of the report.

Detailed discussion of the report ensued and concerns were expressed by Members that there was insufficient detailed information within the report in respect of future options for the 6 complexes. Members requested a further report on the future options for the 6 complexes prior to making a decision. Concerns were also raised as to the wellbeing of tenants in the schemes where it was proposed that WHQS works be deferred.

In responding to these comments, Officers reminded Members of the need to deliver the WHQS programme within funding constraints and the importance of ensuring that monies were not unnecessarily spent on works in instances where they may need to be repeated if a remodelling programme were to take place. Members were advised of the importance of recommendation 9.1 of the report, in that there was a pressing need to reduce future slippage of the programme. Officers reiterated that the remodelling works were not a WHQS requirement but that as there was an indication that some of the properties identified would need to be converted or remodelled in future years, it would be prudent to plan for such eventualities. Discussion also took place in regards to the original Savills stock survey of 2008.

Following consideration of the report, and in taking into account the views of Members and the Caerphilly Homes Task Group representatives, it was proposed that recommendation 9.1 of the report be endorsed (subject to an amendment to remove the option to outsource the tenant liaison role). It was moved and seconded that subject to this amendment, the following be referred to Cabinet for consideration. By a show of hands (and in noting there was 1 against), this was agreed by the majority present.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that subject to the removal of the option to outsource the tenant liaison role, the sheltered complexes be packaged into a separate programme and the management and delivery be outsourced to a suitable multi-disciplinary consultancy.

Having regard to the comments of Members and the Caerphilly Homes Task Group representatives, it was proposed that consideration of recommendation 9.2 be deferred pending further information from Officers relating to these affected schemes. This was moved and seconded, and by a show of hands, was unanimously agreed. Members were therefore unable to make a recommendation to Cabinet in support of recommendation 9.2 (the removal of 6 complexes from the WHQS Programme until a decision is made on the long-term future of these properties).

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that consideration of recommendation 9.2 (the removal of 6 complexes from the WHQS Programme until a decision is made on the long-term future of these properties) be deferred pending further information from Officers relating to these affected schemes.

9. “CAERPHILLY DELIVERS” – THE CAERPHILLY LOCAL SERVICE BOARD SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN

Howard Rees, Programme Manager for Partnership Development and Collaboration Improvement, together with Paul Cooke, Team Leader for Sustainable Development and Living Environment, presented the report, which updated Members on the progress, monitoring and delivery of “Caerphilly Delivers”, the Caerphilly Local Service Board’s Single Integrated Plan.

Members were reminded that in 2012, the Welsh Government published “Shared Purpose - Shared Delivery: Guidance on integrating Partnerships and Plans”, which provided statutory guidance to and required Local Service Boards (LSBs) to rationalise their respective Partnership “landscapes” and produce a Single Integrated Plan (SIP) to discharge statutory planning and delivery obligations. Caerphilly LSB developed and produced “Caerphilly Delivers” – their Single Integrated Plan, which was approved by the LSB and Caerphilly Council in April 2013. In April 2014, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered a report which provided an overview of the above and outlined the LSB “Performance and Delivery Framework” being used to monitor the performance and delivery of the Plan.

Officers summarised the Performance and Delivery Framework of the SIP, which was attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report. Caerphilly Delivers is co-ordinated/actioned via a Partnership Group (Leads Group), which consists of a designated lead officer for each of the five SIP outcomes, namely; Prosperous Caerphilly, Safer Caerphilly, Learning Caerphilly, Healthier Caerphilly and Greener Caerphilly. The Leads Group (assisted by a Delivery Group) is responsible and accountable to the LSB for the production and delivery of action plans to achieve each priority, which in turn support the achievement of the identified Outcomes. Each Lead Officer submits a highlight/exception report and scorecard for their respective Outcome for consideration, discussion and comment at quarterly LSB meetings. In rotation, a Lead Officer presents their highlight/exception report and scorecard at every LSB meeting.

Members were referred to Appendices 3 and 4 of the report, which outlined the Greener Caerphilly Outcome Quarter 3 2014/15 highlight/exception record and scorecard, and which were recently considered by the Caerphilly LSB at their meeting on 3rd March 2015.

With the aid of a slideshow presentation, Paul Cooke outlined to Members the composition, performance and achievements of the Greener Caerphilly SIP outcome to date. Particular focus was given to the three objectives of the outcome (Improving Local Environment Quality, Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change, and Environment for Health) and the progress made against each of these objectives. Examples of this progress included the Healthy Rivers Partnership between Caerphilly Council and other agencies, which had seen a number of positive outcomes, including improvements to the ecological status of the Sirhowy River. Progress was also made regarding climate change with the installation of solar-powered systems within a number of schools in the county borough, together with progress against the Environment for Health objective via the launch of a Go Green For Health campaign in February 2015. Officers outlined the key issues and financial pressures facing the Greener Caerphilly Outcome, together with plans for future collaboration.

The Officers were thanked for their presentation and discussion of the report ensued. Reference was made to Appendix 3 of the report, which identified a number of priority actions to improve the Greener Caerphilly objectives. Members sought further information as to whether changes introduced at civic amenity sites had led to an increase in fly-tipping, and requested that future reports include the amount of recorded fly-tipping incidents (in addition to the percentage already reported) in the county borough. Members also commented on the new waste permit procedure in operation at civic amenity sites and relayed the concerns of a local resident regarding the allocation and use of permit time slots. Officers confirmed that they would make enquiries in regards to these matters and report back to Members.

Reference was made to the priority which addressed the causes and effects of climate change and Members commented that the average ecological footprint of local residents appeared to have remained unchanged over the last four years. Officers explained that this data was provided by WG, and had not been updated since its original measurement. Discussion also took place regarding the impact of funding pressures on the Greener Caerphilly Objectives.

Following consideration of the report, Members were pleased to note the progress, monitoring and delivery of the Single Integrated Plan and the performance of the Green Caerphilly outcome, and were in agreement on its success to date. Members requested that the Prosperous Caerphilly outcome be brought forward for discussion at the next update of the Single Integrated Plan.

10. NATIONAL PROCUREMENT SERVICE FOR WALES PROGRESS REPORT

Liz Lucas, Head of Procurement, presented the report, which advised Members of the progress made with the National Procurement Service (NPS) for Wales and sought their views on the Authority's future working arrangements with the NPS, prior to presentation of the report to Cabinet for determination.

Members were reminded of Cabinet's decision in 2012 to join the National Procurement Service for Wales in a number of key commodity areas, which were outlined in paragraph 4.1 of the report. At the time it was decided to 'opt out'/ continue with the Authority's own Procurement Strategy in the remaining areas (outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the report), which has resulted in a greater level of flexibility in the Authority's procurement processes. Officers explained that as the NPS function continues to develop and key contracts and frameworks are delivered, it may be beneficial for the Authority to 'opt in' to arrangements in which they originally decided not to participate. This includes Legal Services, which is currently being tendered by the NPS.

The report also proposed that Cabinet gives delegated authority to the Head of Procurement, to opt into such arrangements when able to demonstrate value for money for the Authority. All decisions would be supported by an internal business case and agreed with the appropriate Head of Service. The same flexibility would be required in relation to 'opt outs'.

Discussion of the report ensued and Members sought reassurances in regards to the proposal to 'opt in' to the Legal Services Category Area. Officers confirmed that this arrangement should provide value for money and benefit the Authority as it is being tendered on behalf of the Welsh Public Sector. Members were assured that all eventualities had been examined prior to preparing this proposal. Officers also responded to general queries relating to the delegated authority proposal and the comparative value of the NPS to the outgoing Welsh Purchasing Consortium.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendations be referred to Cabinet for consideration. By a show of hands (and in noting there were 2 abstentions), this was agreed by the majority present.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:-

- (i) the Authority remains opted out of the commodity areas outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the report (Vehicle Management, Catering, Legal Services, Construction Materials associated with WHQS, Stationary and Educational Supplies) until such time that Officers can demonstrate best value to opting in;
- (ii) the Authority takes forward the opportunity to opt in to the Legal Services framework currently being developed by the NPS;
- (iii) the decision to opt in and or out of commodity areas in the future be delegated to the relevant member of the Corporate Management Team for the service area and Head of Procurement in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.

11. DRAFT SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Gareth Hardacre, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development, presented the report, which sought the views of Members on the introduction of a Shared Leave Parental Leave Policy, prior to its presentation to Cabinet for determination.

The report outlined a new Shared Parental Leave Policy, in line with new legislation introduced in England and Wales on 1st December 2014, to allow employees leave to care for a child after birth or placed for adoption in the first year following the birth or adoption. Officers explained that shared parental leave is a statutory right for all children due to be born or placed for adoption on or after 5th April 2015. The draft policy (attached at Appendix 1 to the report) outlined the arrangements and notification requirements before a period of Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and the entitlement to pay during the SPL period.

Members were advised that consideration had been given to whether the Authority should adopt a statutory or enhanced Occupational Shared Parental Pay Scheme and whether the Council's Maternity Pay Policy should be reduced. It was explained that such arrangements could be cost-prohibitive and may not be compatible with the Council's People Management Strategy in recruiting and retaining a balanced workforce, and were therefore not recommended to Members.

Members were also asked to note that Gary Enright (Unison Branch Secretary) was unable to attend that evening's meeting but had emailed the Vice-Chair to confirm the support of the Trade Unions for the new Policy.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendations be referred to Cabinet for consideration. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:-

- (i) Members note that the Shared Parental Policy is based on the statutory entitlement and in all aspects other than pay it mirrors the Council's Maternity and Adoption Policies;
- (ii) the Council do not adopt an enhanced Occupational Shared Parental Pay Scheme;
- (iii) the Maternity Pay scheme is not reduced to the statutory scheme only;
- (iv) the Shared Parental Leave Policy (as outline in Appendix 1 of the report) be adopted.

12. UPDATE ON RESERVES

Stephen Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance, presented the report, which provided the Scrutiny Committee with details of the usable reserves held by the Authority.

Members' attention was directed to the appendix to the report, which showed an opening balance of £97.165m (in accordance with the audited Statement of Accounts for the 2013/14 financial year), anticipated movements for 2014/15 and the projected balance on reserves of £89.080m as at 31st March 2015. The report also provided further detailed information on the reserve balances, which was outlined to Members.

With regards to General Fund reserves, as part of the annual budget setting process the Section 151 Officer recommends to Council that a prudent level be set. In recent years £10m has been recommended which is circa 3% of the Authority's net revenue budget. At its meeting on 25th February 2015, Council agreed the budget for 2015/16 including the proposed use of General Fund balances resulting in a projected balance of £10.078m as at 31st March 2015. With regards to Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reserves, these are ring-fenced and cannot be transferred into General Fund balances. The projected balance on HRA usable reserves is £15.333m as at 31st March 2015 and much of this funding will be utilised for the £200m WHQS Capital Programme. With regards to Capital Reserves, the total projected balance of £28.932m is ring-fenced for the Authority's Capital Programme, including approved matched funding for 21st Century Schools.

Officers also provided an update on the Service reserves held by each Directorate. The projected year-end balance on Corporate Services reserves is £22.999m and Members were asked to note that the £1.378m 'Other' reserves detailed against this section relate in the main to accumulated retained service underspends. It was previously agreed by Cabinet that service areas retain 50% of reported underspends at the financial year-end, which has

resulted in full ownership and accountability by Senior Officers in respect of delivering a balanced budget. The projected year-end balance on Environment Directorate reserves is £0.915m, £6.043m for Education and Leisure and £2.059m for Social Services.

An update was also provided in respect of released/partially released reserves. The budget proposals approved by Council on 25th February 2015 included the release of reserves totalling £0.757m to General Fund balances. However, reserves were only partially released in two areas and balances of £1.030m and £1.690m remain. The balance of £1.030m relates to approved funding set aside in previous years to meet potential pension deficits and this is likely to be required. A summary of the remaining £1.690m was detailed within Section 4.9.3 of the report.

Members were advised that a number of the reserves throughout the report have been highlighted as being subject to review. However, it was stressed that if any further sums are identified for release to General Fund balances these can only be used for one-off purposes and will not support the on-going need to identify year-on-year savings to support the Authority's Medium-Term Financial Plan.

During discussion of the report, a Member commented on the level of earmarked reserves relating to insurance and PFI schools. Officers explained the purpose of these reserves and the need to retain the balances.

Members thanked the Interim Head of Corporate Finance for his presentation and noted the contents of the report.

13. REQUESTS FOR REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

There were no requests for reports received.

14. INFORMATION ITEMS

The Committee noted the following items for information, full details of which were included within the Officers reports. There were no items brought forward for review.

- (1) HRA Garages Update;
- (2) Discretionary Rate Relief Applications;
- (3) Information Governance 2014;
- (4) Caerphilly Local Service Board Minutes – 19th November 2014;
- (5) Caerphilly Homes Task Group Minutes – 19th February 2015;
- (6) Pensions/Compensation Committee Minutes – 17th March 2015.

15. JONATHAN JONES – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

The Vice-Chair advised the Committee that Jonathan Jones, Democratic Services Manager, had accepted a position with the Welsh Ambulance Service, and would therefore be leaving the Authority shortly. Members requested that their appreciation for all the work he had carried out on behalf of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee be placed on record. Members added that Mr Jones would be greatly missed and wished him well in his future endeavours.

The meeting closed at 7.28 pm

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2015, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: ANTI POVERTY STRATEGY

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report relates to a proposed Caerphilly county borough Council Anti Poverty Strategy. The report is seeking the views of Members prior to its presentation to Cabinet and Council.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council delivers a significant programme of work that contributes to tackling poverty. An Anti Poverty Strategy has been developed which brings together that activity at a high level. The draft Strategy has been the subject of consultation and a final draft is appended to this report for views and approval. The draft Strategy sets out the Council's position and aims, actions and measures in relation to tackling poverty.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The proposed Anti Poverty Strategy supports all of the priorities within the single integrated plan, Caerphilly Delivers.
- 3.2 The Council's Corporate Priorities and Aspirations support the aim of tackling poverty.
- 3.3 The Children and Families (Wales) Measure places duties upon Local Authorities in relation to child poverty.
- 3.4 The proposed Anti Poverty Strategy supports Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan and Child Poverty Strategy.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Caerphilly Council delivers a significant programme of activity that contributes to tackling poverty. This includes the Welsh Government funded programmes of Communities First, Families First, Flying Start, and Supporting People as well as the Welsh Housing Quality Standard investment and a range of other services and activities. Caerphilly Council has a significant track record in regeneration and was the first in Wales to become a Living Wage Employer.

- 4.2 High levels of deprivation exist within Caerphilly county borough and not just within the valleys communities. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the Welsh Government's official measure of deprivation for small areas in Wales designed to identify where there are the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. WIMD is calculated for all Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in Wales. 1909 LSOAs are defined in Wales with an average population of around 1600 per LSOA.
- 4.3 Caerphilly County Borough has 68.2% of its LSOAs within the top 50% most deprived category – this is the fourth highest proportion in Wales after Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff. In the 2014 release of the WIMD St James 3 is the most deprived LSOA in Wales, with Twyn Carno 1 also falling within the ten most deprived LSOAs in Wales. This relative disadvantage leads to significant inequalities across our communities so that, for example, the gap in life expectancy in males between the most and least deprived fifth is 8.5 years; for healthy life expectancy the gap is even bigger at 18.7 years.
- 4.4 The Anti Poverty Strategy at Appendix 1 has been drafted recognising that there are still individuals and households in the county borough living in poverty. It sets out the Council's position and brings together a range of actions all of which contribute to tackling poverty. Those actions have been set out under four areas as promoted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation:
- Prospects:** policies concerned with improving the life chances of individuals and their families, so people are able to escape poverty in a sustainable way.
- Pockets:** policies concerned with boosting households' resources now – primarily by increasing their income – so they are better able to meet their needs.
- Places:** where people live shapes their lives, affecting their job prospects and access to essential goods and services and affordable housing.
- Prevention:** almost anyone can experience poverty during their lifetime, so policies that insure against sliding into poverty are important.
- 4.5 It is intended that the Strategy will be reviewed annually and progress reported. It is also proposed that an Anti Poverty Board is established to provide oversight of the Strategy. Membership would include the Member and Officer Anti Poverty Champions, the Chief Housing Officer, the Chief Education Officer, the Head of Regeneration and Planning, and others as the Board considered appropriate. There will be a standing invitation to the Leader and Chief Executive to attend. Representation would also be sought from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. There are a number of fora contributing to the tackling poverty agenda in the county borough and the Anti Poverty Board would also be tasked with determining the most appropriate structures and governance arrangements for these going forward.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Caerphilly Council is committed to ensuring that its residents are able to live fulfilled lives, regardless of who they are as an individual, and are not prevented from enjoying an acceptable standard of living due to economic, social or cultural disadvantage.
- 5.2 In this way, the Anti-Poverty Strategy links with the Strategic Equalities Plan and Welsh Language Scheme on an operational level where it matters most to the residents of the county borough, and operates on their behalf across the range of protected characteristics and wider equalities, human rights and language issues, and also ex-servicemen.

- 5.3 As examples, projects and action plans under Skills Development would ensure that people from different protected characteristic groups on low income receive support, as they could be doubly disadvantaged in terms of their ability to progress - disability issues around employment and training for instance. Parenting Skills would need to ensure that it covered all types of families and parenting models, not just the more traditional types of family.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications for the Authority, as financial budgetary provision has been identified and provided to each Service area of the Authority, inclusive of any specific budgetary provision for service initiatives used to assist in anti poverty strategies.
- 6.2 Any identified need to provide additional financial resources in support of the Council's anti poverty strategy over and above that identified in the 2015/2016 budget would require further consideration and approval.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The report has been sent to the consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.
- 8.2 The Draft Anti Poverty Strategy was subject to a 4 week public consultation during April 2014 and subject to some amendments as a result. A summary of the consultation responses is included at Appendix 2 of this Report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Committee are asked for their views prior to presentation of this Report and Anti Poverty Strategy to Cabinet and Council for approval.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To seek Members' views.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000.

Author: Rob Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection & Anti Poverty Champion
Consultees: Cllr Keith Reynolds, Leader
Cllr Elaine Forehead, Anti Poverty Champion
Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive,
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Pauline Elliot, Head of Regeneration & Planning
Shaun Couzens, Chief Housing Officer
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Sian Phillips, Human Resources Manager
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager
David A. Thomas Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)

Background Papers: None

Appendices:


Appendix 1 Caerphilly Anti Poverty Strategy

Appendix 2 Summary of Consultation Responses



Caerphilly County Borough Council

Anti-Poverty Strategy



“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity, it is an act of justice.
Like Slavery and Apartheid, poverty is not natural.
It is man-made and it can be overcome and
eradicated by the actions of human beings.
Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great.
YOU can be that great generation.
Let your greatness blossom.”

Nelson Mandela

Introduction

Poverty harms people's prospects and damages their long term future. It also places a burden on public resources and service. It is in all our interests to tackle poverty.

Caerphilly Council has a long track record of tackling poverty through a range of core services as well as the four Welsh Government funded programmes, Communities First, Flying Start, Families First and Supporting People. As a landlord we provide good quality homes and work hard to support our tenants and we are building upon this with our Welsh Housing Quality Standard improvement programme. We also work actively with our partners to tackle this priority as reflected in our single integrated plan, Caerphilly Delivers.

This Anti Poverty Strategy clearly states Caerphilly Council's commitment to tackling poverty. It confirms the priority that we give to this issue. It also brings together the broad body of activity that we have in place to mitigate the impacts of poverty, to support people out of poverty, and to prevent poverty.

We need a comprehensive approach to tackling poverty and we realise that we cannot address poverty on our own, but we wish to set out our commitment to playing our part:

Caerphilly Council is committed to ensuring its residents are able to live fulfilled lives and are not prevented from enjoying an acceptable standard of living due to economic, social or cultural disadvantage.

In their publication "A UK Without Poverty" the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) define poverty as: When a person's resources are not enough to meet their basic needs. This includes the need to be part of society, by being able to participate in common customs and activities - like buying a birthday present for your partner or sending your child on a school trip.

JRF go on to state that interventions that either increase the resources available to households or reduce the costs of meeting their needs will help to reduce poverty.

