



## REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 1ST JULY 2014

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE NO. 4 FOR 2013/14**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires all Local Authorities in Wales to set and publish a set of priorities that improve the life of citizens. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) use Improvement Objectives (IO) to evaluate the Council's likelihood of improvement and following that, the level of actual improvement that is achieved for the citizens of Caerphilly.
- 1.2 The Council is required to review their improvement objectives to remain relevant and current. The purpose of this report is to update Members of the review of performance for Improvement Objective No. 4 for 2013/14:-

*"Improve awareness, access, variety and use of leisure, community and sporting facilities".*

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The outcome for this objective is that people in Caerphilly lead active lifestyles. This Improvement Objective is concerned with improving the sporting and leisure facilities across our County Borough. It is also about increasing the usage of our facilities. We want our County Borough to have excellent sporting and leisure facilities that encourage all parts of the community to be more active, more often.
- 2.2 The Improvement Objective has been chosen because we recognise that being physically active is an important part of leading a healthy lifestyle. Improving our sport and leisure facilities and finding innovative ways to encourage our citizens to use the facilities on offer is one way we can help support our citizen's lead healthier active lives. While there is clear medical evidence to prove that being physically active has health benefits, there is also evidence to prove that active lifestyles can improve educational attainment and tackle some of our social issues by transforming the lives of those living in our communities, particularly those in areas of deprivation.
- 2.3 This report summarises some of the excellent progress made during 2013/14 and highlights some of the areas that require further focus. The report clearly shows that significant progress has been made in improving facilities and increasing levels of participation. However, it also recognises that more is required, within current resources, to improve the quality of life of our residents.
- 2.4 This report also includes a "dashboard" of key performance indicators (PI's) that are used to monitor progress against targets. Some of these PI's are set nationally so we can benchmark and compare against other local Authorities, while some are local PI's to allow a monitoring trend in performance. The attached dashboard is evidence that improvements have been

made against most measures and actions are in place to further improve areas where targets have not been achieved.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Local Government Measure 2009 requires each Local Authority to publish priorities for improvement called Improvement Objectives.
- 3.2 This Improvement Objective is aligned to Creating an Active Caerphilly, the Vision for Sport in Wales and the Single Plan.

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 There has been positive progress against most of the actions in the Improvement Objective and highlights some of the actions then the progress made against each action. The attached dashboard (Appendix 1.) also provides performance indicators that details the measures and targets that are also used to monitor progress. Some of these measures are National Indicators, some are collected through surveys while others are collected locally through Smart Card, registers for example. This data allows benchmarking and an opportunity to compare performance against other local authorities and also monitor trend against previous performance.
- 4.2 **Build a Centre of Sporting Excellence in Ystrad Mynach:-** The building work is now completed, the official launch of the new facility took place 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014. There is a full programme of use for the facility.
- 4.3 **Develop a Leisure Facilities Strategy:-** A draft strategy is in circulation with key stakeholders and partners for consultation. This strategy will, alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) outline proposals for future provision of leisure centres. This will form a key component of an overarching sport and leisure strategy.
- 4.4 **Engage with Schools and parents to ensure children are provided the opportunity to learn to swim by the age of 11 years:-** The new learn to swim programme (Aqua Passport) has been introduced in all our swimming pools. This process will improve the quality and consistency in delivering swimming lessons. The early signs of the new intensive lesson programme for schools and targeting of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are also very positive and engagement of schools onto this programme is very good. The attached dashboard shows that our performance is well below the nationally set target of 91% (this is a national target for all local authorities to achieve by 2018). A programme is in place to achieve the target and ensure all children in Caerphilly County Borough council are able to swim. Improved numbers attending free swim sessions was also achieved.
- 4.5 **Develop and Implement a scheme that rewards customer loyalty:-** The new Smart Rewards Scheme was developed and introduced in conjunction with the Youth Forum. The scheme is now fully operational and customers are being rewarded for their loyalty. It is evident that this scheme also aids the retention of customers. Despite the challenges of pool closures for refurbishment at two of the busiest Leisure centres it is pleasing to note that despite not achieving our target, actual visitor numbers are at an all time record high of over 1.3 million visitors during 2013/14. The target for number of Smart Card holders was also exceeded.
- 4.6 **Growing a skilled and passionate workforce:-** The results from the School Sport Survey show that while the overly ambitious targets for participation in Sports Clubs was not achieved, there has been improvement in pupils engagement with community clubs. The delivery of Community Sport cannot be achieved without the support of volunteers and a staggering 8,000 hours of volunteer time was donated during 2013/14. This is an impressive performance and has to remain a priority if further increases in participation are to be

achieved.

- 4.7 **Introduce a programme to identify and support the more able and talented:-** While the more able and talented programme (MAT) has improved, the new Centre of Sporting Excellence will further enhance the support of our more able and talented young people through improved identification and support.
- 4.8 **Promote & deliver exercise referral scheme:-** There is an excellent relationship with local GP's who refer patients to exercise more. Patients are now completing the course and remaining active after the programme. However, due to demand, capacity and limitations of Health Board funding we have an extensive waiting list of patients for the programme.
- 4.9 **Promote the well-being benefits of being physically active:-** There have been improvements in the use of a more varied approach of communicating with customers and non-users, particularly through the use of social media. The production of "Playing our Part" provides robust evidence of the benefits of leading an active lifestyle.
- 4.10 **Introduce a 5-a-side arena in Risca:-** This project is clear evidence that a small investment into enhancing provision can lead to a significant increase in levels of participation. Further investment in improved facilities at Risca has resulted in doubling the number of users and membership of the facility is now at record levels. These results are replicated at New Tredegar and other sites where improved facility provision has been made.
- 4.11 The results of the School Sport Survey and the recent active Adults Survey are clear evidence that significant improvements in levels of participation in sport and physical activity have been made in Caerphilly county borough. However, whilst these results are pleasing and significant progress is being made further improvements are required if we are to continue to improve the quality of life of our residents and fully address the clear health benefits of being more active, more often.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report although the objective seeks to address inequalities in levels of provision.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The results of all consultations have been incorporated in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the progress against Improvement Objective No. 4.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To provide Members with regular updates on progress with Improvement Objective No. 4 and ensure that the Council undertakes effective scrutiny for monitoring performance improvement.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 The Local Government Measure 2009.

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Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Improvement Objectives IO4 - Performance Dashboard