



## CABINET - 4TH JUNE 2014

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2014/15**

**REPORT BY: HEAD OF PERFORMANCE AND PROPERTY**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Local Government Measure 2009 requires all local authorities in Wales to set and publish a set of priorities called Improvement Objectives. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) will use these Improvement Objectives to evaluate the council's likelihood of improvement and following that, the level of actual improvement that is achieved for the citizens of Caerphilly. Additionally the Council wants to publish a Corporate Plan in July 2014 which details its longer term priorities and in future this plan will be the vehicle for publishing both longer term priorities and shorter term objectives to the public.
- 1.2 The Council is required to review their Improvement Objectives to ensure they remain relevant and current. This report details the outcome of this process and identifies the Cabinet recommended set of Priorities and Improvement Objectives for 2014/15.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 This report shows the chosen Aspirations, Priorities and Improvement Objectives for 2014-2015. The Improvement Objectives (Appendix A) are required to be published before the end of June 2014.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The local Government Measure 2009 requires each authority to publish priorities for improvement called Improvement Objectives

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 The Improvement Objectives must be published as soon as possible after the end of the financial year and although not stated in legislation the informal expectation is no later than the end of the first quarter (June 2012). Although there is no requirement to publish a corporate plan, this is the chosen is the vehicle for publishing the Councils longer- term priorities and will include the Improvement Objectives so a full set is published.
- 4.2 Improvement Objectives will be published by the end of June as part of discharging our statutory improvement duty and it is suggested that the fuller Corporate Plan be published by the end of July 2014 to allow for the more detailed work that will be required to create a robust plan. The Corporate Plan will be made up of three aspects.

- 4.3 The first aspect is the Councils long-term aspirations and vision and these are listed below:
- Our communities must be safe, green and clean places to live to improve resident's quality of life.
  - We want to improve job opportunities in our County Borough, so people can live better lives.
  - Our goal is that every child should have the best start in life, and the opportunity to achieve success as a young person and as an adult
  - We want to enable our communities to make healthy lifestyle choices to improve citizens' quality of life
  - We want to improve accessibility throughout the county borough
  - Our council homes, lives and lives and communities

4.4 These were set in November 2012 as the Councils Corporate Priorities for 2013-17 although they were not published in a 'Corporate Plan' at that time. In 2014/2015 Cabinet reviewed its set of priorities and in light of the difficult financial climate chose a more medium term specific set of priorities, whilst retaining the first overall set as noted above in 4.3.

4.5 Part of the review asked the following questions to establish the priorities and objectives for 2014/2015:-

Relevance - Is this area still relevant where there is an 'unmet' need?

Consultation – are these still what the citizens want?

Funding – Does the Medium Term Financial Plan affect whether some of these activities can still be delivered? Has external (central government, home office etc) funding affected the delivery of these objectives?

Is there any new legislation, demographic or any other changes that need to be taken into account?

4.6 Following the review Cabinet decided on the following revised set of Priorities and to retain the same Improvement Objectives as last year for 14/15. They are listed as follows:-

Priorities	Improvement Objectives
1. Peoples social care needs are identified and met in a timely and appropriate way	
2. Children and Adults are safeguarded from abuse	1. Ensure children and young people who are looked after are supported to achieve their full potential
	2. Improve job opportunities by implementing the Council's Passport Scheme
3. Improve standards across all year groups particularly key stage 3 and 4	3. Develop an effective and accessible Youth Service that supports the personal and social development of young people
4. Identify vulnerable groups of learners and develop interventions to ensure needs are met	
5. Reduce the gap in attainment between pupils in advantaged communities	
6. Promote the benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle	4. Improve awareness, variety and use of leisure, community and sporting facilities

7. Invest in our Council Homes and their communities to transform lives	5. Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities
8. Affordability - To deliver a medium term Financial Plan aimed at ultimately providing a period of stability that helps the authority to have a range of services in the future that are sustainable ( <b>NEW</b> )	6. Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless

4.7. Where possible the long term aspirations, priorities and Improvement Objectives are designed to have connections and links to each other.

4.8 Also taken into consideration was 13/14 consultation results, where people were asked what they thought was missing from the Councils improvement objectives. A number of respondents noted that the Improvement Objectives were focussed towards younger people and commented that there should be more focus on Adult Care and improving job and business opportunities for all age groups. Adult care therefore is addressed in the Councils longer- term priorities and aspirations, whilst job opportunities for all ages are predominantly addressed within the Councils Partnership document the Single Plan. Whilst we were successful in 13/14 we believe we have more to do to therefore we recommend retaining the 13/14 objectives and carrying them forward into 14/15 (Appendix A). Full progress updates of each 13/14 objectives will go to their respective scrutiny with a fuller public account of all Improvement Objectives in October 2014

4.9 The Councils Statutory responsibility is to publish a full description of each Improvement objective and its outcomes (what difference to we aim to make) and this is noted below.

Improvement Objective 2014/2015		Outcomes
IO1	Ensure children and young people who are looked after are supported to achieve their full potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will recruit more foster carers in order to meet the placement demands of children requiring foster placements. We hope to reduce the number of Independent Fostering Agency placements and provide placement stability</li> <li>Children requiring adoptive placements are matched and placed with adoptive families in a timely manner</li> <li>We hope to increase the attainment levels of all Looked after children (LAC) in an education setting.</li> <li>We want to increase the number of young people engaged in education, training and employment so it gives them the best opportunities and part of that is to build upon arrangements to place young people in suitable accommodation.</li> </ul>
IO2	Improve job opportunities by implementing the Council's Passport Scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing the Council's Passport Scheme to create employment and training opportunities</li> </ul>
IO3	Develop an effective and accessible Youth Service that supports the personal and social development of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To help learners achieve formal and non-formal qualifications in a wide range of settings</li> <li>Improve attendance at Secondary school</li> <li>Improving life chances (opportunities for future employment)</li> </ul>

<b>Improvement Objective 2014/2015</b>		<b>Outcomes</b>
IO4	Improve awareness, variety and use of leisure, community and sporting facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the awareness, variety of leisure, community and sporting facilities to increase people's participation in sports and active recreation</li> </ul>
IO5	Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver the best quality home improvements scheme to our tenants as promised in the Offer Document</li> <li>Their homes create real jobs in our communities</li> <li>Deliver wider community benefits</li> </ul>
IO6	Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide as many opportunities as possible to prevent as few people as possible becoming homeless</li> </ul>

4.10 The next step is for Cabinet to recommend acceptance of the priorities and objectives to Council on 10th June 2014.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications to this report that have not been considered or would adversely affect any individual or group who fall under one of the protected characteristics or wider issues as shown in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan.
- 5.2 Equalities and Welsh Language issues are crosscutting themes and to varying degrees, the Council's 7 Strategic Equality Objectives support the implementation of each of the 6 Improvement Objectives.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 A review of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan against the 6 improvement objectives shows there are no cuts that will adversely affect their delivery at this time but this will remain under review.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 All responses from consultations have been incorporated into this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Cabinet approve the Priorities and Improvement Objectives for 2014/15 and recommend them to Council (10th June 2014).

## **10 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to agree and publish its improvement objectives as soon as possible after the financial year.
- 10.2 The measure (WPI 2010 guidance) requires Improvement Objectives to be approved by the Council's Executive function.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Measure 2009

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Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Draft Improvement Objectives (Part 2)