

Improvement Objectives

IO1 -To help people make the best use of their household income and manage their debts

Outcomes


To introduce policies concerned with boosting households' resources so that Caerphilly residents are able to improve their income levels and are better able to meet their own needs.

Why have we chosen this?

Poverty harms people's prospects and damages their long term future. It also places a burden on public resources and services. It is in all out interests to tackle poverty. 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 addition, current welfare reforms are anticipated to have a large and disproportionate impact upon residents in our borough and knock-on consequences for our local economy, compared to the UK as a whole.

This is why at this point, this Improvement Objective is concentrated in the area of income maximisation and debt management for households most at risk of poverty across our borough.



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Man gwyrdach i fyw, gweithio ac ymweld



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2015-16 - Six Month Progress Summary

We assessed this objective and judged it to be **partially successful** for the first six months of 2015/16 because:

What have we done well over the last 6 months?

We are working well towards achieving and exceeding the target for referring residents for support with managing debts and accessing benefits.

We are on target in supporting children to access placements, this is significant in view of engagement in the new Flying Start areas.

We are continuing to actively promote take up of Free School Meals, using established media channels, and also working with schools and other partners. The information issued highlights the benefits to families and schools of eligible parents/carers completing Free School Meal applications. Uptake of Free School Meals in Secondary Schools has increased compared with the same period last year, although uptake remains below our target in both the Secondary and Primary school sectors.

Almost 500 Council tenants affected by welfare reform changes were visited in their own home and provided with advice and support; almost 400 other residents were referred to money advice support. The value of financial savings generated for tenants as a direct result of face to face support was £126,877. Also £50,913.72 of additional income has been generated for residents via social services at the end of September 2015.

What areas do we need improve on, and how are we going to do it?

The collection of updates and information from a wide range of service providers for debt and income support has proved challenging.

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Actions

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	% Complete
Ensuring all pupils eligible for Free School Meals are in receipt of their entitlement	<p>The Catering Service actively promotes school meals and encourages claims for Free School Meals. Ongoing promotion of Free School Meals consists of providing leaflets and flyers in Libraries, Doctors' surgeries, Leisure Centres and Schools, using social media, promotion on websites such as www.myschoollunch.co.uk/caerphilly, texting parents, attending school events including parent's evenings, other promotional events, school assemblies etc. 26 promotional visits were undertaken to our school sites during Quarters 1 and 2.</p> <p>The communication plan includes a briefing note issued to Council staff and to partners. Schools receive Pupil Deprivation Grant for each pupil claiming Free School Meals and a template letter has been provided to Headteachers for them to issue directly to parents/carers of their children enabling them to highlight the use of Pupil Deprivation Grant within their school.</p> <p>In our secondary schools, the authority have introduced cashless systems that enable all young people to purchase their school lunch without the use of dinner tickets, ensuring all pupils are treated equally where the young person is entitled to free meals or a paying customer.</p>	⊖	In Progress	50
Promote quality, accessible and affordable childcare provision to enable families to improve their income through accessing education, learning and employment	<p>Flying Start Childcare has supported 99 new children to take up childcare placements in 28 childcare settings, totalling 321 children attending Flying Start funded childcare placements in the first term 2014-15.</p> <p>Out of School grant has supported 74 children to attend funded childcare provision through the short term placements in the Assisted Places Scheme in the first 6 months. Families First grant has supported 26 children with additional needs to access childcare placements in the first 6 months.</p> <p>On going childcare placements through the year. Concern regarding future of Assisted Places scheme as funding will be for school age children only.</p>	⊖	In Progress	50
Provide residents with information and advice on a range of social welfare issues to enable them to increase household income, manage debt and develop skills to improve their financial capability	<p>All of Supporting People's commissioned providers offer information and advice to maximize income and support debt reduction when providing housing related support. This is mainly done through benefit applications, setting up payment plans and budgeting support.</p> <p>Supporting People has four services that specifically provide support to individuals to manage debt and improve financial capability to enable individuals to budget, preventing further debt. These are; Age Cymru Welfare Benefits Service, Age Cymru Appeals Service, St Vincent's Community Support and the joint commissioned Families First and SP 'Confident with Cash' project.</p>	⊖	In Progress	50
Support Council tenants to reduce the impact of rising fuel costs. The impact of this advice will be captured during follow up visits with a selection of the tenants	<p>Four of our tenancy support staff have achieved city and guilds level 3 accreditation in the provision of energy advice. In addition to this, the National Energy Action group has also provided training to City and Guilds level 2 for 3 older persons floating support staff, 3 homeless prevention officers and 2 staff from the Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB). Each of these officers will work within the community to support tenants to reduce the impacts of rising fuel costs.</p>	⊖	In Progress	50

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How much did we do?

Title	Actual	Target	Intervention	RAG	Comment
The number of our staff who have undertaken the All Wales Academy e-learning Financial Inclusion & Tackling Poverty course	17.00				This is a new measure commencing in June 2015, a target has yet to be established.
The number of council tenants referred for money and debt advice as a direct result of face to face support on the impact of welfare reforms (OA5)	62.00	20.00	10.00	▢	
The number of council tenants affected by welfare reforms who were visited in their own homes and provided with advice and support to minimise the impact of the changes (OA5)	484.00	500.00	300.00	▾	Target not quite achieved this qtr due to holiday and annual leave of visiting staff However annual target still achievable as exceeded target in 1st quarter
Number of other residents referred to commissioned debt/financial support services	309.00	195.00	185.00	▢	
Number of council tenants visited and provided with advice regarding energy saving measures and energy use	109.00	110.00	100.00	▢	Target of 220 for the year.
Number of children benefiting from Flying Start Childcare provision	99.00	130.00	110.00	▢	Term 1 2015-16 (Apr - Aug) Data, based on the smallest (3 month) eligibility
Number of children accessing childcare places through Assisted (Supported) Places Scheme	935.00	405.00	365.00	▢	

How well did we do it?

Title	Actual	Target	Intervention	RAG	Comment
Secondary Free Meals Uptake (Qtly accum - Year to date)	60.74	64.00	55.00	▾	Free meal uptake has increased compared to the same period last year.
Primary Free Meals Uptake (Qtly accum - Year to date)	66.37	70.00	67.00	▴	Free meal uptake figures are similar to the same period last year
% of tenants and residents referred by the Council to CAB debt support service and responded to survey who rated the service as good or better	74.00	77.00	67.00	▢	

Is anyone better off?

Title	Actual	Target	Intervention	RAG	Comment
Number of people supported to access benefits they are entitled to	381.00	260.00	250.00	▢	
The value of financial savings generated for tenants as a direct result of face to face support	126877.09	70000.00	35000.00	▢	target exceeded for this quarter
Value of additional income generated for residents via social services as a direct result of support	50913.72	50000.00	40000.00	▢	£50,913.72 of additional income has been generated for residents via social services at the end of September 2015.