Recognising that the experience of poverty is dynamic, and differs at different stages of life, JRF propose that thought must be given to policies that have an impact now, those that are investments in the future and those that provide insurance against future events. This can be summed up as four Ps:

This can be summed up as four P's:

Prospects: Policies concerned with improving the life chances of individuals and their families, so people are able to escape poverty in a sustainable way.

Pockets: Policies concerned with boosting households' resources now – primarily by increasing their income – so they are better able to meet their needs.

Places: Where people live shapes their lives, affecting their job prospects and access to essential goods and services and affordable housing.

Prevention: Almost anyone can experience poverty during their lifetime, so policies that insure against sliding into poverty are important.

Our Aims

Caerphilly Council is committed to ensuring its residents are able to live fulfilled lives, regardless of who they are as an individual, and are not prevented from enjoying an acceptable standard of living due to economic, social or cultural disadvantage.

1

Prospects

Caerphilly residents are able to develop employment skills, find work and progress within employment.

2

Pockets

Caerphilly residents are able to improve their income levels.

3

Places

Caerphilly residents are able to enjoy a high level of well-being in safe and sustainable housing and communities.

4

Prevention

Caerphilly residents who are affected or at risk of being affected by poverty have the skills and knowledge to improve their lives and achieve their potential.

What we want to achieve

1 Prospects

1. Working age people on low incomes are helped to develop skills, achieve qualifications (formal and informal), progress to employment and progress within employment.
2. Young people are provided with key employability skills, access to accredited training and support to secure sustainable employment.
3. Caerphilly residents are supported to improve prospects for employment through the provision of community education and employment programmes.
4. Flying Start Programme will be expanded to 25 areas to support child development and parental aspirations.

2 Pockets

1. Caerphilly residents are provided with information, advice and assistance on a range of social welfare issues to enable them to increase household income, manage debt and develop skills to improve their financial capability.
2. Caerphilly residents are supported to reduce the impacts of rising fuel costs.
3. Quality, accessible and affordable childcare provision is promoted to enable families to improve their income through accessing education, learning and employment.
4. Through working in partnership with local employers increase local employment opportunities and identify ways to increase employees incomes.
5. Ensure that all pupils eligible for Free School Meals are in receipt of their entitlement.

3 Places

1. Caerphilly Residents are able to live in homes that are affordable, warm and secure without the fear of homelessness.
2. Raise levels of healthy life expectancy across the borough and encourage residents to take responsibility for their own and their families health and well-being and make use of the opportunities and support available.
3. Working in partnership with families, parents and schools to increase participation and support the development of parenting skills.

4 Prevention

1. Identify and support vulnerable residents and families to reduce the impacts of poverty through the provision of targeted support.
2. Caerphilly residents are supported to manage the changes to welfare reform and prepared for the introduction of Universal Credit.
3. Improve pupil performance in all key stages through supporting and challenging schools to ensure that all pupils meet challenging targets set for them.
4. Reduce the levels of smoking and obesity.

1 Prospects

1. Working age people on low income are helped to develop skills, obtain qualifications (formal and informal) progress to employment and progress within employment.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Advice, support and training will be provided to help individuals gain the skills, qualifications and experience necessary to secure employment.	<p>Number of people supported by Communities First and Families First to gain an employment related qualification (eg First aid in the workplace, food hygiene).</p> <p>Number of people referred to employment support by Council Tenancy Support Officers and WHQS staff.</p> <p>Number of people supported through Bridges into Work (2), into employment.</p>
Caerphilly Council will provide access to IT equipment and basic IT courses in community venues for individuals who are digitally excluded to gain essential skills that may assist in securing employment.	<p>Number of people supported by Communities First to gain Basic IT skills.</p> <p>Number of adults supported by Get Caerphilly Online and Families First who gain IT accreditation.</p>

2. Young people are provided with key employability skills, access to accredited training and support to secure sustainable employment.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Young People (aged 16-24) who are not in employment, education or training are supported to access opportunities which help them to succeed in life.	<p>Number of young people supported by Communities First who gain an Employment related qualification (eg First Aid in the workplace, food hygiene).</p> <p>Number of young people supported by Communities First to secure a JGW Employment Opportunity.</p>

3. Caerphilly residents are supported to improve prospects for employment through the provision of community education and employment programmes.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Adult Community Learning will provide a range of interventions and support to help people improve skills and progress towards employment.	<p>Number of people gaining qualifications through Working Skills for Adults.</p> <p>Number of people achieving Basic Skills qualifications through Adult Community Learning.</p>
Working in partnership (Families First, Communities First, JCP, Basic Skills Unit and Coleg Y Cymoedd) a range of learning-based support will be provided to develop basic skills in literacy, numeracy and work related skills.	<p>Percentage of parents and families with low or no basic skills.</p> <p>Number of individuals engaged in basic skills community programmes.</p>

4. Flying Start Programme will be expanded to 25 areas to support child development and parental aspirations.

Services will be delivered across all identified 25 areas offering families with children aged 0-3years Enhanced Health Visiting, Early Language Development, Parenting Programmes and Family Support, and funded Childcare places.	<p>Number of children accessing the Flying Start programme.</p> <p>of 2 year olds reaching or exceeding their developmental milestones through the SOGS assessment.</p> <p>of 3 year olds reaching or exceeding their developmental milestones through the SOGS assessment.</p>
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2 Pockets

1. Caerphilly residents are provided with information, advice and assistance on a range of social welfare issues to enable them to increase household income, manage debt and develop skills to improve their financial capability.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Services will be commissioned that will assist residents to increase income, reduce debt, provide skills to manage finances and deal with short term crisis.	<p>Number of council tenants referred and supported for money and debt advice as a direct result of face to face support on the impact of welfare reform.</p> <p>Number of other residents referred to commissioned debt support services.</p> <p>Number of people supported to access the benefits they are entitled to.</p> <p>Value of financial savings generated for tenants/residents as a direct result of support.</p>
Healthy Start Scheme providing vouchers for free fruit and vegetables will be promoted to increase uptake.	Number of Healthy Start Scheme vouchers issued.

2. Caerphilly residents are supported to reduce the impacts of rising fuel costs.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Energy efficiency measures are undertaken on properties through the WHQS and ARBED schemes and households are provided with specialist impartial energy use advice.	<p>Number of council tenants visited and provided with advice regarding energy saving measures and energy use.</p> <p>Number of tenants whose homes have been adapted as part of the WHQS works to meet their specific needs in accordance with Part 7.</p> <p>Number of homes benefiting from energy improvement measures under the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO), ARBED or similar government initiatives.</p> <p>Number applying to NEST scheme in private rented and owner occupier sector.</p> <p>Number of properties with improved energy efficiency levels through the WHQS improvements.</p>
Caerphilly Council will actively promote and support the use of collective community energy purchase schemes to benefit social and private sector households.	Number of residents registered to Cyd Cymru.

3. Quality, accessible and affordable childcare provision is promoted to enable families to improve their income through accessing education, learning and employment.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Provision of childcare through the assisted places scheme, supporting family outcomes and sustainability of childcare provision.	<p>Number of children accessing places through Flying Start Childcare and the Assisted Places Scheme.</p> <p>Number of childcare settings offering contracted places in the borough.</p>

2

Pockets

4. Through working in partnership with local employers increase local employment opportunities and identify ways to increase employees incomes.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
The Living Wage is promoted to businesses throughout the borough.	Businesses committing to the living wage.
Appropriate Council contracts to contain community benefit clauses such as targeted recruitment and training to create opportunities for local people.	Number of job created through WHQS targeted recruitment and training schemes.
Support the development of existing and new businesses.	Number of jobs created Number of jobs safeguarded.

5. Ensure that all pupils eligible for Free School Meals are in receipt of their entitlement.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Promote the take up of Free School Meals.	Percentage of eligible pupils taking up the opportunity to access Free School Meals.

3 Places

1. Caerphilly residents are able to live in homes that are affordable, warm and secure without the fear of homelessness

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Residents are supported to live independently in their own homes.	Number of residents supported by Supporting People, tenancy support officers and WHQS officers to live independently. Number of council homes adapted to comply with Part 7 of WHQS.
Existing council housing will be refurbished and future housing planned to meet the needs of the citizens of the county.	Number of properties refurbished to WHQS. Carbon savings achieved on council housing stock via insulation schemes.
We will engage with private sector housing to provide advice and guidance to landlords and advice and assistance to tenants to maintain or access affordable housing in the PRS.	Number of landlords and letting agents accredited. Number of PRS tenants supported to access or maintain existing tenancies.

2. Raise levels of healthy life expectancy across the borough and encourage residents to take responsibility for their own and their families health and well-being and make use of the opportunities and support available.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
A range of community based programmes will be provided to encourage healthy lifestyles.	Number of residents participating in Communities First, Flying Start and Families First healthy living programmes (eg Foodwise, Post and Pre Natal support package, mental health promotion, HENRY). SF-36 Mental Component Summary Score (Welsh Health Survey).

3. Working in partnership with families, parents and schools to increase participation and support the development of parenting skills.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Co-ordinate the provision of and access to Parenting Programmes to improve parenting skills.	Number of parents attending Families First and Flying Start Parenting Programmes. Percentage of parents reporting they understand their child's needs better.
Communities First, in partnership with the Parent Network, will work with selected Secondary Schools to support families to overcome barriers and engage in their child's education.	

4

Prevention

1. Identify and support vulnerable residents and families to reduce the impacts of poverty through the provision of targeted support.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Through structured training and awareness sessions Caerphilly Council staff are able to signpost and refer residents to appropriate advice and support across a range of service areas and partners.	Corporate training statistics.
Through Supporting Family Change project (Families First and ISCAN (Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs)) facilitate and deliver "joined-up" and coordinated services for individuals and families who need multi-agency support over and above universal services.	Number of families in receipt of Supporting Family Change support. Percentage of families who feel that Supporting Family Change has made a positive difference to them on case closure.
Provide children and young people with access to educational or learning opportunities in non-formal and formal settings that contribute to reducing risk taking, anti-social behaviour and low level offending.	Number of young people achieving accredited outcomes through the Youth Service.
Provide targeted support to engage, build confidence and raise the aspirations of families who require more intensive support at a preventative level.	Number of families accessing universal services Number of families engaged in outreach and flexible group sessions.

2. Caerphilly residents are supported to manage the changes to welfare reform and prepared for the introduction of Universal Credit.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
CCBC website is kept up to date and promoted as an information resource for both staff and residents.	Number of 'hits' on selected pages.
Residents are visited in their own homes and provided with advice and support with the changes.	Number of residents visited by Supporting People and Tenancy Support Officers. Percentage of council tenants satisfied with the visit.

3. Improve pupil performance in all key stages through supporting and challenging schools to ensure that all pupils meet challenging targets set for them.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
Improve Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 results through supporting and challenging schools to ensure that all young people achieve the expected level at the end of each Key Stage.	Number / Percentage of children achieving Foundation Phase Indicator at of the Foundation Phase. Number /Percentage of children achieving Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2. Number /Percentage of children achieving Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3. Number /Percentage of young people achieving Level 2+. Threshold (5 GCSE's A* - C, including English/Welsh and Maths).

4

Prevention

3. Improve pupil performance in all key stages through supporting and challenging schools to ensure that all pupils meet challenging targets set for them.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
<p>Improve the performance of those pupils in receipt of Free School Meals against pupils who are not eligible for Free School Meals.</p>	<p>Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) who achieve the Foundation Phase Indicator (in teacher assessments) compared to pupils who are not eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>Number / Percentage of pupils eligible for FSMs who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage2 (KS2), compared to pupils who are not eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>Number / Percentage of pupils eligible for FSMs who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage3 (KS3), compared to pupils who are not eligible for free school meals.</p>
<p>Target key schools to improve attendance, reduce disengagement, improve social skills and reduce exclusions.</p>	<p>Number of young people with improved academic performance.</p> <p>Number of young people with increased attendance.</p> <p>Number/ Percentage of primary school attendance.</p> <p>Number /Percentage of secondary school attendance.</p>

4. Reduce the levels of smoking and obesity.

How we will achieve it	How will we know
<p>Smoking: Provide education in schools on the benefits of not smoking.</p> <p>Increase uptake of smoking cessation services.</p> <p>Train staff in brief intervention techniques for smoking.</p> <p>Obesity: Promote healthy eating and physical activity.</p>	<p>Percentage of adults who reported being a current smoker (Welsh Health Survey).</p> <p>Percentage of adults reporting eating 5 or more portions of fruit or vegetables per day (Welsh Health Survey).</p> <p>Percentage of adults reported being active on 5 or more days in the past week (Welsh Health Survey).</p>

Appendix 2

Anti-Poverty Strategy Summary of Consultation Responses

April 2015

Comments received	Actions Taken
Additional outcome under prospects – <i>Flying Start programme will be expanded to 25 areas to support child development and parental aspirations</i>	This can be included under Prevention (1. Identify and support vulnerable residents and families to reduce the impacts of poverty through the provision of targeted support)
CCBC 4 p's differ from JRF	Noted – JRF approach used as a guide, local outcomes specific to area and placed under most appropriate heading.
General comments on non-specific nature of targets	All targets have been re-visited and amended
ABHB commit to promoting strategy through its NCN and communications	Noted and welcomed
Pockets 1. – ABHB are scoping the development of a Gwent wide on-line based directory to help signpost residents to a range of information, support and advice	Noted and welcomed. More details to be sought
ABHB would welcome the opportunity to collaborate on outcomes identified under Places theme through Caerphilly Wellbeing Improvement Network and NCN.	Noted and welcomed

Reducing levels of smoking under Prevention theme is a key priority for NCN. Scoping of priorities and actions that read across NCN Plans and Strategy to determine how we can collaborate to ensure a strategic approach is developed.	
Public Health Wales have a number of PI's that would be useful for the strategy to adopt. These indicators are used by NCN to track progress and are being considered for incorporation into revised healthy themes action plans.	Agree we should seek consistency across plans.
The use of the word 'poverty' is used out of context and should be about dealing with 'deprivation'.	The use of the term "poverty" in this way is widely accepted and is consistent with other bodies such as Welsh Government.
The information on pages 2 and 3 could be included within pages 4 to 8 as this is an unnecessary duplication of information and wasteful of ink, paper and computer storage	At 8 pages this is a very slim strategic document. The layout adopted aims to lead the reader through the levels of the strategy from high level vision to more detailed actions. Whilst it may be possible to accommodate all of the text on less pages it is considered that this would compromise ease of understanding.
The use of # and % is not good reading practice and should be changes to Number and Percentage	The full wording will be used in the final version of the document
'How will we know' would read better as 'What can we Monitor'.	Noted and will be raised to steering group for consideration
Add 'regardless of who they are as an individual' to the Our Aims paragraph	Accepted and amended
Equalities issues need to be considered at an operational level (not necessarily at the strategy level). People from different protected	Noted – EIA will be completed and equality implications included within covering report.

<p>characteristic groups could be doubly disadvantaged in terms of ability to progress (eg skills development, ensuring all families are included under parenting models). Notes have been made on the covering council report and the EIA provided.</p> <p>Strategy to an operational activity having a positive impact.</p>	
Pockets 4 – should also include businesses, tourism and town centres	
Places could include – To make town centres safe and secure environments for both residents and visitors.	Our town centres are safe
Prospects should refer to attracting higher paid employment opportunities along with inward development	Not included in these terms as it is not clear how it is proposed this would be delivered.
Living Wage outcome – needs rewording and there are no resources to promote/monitor it. What is it, how should it be promoted, what are the benefits to businesses.	Noted and amended.
Places should include the promotion of outdoor activities such as cycling and walking in improving health and wellbeing. Achieved through the numbers using country parks and outdoor activities	Health and Well being is addressed under Prevention within the draft Strategy.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS POLICY

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Scrutiny Committee on the attached Discretionary Housing Payments Policy prior to consideration by Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are additional short-term payments made towards rent. They are only paid to customers already receiving Housing Benefit who need more help with their housing costs over and above their benefit award.
- 2.2 To help Local Authorities mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform, funding for DHPs has increased in recent years. However, it is important that the limited funding available is targeted at those most in need. With this in mind, the DHP policy appended to this report has been drafted. The policy complies with the Department for Work and Pensions Discretionary Housing Payments Guidance Manual (April 2014) and the Pan-Wales Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Framework.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The payment of Housing Benefit is a key element of the Council's anti-poverty and regeneration strategies.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Since July 2001, Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) have enabled Local Authorities to help those entitled to Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit who, in their opinion, require further financial assistance with housing costs.
- 4.2 From April 2013 DHPs were available only to those entitled to Housing Benefit as Council Tax Benefit ended in March 2013 and was replaced by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which is not a Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) related benefit. Therefore, DHPs could no longer be used for help towards paying Council Tax.
- 4.3 Local Authorities have a responsibility to ensure that DHP funding is utilised effectively so that it is paid to those who have the most need. Decisions on assessments are made with reference to the relevant DWP Regulations. These are the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 [SI 2001/1167]. There is no set criterion but each claim has to go through a financial income and expenditure assessment.

- 4.4 Every Local Authority is required to have a written policy that provides clear guidelines on the assessment of DHP applications. Local Authorities have a duty to act fairly, reasonably and consistently when considering entitlement to a DHP award, thus ensuring that the most vulnerable receive the financial assistance they need.
- 4.5 The number of people supported with DHPs has increased significantly in recent years as shown in the table below: -

Year	Total Spend (£)	Number of Claimants Supported
2012/13	74,586	239
2013/14	388,788	1,207
2014/15	428,113	1,266

- 4.6 The funding allocated by the DWP for the 2015/16 financial year is £381,973 and the Council needs to consider the way in which this is allocated to ensure that those most in need are supported. It is therefore proposed to adopt the policy appended to this report to ensure that all claimants are treated fairly and those in most need are given the financial assistance they require to support them to maintain or achieve a solution to secure their tenancy.
- 4.7 It is important to stress that DHPs are principally short-term financial support towards long-term sustainable solutions and payment cannot be made indefinitely. It is fundamental when a DHP is awarded that a sustainable solution is sought and it is imperative that claimants work with their landlords and other support available so that financial advice can be given or affordable accommodation found.
- 4.8 Under the proposed policy payments granted will initially be for a maximum period of up to 3 months (13 weeks). In a limited number of cases where there are particular exceptional circumstances the award may be extended beyond this initial period subject to an assessment of on-going need.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposed policy will help the Authority ensure that it acts fairly, reasonably and consistently when considering entitlement to DHPs. The limited funding available will be targeted at those most in need of financial support.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As detailed throughout the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to consider and comment upon the DHP policy appended to this report prior to consideration by Cabinet.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee has an opportunity to express its views on the proposed DHP policy.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Decisions on assessments are made with reference to the relevant DWP Regulations. These are the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 [SI 2001/1167] and associated amendments.

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Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Stephen Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
David A. Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)
Cllr Barbara Jones, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Draft Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

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Discretionary Housing Payment Policy

Version of Scheme:	Version 1
Draft Number:	Draft 1
Scheme Ratified By:	
Date Ratified:	
Effective Date of Scheme:	15 th June 2015
Review Date:	Every 2 years
Applicable To:	Housing Staff, Benefits Staff, Support Officers, Housing Benefit Claimants.
Equalities Issues:	All Equalities considerations have been taken into account when drafting this Scheme.



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1) Introduction

- 1.1 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) provide claimants of Housing Benefit with further financial assistance to help meet housing costs. The payments are standalone, do not form part of the Housing Benefit entitlement and are additional to the Housing Benefit subsidy.
- 1.2 In 2011/12 the UK Government increased the level of DHP funding available to Local Authorities in order to help mitigate against some of the impacts of Welfare Reform.
- 1.3 The DHP scheme should be viewed as short-term financial support and should not be considered as an alternative to any current or future restrictions set out within the Housing Benefit scheme.

