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Date: 25th May 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Tuesday, 31st May, 2016** at **5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

Chris Burns
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of Interest.	
<p>Councillors and Officers are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.</p> <p>To approve and sign the following minutes: -</p>	
3 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 1st March 2016.	1 - 8

A greener place Man gwyrdach

Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat



- 4 Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.
- 5 To receive a verbal report by the Cabinet Member(s).
- 6 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. 9 - 30
- 7 To receive and consider the following Cabinet Reports*: -
1. Council Tax Discretionary Reduction Policy – Section 13A (1)(C) - 16th March 2016;
 2. Write-Off of Debts Over £20,000 – NNDR Arrears for LTD Companies (EXEMPT) - 16th March 2016;
 3. Review of Community Improvement and Community Safety Funds - Addendum - 30th March 2016;
 4. Cabinet Forward Work Programme - 30th March 2016;
 5. Draft Customer Services Strategy 2016-2020 – 13th April 2016.

**If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above Cabinet reports to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Rebecca Barrett, 01443 864245, by 4.00 p.m. on Friday, 27th May 2016.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

- 8 Year End Performance Report for Corporate Services. 31 - 48
- 9 Improvement Objective IO5 - Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities. 49 - 58

Circulation:

Councillors L.J. Binding, Mrs P. Cook, C.J. Cuss, Miss E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, C. Hawker, Ms J.G. Jones, G. Kirby (Vice Chair), A. Lewis, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan (Chair), D. Rees, R. Saralis, J. Simmonds and J. Taylor

And Appropriate Officers



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
TUESDAY, 1ST MARCH 2016 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor H.W. David – Chair
Councillor S. Morgan – Vice-Chair

Councillors:

L. Binding, Mrs P. Cook, C.J. Cuss, C. Hawker, Ms J.G. Jones, G. Kirby, A. Lewis, C.P. Mann,
D. Rees, R. Saralis, J. Simmonds

Cabinet Members:

D. T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), Mrs B. Jones (Corporate Services)

Together with:

N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer), P. Davy (Head of Programmes), S. Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance), D.A. Thomas (Senior Policy Officer, Equalities and Welsh Language), L. Lane (Solicitor) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.E. Fussell, Miss E. Forehead and J. Taylor, together with Cabinet Members Mrs C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager) and D.V. Poole (Housing).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C.J. Cuss declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 (Review of Community Improvement and Community Safety Funds). Details are minuted with the respective item.

3. MINUTES – 19TH JANUARY 2016

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 19th January 2016 (minute nos. 1 – 16) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

The Scrutiny Committee received a verbal report from Cabinet Member Mrs B. Jones.

Councillor Mrs B. Jones (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services) presented her report and explained that the Council's IT Department is currently involved in an outline business case process to evaluate whether it would be appropriate to join an All-Gwent collaborative ICT service. The Shared Resource Service (SRS) is based in Blaenavon and is a collaborative ICT venture across South Wales that provides ICT services to public sector organisations. This process is ongoing and scheduled to be completed by 30th June 2016.

Members were also informed that the Council's computer upgrade programme is due to be completed during March/April 2016. This exercise has involved a significant amount of work by the Council's ICT Team to ensure that the process has been as seamless as possible.

A Member queried if the potential collaborative venture could have an impact on the day-to-day running of ICT operations within the Council (in that it is based in Blaenavon). The Cabinet Member confirmed that there will still be staff from IT based in CCBC.

In explaining that he had been unaware that the matter would be presented at the meeting, Councillor D. Rees asked for it to be noted that he had not participated in the discussion regarding the collaborative venture with SRS.

The Cabinet Member was thanked for her report.

6. CABINET REPORTS

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN AND OBJECTIVES 2016-2020

David A. Thomas (Senior Policy Officer, Equalities and Welsh Language) presented the report, which sought the views of Members on an updated Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives 2016-2020, prior to its presentation to Cabinet and Council to seek approval for adoption as Council policy.

Members were advised that since April 2012, the Council has had in place a four-year Strategic Equality Plan alongside a Welsh Language Scheme in order to comply with statutory duties. These have been supported by a single operational document, the Equalities and Welsh Language Strategic Objectives and Action Plan. This operational document was created as the requirements of both statutory duties have many similar requirements in terms of implementation, so this unified action plan reduces duplication of actions and streamlines the implementation of both sets of duties.

All local authority Welsh Language Schemes come to a formal end in March 2016 due to the introduction of the new legislation and so as part of this policy update, the Council's Welsh Language Scheme document will be removed from the policy framework, so that actions within the Strategic Equality Plan, related to the new Welsh Language Standards, can replace it.

The Strategic Equality Plan has undergone relatively minor updates in order to reflect changes or to provide additional information only. The Objectives and Action Plan have been developed to take achievements and progress into account and to bring the document in line with the Welsh Language Standards. The main additions are sections on the Armed Forces Covenant and links to the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, as Equalities and Welsh Language issues (alongside Community Cohesion matters) form 3 of the 7 Well-being Goals within the Act.

Members were advised that the number of Strategic Equality Objectives has risen from 7 to 11, with the addition of Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, Supporting Age-friendly Communities, Supporting the Armed Forces Covenant and Working with Gypsy and Traveller Communities. Members were referred to Appendices 2 and 3 of the report which contained the updated Strategic Equality Plan and the Equalities and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan for 2016-2020.

