

**Service Level Agreement between
Caerphilly County Citizens Advice Bureau
and Caerphilly County Borough Council
1st April 2010 to 31st March 2013**

1 Agreements

Caerphilly County Citizens Advice Bureau (CCCAB) hereby enters into this Service Level Agreement with Caerphilly County Borough Council (Caerphilly CBC) from the 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2013 and undertakes to fulfil the activities and provide the services specified in Section 4 and 5 below with the financial support of the Council. This Service Level Agreement is subject to the Standard Terms of Grant issued by Caerphilly County Borough CBC.

Signed on behalf of Caerphilly County CAB

Name and Designation

Signed on behalf of Caerphilly CBC

Name and Designation

2 Aims and Principles

Caerphilly County Citizens Advice Bureau is independent and provides free, confidential and impartial advice to everybody regardless of age, race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion or language.

The aims of the Citizens Advice service nationally are:-

to ensure that individuals do not suffer through ignorance of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available to them or through an inability to express their needs effectively

and equally

to exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policies and services, both locally and nationally.

To these Caerphilly County Citizens Advice Bureau has added a third aim:

to help people develop their own skills and confidence to avoid financial crisis

CCCAB will uphold these aims and principles in fulfilling the terms of this Service Level Agreement.

CCCAB has a specific focus upon anti-poverty work, this includes maximising income and the effectiveness of income by the delivery of welfare benefits advice and debt advice and by carrying out preventative work in the form of financial capability training sessions for its own and other agencies' front line staff and their service users to help people make better budgeting, borrowing, saving and banking decisions.

3 Statement of Accountability

CCCAB is held accountable by the following organisations for either its overall activities and performance, or for the activities and services as specified which in the case of third parties will be subject to separate Agreements:-

National Citizens Advice Bureau
Charity Commission
Companies House
Legal Services Commission
Caerphilly CBC

4 Purpose and Type of Grant Award

Caerphilly CBC will pay CCCAB £191,244 per annum between 2010/11 and 2012/13 (including £27,000 contribution towards rent) to enable the provision and publicity of:

- i) generalist open access advice services (drop-in, telephone and letter advice) and contribute to the overall management and development of the organisation.
- ii) a community outreach service in line with the schedule specified in Appendix 1.

This grant will be paid quarterly in advance. The CCCAB will be required to set aside out of this sum £10k per annum to be allocated against the property for whatever general maintenance/repairs/annual inspections that will be required over the coming years.

Whilst the Council will use reasonable endeavours to ensure that the grant monies provided for in this Service Level Agreement are provided in accordance with the terms of the Agreement, it reserves the right to reduce, suspend or to completely withdraw funding in the event that it becomes necessary, at the discretion of the Council, to reduce the Voluntary Sector budget. A 12 week notice period will be given.

5 Service Objectives and Service Delivery

To provide advice sessions at Bargoed CAB, Caerphilly CAB and Risca CAB according to the opening hours detailed in appendix 1.

To provide a telephone advice service during the hours detailed in appendix 1.

To provide outreach advice sessions at the venues and according to the opening hours detailed in appendix 1.

To work to secure additional funding in order to meet unmet need for advice amongst the diverse local communities.

6 Targets and Outcomes

CCCAB will aim to achieve the following service standards in the course of undertaking the activities and services outlined in Sections 4 and 5 above:-

- To provide advice and outreach services during the times detailed in appendix 1.
- To provide the telephone advice service during the times detailed in appendix 1.
- To respond to all letter enquiries within 10 working days.
- To maintain the CLS Quality Mark at General Help level.
- To maintain an advice service that fully complies with the Citizens Advice Membership Scheme.
- To seek funding to enable it to undertake work on financial literacy improving the competency skills within the borough through all generations.
- To contribute towards a holistic and coordinated joint agency report to financial and social inclusion such as through the use of the CCCAB client-based evidence feeding through to policy and the use of the CCCAB management information system. The latter will be used to generate regular reports on the work of the CCCAB and on profiling poverty and debt management in the borough, which will be used to highlight causes and barriers and so help form appropriate responses. The CCCAB will be expected to actively engage with initiatives promoting financial and social inclusion within the borough.
- CCCAB will also be required to meet the following performance targets based on improving client outcomes, which will be used to encourage improvements in CCCAB performance in line with the proposed grant increases. Some of the indicators rise year-on-year as they are indicative of quality and efficiency, others are to be maintained at a constant level as the overall capacity of the organisation imposes a natural limit, should the organisation grow in real terms, the levels will be reviewed.

Indicator	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
% clients satisfied/ very satisfied	81%	84%	87%	90%
Number of clients starting an enquiry ¹	4798	5158	5545	5960
Number of client contacts ²	25239	23840	25628	27550
Number of enquiries ³	6327	6802	7312	7860
Number of advice issues ⁴	23758	25540	27455	29514
Total financial gains for clients ⁵	£1,686k	£1812k	£1948	£2095
Total client debt advised on ⁶	£12,642k	£13274	£13938	£14635
Number of volunteers completing training	8	10	12	14
Number of volunteers entering paid employment	6	8	10	12
% of income derived from sources other than the LA	Continuing at 50%+ with 3% increase of amount obtained from other sources to be obtained for each of the 3 years of the SLA funding agreement.			
Active participation in local development forums & partnerships	Continue to play an active role in wider community affairs by contributing to community development agenda by attendance at meetings and local social policy work.			
NOTES:				
1. <i>Number of clients starting an enquiry</i> : the number of different (unique) clients who came into the bureau and opened one or more enquiries during the year.				
2. <i>Number of client contacts</i> : the total number of times the CAB has had contact with clients – an indicator of complexity of problems.				
3. <i>Number of enquiries</i> : the number of enquiries that have been opened during the year.				
4. <i>Number of advice issues</i> : the number of individual issues that have been raised by clients during the year – a single complex enquiry may give rise to many different issues.				
5. <i>Total financial gains for clients</i> : the amount of money generated by assisting clients to claim benefits, appeal decisions, challenge unfair dismissal etc. Benefit gains are calculated as any backdated benefit plus new weekly benefit x 52.				
6. <i>Total client debt advised on</i> : the total amount of debt reported to CAB by clients who receive debt advice at any level.				
The 2008/09 column shows actual figures, the targets for subsequent years have been raised by an ambitious, but achievable 7.5% with the exception of <i>total client debt</i> which is governed by availability of caseworkers and has been raised by 5%.				