2) Policy objectives

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to specify how Caerphilly County Borough Council will operate the DHP scheme, and to indicate the factors that will be considered when making a decision on an award of a DHP. The policy should be viewed in conjunction with the Department for Work and Pensions Discretionary Housing Payments Guidance Manual (April 2014) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300220/discretionary-housing-payments-guide-apr-14.pdf) and the Pan-Wales Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Framework.
- 2.2 The purpose of the DHP is to support existing housing benefit claimants who may be in exceptional need and DHPs can be used to provide support to claimants affected by some of the key welfare reforms, including, but not limited to: -
 - introduction of the 'benefit cap'
 - introduction of size criteria in the social rented sector – the Spare Room Subsidy (sometimes called the 'bedroom tax');
 - reductions in Local Housing Allowance
- 2.3 Principally, the objective of DHPs is to offer short-term financial assistance to residents impacted upon by the changes described above and the objective of this policy is to ensure the Council administers DHPs: -
 - to assist those residents who demonstrate an exceptional financial need for support with housing costs and who are willing to accept the support available on a short-term basis in order to work towards a sustainable solution
 - within the allocated annual budget
- 2.4 Each application for DHP will be treated strictly on its own merits and all residents will be treated fairly and equally, and the Council will seek through the operation of this policy to: -
 - Help alleviate poverty
 - Help prevent homelessness

- Support vulnerable young people in the transition to adult life
- Encourage claimants to obtain and sustain employment
- Help keep families together
- Support the vulnerable in the community
- Help customers through personal crises and difficult events
- Provide advice on long-term possible solutions to meet unaffordable housing costs
- Improve financial capability by referral to an independent advisor e.g. Money Advice Service

2.5 The Council is committed to working with internal and external stakeholders and other interested parties to maximise the take-up of all available state benefits, and this will be reflected in the administration of the DHP scheme. Where evidence is provided in support of a DHP application that indicates that the applicant is not claiming another state benefit to which they are entitled, the Council will advise, and where applicable, support the applicant to make such a claim.

3) Eligibility Criteria and Claim Process

3.1 To be eligible for a Discretionary Housing Payment all the following conditions must be met for an award to be considered.

Applicants must: -

- a) Be in receipt of Housing Benefit (or the housing element of Universal Credit).
- b) Be able to demonstrate financial hardship or have experienced personal exceptional circumstances. Demonstrating financial hardship will be through the completion of an income and expenditure form during the assessment process.
- c) Be able to demonstrate steps have been (or are being) taken to achieve financial independence e.g. requesting and acting on guidance from the support provided. This may include moving to cheaper accommodation.
- d) Make an application on an approved format. The Regulations state that to make an award of DHP there must be a claim for DHP.

3.2 In order to make a claim for a DHP an assessment form must be completed. The form includes details such as household composition, income and expenditure and what the claimant can do to reduce the shortfall between their housing costs and their Housing Benefit or Local Housing award.

3.3 The Council reserves the right to request any additional evidence in support of the DHP application, and will act consistently and reasonably in doing so. Where the customer is unable to, or does not supply the required evidence, the Council will still consider the DHP application and will take into account any other evidence available, including documentation held on the housing/council tax benefit case file.

4) Decision Process

- 4.1 In deciding whether to award a DHP, the Council will take into account the following: -
- The shortfall between housing benefit, local housing allowance and the liability for rent
 - Any steps taken by the claimant to reduce their rental liability
 - Information gathered by the claimant when accepting a tenancy which falls under the local housing allowance scheme
 - The medical needs and circumstances of the claimant, their partner and any other persons in the household
 - Any savings or capital held by the claimants household
 - The claimants level of debt, their efforts to reduce it and their ability to demonstrate this
 - Whether the customer can change their spending pattern on non-essential items
 - The actions being taken by the claimant to improve or change their domestic, financial or personal situation to reduce or limit the amount of support that they will require in the future i.e. helping those that are trying to help themselves
- 4.2 A minimum of 95% of all applications for DHP will be looked at within 28 working days of being received.
- 4.3 There are certain elements of a claimant's housing costs that cannot be considered for DHP because the regulations exclude them.
- Excluded elements are: -
- a) Ineligible service charges
 - b) Increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears
 - c) Certain sanctions and reductions in benefit
- 4.4 Whilst the DHP scheme is by definition discretionary, the Council has a duty to make decisions in accordance with recognised principles about good decision-making, i.e. administrative law, and in particular to act fairly, reasonably and consistently.

5) Payment and Award Period

- 5.1 The Council will decide the most appropriate person to pay any award of DHP based on the circumstances of each case. Payment frequency will be made in line with the Housing Benefit or Local Housing Allowance award.
- 5.2 Where an application for DHP is successful the customer and any other affected party will receive notification of: -
- The amount of the award

- The method of payment
- The start and end date of the award
- Their duty to report any change of circumstances that may affect their award
- The recoverability of any overpaid award of DHP
- The procedure to follow should a dispute arise

5.3 Consideration will be limited to the current financial year, and DHP will not be awarded for any period outside an existing Housing Benefit or Local Housing Allowance period.

5.4 Any payment granted under this policy will initially be for a maximum period of up to 3 months (13 weeks). However, it is accepted that there will be occasions where the award will be made for longer than 3 months due to the particular exceptional circumstances of the customer. In these circumstances on-going need will be reviewed before any extended award is made.

6) Finance and Monitoring

6.1 The Council will monitor the DHP budget on a monthly basis in order to ensure that the benefits of the scheme are maximised, and to ensure that any under or overspends are adequately controlled.

6.2 Although DHP funds are not 'ring-fenced' for specific impacts of Welfare Reform the DWP have introduced a new monitoring regime that requires the Council to record if the claimant has been affected by one of the following: -

- benefit cap
- social sector size criteria
- local housing allowance restrictions
- combination of reforms
- not impacted

7) Overpayments and Disputed Decisions

7.1 *Overpayments*

The Council reserves the right to recover any overpayment of DHP where the payment was made as a result of: -

- Misrepresentation or failure to disclose a material fact, fraudulently or otherwise
- An error made when the claim was determined

DHP overpayments must not be recovered from any on-going award of Housing Benefit or Local Housing Allowance, unless the customer requests this method of recovery. A standard overpayment notification letter will be issued and will contain the reason for the overpayment, the amount overpaid, the period to which the overpayment relates and the right of review.

7.2 ***Disputed Decisions***

DHP's are not subject to a formal appeals process by virtue that any decision to make a payment is discretionary.

Where an application is declined and a decision disputed for a reason other than one relating to exclusions from the DHP scheme an applicant or their representative may request a review.

All requests for reviews must: -

- a) Be made by the applicant or their representative.
- b) Set out the reasons why it is believed the decision should be reviewed.
- c) Be made within 1 calendar month of the original decision being notified.

7.3 An officer other than the person who made the original DHP decision will carry out the review. In the event that the customer is still dissatisfied with the decision after the review has been carried out, a panel of selected officers will reconsider the case: -

- Head of Corporate Finance
- Lead Officer, Benefits & Finance (Welfare Reform)
- Project Manager & Co-ordinator (Welfare Reform)

All available evidence will be considered and new evidence may be requested. A decision will be made within 14 working days of the referral or as soon as practicable afterwards and notified to the applicant in writing, setting out the reasons for their decision.

7.4 Where the panel decides not to revise the original decision this decision is final and binding and may only be challenged by way of judicial review or by a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, if there is an allegation of maladministration. Decisions on DHP's cannot be appealed to the Tribunal Service, as they are not empowered to deal with them.

8) **Fraud**

8.1 Caerphilly County Borough Council Benefit's Service is committed to tackling fraud and abuse of public funds in all forms. A claimant who falsely tries to claim a DHP by deliberately misrepresenting their circumstances or providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application may have committed an offence. Where there is suspicion that that a fraud may have occurred, the matter will be investigated and this may lead to criminal proceedings being initiated.

9) **Data Access and Data Sharing**

9.1 The Council is allowed to collect data to support, evidence and to determine DHP awards. The scheme will operate to support principles for fair, reasonable and confidential data access and sharing at all times. This is to ensure that customers receive the correct benefits at all times and that public funds and the wider interest of local council tax payers are protected.

10) Review of the Policy

- 10.1 A review of this policy will take place every 2 years, or earlier if required as a consequence of legislative/funding changes. Consultation will depend on the extent of the changes.

DRAFT



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: EQUALITIES AND WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORTS

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the progress made during the financial year 2014/2015 against targets in the Council's current Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme, prior to presenting the annual monitoring and improvement reports to Cabinet for approval for submission to the relevant Commissions and publication online, before the deadline date of 30th June 2015.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce annual monitoring reports on Equalities and Welsh Language issues under current legislation. The requirements are very detailed as to what relevant information must be included in the annual monitoring and improvement reports (attached in full as appendices).
- 2.2 The amount of information presented is therefore in order to ensure that the regulatory bodies involved (the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office) are provided with full evidence of the Council's compliance and commitment to those statutory duties.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Equalities and Welsh Language issues are crosscutting themes of the Community Strategy and impact on every council policy, function and procedure, covering those aimed at the public and internal policies covering the Council's staff members.
- 3.2 The Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme have direct links with a number of other current policies and strategies, both within the Council and in terms of partnership working:-
- **Caerphilly Delivers** (the Single Integrated Plan)
 - Corporate Improvement Plan
 - Welsh in Education Strategic Plan
 - Youth Services Strategy 2014-2019
 - People Management Strategy
 - Workforce Development
 - 50+ Positive Action - action plan
 - Communications Strategy 2014-2017
- 3.3 There are also a number of national Welsh Government strategies or regulations that the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language work links to, including "**Mwy Na Geiriau / More Than Words**" (the National Health and Social Care Welsh Language Strategy); "**Getting On Together**" (the All Wales Community Cohesion Strategy); "**Travelling to a Better Future**" -

the Welsh Government's Gypsy and Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan; and various aspects of Planning, Licensing and Building regulations.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Welsh Language Scheme annual monitoring and improvement report must be published by the 30th June each year.
- 4.2 Under the Public Sector Equalities duties in Wales, an annual report on the Strategic Equality Plan must be published anytime during the 12 months after the end of the financial year that is covered by that report.
- 4.3 Due to the fact that the Council operates an integrated Equalities and Welsh Language system, both reports are collated and presented at the same time for ease of reference.
- 4.4 There are two appendices to this committee report, the full Strategic Equality Plan annual monitoring and improvement report and the full Welsh Language Scheme annual monitoring and improvement report.
- 4.5 In summary however, the following performance information should be noted covering the financial year in question:
 - **231** reports, policies and proposals were impact assessed or had consultation comments provided for them. **43** of those were individual assessments on each of the savings proposals for the 2015-2016 budget, written by staff from the service areas and sent to the Policy Unit for comment.
 - **110** disability access audits were undertaken by Corporate Property and 46 properties upgraded -
 - 2 Caerphilly CBC corporate buildings
 - 2 Countryside locations
 - 2 community centres
 - 2 community education centres
 - 6 libraries
 - 2 Social Services centres
 - 5 leisure centres
 - 22 schools
 - 3 tourism sites
 - **3,517** course places were taken up across a range of Equalities and Welsh Language courses. The 2014-2015 annual training report will be available by Autumn 2015 and this year will include a full Training Needs Analysis, being undertaken over the summer, in order to help the Council and its partners focus on their future priorities.
 - **40** complaints were dealt with by the team, working alongside other service areas, **14** Equalities related and **26** Welsh Language related.
 - Nearly **2,000** staff payroll records had additional Equalities data entered, reducing the number of blank fields in the system. This demonstrates continuous improvement over the last three years of monitoring, from a position where roughly less than 5% of records held any significant level of Equalities and Language data, to a position this year where around 20% have data entered into the relevant fields.
 - **2,773** Welsh language translation requests were dealt with by the team.
 - **511** Welsh speakers are now recorded on the system, an increase of just over 100 staff recorded, for the second year running, due to improved data collection.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Full Equalities and Welsh Language assessments and consultation were undertaken on the Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme as they were being developed, therefore no full assessment has been made on these annual reports. The reports themselves are an assessment of achievements made by the Council under both plans.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report as the annual reports cover work already undertaken in the previous financial year.
- 6.2 During 2014/2015, the team secured additional resources to help deliver against the statutory duties, from internal and external sources, to a value equivalent to £68,600.10, or 36.9% above the core budget.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications to these reports, although this continues to be reviewed as the work specified in the Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme progress.
- 7.2 The additional resources noted in 6.2 above also covers the fact that staff in the team now undertakes Welsh translation work, and Equalities and Welsh language training work for 4 other organisations under formal Service Level agreements or arrangements.
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
 - Newport City Council,
 - Gwent Education Achievement Service
 - Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The reports are based on data gathered across the service areas on implementing the Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme during 2014/2015.
- 8.2 A number of the officers shown at the end of this report as consultees, therefore contributed specific reporting information for different sections in the two full annual reports.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that members note the content of these annual reports and recommend that Cabinet endorse the submission of this information to the relevant Commissions by the date noted in 1.1.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 By gathering all the required information together into these reports from the Council's service areas and from partnership working, and then publishing them, the Council is ensuring that it complies with its statutory duties under current Equalities and Welsh Language legislation.
- 10.2 More importantly, the reports also evidence the amount of positive work and good practice the Council is achieving to benefit those individuals and groups who fall under one or more of the protected characteristics and wider Equalities issues.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
Human Rights Act 1998
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

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- Consultees - Cllr Barbara Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services)
Cllr James Pritchard (Members Equalities Champion)
Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property
Angharad Price, Barrister/Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jackie Dix (Policy and Research Manager)
Anwen Rees (Equalities Training and Promotion Officer)
John Elliot (Senior Research Officer)
Ros Roberts, Performance Manager
Liz Sharma (Consultation and Engagement Officer)
Lynne Donovan (Personnel Manager)
Liz Vicente and Ian Joynes (Human Resources)
Simon Dixon (Disability Access Officer, Corporate Property)

General consultation also undertaken with Equalities and/or Welsh Language Officers from:-

City and County of Cardiff, Torfaen CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Newport CC, Monmouthshire CC.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2014
Appendix 2 - Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring and Improvement Report 2014

Background Papers:

Strategic Equality Plan 2012
Welsh Language Scheme 2012-2015
Equalities and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan 2012 - 2016
Various Guidance Documents

(These are available electronically for information on the relevant pages at - www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities)

Caerphilly County Borough Council Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring and Improvement Report 2014 - 2015

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, regardless of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh, BSL or other language, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Published 30th June 2015

A greener place
Man gwyrdach



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Introduction

Mainstreaming of Equalities work continued during 2014-2015 and this latest annual report not only contains the usual statistical data on staffing issues and complaints, but has an increased focus on case study examples where this mainstreaming and integration work can be seen to be put into practice.

The Council has also continued to work in partnership with organisations from the public, health, voluntary and private sectors and continues to be creative and innovative in delivering against its statutory duties. Caerphilly CBC now undertakes Equalities and Welsh language training, and Welsh language translation services, for 4 partner organisations under formal service level agreements.

A great deal of the Council's Equalities related information is already published in greater detail on the Equalities pages of the Council's website, available at:- www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.

The Council remains committed to ensuring that everyone within the county borough of Caerphilly is treated with equal respect and that their individual circumstances are not a barrier to them receiving the services they need from the Council or its partners.

In order for both this Equalities Annual Report and the equivalent Welsh Language Annual Report to be properly scrutinised and considered, they were taken together through the internal endorsement process via the Corporate Management Team on 21st May 2015, Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 2nd June 2015 and then Cabinet on the 17th June 2015.

The annual reports were then submitted to the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Language Commissioner's Office on 30th June 2015. This ensures that both reports are published within their statutory deadlines.

The reports are also available to download in pdf format on the Council's website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.

Councillor Keith Reynolds
Council Leader
Caerphilly County Borough Council

Chris Burns
Interim Chief Executive
Caerphilly County Borough Council

This report is available in Welsh, and in other languages or formats on request.
Mae'r adroddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd neu fformatau eraill ar gais.

1. Equality Impact Assessments

Overview of the increased effectiveness of the EIA process within the Council during 2014-2015

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) covering Equalities and Welsh Language issues are undertaken on corporate policies and this progress began full implementation in February 2012, from when all council reports were required to contain an Equalities Implications heading.

As EIAs are a requirement of both the **Strategic Equality Plan 2012** and the **Welsh Language Scheme 2012**, the Council has an integrated assessment form to ensure a consistent approach.

General guidance for staff is available on the Equalities and Welsh Language intranet Portal, in the following document:



2014-2015 Data

The list of reports and projects can be found on the Assessing the Services page on the Council's website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities - these have had either a full impact assessment on them or were sent to the Equalities and Welsh Language team for consultation comments.

231 reports, policies and savings proposals were impact assessed or had consultation comments provided for them during the financial year, though

many did not have any significant or direct implications due to the subject matter and so did not require a full impact assessment.

This is a significant increase on the **157** reports and policies undertaken in 2013-2014 and more importantly, **43** individual assessments were undertaken on savings proposals for the Council's 2015-2016 budget and these are also published on the above web page link.

As part of this work around the budget setting process, the Council's Impact Assessment Form was updated in December 2014, and is shown in this report as **Appendix A**.

An evaluation of the older form that had been in use since 2012 identified that users needed some general notes on usage in addition to the Guidance document, which was not always referred to or known about by some staff who were tasked with completing the EIA form.

The Guidance document was re-circulated during 2014 to raise awareness of the help available but in December 2014, the EIA form was updated to include an introductory page covering the basics and a new question added, based on work undertaken by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC - around mitigating factors that would help explain the context of some decisions and offset any potential negative impacts.

Impact assessments are part of a sequence of events that have to happen in order to fully embed Equalities and Welsh Language issues and so the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance document was also updated in order to reinforce the practice that proper and full consultation with groups and individuals representing the various protected characteristics helps make the EIA process that much more robust and straightforward.

See also this report's **Section 7** for information on the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance document update.

2. Discriminatory Bullying in Schools

The Education, Schools and Equalities Report 2015

As reported to Education for Life Scrutiny in January 2015, school bullying in all its forms has a deeply negative effect on the pupils who are its victims, but discriminatory bullying can add an even more personal and hurtful element to the bullying that goes on.

But where discriminatory bullying incidents are not properly recorded, the true nature of that bullying can get overlooked, and any support offered may never tackle the root cause.

Since the Spring Term in the 2011-2012 academic year, termly reporting of discriminatory bullying incidents to the Directorate of Education has been a mandatory requirement, as part of wider bullying and equalities monitoring.

The positive work being undertaken by this Council is receiving publicity across the country, with a short article in Fyne Times reflecting the last few years' work. Fyne Times is a national publication covering LGBT issues but an edition in 2014 was specifically around homophobic bullying in Education. The article on Caerphilly's work is attached as [Appendix C](#) for information.

One area of concern that needs to be raised however is that discriminatory monitoring forms are not the only source of data available to the Directorate of Education, as hate incidents and hate crimes are also recorded by Gwent Police for example. Gwent Police have been called to schools in the county borough on a number of occasions due to the severity of the discriminatory incident, yet the schools concerned in those cases have submitted a Nil Return to the Directorate of Education for that term.

There have also been Freedom of Information requests made to schools on these issues, the results of which have been advertised in the media, that again show more incidents recorded by schools in this period than have been reported to the Directorate of Education.

Under the Council's Bullying Prevention Strategy (May 2012), there is a requirement to complete the Bullying Incident Recording Sheet to record individual critical incidents of bullying and forward them to the local authority within 24 hours. At the time of preparing the Education for Life Scrutiny report, there were none on record that noted any police involvement with schools.

The Directorate of Education, working with the council's Equalities and Welsh Language Team and the Regional Community Cohesion Officer, have provided schools with support and training around these issues. In October 2014, all schools in the county borough were sent a letter covering these issues to remind them of the importance of proper recording and monitoring of these incidents.

During the academic year 2013-2014, 16 primary schools, 8 comprehensive schools and 22 youth clubs were provided with Show Racism the Red Card training. Show Racism the Red Card is an anti-racism charity which aims to raise awareness amongst young people about racism in society. They make use of the powerful position of professional footballers and other sports stars as role models to deliver an anti-racism message. 2629 pupils in total received this training across the county borough.

The full evaluation report provided by Show Racism the Red Card can be found online at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities in the Equalities in Schools section, which is specifically devoted to providing schools with equalities related information and support.

Another charity that the Council worked with during the year for the first time was the Sophie Lancaster Foundation. It was established and became a registered charity in 2009 with the aim of providing workshops that would challenge the prejudice and intolerance towards people from alternative subcultures. It was set up by Sylvia Lancaster, a youth worker herself, and was named after her daughter who was attacked and murdered due to her appearance and mode of dress.

