



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 21ST JANUARY 2014

**SUBJECT: HALF-YEARLY UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 6 (2013/14) -
IMPROVE THE AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR
HOUSING**

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee with a half-yearly update on progress made against Improvement Objective 6 – Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report outlines progress made to date against the actions contained within Improvement Objective 6.
- 2.2 Good, steady progress at the half-yearly stage is being made against the actions contained with the Improvement Objective.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Improving Lives and Communities: Homes in Wales (Welsh Government, 2010) which sets out the national context on meeting housing need, homelessness, and housing-related support services.
- 3.2 Caerphilly Delivers (Single Integrated Plan, 2013): P2: “Improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the county borough.”
- 3.3 People, Property, Places: A Housing Strategy for Caerphilly County Borough (2008-2013) provides the context for the provision of housing and related services in the county borough.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Local Government Measure 2009 requires all local authorities in Wales to establish and publish a set of priorities called Improvement Objectives. The Wales Audit Office use Improvement Objectives and other data/information to evaluate the council’s likelihood of improvement.

- 4.2 In assessing the progress of an Improvement Objective, there is no criterion as to what constitutes success. Progress is normally summarised as being Successful, Partially Successful or Unsuccessful. This is largely a judgement call from those delivering the service and the Council Members scrutinising that judgement.
- 4.3 In terms of overall performance made in the first six months against IO6 the following applies:
- Risks – all risks have been reassessed in accordance with corporate guidance. Two risks are assessed as being high and seven as being medium. No risks have been assessed as being low. None of the risks have increased or reduced since first being assessed.
 - Tasks/Actions – the performance of each action has been reviewed. In total, there are twenty actions. Three actions have been completed and good progress is being made against the other seventeen actions. All of the remaining actions are on track to be completed by their target dates.
 - Performance Indicators – There are eight performance indicators. All of the indicators bar one are monitored on a quarterly basis. These seven indicators are currently on track to meet their end of year targets.
- 4.4 In terms of the completed actions we have successfully:
- Reconfigured the housing advice section to enhance the focus on homelessness prevention, including the recruitment of one (FTE) homelessness prevention officer. The reconfiguration will allow us to improve the level of service we provide to people who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness.
 - Amended the procurement practices in respect of minor works of adaptation. This will further reduce waiting times for clients.
 - Implemented a revised procedure for minor works of adaptation for housing association tenants. The revised procedure will increase the level of available funding for private sector clients.
- 4.5 Full details of the risks, actions and performance indicators are provided in Appendix 1.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An equalities impact assessment (EIA) is not needed because the issues covered in this report are for information purposes only, therefore, the council's full EIA process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial Implications directly associated with this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications directly associated with this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

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

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny, along with Officers, reach agreement on the success or otherwise of the Improvement Objective.
- 9.2 It is further recommended that should the Improvement Objective not be judged successful Scrutiny consider means of monitoring future progress towards achieving success.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure the Council continues to improve the quality of services it provides to residents.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Measure 2009.

Author: Shaun Couzens, Chief Housing Officer
Consultees: Cllr Gerald Jones, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr David Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management
Stuart Rosser, Interim Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151
Dan Perkins, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property Services
Phil Davy, Head of Programmes
Kenyon Williams, Private Sector Housing Manager
Graham North, Public Sector Housing Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Improvement Object 6 Q2 Ffynnon Dashboard Report