In addition to the above indicators, CCCAB will also be expected to actively seek opportunities to develop the organisation, provide new services and move towards long-term sustainability.

7 CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND THE BUREAU'S CONTROL

The bureau will not be held responsible for any interruption in or disruption to the services specified due to circumstances beyond its control.

The services specified are dependent on the availability of suitable advisers.

8 STATUS OF AGREEMENT

It is not the intention of either party that this agreement shall be legally binding and therefore neither party shall have any liability to the other for any failure to observe the terms of this agreement.

9 Liaison

CCCAB will maintain regular contact with the contact officer nominated by Caerphilly CBC.

CCCAB will ensure that the contact officer is sent a copy of all notice of meetings, agendas and minutes of its Trustee Board.

10 Monitoring and Evaluation

Caerphilly CBC monitors the development and performance of all organisations it supports financially to ensure value for money. This exercise is mutually beneficial. CCCAB, therefore, agrees to co-operate in providing monitoring information in a form acceptable to both parties at intervals of 3 months, and to participate in an annual evaluation of activity, organisational development and performance. CCCAB also agrees to participate in any intermediate evaluations, which Caerphilly CBC might reasonably conduct on grounds to be communicated to CCCAB in advance of any such evaluation taking place. All evaluations will be conducted as a joint exercise and CCCAB will be given full opportunity to make comment on the final evaluation report before it is presented to Caerphilly CBC for adoption and action as appropriate.

CCCAB will provide Caerphilly CBC with an audited set of accounts by 30th September.

No information of a confidential or sensitive nature exchanged between Caerphilly CBC and CCCAB will be communicated without the prior agreement of both parties.

Caerphilly CBC acknowledges that CCCAB is held accountable by the organisations listed in Section 3 for the purposes shown. CCCAB permits Caerphilly CBC to have access to any review and evaluation reports produced by those organisations and

acknowledges that Caerphilly CBC is entitled to take account of such reports in conducting its own periodic evaluations.

11 Internal Management

CCCAB is a registered charity (Charity Number 1084045) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (Company Number 4041962).

CCCAB hereby undertakes to comply in full with any requirements of charity and company law which might apply to its conduct and business.

Responsibility for the management of the bureau is vested in the Trustee Board, the membership and operation of which is laid down in its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

12 Financial Management

CCCAB will ensure that there are full and proper internal systems and procedures in place for financial management. It will comply with the accounting and auditing requirements of the Charities Commission, Companies House and the financial management quality standards outlined in the Citizens Advice Membership Agreement.

13 Organisational Development

CCCAB will endeavour to meet the training and development needs of its Trustee Board, employees and volunteers. The bureau produces a three year business and development plan which is reviewed annually, a copy of which will be made available to Caerphilly CBC.

14 Termination of SLA

This is a three-year SLA, however, it can be terminated by either party subject to the submission of 6 months notice in writing.

Appendix 1.

Opening Hours and Service Delivery

Main Office Addresses and Opening Times					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
BARGOED CAB 41b Hanbury Rd Bargoed CF81 8QU	CLOSED	Open door 10.00 – 1.00	Open door 10.00 – 1.00	Open door 5.00 – 7.00pm	Open door 10.00 – 1.00
CAERPHILLY CAB Park Lane Caerphilly CF83 1AA	Appointments only 10.00 – 1.00	Appointments only 10.00 – 1.00	CLOSED	Appointments only 10.00 – 1.00	CLOSED
RISCA CAB Park Road Risca NP11 6BJ	Open door 10.00 – 1.00	CLOSED	Open door 10.00 – 1.00	Open door 10.00 – 1.00	CLOSED
Telephone Advice 029 2088 2105	Phone Advice 10.00 – 1.00	Phone Advice 10.00 – 1.00		Phone Advice 10.00 – 1.00	

Outreach Venues and Opening Times		
Venue	Day	Time
Bedwas Council Chambers	Mondays	9.15 - 11.45
Cefn Fforest Community Centre	Mondays	9.00 - 11.30
Llanbradach Library	2 nd Monday of month	2.00 - 4.00
Newbridge Tabernacle Church	Tuesdays	9.30 - 12.00
Cefn Hengoed Youth Centre	Wednesdays	9.15 - 11.30
Graig Y Rhacca Helping Hands Family Centre	2 nd Wednesday of month	1.30 - 4.00
Cwmfelin Community Hall	2 nd Wednesday of month	9.15 - 11.45
Gelligaer Cyber Café, Gelligaer	4 th Wednesday of the month	2.00 - 4.45 (Drop in)
Senghenydd Community Centre	1 st and 3 rd Thursdays of month	9.00 - 11.30
Rhymney Day Centre	Fridays (except last Fri of month)	9.00 - 11.30
Phillipstown Community House	Last Friday of the month	9.00 - 11.30