A session was arranged for members of staff from the Youth Service, with a view of up skilling existing staff with the knowledge to be able to deliver further sessions within youth clubs and schools across the county borough. 12 people attended the session, 10 were staff members and 2 from Barnardo's Cymru - Young Carers Project. Their feedback was unanimously positive and they are actively using the resources at sessions being held within the county borough with young people.

The council's Equalities and Welsh Language Team also worked with the Directorate of Education in 3 schools (including their governing bodies) to provide dedicated Equalities awareness sessions in response to situations that have arisen within their establishments.

Also during the academic year, Gwent Police through the 5 School Community Police Officers within Caerphilly CBC, have delivered a very high number of lessons on respect, bullying and diversity issues:-

- 86 Right or Wrong Lessons
- 88 Sticks and Stones Lessons at Primary Level
- 84 Save Me lessons at Secondary Level.

Support materials for all these lessons for both teachers and pupils can be found on www.schoolbeat.org.

The numbers of incidents being recorded each terms varies as a number of factors can influence the results, however it should be noted that *increasing* the number of reported incidents is a target in the Strategic Equality Plan 2012 to reflect better monitoring and identification of the incidents, and so when higher figures are recorded it does not necessarily mean that the situation is worsening.

Data collection and publishing of reports is always done using anonymised totals, with only examples of good practice by individual schools, or those that have had bespoke training being specifically named at any time.

Data is collected and reported in various ways to help identify trends, to target support and show that the Council and schools are complying with legal duties around these issues.

Discriminatory bullying is a matter of concern for every local authority, however this report helps demonstrate that Caerphilly county borough council and its partners are actively monitoring the situation and tackling the issues by working with partners to make positive progress each year.

3. Physical Access

The DDA Work Programme

The Council's Corporate Property Services Division continues to deliver improvements to make public buildings accessible for all via the DDA Work Programme. Each year a programme of work is arranged to update and improve the physical access capacity of a range of Council-owned buildings.

During 2014-2015, £42,000 of capital funding and £200,000 of revenue funding was used to upgrade properties across the county borough.

These included:

- 2 Caerphilly CBC corporate buildings
- 2 Countryside locations
- 2 community centres
- 2 community education centres
- 6 libraries
- 2 Social Services centres
- 5 leisure centres
- 22 schools
- 3 tourism sites

During the same financial year, **110** disability access audits were undertaken.

The Council's Disability Group continues to meet regularly to discuss the wide range of issues faced by people with disabilities, including housing, highways, access issues and any complaints that have been made.

Chaired by the Head of Service for Performance and Property, it includes representatives from a number of Council service areas, partner organisations and the voluntary sector to ensure that there is a cross-sector forum to take forwards the issues faced by so many residents of Caerphilly county borough.

4. Tailoring the Services

The examples below show how Council service areas have tailored their day-to-day work to suit the requirements and needs of individual service users - both excellent examples of putting Equalities related principles to practical use for the benefit of people in the county borough.

a) **WHQS case study example - Meeting the specific physical requirements of households**

The Caerphilly WHQS (Wales Housing Quality Standards) team worked with the visually impaired tenant of a property in Bedwas, Caerphilly to design improvements to meet her specific needs.

The tenant previously experienced difficulties using her kitchen and bathroom, as a result of her visual impairment. She also rarely used the lights in her home as the glare from them made her unwell.

The use of matt tiles and worktops, contrast switches, improved and diffused lighting, along with the general use of contrast to identify critical areas has helped increase the tenant's safety and independence in her home.

The bath was also replaced with a walk in shower to enable easier access for the tenant.

b) **Supported Living case study example - Meeting the specific personal requirements of individuals**

Staff based in a CCBC supported living scheme had raised an issue that a client who has learning disabilities was displaying same sex attraction but hadn't come out.

An LGBT awareness course was arranged for those staff as they wanted to raise their own awareness of LGBT issues to be able to provide advice and support to the client if the need arose, which would improve the way the client was being supported as an individual.

10 members of staff attended this session along with the client's social worker.

5. The Training Programme

Overview of the academic year 2013-2014 and the partnership working through Service Level Agreements

Providing Equalities and Welsh Language courses are statutory duties under relevant legislation and the Council publishes a full Equalities and Welsh Language Training Report annually (based on academic year information) to demonstrate our commitment and progress.

The 2013-2014 report is therefore the most recent and is online on the dedicated Training page at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.



In total, **3517** course places were taken up across the range of Equalities and Welsh Language courses provided, making the year the most successful yet in delivering against the statutory duties.

Since April 2013, Caerphilly CBC has been providing Blaenau Gwent county borough council with Equalities and Welsh language training. This was set-up under a Service Level Agreement and in 2015, Newport has joined the partnership agreement.

The 2014-2015 annual report will be available by Autumn 2015 and this year will include a full Training Needs Analysis, being undertaken over the summer, to help the three partner-councils focus shrinking resources in partnership on what the priorities are in the region.

6. Diversity in the Workplace

Improvements to the CCBC Payroll Data

As shown in greater detail in [Appendix B](#), further efforts were made to increase the numbers of those recorded on the *iTrent* payroll system and this has again delivered improved results for 2014-2015. Below are examples in two categories where clear improvements in the data recorded have been made over the last three years.

i) Religion and Belief

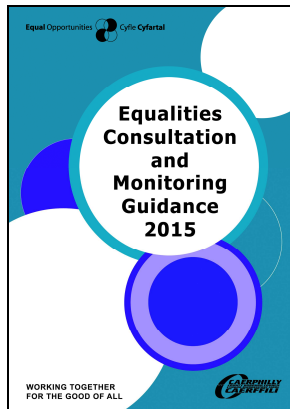
Religion or Belief (Corporate Totals)	31/03/13	31/03/14	31/03/15
Buddhist	1	2	2
Christian (All Denominations)	75	470	736
Hindu	0	2	3
Jewish	0	1	2
Muslim	0	1	2
Humanist	0	0	1
Sikh	0	1	1
No Religion	81	454	742
Undisclosed / Not Specified	9,411	8,603	7,705
Unwilling to Declare	N/A	N/A	96
Other	3	9	15
Authority Total	9,571	9,543	9,305

ii) Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation (Corporate Totals)	31/03/13	31/03/14	31/03/15
Bisexual	0	5	8
Gay	2	10	19
Heterosexual	167	961	1,523
Lesbian	1	8	10
Other	2	2	12
Undisclosed	9,312	8,411	7,587
Unwilling to Declare	87	142	146
Authority Total	9,571	9,543	9,305

7. Engagement and Participation

Updating the CCBC Guidance Document



The Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance document has been in place since 2011 but needed to be updated for several reasons.

As part of the increasing pressure on local authorities to reduce and restructure services and the increasing scrutiny on any decisions being made, the guidance was updated and recirculated in order to reinforce the practice that proper and full consultation with groups and individuals representing the various protected characteristics helps make the EIA process that much more robust and straightforward.

It also had to be updated as the section containing information on voluntary sector groups was in need of editing as a few had ceased to operate for a number of reasons.

The section on consultation questions was also expanded to roll out the new consultation question that was trialled last year. Instead of asking a series of statistical questions on the person being consulted with, a more open question is offered as an option asking how the specific project, proposal or policy would affect them as a individual. This allows people to express concerns or issues that affect them as individuals and can be a far more effective consultation tool than simply knowing that 55% of respondents were female for example.

The updated guidance can be found on the Council's external website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities and on the intranet Portal for Council staff members and elected members.

8. The Landlords Project

A successful collaboration between the Council's Housing team, the Equalities and Welsh Language team and the TDS Charitable Foundation

In the spring of 2014, Caerphilly CBC's Council's Housing team contacted the Equalities and Welsh Language team for advice following a number of recent examples of case law around tenancy issues that had equalities/discriminatory aspects to them.

The planned Common Housing Register in the county borough, together with the growing case law led to the two teams within the Council to work together to develop guidance to help all those who have landlord responsibilities (whether council, social or private) to understand the issues involved and to provide training opportunities to Housing staff, social and private landlords, and letting agencies.

As the work began to develop, it became clear that it brought together a much wider range of local and Welsh national strategies than had first been realised.

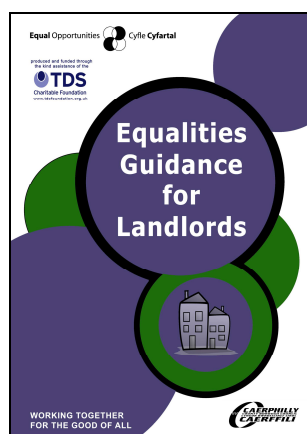
- The development of the Common Housing Register and common allocation policy,
- The Council's current Housing Allocations Policy,
- Caerphilly Delivers - the LSB single integrated plan
- The Council's Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives
- Community Cohesion and Hate Crime issues
- "Part 1 : Regulation of Private Rented Housing" of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, which introduces a mandatory training element for all private sector landlords, operated by the licensing authority.

Landlords, whether council, social or private are provided with support and information on legal matters relating to building regulations, health and safety issues and a range of other practical matters that have an impact on their role. Little has been offered in the past however around Equalities-related guidance and the relationship between landlords, tenants and even neighbours.

The guidance document was therefore been developed to help landlords understand that the greater the level of understanding and information they and their tenants share in terms of Equalities issues, the better the business relationship will be.

Further, any potential problems or issues, if known about from the very beginning of the business relationship, could be used to the advantage of all parties and thus avoid simple things developing into costly legal action.

The guidance provides landlords with greater access to Equalities information and support when dealing with tenants from different backgrounds, or if issues arise between their tenants and neighbours for example. It also supports the relationship between different landlords, tenants and neighbours by potentially improving or avoiding dispute resolution between people of different backgrounds.



As producing Equalities guidance is a target for the Equalities and Welsh Language Team each year, initially the costs of producing and publishing the guidance document was part of core costs for the Council, met from the existing corporate budget.

The team are always looking for ways of securing additional funding and resources however, and thanks to the use of a system known as Grantfinder, a member of the team found a source of potential grant funding to support this project.

The Tenancy Dispute Service, known as the TDS Charitable Foundation, is the UK's leading provider of insurance based tenancy deposit protection, and works to advance education amongst landlords and tenants about private rented housing rights and obligations.

The TDS had £35,000 available in each quarter to fund projects which support this aim, and its first round of funding was made available in 2014/2015, where the Foundation invited bids of up to £20,000 for projects.

In its own press release the TDS noted that it was “*overwhelmed by applications from charities, tenant and landlord groups, local councils, and other organisations*” in the first round.

The Council’s Equalities and Welsh Language Team submitted a bid to the Foundation for £5,000 to both expand the print run for the guidance document and allow landlords in the county borough to access the Council’s Equalities and Welsh language training for free until March 2015.

£35,000 was available in the first round, however the Foundation received bid applications worth over £500,000. Caerphilly County Borough Council was one of only five bodies from around the UK (and the only one in Wales) to be successful and share in grants from the first round of national funding.

The guidance and the training provision were reported to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) on 30th October, with hard copies of the guidance and a press release from the TDS Charitable Foundation about the 1st round of funding included with the report as appendices. The CHTG were very positive about the guidance document and the shared training element.

These were also reported to the local homelessness forum and the Council’s Communications team issued a press release about the project. The pdf copies were placed on the Council’s updated website - under www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities in the Information and guidance section during November 2014.

A series of training sessions were booked in across the county borough for Housing staff, social and private landlords, and letting agencies and an experienced Equalities trainer, Helen Stephens, was brought in to deliver the sessions after being briefed on the target audience.

The training courses were delivered as follows:

- Moriah Church Hall, Risca - 25/11/14
- Rhymney Room, Penallta House, CCBC HQ, Ystrad Mynach - 02/12/14
- Tredomen Business Centre, Ystrad Mynach - 09/03/15
- ICE Centre, Britannia House, Van Road, Caerphilly - 18/03/15

Across the 4 sessions, 39 people attended:

- 25 private Landlords
- 6 Lettings Agents
- 6 Caerphilly CBC Housing staff
- 2 Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC employees

One member of the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team attended an Equalities and Human Rights Commission (Wales) event on Monday 2nd Feb and took some of the booklets along to share out.

On the 6th March 2015, two member of the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team and one from Housing attended a Tai Pawb conference at Cardiff International White Water Centre to give a presentation on the Council's Housing work and upcoming legislative changes, and the Landlords project as a specific section.

The link to their news page where they refer to the conference and the presentation is - <http://www.taipawb.org/article.aspx?nref=167>

9. Service Area Self-Evaluation

An update on changes in how the Council's service areas look at their own performance in terms of Equalities and Welsh Language

During 2014, the service improvement plan process within the Council was updated to focus more on service delivery and self-evaluation, to include a range of data and intelligence to evaluate a service area's work and to draw a conclusion as to how effective that service is.

The Improvement legislation (2009) advises that each authority must 'assess' itself and then publish to the public how it has performed. The legislation recommends certain aspects to take into account when undertaking this work (e.g. analysing performance indicators) before publishing to the public, however, the legislation does not prescribe any specific model for doing so. This means it is up to the Council to decide how self-evaluation will be undertaken by its services within the Council.

The Auditor General for Wales has stated that he wishes to see public services developing their own abilities to constructively evaluate their services placing less reliance on the Regulatory bodies. This move can only be successful within an environment where self-evaluation is honest, consistent, robust and subject to challenge.

How well a service is performing can be subjective, for example a service could be financially sound however its customers may be dissatisfied with the service they are receiving, therefore, drawing on a range of data and intelligence is important in reaching a more accurate and overall judgement of performance. The self-evaluation should be based on evidence that should be readily available in the event of challenges.

The Self-Evaluation Template consists of 7 sections – Performance & Service Development Activity Assessment, Customer Assessment (what our customers say), Financial Assessment, Workforce Assessment, Auditors/Regulators assessment, Equalities and Welsh Language Assessment and 'Changes in the Landscape'.

The Equalities and Welsh Language Assessment is shown in **Appendix D** for this report, and a full report will be published on the Council's website in the Autumn of 2015 once all service area self-evaluation reports have been collated and analysed.

10. Complaints Data

An analysis of the complaints received during 2014 - 2015 and an overview of the improved reporting and recording systems

Section 4 v) of the **Strategic Equality Plan 2012** defines what is considered a complaint in terms of Equalities issues and is equivalent to the definition in section 3.2 of the **Welsh Language Scheme 2012**.

This is in order to maintain consistency of approach when dealing with any complaint of this nature as the Council operates an integrated Equalities and Welsh Language service.

v) Complaints

4.12 A complaint can be defined as a situation where a member of the public, or a group, is not satisfied with the standard of a service, or the action or lack of action by the Council or a member of staff.

4.13 All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the corporate Complaints policy, but with the added need for translation of all incoming and outgoing correspondence on the matter, in line with the Welsh Language Scheme Editorial Policy and any other relevant translation or format issue.

4.14 Complaints will be fully monitored by Equalities category and in which language or format they were initially made.

4.15 Complaints can be made in writing, by telephone or via email to the Council's dedicated email address complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk.

Equalities and Welsh language complaints data now forms part of the quarterly reporting to the Audit Committee as part of the Corporate Complaints process where appropriate, and the Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language) is also now part of the corporate Learning From Complaints Group that meets quarterly to discuss specific and cross-cutting complaints.

Corporate complaints are those that are due to failure of process or failure to operate Council policy correctly. These are complaints that could ultimately be forwarded to the Public Services Ombudsman or Welsh Language Commissioner for example. Code of conduct issues around staff behaviour or attitude are dealt with via internal HR processes.

Equalities and Welsh Language complaints are however something of a hybrid, in that a failure of process may be as a result of the attitudes or opinions of a staff member towards a particular group for example.

During 2014 - 2015, there have been **40** instances that can be therefore classed as complaints under both schemes - **26** Welsh Language complaints and **14** Equalities related complaints.

The following tables are summaries of the complaints, though the full detail of each has been removed for this report to maintain the anonymity of those making the complaint.

**Table 10.1 - Complaints by Equalities Strand
(following the categories listed in the CCBC Strategic Equality Plan)**

Strand	Number
General / Unspecified	4
Age	1
Disability	6
Gypsy and Traveller	0
Human Rights	0
Linguistic Skills	1
Marital Status	0
Nationality	0
Pregnancy and Maternity	0
Race	1
Religion or Belief	0
Sex (Gender)	0
Sexual Orientation	1
Gender Reassignment / Transgender	0
Welsh Language	26
Totals	40

Table 10.2 - Complaints by Directorate

DIRECTORATE	EQUALITIES	WELSH LANGUAGE	TOTALS
Corporate Services	1	10	11
Education	4	5	9
Social Services	1	0	1
Environment	8	11	19
TOTALS	14	26	40

Table 10.3 - Complaints by Outcome

DIRECTORATE	UPHELD	NOT UPHELD	PARTIALLY UPHELD	ONGOING
Corporate Services - Equalities	0	1	1	0
Corporate Services - Welsh Language	6	2	0	1
Education - Equalities	1	2	0	1
Education - Welsh Language	1	0	3	1
Social Services - Equalities	0	1	0	0
Social Services - Welsh Language	0	0	0	0
Environment - Equalities	3	3	0	2
Environment - Welsh Language	6	3	3	0
TOTALS	17	12	7	5

(NB - one Environment Welsh language complaint was in two related parts, one upheld, one partially upheld so the totals here show 1 outcome more than the actual totals in the other breakdowns)

- Upheld** = On investigation, the complaint was valid and therefore upheld.
- Not Upheld** = On investigation, the complaint was not valid and therefore not upheld.
- Partially Upheld** = If the allegation of process failure or conduct contained an element of discrimination, or the complaint was in more than one part, aspects may have been a valid complaint but other parts may not have been upheld.
- Ongoing** = At the time of preparing the report, no final date to close the complaint has been reached.

Table 10.4 - Complaints by Timescales

TIMESCALES (IN WORKING DAYS)	EQUALITIES	WELSH LANGUAGE	TOTALS
0-10	6	19	25
11-20	3	2	5
21-50	1	2	3
51-70	0	0	0
71+	1	1	2
Ongoing (no final calculation yet)	3	2	5
TOTALS	14	26	40

(NB - these timescales cover the Equalities and Welsh language response elements to complaints and so in some cases may differ from the overall Council response time, where other departments also had contributions to make to the full and final response to the complainant.)

The corporate target for responding in full to a complaint is 20 working days, therefore the overall performance shown here is very good, with 25 of the 35 completed issues dealt with in less than half that target time.

The two complaints of over 70 days involved a number of issues and were particularly complicated, so it should be noted that despite the length of time shown, the parties in both cases were kept in constant touch in order to update them on progress.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

December 2014

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL*	
DIRECTORATE	
SERVICE AREA	
CONTACT OFFICER	
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION	

***Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, 'proposal' is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

INTRODUCTION

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities issues have been consciously considered throughout the decision making processes of the work undertaken by every service area in the Council and work done at a corporate level.

The form should be used if you have identified a need for a full EIA following the screening process covered in the Equalities Implications in Committee Reports Guidance document (available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal on the intranet).

The EIA should highlight any areas of risk and maximise the benefits of proposals in terms of Equalities. It therefore helps to ensure that the Council has considered everyone who might be affected by the proposal.

It also helps the Council to meet its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011. There is also a requirement under Human Rights legislation for Local Authorities to consider Human Rights in developing proposals.

The Council's work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the Strategic Equalities Objectives and Action Plan 2012.

This approach strengthens work to promote Equalities by helping to identify and address any potential discriminatory effects before introducing something new or changing working practices, and reduces the risk of potential legal challenges.

