

Action Plan Progress Update to WAO Annual Improvement Report 2011/12
Update July 2012

WAO Proposal	Comments	Actions	By Whom	By When	Progress Update
P1. Improve Welsh language provision on the Council's website	Acknowledged area for improvement. Service has seen a big increase in the demand on the service during a period where there is less provision.	Job description is nearly complete. Once Job Evaluated, it can be advertised, current timetable is April/May to have new person in post	DAT	May 2012	The job description was completed in April 2012, but not advertised as a work placement has been with the team since May. The job advertisement will be going out in August 2012. The SLA and both the Policy Unit and Communications having increased Welsh language capacity, Facebook is now in both languages and new sections of the web are added in Welsh every month. Guidance has been drafted and will be circulated for comments in August 2012.
	Under the Council's Apprentice Scheme, Equalities & Welsh Language team are having one placement as a translator-in training, covering the website, Facebook and other "media" related work such as the public notices for the newspapers.	This will be achieved using our translation Service Level Agreement with Cardiff Council	DAT	April 2012	
	Sections of the website have been targeted for translation between now and the 1 st April using existing resources in Equalities budget.	From the objectives we will increase the number of Welsh pages on the website	DAT	April 2012	
	Communication Access (how the council makes its services accessible to everyone in the community) is the 4 th of 7 Strategic Equality Objectives recent approved by Cabinet.	Draft list of suggested actions is being prepared and will be circulated after the adoption of the Councils Strategic Equalities objectives have gone to council for approval 1 st April 2012	DAT	July-Aug 2012	

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	New upgrade to translation software has been identified as a need (current system old and slow and does not support future upgrades).	Software costs are being investigated and aim to have it installed by the summer at the latest.	DAT	Sept 2012	Training and awareness of the new Wordfast software took place in July 2012, but purchase has been moved until Sept 2012.
P2. Complete outcome-based success measures for all objectives and ensure regular, clear reporting	Seek clarification from regulator. We presume reference to 'all objectives' refers to improvement objectives under the local government measure. As each has success measures reported on publicly June 2011 & October 2011 clarification is needed.	Clarification received, but with no specifics. Regular reviews of improvement objectives include the best way to measure and report progress as standard.	WAO / HoS PMU	March 2012 March - June 2012	Completed. Objectives reviewed and published for 2012/2013 with clear outcomes.
	2011 PM Scrutiny meetings (spring and autumn) were used to monitor progress	Continue to build and use Scrutiny capacity for IO governance. Reporting is carried out at different levels including to the corporate management team.	PMU / Scrutiny officers	Spring & Autumn 2012	Completed. Awareness Induction held in scrutiny – IO continue to be monitored.
P3. Improve self-assessment arrangements and performance reporting by:					
Reporting clearly on whether the actions planned to deliver Improvement Objectives have been undertaken	Seek clarification. In particular the reference to 'targets for improvement have been achieved' This appears to contradict the outcome based approach described in P2.	WAO feedback advises each IO should have a statement as to whether we have been successful or not for the whole objective. This is explained in our publication but have	PMU	Oct 2012	Completed for the June document and will continue within the October performance plan. Each IO now has a

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and whether targets for improvement have been achieved;		enhanced this making it more specific for the June 2012 publication.			snap shot with simple smiley face and a red amber green key to indicate progress. This can be included in the October document
Establishing and reporting against outcome-focused measures of success for each Improvement Objective	Clarification sought from Wales Audit Office from their review. Some examples given by WAO are not correct and others have been superseded.	Each IO has success measures reported on via Ffynnon.	PMU (with service support)	June 2012	Completed. Improvement Objectives reviewed and new set published June 2012.
Presenting a balanced picture of how well the Council has performed in respect of each Improvement Objective, including reporting against all measures;	Seek clarification on what aspects regulators believe are unbalanced in order to set relevant actions.	Clarification received, a few examples given where WAO believe CCBC published good progress but limited comment on poorer performance. Future publications need to better demonstrate balanced reporting.	PMU	May 2012	Complete. IO published 3 rd week June. Checked for balance. Whether meets WAO requirements will be in Annual Letter due Sept 12
Including a clear self-evaluation in its Performance Report of whether it has met or progressing satisfactorily towards each	Clarity is required as detailed progress statement was reported in June 2011	Feedback received and the answer repeats 3.1 with additional feedback not providing extra clarity.	PMU	May 2012	Completed. This will be included in the October Performance Report

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Improvement Objective;					
Providing citizens with more comparative performance and benchmarking data to enable them to better judge performance;	Refer to legislation for direction and adhere to those guidelines. Will only quote comparisons that are reliable and relevant.	Where /if current comparisons add value, amend if and as appropriate. Most of our evidence in our improvement objectives is local information and does not have national comparative data that would aid customer understanding.	PMU	April 2012	Will include where relevant in the October publication.
Reporting progress against targets to citizens;	Progress against targets is reported internally. Reporting to citizens is yearly and at year ending. Consequently we report current actual performance against previous actual performance, which is a more accurate measure of improvement. Future targets are reported with outturns, so public can see what we are aiming for.	None Required			Completed

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<p>Report information on unit costs, activity costs, benchmarks and other financial performance measures to enhance the Council's Performance Report as well as help to identify further opportunities for savings;</p>	<p>WAO feel an area that could be strengthened is on financial benefits arising from collaboration. Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparing and contrasting costs with other councils to assess whether VfM specifically is being realised as a benefit of collaboration; • Highlighting financial benefits that have arisen from joint projects; • Demonstrating how Caerphilly compares with others in terms of procurement; and <p>Highlighting why services may be more expensive than others and why – e.g. Gwent frailty.</p>	<p>To consider whether this will add value to the Councils Improvement plan 2012.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>March 2012</p>	<p>Currently reviewing content of improvement plan.</p>
<p>Evaluate and report on the impact of reduced budgets on frontline services to identify and deal with risks that emerge from dis-investment decisions;</p>	<p>Seek clarification. Difficult to understand where this proposal is coming from, given the AIR's recognition of the council's sound financial planning, which includes understanding the impact on all services.</p> <p>WAO response: The issue here is public reporting on the impact of budget cuts at this time and</p>	<p>Actions need to be determined to see if adding more financial data to our performance report will aid public understanding of the services we provide.</p>		<p>Sept 2012</p>	<p>Not progressed at this stage.</p>

	<p>potential challenges in the future for individual and pan council services arising from these decisions. We feel this could be improved by including an analysis of the savings required to balance budgets, how these are being achieved and what the likely impact will be on services. This is not often set out and demonstrated. For example, under the section on adult social care the council notes that In 2010-11 Social Services faced a number of challenges ranging from an ageing population to financial pressures. No information is provided showing what the financial impact is.</p>				
<p>Reporting its performance to the public in a document or documents, which help citizens to understand the Council's performance more easily.</p>	<p>Reassess current document within LGM guidelines. Seek WAO evidence of their view that citizens fail to understand current reports.</p>	<p>Possible subject for consultation, viewpoint panel / youth forum for feedback.</p>	<p>PMU</p>	<p>Spring/ Summer 2012</p>	<p>Completed. Published June 2012</p>