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal (the Committee report guidance mentioned above, the Consultation and Monitoring guidance) and the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team can offer support as the EIA is being developed - the contact email is equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

1	What is the proposal intended to achieve? <i>(Please give a brief description of the purpose of the new or updated proposal by way of introduction.)</i>
----------	--

2	Who are the service users affected by the proposal? <i>(Who will be affected by the delivery of this proposal? e.g. staff members, the public generally, or specific sections of the public i.e. youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits etc.)</i>
----------	---

IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3	Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals? <i>(What has been done to examine whether or not these groups have equal access to the service, or whether they need to receive the service in a different way from other people?)</i>
	<u>Actions required</u>

4	<p>What are the consequences of the above for specific groups? <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect affect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy or savings proposal differ dependent upon people’s disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, language, religion/belief?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

INFORMATION COLLECTION

5	<p>Is full information and analysis of users of the service available? <i>(Is this service effectively engaging with all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation of uptake by one or more groups? If so, what has been done to address any difference in take up of the service? Does any savings proposal include an analysis of those affected?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

CONSULTATION

6	<p>What consultation has taken place? <i>(What steps have been taken to ensure that people from various groups have been consulted during the development of this proposal? Have the Council’s Equalities staff been consulted? Have you referred to the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

MONITORING AND REVIEW

7	<p>How will the proposal be monitored? <i>(What monitoring process has been set up to assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community, or that the savings proposals are achieving the intended outcomes with no adverse impact? Are comments or complaints systems set up to record issues by Equalities category to be able analyse responses from particular groups?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

8	<p>How will the above be evaluated? <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>
9	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equality training of some sort?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

10	<p>Where you have identified mitigating factors in previous answers that lessen the impact on any particular group in the community, or have identified any elsewhere, please summarise them here.</p>
-----------	---

11	<p>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment? <i>(What use will you make of this document i.e. as a consultation response, appendix to approval reports, publicity etc. in addition to the mandatory action shown below?)</i></p>
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	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIA, when completed, to be returned to equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for publishing on the Council's website.
--	--

Completed By:	
Date:	
Position:	
Name of Head of Service:	

Appendix B - CCBC Payroll Data Summary

The following information is high-level data of what the *iTrent* payroll system holds as at 31st March 2015 regarding the Caerphilly CBC workforce profile, in terms of protected characteristics and language ability of staff.

Both the Strategic Equality Plan and Welsh Language Scheme require recording of this information and by comparing those figures available at 31st March 2013 and 2014 with those at 31st March 2015 (and bearing in mind that relatively little external recruitment is being done) the increase in the numbers recorded has to be due to improved data-recording and data cleansing of existing staff records.

The **Unwilling to Declare** option was added to the payroll data across each category as an option during this financial year, as it had not been an option for every protected characteristic previously.

- Gender, Ethnicity and Disability data is shown by Directorate.
- Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation data is currently shown by Corporate totals only. Data has again improved during the last financial year.
- Nationality has been included for the first time, by Corporate totals.
- Language Ability is available by Service Area but the data is provided here as Corporate totals for information.
- The numbers in all categories now also show Undisclosed and Unwilling To Declare, reducing the number of empty fields in the system and providing a more accurate staff overview.
- Other information categories within *iTrent* (i.e. certain ethnicities, languages, religions etc.) have not been presented as they are currently showing zero records.

Gender by Directorate	Male	Female	Undisclosed
Corporate Services	580	506	0
Directorate of Education & Lifelong Learning	867	3,895	0
Directorate of Social Services	196	1,308	0
Directorate of the Environment	957	1,462	0
Authority Total	2,532	6,773	0

Disability by Directorate	Disability Recorded	Unwilling to declare
Corporate Services	25	5
Directorate of Education & Lifelong Learning	71	2
Directorate of Social Services	31	0
Directorate of the Environment	64	1
Authority Total	182	8

Ethnicity by Directorate	White	BME	Undisclosed	Unwilling to declare
Corporate Services	1,051	12	21	2
Directorate of Education & Lifelong Learning	4,365	33	362	2
Directorate of Social Services	1,451	24	29	0
Directorate of the Environment	2,268	11	139	1
Authority Total	8,697	79	524	5

Religion or Belief (Corporate Totals)	Numbers
Buddhist	2
Christian (All Denominations)	736
Hindu	3
Jewish	2
Muslim	2
Humanist	1
Sikh	1
No Religion	742
Undisclosed	7,705
Unwilling to Declare	96
Other	15
Authority Total	9,305

Sexual Orientation (Corporate Totals)	Numbers
Bisexual	8
Gay	19
Heterosexual	1,523
Lesbian	10
Other	12
Undisclosed	7,587
Unwilling to Declare	146
Authority Total	9,305

Nationality (Corporate Totals)	Numbers
British (Not Channel Islands or IOM)	487
English	44
Irish	3
Northern Island	2
Scottish	6
Welsh	1,164
Other	19
Undisclosed	7,576
Unwilling to Declare	4
Total	9,305

Language Ability (Other than English) (Corporate Totals)	Numbers
Arabic	1
Braille	16
Breton	1
BSL (British Sign Language)	70
Croatian	1
Dutch	1
French	67
German	26
Greek	1
Hebrew	1
Hindi	2
Hungarian	1
Italian	8
Kurdish	1
Makaton Sign Language	2
Malayalam	2
Nepali	1
Rumanian	3
Russian	2
Serbian	1
Spanish	19
Tamil	1
Turkish	2
Welsh	511
(No staff total is recorded as some staff speak more than two languages)	

APPENDIX C

FYNE TIMES ARTICLE ON CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DISCRIMINATORY BULLYING WORK

A greener place
Man gwyrdach



Tackling Homophobic Bullying in Schools - improve the information being held about it and you improve the opportunities to tackle it effectively.



Since 2012, Caerphilly county borough council has worked with schools to develop better monitoring and better support for pupils and teachers in dealing with homophobic bullying. The full report on what we had done around all forms of discriminatory bullying up until December 2013 can be found online.

School bullying in all its forms has a deeply negative effect on the pupils who are its victims but discriminatory bullying

can add an even more personal and hurtful element to the bullying that goes on. But where homophobic, or other forms of discriminatory bullying, are not recorded as such within the general school bullying figures, the true nature of that bullying can get overlooked, and any support offered may never tackle the root cause.

Developing discriminatory bullying monitoring to cover 10 areas of pupil identity has meant that the Council now has

recorded data on homophobic incidents in schools. Since the trial term in 2012, there is now two full academic years' worth of data to be able to identify patterns, trends and target support at any schools where there seems to be ongoing problems.

There are 97 education establishments that provide monitoring data and the summary of the reported homophobic data across the 7 school terms is shown in the table below.

Summer Term 2012 (pilot term)	Autumn Term 2012	Spring Term 2013	Summer Term 2013	Autumn Term 2013	Spring Term 2014	Summer Term 2014
7	2	1	2	3	5	1

Bullying of this kind is too big an issue for one school, or one governing body or one council department to tackle alone, it's something that needs all the partners to work on together.

Since the last report, we have begun providing training sessions in schools using the

"Homophobia: Let's Tackle It" educational resource, delivered by Show Racism the Red Card. Update reports on discriminatory bullying are also presented to elected members through the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee, and to the Community Cohesion Forum.

as part of the reporting on all hate crime and incidents in the county borough.

We are delighted that in Caerphilly county borough, though there's still so much more to do, we're taking the right steps to tackle homophobia in schools.

www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities or www.caerffili.gov.uk/cyd-raddold eb

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APPENDIX D

EXTRACT FROM CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S SERVICE AREA SELF-EVALUATION TEMPLATE 2015

6. Equalities and Welsh Language Assessment

This aim of this section is to provide an assessment of how Equalities and Welsh Language considerations impact on your service area's plans, or how your work impacts on different groups in the community.

Think about the previous self-evaluation sections you have completed and consider whether your current performance has Equalities and Welsh Language requirements embedded in them, has service development or financial planning issues been properly Equality Impact Assessed, do you consult with a wide range of different groups where necessary, has your service area had any complaints that contain Equalities or Welsh Language aspects to them, how accurate is your Workforce profile in terms of the staff's Equalities and language data and have you had any feedback on these issues from any Auditing or Regulatory body you provide reports to as part of your function?

(Support in completing this section is available from the Equalities and Welsh Language team - equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk).

Section Evaluation

What does the Equalities and Welsh Language evidence say about our service?

Section Analysis

After consideration of the data, what:

- Are the main challenges facing the service and its delivery?
- Are the key service contractions/improvements/enhancements that are needed?
- Actions will deliver those key service contractions/improvements/enhancements?
- Are the main risks and challenges to the organisation and services in securing those changes?
Do any of the identified risks require to be escalated to a Directorate or whole authority level?
If yes, please ensure these are discussed with your Director and transferred to the Corporate and Directorate Risk Register via the Corporate Performance Management Unit.
- Can be concluded about the performance of the service?

Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring and Improvement Report 2014 - 2015

Prepared in accordance with the requirements of the



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

30th June 2015

A greener place
Man gwyrddach

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Introduction

Caerphilly County Borough Council remains committed to providing the best bilingual service possible to residents and visitors, both fluent Welsh speakers and those who are learning the language, children and young people and adults alike.

The Council's 5th Welsh Language Scheme was approved by the Council on 13th March 2012 along with the first Strategic Equality Plan. The Council is implementing both policies, together with a fully integrated action plan under both, in order to maximise the use of resources by mainstreaming the full range of work required, much of which is similar.

This report reflects progress made during the 2014-2015 financial year and looking ahead, in moving into the final operational year of both policies, despite the problems noted in this report under the Complaints section and some lack of progress in certain areas, the integrated approach has proved successful in embedding Welsh language issues into many areas of the Council's work.

A great deal of internal discussion and debate has already taken place around the new Welsh Language Standards, and this will continue when the draft Compliance Notice is received in June 2015, in order to prepare for any new action plan ready for 2016.

In order for Welsh Language matters to be properly scrutinised and considered, the annual report has been through the internal endorsement process via the Corporate Management Team on 21st May 2015, Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 2nd June 2015 and then Cabinet on the 17th June 2015.

The annual report was then presented to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office on the 30th June 2015.

It is also available to download in pdf format on the Council's website on the dedicated Welsh Language page at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.

Related information on Welsh Language issues can also be found on the Linguistic Skills page, the Equalities Guidance page and the Equalities Training page and in the other documents mentioned throughout this report.

Councillor Keith Reynolds
Leader
Caerphilly County Borough Council

Chris Burns
Interim Chief Executive
Caerphilly County Borough Council

**This report is available in Welsh, and in other languages or formats on request.
Mae'r adroddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd neu fformatau eraill ar gais.**

Annual Monitoring and Improvement Report 2014 - 2015

1. Welsh Language Scheme Compliance

Section 5 of the Welsh Language Scheme includes the 6 specific Welsh Language Indicators (**WLI 1-6**) as part of a set of 24 actions.

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRESS
<p>WL Indicator 3 To ensure that Welsh Language issues are an integral part of all e-Government projects.</p>	<p>Internal systems are upgraded to be able to record language choice of users, bilingual front-end interfaces are created etc.</p>	<p>Ongoing as standard practice.</p>
<p>To make 40% of website available in Welsh during the first year, minimum of 10% increase per year afterwards on a rolling programme basis (HTML web pages - this % target does not include pages in downloadable documents).</p>	<p>Demonstrable progress during 2012/2013 on key sections of the website so that Welsh speakers have an increased ability to access online council services and information in Welsh.</p>	<p>See Section 2) ii of this report for further information.</p>
<p>Update of Welsh Language Scheme Editorial Policy.</p>	<p>Greater awareness of bilingual requirements amongst new and existing staff.</p>	<p>Completed, but will be updated with the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards.</p>
<p>To develop an updated set of minimum standards for Council publications.</p>	<p>Council publications comply with the different requirements of the updated Equalities and Welsh Language legislation.</p>	<p>Ongoing as standard practice.</p>
<p>Development of a new Public Engagement Strategy and updating of related guidance to ensure that public engagement/consultation exercises properly take into account equality issues and include all groups in the community to obtain a broad range of opinion.</p>	<p>All public engagement/consultation exercises reflect the requirements of the Equalities duties.</p>	<p>Ongoing as standard practice.</p>
<p>To identify appropriate methods of promoting Council services to different and specific groups in the community and to ensure that the new Public Engagement Strategy reflects appropriate methods of communication.</p>	<p>Use of all forms of media, language and format that are appropriate for engaging with all sections of the community.</p>	<p>Ongoing as standard practice.</p>

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRESS
To identify service needs of specific groups and identify the barriers to accessing services and the actions required to remove those barriers.	Ensuring robust methods of data collection and analysis for all public engagement exercises including surveys, complaints and other available means, to identify specific actions necessary to ensure that individual service needs are considered and met.	Ongoing as standard practice.
To undertake 4 Welsh Language projects in partnership with the Menter Iaith.	Projects undertaken by the Menter Iaith that would not be able to be achieved by the Council alone.	Completed.
To ensure consistent, accurate and robust collation and recording of employee information in terms of Equality data utilising the capacity of the iTRENT payroll database with ongoing data cleansing. Also WL Indicator 5.	Production of anonymised Equalities and Welsh Language quarterly staffing reports based on ongoing data collection and cleansing exercises for publication and use in the Annual Equalities reports.	See Section 2 i) , Section 3) i and Appendix A of this report for staff data.
To offer staff, elected members and partner organisations a comprehensive Equalities training programme and continue to increase course provision and course take-up. Also WL Indicator 4.	Council staff, elected members and staff from partner organisations are appropriately trained in Equalities issues and a quarterly list of Equalities courses produced and circulated.	See Section 4 of this report for summary details. The full Training report is online at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities
To monitor the number and percentage of elected members and staff who have received training in Equalities and Welsh language. Also WL Indicator 4.	Annual Report prepared at the conclusion of each academic year and after consultation with officers and training partners, and submission to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, published on the website during the Autumn.	See Section 4 of this report for summary details. The full Training report is online at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities
To offer staff the opportunity to form their own workplace support networks for specific groups - initial meeting organised centrally with future meetings being the responsibility of the group.	Groups or networks are set up for those wishing to have them, both for mutual support and in order to provide the EEG and other groups with suggestions and comments.	Ongoing as standard practice but no groups are currently running.
To issue supplementary guidance corporately or to service areas on specific areas of work.	Minimum of 3 sets of guidance to be produced per year.	See Section 5) ii) of this report for information on supplementary guidance.

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRESS
To distribute quarterly Equalities and language skills statistics to assist with service planning in relation to Service Improvement Plans.	Quarterly statistics circulated to Heads of Service.	See Section 6) i for progress information.
WL Indicator 2 To undertake a corporate exercise with HR and Service Managers to identify posts where Welsh skills would be essential. Also other language skills e.g. BSL where relevant.	A number of agreed posts in every Service Area have a linguistic element as a basic part of the job description. Alternatively, a team-based approach could be adopted if more practical.	No progress since last year's report, but still planned and tied in to the <i>iTrent</i> data cleansing work.
To develop full proposals for a Language Services Directory.	Directory produced and distributed.	No progress since last year's report, but still planned and tied in to the <i>iTrent</i> data cleansing work.
To ensure that arrangements are in place to strategically monitor the progress of the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) and Welsh Language Scheme (WLS) and to produce annual monitoring and improvement reports on the progress achieved and any areas of concern, and overall compliance with statutory duties.	Annual reports submitted for approval to Corporate Management Team, Policy and Resources Scrutiny and Cabinet internally and then submitted to the relevant bodies. Ad hoc information reports to be produced where relevant or where specifically requested.	Completed each year by the deadline date. See also Section 7 ii) for additional information.
To adopt and implement a standing directive that reports presenting new or updated policies and initiatives carry an assessment of the likely impact of the SEP and WLS.	Reports demonstrate clear links to the Equalities and Welsh Language agenda.	See Section 5) i for progress information.
To produce a corporate list of policies, strategies and plans and update the list regularly.	Updated list produced and made available quarterly.	See Section 5) i for progress information.
Each service to ensure that it has equality targets in its Service Improvement Plan (SIP).	Using SIP reports and EIAs undertaken, services will mainstream Equalities issues in their own action plans.	See Section 6) i for progress information.
Undertake annual Equality audit of all Service Improvement Plans to establish progress each service has made.	Report produced showing good practice and areas for improvement for following year.	See Section 6) i for progress information.
Each service area to undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on all policies.	EIAs undertaken and published on CCBC website.	See Section 5) i for progress information.

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRESS
<p>To monitor the number and type of complaints received that contain an Equalities aspect and whether they are dealt with in accordance with corporate standards and provide appropriate training if required. Also WL Indicator 6.</p>	<p>Complaints reporting will be part of the annual report.</p>	<p>See Section 2) iii for the 2014-2015 information.</p>
<p>To ensure that Council contract specifications include an Equalities and Welsh Language pre-tender questionnaire and include the Equality in Procurement Policy as standard information. Also WL Indicator 1, specifically :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) care services (ii) youth and leisure services (iii) pre-school provision 	<p>All contractors are aware of their Equalities and Welsh Language responsibilities when discharging functions on behalf of the Council.</p>	<p>See Section 3) ii for general details.</p>

2. Welsh Language Front Line Services

i) Welsh Language Indicator 2 - an ability to guarantee a Welsh language service at main receptions, contact centres or one stop shops

Payroll Data

As shown in detail in **Appendix A**, despite still showing relatively low numbers of Welsh speakers recorded as employed by the Council, the efforts made to increase the numbers of those recorded (in terms of Welsh Language and other categories in the Equalities and Language data held on **iTrent**) has again delivered improved results for 2014-2015.

This year's figures stand at **511** as at the end of March 2015 compared with **406** as at the same period last year.

ii) The Updated CCBC Website

The corporate website was re-launched in November 2014 with a new design and updated content.

Though the website was not fully bilingual at the relaunch, 10 major sections were translated and online by that date, and a rolling programme of further sections has continued covering 20 other areas.

It is now estimated that over 50% of the new site is bilingual with more sections going online each month.

One issue that has arisen is around the micro-sites (i.e. the stand-alone sections not specifically part of the corporate site) and that is a priority for the coming year, but due to limited resources the main site relaunch took priority at the time.

A full analysis of the site by the Web team in IT is due to take place over the summer of 2015.

iii) Welsh Language Indicator 6 - Standards of Service

Section 3.2 of the **Welsh Language Scheme 2012** defines what is considered a complaint in terms of the Welsh Language and is in line with the Council's overall Complaints Procedure :-

3.2 COMPLAINTS

- 3.2.1 A complaint can be defined as a situation where a member of the public, or a group, is not satisfied with the standard of a service, or the action or lack of action by the Council or a member of staff. In the context of the Welsh Language Scheme, complaints can be further defined in two ways:-
- i) Complaints in Welsh that concern a specific service area;
 - ii) Complaints in either language, concerning the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme itself.
- 3.2.2 All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the corporate Complaints policy, but with the added need for translation of all incoming and outgoing correspondence on the matter, in line with the Editorial Policy (see **Appendix A**).
- 3.2.3 Complaints can be made in writing, by telephone or by email to the Council's dedicated address **complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk**.

Significant changes and improvements have been made to the way Welsh Language complaints, along with all other wider Equalities complaints, are recorded, monitored and reported upon internally.

Equalities and Welsh language complaints data (when relevant) now forms part of the quarterly reporting to the Audit Committee as part of the Corporate Complaints process, and the Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language) is also now part of the corporate Learning From Complaints Group that meets quarterly to discuss specific and cross-cutting complaints.

Corporate complaints are those that are due to failure of process or failure to operate Council policy correctly. These are complaints that could ultimately be forwarded to the Public Services Ombudsman or Welsh Language Commissioner for example.

Code of conduct issues around staff behaviour or attitude are dealt with via internal HR processes. Equalities and Welsh Language complaints are however something of a hybrid, in that a failure of process may be as a result of the attitudes or opinions of a staff member towards a particular group for example.

During 2014 - 2015, there have been **40** instances that can be therefore classed as complaints under both schemes - **26** Welsh Language complaints and **14** Equalities related complaints. Over the next few pages, the following tables are summaries of the complaints, though the full detail of each has been removed for this report to maintain the anonymity of those making the complaint.

Complaints by Directorate

DIRECTORATE	EQUALITIES	WELSH LANGUAGE	TOTALS
Corporate Services	1	10	11
Education	4	5	9
Social Services	1	0	1
Environment	8	11	19
TOTALS	14	26	40

Complaints by Outcome

DIRECTORATE	UPHELD	NOT UPHELD	PARTIALLY UPHELD	ONGOING
Corporate Services - Equalities	0	1	1	0
Corporate Services - Welsh Language	6	2	0	1
Education - Equalities	1	2	0	1
Education - Welsh Language	1	0	3	1
Social Services - Equalities	0	1	0	0
Social Services - Welsh Language	0	0	0	0
Environment - Equalities	3	3	0	2
Environment - Welsh Language	6	3	3	0
TOTALS	17	12	7	5

(NB - one Environment Welsh language complaint was in two related parts, one upheld, one partially upheld so the totals here show 1 outcome more than the actual totals in the other breakdowns)

Upheld	=	On investigation, the complaint was valid and therefore upheld.
Not Upheld	=	On investigation, the complaint was not valid and therefore not upheld.
Partially Upheld	=	If the allegation of process failure or conduct contained an element of discrimination, or the complaint was in more than one part, aspects may have been a valid complaint but other parts may not have been upheld.
Ongoing	=	At the time of preparing the report, no final date to close the complaint has been reached.

Complaints by Timescales

TIMESCALES (IN WORKING DAYS)	EQUALITIES	WELSH LANGUAGE	TOTALS
0-10	6	19	25
11-20	3	2	5
21-50	1	2	3
51-70	0	0	0
71+	1	1	2
Ongoing (no final calculation yet)	3	2	5
TOTALS	14	26	40

(NB - these timescales cover the Equalities and Welsh language response elements to complaints and so in some cases may differ from the overall Council response time, where other departments also had contributions to make to the full and final response to the complainant.)

The corporate target for responding in full to a complaint is 20 working days, therefore the overall performance shown here is very good. 19 of the 26 Welsh Language complaints were dealt with in less than half the corporate target timescale.

The Welsh Language complaint of over 70 days involved a number of issues and was one that involved the complaint escalating to the Welsh Language Commissioner. It should be noted however that despite the length of time shown, all parties were kept in constant touch in order to update them on progress.

2 complaints in total were escalated to the Welsh Language Commissioner formally, with one further complaint being copied in but with no further action required. In both formal cases, the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office were satisfied with how the Council subsequently responded to and dealt with those issues.

Complaint Themes

22 of the 26 Welsh Language complaints can be classed as "process" issues, where council policy has not, or allegedly had not, been followed properly in terms of providing written material, or web pages, in Welsh for example.

The remaining 4 can be classed as "prevention", where an individual has alleged that the Council's failure to provide a Welsh language face-to-face or telephone service in Welsh has prevented them being able to speak Welsh with a council employee or representative.

3. Scheme Management and Administration

i) Welsh Language Indicator 5 - Language Ability

The ability to record Welsh language issues in terms of staff data and analysis is an integral part of the payroll system within Caerphilly County Borough Council. Financial year-end figures to 31st March 2015 show the following numbers:-

Directorate	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	Percentage
Corporate Services	1,086	104	9.58
Social Services	1,504	66	4.39
Environment Group	2,419	80	3.31
Education and Lifelong Learning	4,762	275	5.77
Total	9,305	511	5.49

The full year-end breakdown of Council staff's Welsh Language ability for 2014 - 2015 can be seen in [Appendix A](#).

Staff Language Choice

One system improvement to note is that *iTrent* now allows Welsh speaking members of staff to record their own language choice, and currently **7** staff members have opted to have any correspondence from HR sent to them in Welsh. No active language choice offer has yet been made across the board, but this will happen as the Welsh Language Standards come into force.

ii) Welsh Language Indicator 1 - Procurement

Previous Annual Monitoring and Improvement Reports have noted how corporately, Equalities and Welsh Language requirements have been included in all Pre-Tender Questionnaires from the Procurement team, included in Social Services Commissioning guidance and in the specific contract requirements in Building Consultancy.

Tenders submitted are monitored for compliance with the questions asked in Equality in Procurement documents, and if any indicate they do not or cannot comply, they are signposted to support and guidance on adopting or developing Welsh Language Schemes of their own.

Records for 2014-2015 indicate that **154** contracts have been offered for tender by the Council's Procurement section, and **1192** companies invited to tender for them.

4. Linguistic skills: comparing service needs and capacity

i) *Welsh Language Indicator 4 - Welsh in the Workplace Training and Language Awareness Training*

By the current academic year 2014-2015, **1429** of the Council's staff and staff of partner organisations have now been on conversational Welsh classes ranging from taster courses for absolute beginners, up to and including 'A' level courses.

Academic Year	Year courses	Taster Courses	Total Learners	(Numbers withdrawn)
2001 – 2002	46	0	46	(0)
2002 – 2003	66	0	66	(11)
2003 – 2004	84	37	121	(17)
2004 – 2005	70	43	113	(15)
2005 – 2006	61	77	138	(10)
2006 – 2007	66	27	93	(12)
2007 – 2008	68	38	106	(7)
2008 – 2009	43	58	101	(9)
2009 – 2010	48	50	98	(13)
2010 – 2011	50	33	83	(1)
2011 – 2012	52	21	73	(2)
2012 – 2013	52	22	74	(3)
2013 – 2014	61	142	203	(16)
2014 – 2015	56	58	114	(13)
TOTALS	823	606	1429	(129)

The lower numbers attending this year, and the higher percentage of those withdrawing from courses, appear mainly to be due to increasing work pressures as services contract. The introduction of the Welsh Language Standards may have the opposite effect in future but this trend will be closely monitored.

In preparation for the Urdd Eisteddfod in May 2015 (being hosted by Caerphilly CBC at Llancaich Fawr Manor), a Mynediad 1 Welsh course was arranged for the staff there in order to assist them in dealing with the Welsh speaking visitors to the national event and to increase their skills longer term for future visitors.

The full training report for the academic year 2013-2014 can be found online at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities on the Training page, and the report for the academic year 2014-2015 will be published there by the Autumn of 2015.

5. Mainstreaming

i) *Impact Assessments on New and Updated Policies*

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) covering Equalities and Welsh Language issues are undertaken on corporate policies and this progress began full implementation in February 2012, from when all council reports were required to contain an Equalities Implications heading.

As EIAs are a requirement of both the **Strategic Equality Plan 2012** and the **Welsh Language Scheme 2012**, the Council has an integrated assessment form to ensure a consistent approach.

General guidance for staff is available on the Equalities and Welsh Language intranet Portal, in the following document:



2014-2015 Data

The list of reports and projects can be found on the Assessing the Services page on the Council's website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities - these have had either a full impact assessment on them or were sent to the Equalities and Welsh Language team for consultation comments.

231 reports, policies and savings proposals were impact assessed or had consultation comments provided for them during the financial year, though many did not have any significant or direct implications due to the subject matter and so did not require a full impact assessment.

This is a significant increase on the **157** reports and policies undertaken in 2013-2014 and more importantly, **43** individual assessments were undertaken on savings proposals for the Council's 2015-2016 budget and these are also published on the above web page link.

As part of this work around the budget setting process, the Council's Impact Assessment Form was updated in December 2014, and is shown in this report as **Appendix C**.

An evaluation of the older form that had been in use since 2012 identified that users needed some general notes on usage in addition to the Guidance document, which was not always referred to or known about by some staff who were tasked with completing the EIA form.

The Guidance document was re-circulated during 2014 to raise awareness of the help available but in December 2014, the EIA form was updated to include an introductory page covering the basics and a new question added, based on work undertaken by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC - around mitigating factors that would help explain the context of some decisions and offset any potential negative impacts.

Impact assessments are part of a sequence of events that have to happen in order to fully embed Equalities and Welsh Language issues and so the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance document was also updated in order to reinforce the practice that proper and full consultation with groups and individuals representing the various protected characteristics helps make the EIA process that much more robust and straightforward.

ii) *Supplementary Guidance to CCBC staff*

As noted in the introduction, since 2012 the overall aim of the Council's approach has been to integrate and mainstream Welsh Language issues alongside the wider Equalities agenda, into all aspects of the work undertaken by the various service areas.

The supplementary guidance produced this year in many ways reflects that approach. One existing document has been updated during the year and two new ones have been developed.

Each covers a totally different subject matter as it's main function, but each ensure that the Welsh Language is an integral part of that function.

One is a corporate resource, one is a specific service area resource but has been shared across the UK already, and the third is a resource that has received hugely positive feedback within the council, the county borough and across Wales.

These documents can be found on the Council's external website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities and on the intranet Portal for Council staff members and elected members.

a) Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance



The Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance document has been in place since 2011 but needed to be updated for several reasons.

As part of the increasing pressure on local authorities to reduce and restructure services and the increasing scrutiny on any decisions being made, the guidance was updated and recirculated in order to reinforce the practice that proper and full consultation with groups and individuals representing the various protected characteristics helps make the EIA process that much more robust and straightforward.

It also had to be updated as the section containing information on voluntary sector groups was in need of editing as a few had ceased to operate for a number of reasons.

The section on consultation questions was also expanded to roll out the new consultation question that was trialled last year. Instead of asking a series of statistical questions on the person being consulted with, a more open question is offered as an option asking how the specific project, proposal or policy would affect them as an individual.

This allows people to express concerns or issues that affect them as individuals and can be a far more effective consultation tool than simply knowing that 25% of respondents were Welsh speakers for example.

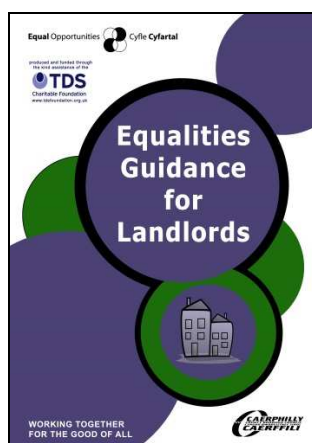
Getting qualitative feedback from Welsh speakers about their experiences, either positive or negative is also more in line with the aims of the Welsh Language Standards and “More Than Just Words” in terms of identifying where the rights of Welsh speakers may have been denied, or to identify good practice to use as case study examples across other service areas.

b) The Landlords Project and Guidance Document

Though at first glance this may appear to be more relevant to the Equalities agenda than the Welsh Language one, this is perhaps the best example of the integration and mainstreaming work mentioned previously, to embed Welsh Language issues as a norm within very different areas of work.

In the spring of 2014, Caerphilly CBC's Council's Housing team contacted the Equalities and Welsh Language team for advice following a number of recent examples of case law around tenancy issues that had equalities/ discriminatory aspects to them.

Landlords, whether council, social or private are regularly provided with support and information on legal matters relating to building regulations, health and safety issues and a range of other practical matters that have an impact on their role. Little has been offered in the past however around Equalities and Welsh Language related guidance and those aspects of the relationship between landlords, tenants and even neighbours.



The bilingual guidance document provides landlords with greater access to Equalities and Welsh Language information and support when dealing with tenants from different backgrounds. The guidance is split into five sections and two appendices.

Section 1	-	Introduction and Background
Section 2	-	Case Law Example
Section 3	-	Know your Tenant - a Practical Guide
Section 4	-	Community Cohesion and Hate Crime
Section 5	-	Training Opportunities
Appendix A	-	Model Tenant Monitoring Form
Appendix B	-	List of Contact Organisations

As producing Equalities guidance is a target for the Equalities and Welsh Language Team each year, initially the costs of producing and publishing the bilingual guidance document was part of core costs for the Council, met from the existing corporate budget.

The team are always looking for ways of securing additional funding and resources however, and thanks to the use of a system known as Grantfinder, a member of the team found a source of potential grant funding to support this particular project.

The Tenancy Dispute Service, known as the TDS Charitable Foundation, is the UK's leading provider of insurance based tenancy deposit protection, and works to advance education amongst landlords and tenants about private rented housing rights and obligations.

The TDS had £35,000 available in each quarter to fund projects which support this aim, and its first round of funding was made available in 2014/2015, where the Foundation invited bids of up to £20,000 for projects. In a press release the TDS noted that it was "*overwhelmed by applications from charities, tenant and landlord groups, local councils, and other organisations*" in the first round.

The Council's Equalities and Welsh Language Team submitted a bid to the Foundation for £5,000 to both expand the print run for the guidance document and allow landlords in the county borough to access the Council's Equalities and Welsh language training for free until March 2015.

£35,000 was available in the first round, however the Foundation received bid applications worth over £500,000. Caerphilly County Borough Council was one of only five bodies from around the UK (and the only one in Wales) to be successful and share in grants from the first round of national funding.

The guidance and the training provision were reported to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) on 30th October, with hard copies of the guidance and a press release from the TDS about the 1st round of funding included with the report as appendices.

The CHTG were very positive about the guidance document and the shared training element. It was also reported to the local homelessness forum and the Council's Communications team issued a press release about the project.

The pdf copies were placed on the Council's updated website - under www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities in the Information and guidance section during November 2014.

A series of Equalities and Welsh Language awareness training sessions were booked in across the county borough for Housing staff, social and private landlords, and letting agencies and an experienced Equalities trainer, Helen Stephens, was brought in to deliver the sessions after being briefed on the target audience.

The training courses were delivered as follows:

- Moriah Church Hall, Risca - 25/11/14
- Rhymney Room, Penallta House, CCBC HQ, Ystrad Mynach - 02/12/14
- Tredomen Business Centre, Ystrad Mynach - 09/03/15
- ICE Centre, Britannia House, Van Road, Caerphilly - 18/03/15

Across the 4 sessions, 39 people attended:

- 25 private Landlords
- 6 Lettings Agents
- 6 Caerphilly CBC Housing staff
- 2 Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC employees

One member of the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team attended an Equalities and Human Rights Commission (Wales) event on Monday 2nd Feb and took some of the booklets along to share out.

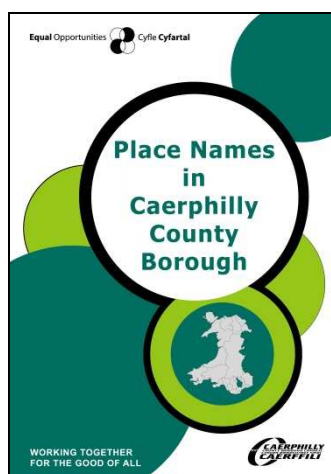
On the 6th March 2015, two member of the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team and one from Housing attended a Tai Pawb conference at Cardiff International White Water Centre to give a presentation on the Council's Housing work and upcoming legislative changes, and the Landlords project as a specific section.

The link to their news page where they refer to the conference and the presentation is - <http://www.taipawb.org/article.aspx?nref=167>

In terms of Welsh Language relevance, aside from being fully bilingual, the guidance document's Training information includes a range of Welsh Language courses, the Model Monitoring Form allows the tenants to note to the landlords if they are Welsh speakers, and the Contact Organisations include the Urdd and the local Menter Iaith.

The 39 people attending the training sessions were also provided with basic information about Welsh Language issues and legislation in Wales alongside the wider Equalities agenda.

c) Place Names Booklet



When the Council's first Welsh Language Scheme was launched in 1998, the Council's Highways department contacted the Welsh Language Officer to get an alphabetical list of the place names in the area to ensure that the bilingual signage being put in place from then on had the correct translations in both languages and also were correct in terms of use of capital letters and hyphens and other such issues.

What began as that list evolved by 2014 into a detailed booklet containing not only the basic place names information but also grid references, phonetic spellings and a history of the way that place name has changed and developed over the years, some as much as over a thousand years. As such, it has become a resource that covers Welsh language issues, history and heritage and geography.

A number of presentations have been made on the place names booklet, in English and Welsh, to local community and history groups and to classes of Welsh learners. The booklet has also been distributed at the annual conference of the Welsh Place Names Society.

iii) Diwrnod Shwmae October 2014

The Council took part in 'Diwrnod Shwmae' on 15th October 2014, by promoting the use of the Welsh language across the organisation and showing that the Welsh language belongs to everyone – fluent speakers, learners or even those who may be shy of using their Welsh language skills.

Members of the Equalities and Welsh Language team were located in the Penallta House Glass Restaurant between noon and 2pm on the day, offering an opportunity for staff to sign a pledge to agree to promote and support Welsh in the workplace in return for some promotional merchandise, which included the branded Cymraeg lanyard, a Diwrnod Shwmae mug and copies of the Place Names Booklet. 108 people signed the pledge, the first being the Interim Chief Executive, and the list includes both staff and elected members.

6. Analysis of Performance by Priority and Target

j) Service Delivery and Self-Evaluation

During 2014, the service improvement plan process within the Council was updated to focus more on service delivery and self-evaluation, to include a range of data and intelligence to evaluate a service area's work and to draw a conclusion as to how effective that service is.

The Improvement legislation (2009) advises that each authority must 'assess' itself and then publish to the public how it has performed. The legislation recommends certain aspects to take into account when undertaking this work (e.g. analysing performance indicators) before publishing to the public, however, the legislation does not prescribe any specific model for doing so. This means it is up to the Council to decide how self-evaluation will be undertaken by its services within the Council.

The Auditor General for Wales has stated that he wishes to see public services developing their own abilities to constructively evaluate their services placing less reliance on the Regulatory bodies. This move can only be successful within an environment where self-evaluation is honest, consistent, robust and subject to challenge.

How well a service is performing can be subjective, for example a service could be financially sound however its customers may be dissatisfied with the service they are receiving, therefore, drawing on a range of data and intelligence is important in reaching a more accurate and overall judgement of performance. The self-evaluation should be based on evidence that should be readily available in the event of challenges.

The Self-Evaluation Template consists of 7 sections – Performance & Service Development Activity Assessment, Customer Assessment (what our customers say), Financial Assessment, Workforce Assessment, Auditors/Regulators assessment, Equalities and Welsh Language Assessment and 'Changes in the Landscape'.

The Equalities and Welsh Language Assessment is shown in **Appendix D** for this report, and a full report will be published on the Council's website in the Autumn of 2015 once all service area self-evaluation reports have been collated and analysed.

7. Publishing Information on Performance

i) General Performance

The Council publishes information on its performance every year in the form of a public summary as hard copy and electronically, and also in Newline, the Council's own newspaper.

ii) Welsh Language Performance

This annual monitoring and improvement report, once debated and approved internally within the Council, will then be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office and then published on the Equalities section of the Council's website, along with other data on language matters - www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.

A full Equalities training report is published in the Autumn each year on the previous academic year, and this also contains all the Welsh language training provided.

iii) Other Information

The Council's website contains information and a pdf document currently giving 7 financial years' worth of information on Translation costs, split into three sections covering Welsh, BSL and other spoken languages. There is also some narrative to give context and background. The 2014-2015 figures are currently being compiled and will be added to the pdf document over the summer.

This information can be found at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.

8. Team Information

The Equalities and Welsh Language Team currently sit within the Policy Unit, in the Performance and Property Division under Corporate Services.

There are six posts in the team, four being translators and the other two working on corporate Equalities and Welsh Language issues across the Council's service areas.

The team is located in the Council's headquarters at Penallta House in Ystrad Mynach.

**Senior Policy Officer
(Equalities and Welsh Language)
Telephone: 01443 864353**

**Equalities Training and Promotion Officer
(includes all Welsh Language training)
Telephone: 01443 864404**

**3 x Welsh Language Translators
Telephone: 01443 864344
Telephone: 01443 864377
Telephone: 01443 864414**

**1 x Welsh Language Translator
(Vacant Post)**

**Caerphilly County Borough Council,
Policy Unit,
Performance and Property Division,
Penallta House (1st Floor),
Tredomen Park,
Ystrad Mynach,
CF82 7PG.**

Email contacts:-

cymraeg@caerffili.gov.uk

equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk

APPENDIX A -

LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF WORKFORCE - WELSH LANGUAGE ABILITY BY SERVICE AREA AND FLUENCY AS AT 31st MARCH 2015

i) OVERALL STAFF FIGURES

	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
<i>Corporate Services</i>			
Corporate Finance	146	15	10.27
Housing	324	25	7.72
Human Resources	79	5	6.33
Information Technology & Citizen Engagement	206	19	9.22
Legal and Governance	65	9	13.84
Performance & Property	79	11	13.92
WHQS Programme	167	20	11.98
Procurement Services	18	2	11.11
<i>Total</i>	1,086	104	9.58
<i>Directorate of Social Services</i>			
Adult Services	1,168	47	4.02
Business Support	35	4	11.43
Children's Services	284	15	5.28
<i>Total</i>	1,504	66	4.39
<i>Environment Group</i>			
Community & Leisure Services	1,216	14	1.15
Engineering and Transport	254	8	3.15
Planning & Regeneration	365	37	10.14
Public Protection	750	23	3.07
<i>Total</i>	2,419	80	3.31

	Total Staff	Welsh Speakers	%
Directorate of Education & Lifelong Learning			
Learning, Education and Inclusion	461	105	22.78
Lifelong Learning and Planning & Strategy	566	64	11.30
Schools	3,805	111	2.92
Total	4,762	275	5.77
COUNCIL TOTALS	9,305	511	5.49

NOTES

- As with previous reports, the figures in **B i)** above are the total number of people per directorate who have completed the Linguistic Skills form noting Welsh Language skills.
- The figures shown in **B ii)** to **B v)** that follow refer to levels of fluency of Welsh speakers per service area and cannot be compared directly with the totals shown in **B i)** because for example, in Housing (the second section below in **B ii)** the "Quite Well" column refers to a staff member who can read, speak, understand and write quite well, not 4 different members of staff.

ii) CORPORATE SERVICES

Corporate Finance	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading		2	2	9	2
Speaking/Use		2	2	9	2
Understanding		1	1	12	1
Writing			2	11	2
Total Staff	15				

Housing	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	1	2		14	8
Speaking/Use	1	1	1	18	4
Understanding	2	1		20	2
Writing	1	2		13	9
Total Staff	25				

Human Resources	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	2	1		2	
Speaking/Use	2	1		2	
Understanding	2	1		2	
Writing	2	1		1	1
Total Staff	5				

IT & Citizen Engagement	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	4	2	2	10	1
Speaking/Use	4	2	1	12	
Understanding	5	1	3	10	
Writing	5	1	1	11	1
Total staff	19				

Legal & Governance	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading		2	2	3	2
Speaking/Use		2	2	4	1
Understanding		2	2	4	1
Writing		2	2	3	2
Total staff	9				

Performance & Property	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	4		1	6	
Speaking/Use	4			7	
Understanding	4			7	
Writing	4			7	
Total staff	11				

WHQS Programme	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	1		2	14	3
Speaking/Use	1		1	17	1
Understanding	1		3	16	
Writing	1		1	13	5
Total staff	20				

Procurement	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading					2
Speaking/Use				1	1
Understanding					2
Writing					2
Total staff	2				

iii) DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Adult Services	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	11	14	4	14	4
Speaking/Use	11	7	12	16	1
Understanding	12	10	6	16	3
Writing	9	12	8	13	5
Total staff	47				

Business Support	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	1			3	
Speaking/Use			1	3	
Understanding			1	3	
Writing		1		3	
Total staff	4				

Children's Services	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	2		2	8	3
Speaking/Use	2		2	8	3
Understanding	2		1	11	1
Writing	2		2	6	5

	Total staff 15
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iv) **ENVIRONMENT GROUP**

Engineering & Transport	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	2	2	2	2	
Speaking/Use	2	3	1	2	
Understanding	2	3	1	2	
Writing	2	1	3	2	
Total staff	8				

Planning & Regeneration	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	6	4	4	20	3
Speaking/Use	5	2	5	24	1
Understanding	6	3	4	22	2
Writing	5	2	3	22	5
Total staff	37				

Community and Leisure Services	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	1		6	6	1
Speaking/Use	1		5	6	2
Understanding	1		5	7	1
Writing	1		5	6	2
Total staff	14				

Public Protection	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	4	2	2	11	4
Speaking/Use	4	1	1	15	2
Understanding	2	2	3	13	3
Writing	3	2	2	12	4
Total staff	23				

v) **DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING**

Learning Education & Inclusion	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	11	7	6	48	33
Speaking/Use	9	6	9	70	11
Understanding	8	9	8	74	6
Writing	8	7	8	44	38
Total staff	105				

Lifelong Learning & Planning & Strategy	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	6	4	7	35	12
Speaking/Use	7	4	7	42	4
Understanding	7	4	5	44	4
Writing	6	4	5	35	14
Total staff	64				

Schools	Fluently	Quite Well	Moderately	A Little	Level Undisclosed
Reading	62	6	6	31	6
Speaking/Use	61	6	5	37	2
Understanding	24	5	7	32	43
Writing	60	6	6	32	7
Total staff	111				

Appendix B - Updated Equality Impact Assessment Form 2014

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

December 2014

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL*	
DIRECTORATE	
SERVICE AREA	
CONTACT OFFICER	
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION	

***Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, 'proposal' is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

INTRODUCTION

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities issues have been consciously considered throughout the decision making processes of the work undertaken by every service area in the Council and work done at a corporate level.

The form should be used if you have identified a need for a full EIA following the screening process covered in the Equalities Implications in Committee Reports Guidance document (available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal on the intranet).

The EIA should highlight any areas of risk and maximise the benefits of proposals in terms of Equalities. It therefore helps to ensure that the Council has considered everyone who might be affected by the proposal.

It also helps the Council to meet its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011. There is also a requirement under Human Rights legislation for Local Authorities to consider Human Rights in developing proposals.

The Council's work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the Strategic Equalities Objectives and Action Plan 2012.

This approach strengthens work to promote Equalities by helping to identify and address any potential discriminatory effects before introducing something new or changing working practices, and reduces the risk of potential legal challenges.

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal (the Committee report guidance mentioned above, the Consultation and Monitoring guidance) and the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team can offer support as the EIA is being developed - the contact email is equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

1	<p>What is the proposal intended to achieve? <i>(Please give a brief description of the purpose of the new or updated proposal by way of introduction.)</i></p>
2	<p>Who are the service users affected by the proposal? <i>(Who will be affected by the delivery of this proposal? e.g. staff members, the public generally, or specific sections of the public i.e. youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits etc.)</i></p>

IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3	<p>Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals? <i>(What has been done to examine whether or not these groups have equal access to the service, or whether they need to receive the service in a different way from other people?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>
4	<p>What are the consequences of the above for specific groups? <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect affect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy or savings proposal differ dependent upon people's disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, language, religion/belief?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

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INFORMATION COLLECTION

5	Is full information and analysis of users of the service available? <i>(Is this service effectively engaging with all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation of uptake by one or more groups? If so, what has been done to address any difference in take up of the service? Does any savings proposal include an analysis of those affected?)</i>
	<u>Actions required</u>

CONSULTATION

6	What consultation has taken place? <i>(What steps have been taken to ensure that people from various groups have been consulted during the development of this proposal? Have the Council's Equalities staff been consulted? Have you referred to the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance?)</i>
	<u>Actions required</u>

MONITORING AND REVIEW

7	How will the proposal be monitored? <i>(What monitoring process has been set up to assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community, or that the savings proposals are achieving the intended outcomes with no adverse impact? Are comments or complaints systems set up to record issues by Equalities category to be able analyse responses from particular groups?)</i>
	<u>Actions required</u>

8	<p>How will the above be evaluated? <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

9	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equality training of some sort?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p>

10	<p>Where you have identified mitigating factors in previous answers that lessen the impact on any particular group in the community, or have identified any elsewhere, please summarise them here.</p>
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11	<p>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment? <i>(What use will you make of this document i.e. as a consultation response, appendix to approval reports, publicity etc. in addition to the mandatory action shown below?)</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIA, when completed, to be returned to equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for publishing on the Council's website.

Completed By:	
Date:	
Position:	
Name of Head of Service:	

APPENDIX C

EXTRACT FROM CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S SERVICE AREA SELF-EVALUATION TEMPLATE 2015

6. Equalities and Welsh Language Assessment

This aim of this section is to provide an assessment of how Equalities and Welsh Language considerations impact on your service area's plans, or how your work impacts on different groups in the community.

Think about the previous self-evaluation sections you have completed and consider whether your current performance has Equalities and Welsh Language requirements embedded in them, has service development or financial planning issues been properly Equality Impact Assessed, do you consult with a wide range of different groups where necessary, has your service area had any complaints that contain Equalities or Welsh Language aspects to them, how accurate is your Workforce profile in terms of the staff's Equalities and language data and have you had any feedback on these issues from any Auditing or Regulatory body you provide reports to as part of your function?

(Support in completing this section is available from the Equalities and Welsh Language team - equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk).

Section Evaluation

What does the Equalities and Welsh Language evidence say about our service?

Section Analysis

After consideration of the data, what:

- Are the main challenges facing the service and its delivery?
- Are the key service contractions/improvements/enhancements that are needed?
- Actions will deliver those key service contractions/improvements/enhancements?
- Are the main risks and challenges to the organisation and services in securing those changes? Do any of the identified risks require to be escalated to a Directorate or whole authority level? *If yes, please ensure these are discussed with your Director and transferred to the Corporate and Directorate Risk Register via the Corporate Performance Management Unit.*

- Can be concluded about the performance of the service?



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: CONSULTANCY COSTS

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Committee with information in relation to expenditure on consultancy services.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides details of expenditure on consultancy services for the 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years. Part-year information is also provided for 2014/15.
- 2.2 Details are provided by Directorate with a further split between revenue and capital expenditure.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council has a number of corporate strategies and this report deals with the use of resources in the achievement of those strategies.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Consultants are engaged to provide specific technical/advisory/professional services to the Authority. These services will often be in relation to the approved Capital Programme or to address a need for specialist services of a short-term nature where there is insufficient capacity within the Council's workforce.
- 4.2 All contracts entered into for consultancy services are subject to the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts.
- 4.3 The table overleaf provides a summary of actual expenditure on consultancy services for the 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years. Part-year information is also provided for the 2014/15 financial year but these figures will increase as the information was collated at the end of February 2015 and final figures will not be confirmed until year-end processes have been concluded.
- 4.4 Members should note that the figures in the table exclude the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Schools.

Summary of Expenditure on Consultancy Services

Directorate	2012/13 Actual £	2013/14 Actual £	2014/15 (Part-Year) £
Revenue Expenditure: -			
Education & Lifelong Learning	95,937	40,461	11,143
Social Services	13,752	516	250
Environment	380,130	433,360	236,981
Corporate Services	13,028	36,280	24,465
Total Revenue: -	502,848	510,616	272,840
Capital Expenditure: -			
Education & Lifelong Learning	66,438	154,302	163,338
Environment	1,194,379	679,019	141,219
Total Capital: -	1,260,817	833,321	304,557
Total Expenditure: -	1,763,665	1,343,937	577,397

4.5 Members will note from the above table that expenditure on consultancy services is reducing, much of which is due to a reduced Capital Programme.

4.6 To put the revenue expenditure into context the total spend on consultancy services of £502,848 in 2012/13 represents 0.084% of the Council's total gross revenue expenditure for that financial year. The figure of £510,616 for 2013/14 represents 0.085% of total gross revenue expenditure.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 As detailed throughout the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee receives information in relation to expenditure on consultancy services.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

Author: Stephen Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance
E-mail: harrisr@caerphilly.gov.uk Tel: 01443 863022

Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Andrew Southcombe, Finance Manager, Corporate Finance
Mike Jones, Interim Financial Services Manager, Social Services
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager, Education
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager, Environment

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: WRITE-OFF OF DEBTS – 01/04/2014 – 31/03/2015

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with a summary of outstanding debts which have been written-off in accordance with the policy previously agreed by Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides details of debts written-off for Council Tax, Business Rates, Council House Rents and Sundry Debtors.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council's budget is partly funded by Council Tax, Rents and other sources of miscellaneous income. In order to ensure that these resources are available to meet all the Council's objectives the Authority will always seek to maximise income collection.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Council collects very large sums of money from residents and local businesses each year and inevitably there are instances of non-payment. A 'firm but fair' approach has always been adopted and all legal means are pursued to recover monies owed.
- 4.2 The regular writing-off of uncollectable debts is an important financial discipline. The Council would be criticised by External Audit if debts remained in the accounts when there is little likelihood of recovery. The table below provides a summary of debts written-off for the 2014/15 financial year.

	Total Amounts Written Off In Year (£)	Total Budgeted Income/Grant 2014/15 (£m)	% of Total Income/Grant Written-off In Year (%)	% of Total Income/Grant Written-off 2013/14 (%)
Council Tax	216,669	60.5m	0.36	0.39
Business Rates	505,512	39.4m	1.28	1.42
Council House Rents	302,419	49.4m	0.61	0.51
Sundry Debtors	175,586	24.3m	0.72	1.26

4.3 Whilst the sums shown above are significant it is important to put them into context. The column entitled "% of Total Income/Grant Written-off In Year" shows the write-offs expressed as a percentage of the "Total Budgeted Income/Grant 2014/15", i.e. monies due to the Council. For comparison purposes the percentages for 2013/14 are also included in the table.

4.4 In addition to the totals in the table in paragraph 4.2, £88,503 has also been written-off to date during 2014/15 in relation to invoices raised for overpayments of Housing Benefits (total invoices raised during the year £1,312,783).

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 As detailed in the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To ensure that Members are informed of sums written-off during the 2014/15 financial year.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2000.

Author: Stephen Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance

Tel: 01443 863022 E-mail: harrisr@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer

Cllr B Jones, Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

John Carpenter, Council Tax & NNDR Manager

Sandra Isaacs, Rents Manager

Amanda Main, Housing & Council Tax Benefits Manager

Terry Thomas, Principal Incomes Officer



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: CORPORATE SERVICES AND MISCELLANEOUS FINANCE REVENUE GRANTS 2015-16

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information to Members relating to revenue grants for 2015/16 for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides details of the 2015/16 revenue grant funding for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance. The report excludes grant funded schemes where CCBC merely acts as banker for Partnership schemes. During the financial year further grants are often made available subject to new funding being identified and successful outcomes to bids.
- 2.2 The report is provided to ensure that Members are aware of grants and their intended purpose. Further details of individual grants can be made available to Members if requested.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The effective utilisation of grant funding will support the Authority in delivering its stated aims and objectives.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Appendix 1 provides a list of grants known at this point in time, along with a brief description of the use of the grant funding. Grant funding applies in the main to specific schemes and initiatives and is often time limited.
- 4.2 The current administration arrangements are such that each grant has an agreed set of terms and conditions. The grant funding body at year-end requests information to satisfy itself that the grant monies have been spent in accordance with its terms and conditions and for the majority of grants an external audit is required.
- 4.3 Where required, Auditors will assess expenditure against the terms and conditions of the grant. This assessment would normally comprise a random sample of spend, followed by an in-depth scrutiny of the sampled items. This could involve ensuring proper procurement processes have been adhered to and confirming spend complies with the conditions of the grant. Any issues identified will be investigated; this could lead to a need to review a larger sample of expenditure. The External Auditors produce a report annually summarising any issues that have come to light during their audit of the Authority's grants.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's Equality Impact Assessment (EqLA) process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Grant funding levels can change leading to uncertainty of funding. The majority of grants are subject to external audit and the expenditure must comply with the grant terms and conditions. Failure to comply may result in a qualification of the grant by the External Auditors, which could result in the clawback of the grant funding.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Grant funded posts may be at risk if the funding is withdrawn. Wherever possible this risk is mitigated through fixed-term appointments to grant funded posts.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses which have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure that Members are aware of the revenue grants for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

Author: D. Roberts - Principal Group Accountant (Financial Advice and Support).

roberda@caerphilly.gov.uk Tel: 01443 863342

Consultees: Corporate Services Senior Management Team
N. Scammell - Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
S. Harris – Interim Head of Corporate Finance
A. Southcombe – Finance Manager Corporate Services
A. Price – Principal Solicitor/Deputy Monitoring Officer
Cllr Barbara Jones, Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Background Papers:

Grant Allocation Reports 2015/16

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Schedule of Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance Grants 2015-16

Appendix 1 - Schedule of Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance Revenue Grant Funding for 2015-16

Grant	Funding Body	Grant Funding	Matched Funding	Division	Lead Officer	Purpose of Grant	Subject to Audit
Housing Benefits	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	£816,979		Housing Benefits	Amanda Main	Funds housing benefit staff who process housing benefit claims.	Yes
Housing Benefit Subsidy	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	£62,265,067		Housing Benefits	Amanda Main	Funds the housing benefits payments	Yes
Rural Development Plan/ Lead Body	EU funding via Welsh Government (WG)	£13,000		Corporate Finance	Nicole Scammell	Funds staff time on Lead Body financial compliance work	Yes
Police & Crime Panel	Home Office	£71,895		Legal & Governance	Gail Williams	Funds the panel members and associated costs in running the panel.	Yes
Govt Money Advice Service	Welsh Governemnt	£23,000		Customer First	David Tittley	Mitigating efferct of Welfare Reform	Yes
Total: -		£63,189,941	£0				

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: CORPORATE SERVICES AND MISCELLANEOUS FINANCE REVENUE BUDGETS 2015-16

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with details of the 2015/16 revenue budgets for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides details of the 2015/16 revenue budgets for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance and briefly outlines the next steps to progress the budget strategy for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The contents of this report reflect the budget strategy agreed by Council at its meeting on the 25th February 2015.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 2015/16 Revenue Budget

- 4.1.1 The Welsh Government's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for Caerphilly CBC for the 2015/16 financial year is a reduction of 3.3% after adjusting for new responsibilities and transfers in i.e. a cash decrease of £8.892m.

- 4.1.2 Members will recall that as a consequence of the financial settlement a package of savings totalling £11.96m was agreed to enable the Council to deliver a balanced budget for the 2015/16 financial year. Savings for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance amount to £4.27m.

- 4.1.3 The approved 2015/16 budgets for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance total £76.302m and full details are provided in Appendix 1.

4.2 Corporate Services

- 4.2.1 The 2015/16 budget for Corporate Services is £23.229m, which is net of agreed savings totalling £1.490m.

4.2.2 In line with the budget strategy agreed at Council on the 25th February 2015 the Corporate Services base budget has been uplifted for inflation. An allowance of 1% has been made for pay (£269k) and 1.5% for non-pay (£93k).

4.2.3 The most significant other budget movement is £75k in relation to the running costs of the Bargoed Contact Centre.

4.3 Miscellaneous Finance

4.3.1 The 2015/16 budget for Miscellaneous Finance is £53.073m, which is net of agreed savings totalling £2.776m.

4.3.2 In line with the Council's budget strategy an uplift of 1.5% has been allocated to Miscellaneous Finance in respect of non-pay budgets (£174k).

4.3.3 The budget for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been increased by £443k in line with the increase in the Council Tax for 2015-16.

4.4 Budget Strategy for 2016/17 and 2017/18

4.4.1 No indicative RSG settlement figures for 2016/17 and 2017/18 have been provided by the Welsh Government. For planning purposes the Council's current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) assumes further reductions in the RSG of 3.4% for both 2016/17 and 2017/18. This results in further savings required of £14.030m for 2016/17 and £12.105m for 2017/18.

4.4.2 During the coming months detailed work will be carried out to identify a range of savings proposals to meet the significant financial challenges that lie ahead. This process will adhere to the following principles that were agreed by Council at its meeting on the 25th February 2015:-

- Protecting front-line services where we can and reducing expenditure on management and administrative costs.
- Increasing fees and charges where appropriate
- Reducing, rather than removing services where possible.
- Focussing on priorities.
- Looking at alternative ways of delivering services (collaboration, partnerships, community trusts, etc.).

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 As identified throughout the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The personnel implications of agreed savings will be carefully managed and where possible staff will be fully supported to identify appropriate redeployment opportunities.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Scrutiny Committee notes the content of this report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee is provided with full details of the 2015/16 revenue budgets for Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000.

Author: - D. Roberts – Principal Accountant (Financial Advice and Support).
roberda@caerphilly.gov.uk Tel: 01443 863342
Consultees: - Corporate Services Senior Management Team
N. Scammell - Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
S. Harris – Interim Head of Corporate Finance
A. Southcombe – Finance Manager Corporate Services
Cllr Barbara Jones, Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Background Papers
Budget working papers – Accountancy Section

Appendices
Appendix 1 – 2015/16 Revenue Budgets (Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance)

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CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE	Estimate 2014/2015	Revised Estimate 2014/2015	Estimate 2015/2016
<u>SUMMARY</u>			
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SECRETARIAT	239,832	239,832	241,517
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	180,488	180,488	187,249
CORPORATE FINANCE			
Financial services	2,481,303	2,481,303	2,153,341
Procurement	461,047	461,047	447,226
	2,942,350	2,942,350	2,600,567
LEGAL & GOVERNANCE			
Legal	844,275	844,275	855,058
Democratic Services	1,876,596	1,876,596	1,880,945
Electoral Services	303,201	303,201	305,617
Policy	452,434	452,434	457,776
Equalities	185,865	200,824	186,684
	3,662,371	3,677,330	3,686,080
HOUSING SERVICES			
General Fund Housing	656,873	656,873	672,683
Private Housing	573,344	573,344	526,188
Building Maintenance	(117,828)	(117,828)	(118,130)
	1,112,389	1,112,389	1,080,741
INFORMATION AND CITIZENS ENGAGEMENT			
IT Services	4,964,752	4,967,889	4,690,281
Central Services	406,701	406,701	407,598
Communications Unit	298,841	312,847	291,475
Customer First	1,545,172	1,545,172	1,450,953
	7,215,466	7,232,609	6,840,307
PERFORMANCE & PROPERTY			
Performance Management Unit	344,585	361,585	304,363
Corporate Property Services	677,946	677,946	573,299
Corporate Premises	2,721,730	2,721,730	2,676,909
Asset Management Facilities	2,076,468	2,076,468	2,090,150
Building Consultancy	(23,840)	(23,840)	(10,661)
	5,796,889	5,813,889	5,634,060
HUMAN RESOURCES			
Human Resources	1,977,182	2,008,530	1,884,625
Trade Union Facilities	25,233	25,233	25,230
	2,002,415	2,033,763	1,909,855
Heath & Safety			
Health & Safety	1,101,971	1,101,971	1,048,526
	1,101,971	1,101,971	1,048,526
TOTAL CORPORATE SERVICES	24,254,171	24,334,621	23,228,902

MISCELLANEOUS FINANCE	Estimate 2014/2015	Revised Estimate 2014/2015	Estimate 2015/2016
Staff Related Costs			
Pension Contribution - Former Authorities Ongoing	1,233,237	1,233,237	1,234,213
Recharge to Education - Former Authorities	(191,333)	(191,333)	(191,333)
Adjustment for Superannuation Costs	47,315	47,315	0
	1,089,219	1,089,219	1,042,880
Catering			
Subsidy	227,974	227,974	204,394
	227,974	227,974	204,394
Statutory Benefit Schemes			
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	14,189,934	14,189,934	14,633,828
General Rent Allowances	31,398,320	31,398,320	32,359,654
Rent Rebates	30,016,589	30,016,589	29,905,413
Rent Allowance War Widow Concessions	45,000	45,000	35,000
Housing Benefit Subsidy	(61,414,909)	(61,414,909)	(62,265,067)
	14,234,934	14,234,934	14,668,828
Levies Upon the Council			
Coroner	159,347	159,347	160,313
Archives	215,093	215,093	223,138
Fire Service Authority	8,376,576	8,376,576	8,225,773
	8,751,016	8,751,016	8,609,224
Capital Financing			
Debt Charges	17,831,613	18,059,113	18,146,367
Investment Income net of Recharges	392,028	392,028	196,028
Welsh Housing Quality Standard	938,400	938,400	0
CERA (Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue Account)	957,385	729,884	444,974
	20,119,426	20,119,425	18,787,369
Corporate and Democratic Core Costs			
Bank Charges	136,707	136,707	138,758
Income from HRA	(11,484)	(11,484)	(23,339)
Income from DLO/DSO	(21,327)	(21,327)	(9,963)
External Audit Fees	460,207	460,207	467,110
Income from HRA	(35,161)	(35,161)	(78,568)
Income from DLO/DSO	(65,299)	(65,299)	(33,538)
Subscriptions	133,982	133,982	108,992
	597,625	597,625	569,452

MISCELLANEOUS FINANCE	Estimate 2014/2015	Revised Estimate 2014/2015	Estimate 2015/2016
Grants to Voluntary sector			
Assistance to Voluntary sector	255,220	255,220	229,048
	255,220	255,220	229,048
Other Grant funding			
Spend on ad hoc Community Projects	258,000	6,000	258,000
	258,000	6,000	258,000
Private Finance Initiative			
PFI Schools	2,707,407	2,707,407	2,624,617
PFI Sirhowy Enterprise Way	4,399,222	4,399,222	4,280,489
	7,106,629	7,106,629	6,905,106
Other			
Miscellaneous Items	113,263	96,263	15,260
Prudential Borrowing for Islwyn West Secondary School	106,482	106,482	111,949
Budget Pressures	226,500	226,500	191,952
Waste Management Contingency	243,672	3,672	243,672
NNDR - Authority Empty Properties	195,617	195,617	128,551
Apprentice/Trainee Costs	494,749	191,450	149,749
Counsel Fees	394,593	394,593	325,512
Careline	84,074	84,074	85,335
Carbon Management Scheme	23,445	23,445	23,797
Carbon Energy Tax	215,135	215,135	218,362
IT Replacement Strategy	342,090	342,090	327,221
PV Panels Income	(40,000)	(40,000)	(40,600)
Unapplied Growth - Living Wage	42,726	42,726	0
Risk Management Contribution	(154,894)	(154,894)	(157,217)
Proposed Waste Transfer Station - Ty Duffryn	0	0	150,000
Matched Funding for Community Schemes	0	0	25,000
	2,287,452	1,727,153	1,798,543
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS FINANCE	54,927,495	54,115,195	53,072,844
EXPENDITURE TO DIRECTORATE SUMMARY	79,181,666	78,449,816	76,301,746

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CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP (WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH
(SIRHOWY ROOM) ON THURSDAY, 2ND APRIL 2015 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

C. Davies- Vice Chair (Presiding)

Task Group Members:

Ms L. Ackerman, R.T. Davies, K. James, Mrs B. Jones, G. Jones, Mrs S. Jones, Miss A. Lewis, M. McDermott, Mrs D. Moore and J. Moore.

S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer), P. Davy (Head of Programmes), J. Roberts-Waite (Strategic Co-ordination Manager) and C. Evans (Democratic Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Miss G. Green, C. Mann and Mrs D. Price.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Miss A. Lewis, Mr C. Davies, Mrs B. Jones, Mrs S. Jones, Mr M. McDermott, Mrs D. Moore and Mr J. Moore as Council Tenants declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in all agenda items.

3. MINUTES – 19TH FEBRUARY 2015.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th February 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. WHQS AND SHELTERED HOUSING COMPLEXES.

The report sought the views of the Task Group on changes to the WHQS programme delivery relating to the sheltered housing complexes, prior to consideration by Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and presentation to Cabinet for decision.

Arising from a number of setbacks, the WHQS Programme is under severe pressure to complete by 2020. Additional measures are under active investigation to expand the capacity to cope with the volume of work. The report advocates an alternative approach to implement the WHQS programme in relation to the sheltered complexes. In summary the management and delivery of the WHQS works on the sheltered schemes could be out sourced to a suitable multi disciplinary consultancy leaving just the client role in house.

1. In view of the pressures on the WHQS programme the CHTG recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet that the sheltered complexes are packaged into a separate programme and the management and delivery is outsourced to a suitable multi disciplinary consultancy, including the option of tenant liaison.
2. The 6 complexes identified in the report where future remodelling or redevelopment is under consideration be taken out for the WHQS Programme in the period to 2020 and dealt with once decisions have been made about the long term future of these properties.

The Task Group expressed their disappointment that such measures were seen to be essential. Concerns were raised for the high targets for completion and Members sought reassurance that the programme was realistic and achievable. Officers agreed with concerns, however, assured the Task Group that additional arrangements are being put in place to increase the capacity to deliver WHQS by 2020. Consultation would be conducted with the affected tenants where remodelling is a potential option.

Members sought clarification on the suggestion to outsource Tenant Liaison. Officers highlighted that due to the increased pressure on staff, it was suggested that outsourcing would relieve pressure on the existing teams; however, tenants were assured that, the Client role would remain with the Council.

Budget provision and the impact of outsourcing was discussed in detail, Officers explained that fees were estimated at 10-12% of the Capital cost. It was noted that there is a risk that the cost of completing WHQS could increase and spending may be in excess of budget provision.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in 9.1 of the report be supported. By a show of hands (and in noting that there was one abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report and in view of the pressures on the WHQS programme the CHTG recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet that the sheltered complexes are packaged into a separate programme and the management and delivery is outsourced to a suitable multi disciplinary consultancy, including the option of tenant liaison.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in 9.2 of the report be supported. By a show of hands (and in noting that there were 4 in favour, 5 against and one abstention) this motion was lost.

RESOLVED that, the proposal that the 6 complexes identified in the report where future remodelling or redevelopment is under consideration be taken out for the WHQS Programme in the period to 2020 and dealt with once decisions have been made about the long term future of these properties, be not supported.

5. LOCAL EMPLOYMENT FUND – SUPPORTING LIFT.

The report, which was deferred at the last meeting, sought the approval of the Task Group to allocate the annual Local Employment Fund budget to Communities First in order to add value and enhance the Welsh Government's LIFT programme.

During Summer 2014 the Welsh Government announced the introduction of the Lift Programme designed to support its Tackling Poverty agenda through providing training and employment opportunities for people in workless households. The programme is aimed at supporting people who have spent more than 6 months out of work and who face the greatest barriers to becoming employable. For example:

- Young single parent households
- Households in which adults have few or no formal qualifications
- People with weak employment records
- Individuals with disabilities

Originally the Welsh Government advised that in Caerphilly County Borough the LIFT programme would only be piloted in the Caerphilly Basin Cluster (including Lansbury Park) however, they have recently approved an expansion of the project to the upper Rhymney Valley Cluster area (including the Twyn Carno ward) hence the request to allocate the funds to enhance and support the delivery of the recently announced wider programme.

The Chair thanked the Officer for the report and the Task Group noted the apologies for T. McMahon (Community Regeneration Manager) for the presentation of the report.

A Task Group Member sought further information on the targets set and whether the programme was specifically for Council Tenants. The Officer explained the scheme was not specifically aimed at tenants only and that the annual target was set at 60 people taking up the scheme, providing a variety of tailored training to meet the needs of individuals.

The Task Group discussed placement and sought further information on whether external organisations can use the funds to provide employment opportunities. Officers clarified that this could not be done for commercial organisations, only third sector and internal opportunities.

Having fully considered the information provided, the Caerphilly Homes Task Group supported the proposal outlined in the report in respect of the Local Employment Fund.

6. HRA GARAGES UPDATE.

The report, which was requested by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, was presented to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group for consideration and consultation.

A major review of the stock of HRA garages was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and the Cabinet Sub Committee in December 2012. A strategy was agreed to rationalize the portfolio, reduce the size of the stock through selective demolition of poor condition garages on low demand sites, repair and improve the stock, and to market the garages as part of the HRA assets. Specific proposals were made for every HRA garage block in the County Borough and all relevant ward Members were consulted. A budget of £1.5m was agreed as part of the WHQS Programme to implement the proposals. Since that time, commitments have been made within the Eastern Valleys, which was agreed as the priority area and contracts are at various stages. In due course, the programme will be extended to implement the approved strategy for the garages in the Upper Rhymney Valley and the Lower Rhymney Valley.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the report and sought further information on the impact the improvements to the Garages have made to vacancies and whether the demolition has resulted in a reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour. Officers highlighted that the improved garages have made a positive impact on the aesthetics, however, there is low demand for the garages in some areas and further work is required to advertise their availability. As the work has recently been conducted, it is too early to determine any trends, but the Task Group were assured that information would be provided when available.

Having fully considered the information provided, the Caerphilly Homes Task Group noted the report.

7. PONTLLANFRAITH HOUSE

The report, which was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 8th December and 20th January 2015 and approved by Full Council on 25th February 2015, provided information on the closure of Ty Pontllanfraith, the associated financial implications, impact on Council services, employment issues and equality implications.

The Task Group noted that, in relation to Housing Services, staff currently based at Ty Pontllanfraith, with the exception of the Eastern Valley Housing Office, are to be re-located to Tredomen Business Park, subject to confirmation of availability of sufficient office space. The accommodation being considered is fit for purpose, accessible for the public with good transport links, is DDA compliant and will provide an improved working environment for staff.

Alternative premises are currently being considered to accommodate the Eastern Valley Housing Office, with the intention to retain this service within the Blackwood Town Centre. This again would improve access and maintain a presence in the area for which the service is responsible.

Whilst the financial implications are highlighted within the reports, there is likely to be an additional cost for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), but this is affordable within the Business Plan. The HRA would have also been liable for a proportion of the costs for rectifying the defects at Ty Pontllanfraith House if approval had not been given for its closure.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the report and sought further information on the relocation of the Eastern Valley Housing Office, expressing concerns for accessibility. Officers highlighted that consideration has been given to the area office being located within the former Customer First Base in Blackwood.

Concerns were raised around the cost of moving all staff from Ty Pontllanfraith and further information was sought on the impact to jobs. Officers clarified that there are considerable expenses associated with the maintenance of Ty Pontllanfraith, which are considerably higher than relocating staff. Further reassurance was provided to the Task Group that there would be no job losses as a result of the relocation of staff.

Having considered the reports, the Caerphilly Homes Task Group noted the report.

8. IMPACT OF CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP.

The report, which was requested at a previous meeting of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG), highlighted the effectiveness and impact, background information to the establishment of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and activity undertaken.

The CHTG was established with seven Councillors and seven tenants, to focus on the WHQS Programme and the public sector housing service, with the overall objective to be involved in the transformation of the Council's housing estates. Within the terms of the Council's Constitution it was recognised that the CHTG could not be a decision making body and originally recommendations were made to a Cabinet Sub-Committee.

Since the CHTG was formed in September 2012 it has met on 20 separate occasions. Consideration has been given to 69 information reports. The CHTG has debated 39 reports with recommendations, where Cabinet decisions have been required and has been able to offer opinions and amendments to the recommendations. This has included some major issues such as the investment strategy for the WHQS Programme, the Sheltered Housing Service Review, the Tenant Participation Strategy, the Charter for Trust, the Repairs Policy, Rowan Place, and the HRA Garages. In addition, there have been a number of presentations made at the CHTG.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the report and discussed the split between information and recommendatory items. It was noted that the reports brought to the Committee are often on request for information or with recommendations for consideration under officer delegation or consideration at Scrutiny or Cabinet. The Task Group is established as a consultative group.

The Task Group discussed the impact they have had on decisions and monitoring the programme. A number of suggestions were discussed and debated it was noted that there is no formal process for monitoring the impact of the Task Group itself. Officers suggested that it was for the members of the task group to determine whether they consider the CHTG is effective in the role and an Away Day was agreed in order to consider Performance and Effectiveness of the Group and a Forward Work Programme.

Having fully considered the report, the Task Group unanimously noted the report.

9. TO RECEIVE ANY REQUESTS FOR AN ITEM TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

The following requests were received:-

1. Miss A. Lewis requested a report on the support provided by CCBC to Council tenants on the changes in universal credits
2. Miss L. Ackerman requested a report on the progress with the WHQS Programme.
3. Miss L. Ackerman requested a report on the current IT packages in use to support WHQS, effectiveness and whether they are fit for purpose.

The meeting closed at 6.59 p.m.

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 21st May 2015.

CHAIRMAN

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PENSIONS/COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
MONDAY 13TH APRIL 2015 AT 9.00AM

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs J. Gale - Chair

Councillors:

W. David, D.M. Gray, Ms. J.G. Jones, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan, Mrs M.E. Sargent (in place of J.E. Fussell)

Appropriate Cabinet Member - Councillor R. Woodyatt

Together with:

J. Williams (Assistant Director - Adult Services), G. Hardacre (Head of People Management and Development), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J.E. Fussell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

2. APPLICATIONS FOR EARLY RETIREMENT BY MUTUAL CONSENT ON GROUNDS OF BUSINESS EFFICIENCY IN DAY SERVICES, SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Members considered the public interest test certificate from the Proper Officer and concluded that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and it was

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure to them of exempt information as identified in paragraphs 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval for early retirement by mutual consent on the grounds of business efficiency giving access to non-actuarially reduced pension benefits under the Local Government Pension Scheme for two employees within Day Services, Directorate of Social Services.

Following detailed discussion on each of the applications, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation within the report be approved. By show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, and outlined at the meeting, the two requests for the early access to non-actuarially reduced pension benefits under the Local Government Pension Scheme, to support Day Services to achieve some of its required budgetary savings for 2015/16 be approved.

The meeting closed at 4.40pm.



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

**SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE – QUARTER 4 – 1ST
JANUARY 2015 TO 14TH MAY 2015**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report Members' levels of attendance at scheduled meetings of Caerphilly County Borough Council.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The report details the attendance of Members at scheduled meetings throughout the Quarter 1st January to 14th May.

3. THE REPORT

3.1 Appendix 1 details Members' attendance for quarter 4 (1st January 2015 to 14th May 2015), at the following meetings:

- Council;
- Cabinet;
- Scrutiny Committees;
- Planning Committee;
- Audit Committee;
- Democratic Services Committee; and
- Sustainable Development Advisory Panel.

3.2 The information is compiled from attendance sheets signed by Members at these meetings.

3.3 The appendix also allows for a comparison with the same period in the preceding two years. When making comparisons to previous quarters/years, please note that overall averages given are the weighted average to reflect the number of meetings in each quarter.

3.4 Details for the next quarter (15th May 2015 to 30th June 2015) will be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

7. CONSULTATIONS

7.1 None.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Members note the content of the report.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To inform Members of attendance levels at scheduled meetings of Caerphilly County Borough Council from the Annual Meeting of Council, 2014.

Author: C. Evans (Committee Services Officer)

Background Papers:
Member attendance sheets

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Schedule of Members' Attendance 2012 to 2015

Quarterly Summary of Attendance Levels (Percentages)

AGM to AGM

	2012-2013					2013-2014					2014-2015				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Council	89	88	85	81	84	87	82	82	88	85	84	84	75	84	82
Crime & Disorder		38		59	59		69		94	82		81		56	69
Education For Life	75	78	66	69	72	72	75	69	75	73	66	65	81	72	71
Health, Social Care & Wellbeing	88	75	85	88	84	75	66	78	69	72	75	73	74	85	77
The Living Environment															
Regeneration															
Regeneration and Environment	69	77	71	88	76	69	63	81	84	74	81	80	77	78	79
Policy & Resources	81	88	71	79	77	69	78	84	85	79	78	77	88	77	80
Planning Committee	75	83	80	74	78	75	82	85	89	83	85	75	73	75	77
Audit Committee		58	50	42	48	83	75	67	83	77	58	83	58	92	73
Democratic Services Committee		44	63	69	60	69		69	75	71	88	75	69	88	80
Sustainable Development Advisory Panel	73	45	64	45	61	64	64		64	64		82	55	73	70
Average Attendance per quarter	78	67	71	71	74	74	72	77	81	76	77	86	81	76	80
Cabinet	90	94	93	88	91	95	82	92	93	91	93	93	95	91	93

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholders.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme identifies reports that are due to be presented to scrutiny during the period May to July 2015 and have followed consultation process which includes key stakeholders and the public.

4.2 For information, the latest Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Members note the Forward Work Programme.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Catherine Forbes-Thompson Scrutiny Research Officer
Consultees: Angharad Price, Interim Deputy Monitoring officer and Head of Democratic Services

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme – May to July 2015

Subject Area	Report Title	Proposed Meeting Date
Pre-Decision Scrutiny	Equalities and Welsh Language Annual reports 2014/15	2 June 2015
	Disciplinary Policy (Fast Track)	14 July 2015
	Discretionary Housing Payments Policy	2 June 2015
	Anti Poverty Strategy	2 June 2015
	Social Media Policy	14 July 2015
Consultation and Information	Forward Work Programme	2 June 2015
	Inspection Policy for Council Housing	14 July 2015
	Housing Complaints and Representations	14 July 2015
Performance Management:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAO Service Performance Reports • Improvement Objectives • Council Self-Evaluation • Service Improvement Plans 	Improvement Objective Updates 2014-15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IO2 -Improve job opportunities by implementing the Councils Passport scheme • IO5 - Investment in council homes to transform lives and communities • IO6 - Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless 	14 July 2015
Monitoring of Authority's Financial Resources	Write-Off of Debts 1 st October 2014 – 31 st March 2015.	2 June 2015
	Corporate Services & Miscellaneous Finance Revenue Grants 2015/16	2 June 2015
	Corporate Services & Miscellaneous Finance Budgets 2015/16	2 June 2015
Ombudsman Reports	<u>No reports for this area</u>	
Task and Finish Group	<u>No reports for this area</u>	

Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme – May to July 2015

Subject Area	Report Title	Proposed Meeting Date
Members / Public Requests, Call-Ins and CCfA	Council Housing – Damp Condensation update	14 July 2015
	Consultancy Costs (for information)	2 June 2015
Scrutiny of Designated Persons and Other Organisations	<u>No reports for this area</u>	