The Strategic Equality Plan and the unified Objectives and Action Plan were the focus of consultation and engagement undertaken between December 2015 and January 2016. 17 responses were received and where possible, the comments and additional information received from the consultees (who were listed in Appendix 1 of the report) have been reflected in the amended draft policy. The key amendments arising from the consultation were a greater alignment of the new Ageing Well in Caerphilly Objective with existing national programmes, and inclusion of further reference to criminal legislation around Hate Crime and other relevant legislation and regulations.

The Officer was thanked for his report, and during the course of the ensuing debate, a number of observations were raised by Members regarding the contents of the updated Strategic Equality Plan. Officers agreed that the relevant sections would be updated to reflect these views, prior to the final version of the Plan being released.

These observations included a query on why some factors (such as pregnancy) as outlined in Section 3.2 of the report (Definitions of Discrimination) are not covered by the Equality Act 2010. Officers explained that these areas are covered in other ways (such as HR legislation) and confirmed that this section would be updated to clarify the other types of legislation in effect. Reference was made to Section 4.6 of the Plan (Equalities in Practice within the Council – Employment Data) which referred to learning and development data as contained within individual staff records. Officers confirmed this paragraph would be expanded to add clarity to this section of the Plan.

Reference was made to Equality Objectives 3 and 7 (Improving Physical Access and Supporting Age-Friendly Communities) in relation to the issue of impeded pedestrian access caused by parking on pavements. Members expressed a need for the Police to be included in the list of stakeholders listed against these Objectives and for this section to be extended to reflect the need for discussion between the police and other stakeholders regarding such issues. A Member also requested that the rights of children be reflected in the section of the Plan outlining the Human Rights Equality issue. Officers confirmed that these sections would be updated and expanded accordingly.

Officers also responded to a number of general queries in respect of the Strategic Equalities Plan and Objectives. A Member enquired as to the impact of the Council's obligation to offer Welsh Language classes to its staff. Officers outlined the methods by which this training is offered to Council staff and explained that this training will take into consideration workplace operational requirements to provide the most accessible means of training to its employees. It

was agreed that information would be circulated to Members following the meeting regarding the legislation, current provision, the number of staff who have received training, details of their fluency level, and the annual report giving the full details of all the training provided.

Discussion took place regarding the extent of the Council's obligation to translate service requests received in other languages and formats. Officers explained that although the Council responds to all requests in line with current legislation, the situation is regularly monitored to ensure that there are no significant cost or resource implications to the Council. Members explained that in instances where such an impact could arise, discussion will take place between relevant departments to determine the most effective way to progress the translation request. A Member also queried whether there had been any issues experienced by Council staff in dealing with ethnic minority service requests in other languages and formats. Officers confirmed that all such requests had been passed to the relevant department in a timely manner and that no issues had been reported back to the Equalities and Welsh Language Team.

Reference was made to the responses that had arisen from the consultation process, and Officers confirmed that those of an appropriate nature had been reflected in the amended draft policy. A Member queried if any successful challenges had been made against the Council as a result of the Equalities Act 2010. Officers explained that no legal challenges had been made, though a number of complaints are received each year, some of which do progress to the Ombudsman, but that the Council is generally very robust in meeting the requirements of this legislation.

A Member queried why CCBC schools were not included in the list of stakeholders against Equality Objective 3 (Improving Physical Access). Officers explained that the DDA Access Officer (who is listed as a stakeholder) represents the interests of all schools across the county borough in this regard. A Member also queried the impact of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated budget savings on certain Equalities-related matters across the county borough. Officers explained that an Equalities Impact Assessment is carried out against all proposed savings and includes a section on mitigating factors in an attempt to minimise any such impact.

Following consideration of the report (and subject to the aforementioned amendments) it was moved and seconded that the following recommendation be referred to Cabinet for consideration (and thereafter Council for approval). By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet (and thereafter Council) that subject to the amendments proposed at the meeting, the updated Strategic Equality Plan and the Objectives and Action Plan as set out in the Appendices to the report be approved.

8. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FUNDS

Councillor C.J. Cuss declared an interest in this item in that he is the Secretary of Pen y Dre Tenants and Residents Association (who are named as a grant beneficiary in the report). As the interest was determined to be personal and not prejudicial, the Member remained in the meeting during consideration of the item.

Phil Davy (Head of Programmes) presented the report, which had been previously considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 18th February 2016. The report sought the views of Members on proposals to absorb the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund into the Environmental Programme budget, prior to its presentation to Cabinet for approval.

Members were advised that following the stock transfer ballot in February 2012, the Council agreed that it would deliver the promises made in its Offer Document to tenants and deliver

the WHQS by 2019/2020. It also gave a commitment to delivering numerous additional benefits which would add value to the WHQS programme and help deliver the Council's ambition of using the £200 million WHQS investment as a catalyst to Transform Homes, Lives and Communities. These additional benefits included the creation of a Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund. The Council also created a Local Employment Fund, which has been relatively successful and will be the subject of a separate future report. £50,000 is allocated to each fund annually.

Officers explained that each year, despite a number of promotional approaches by staff, there is a significant under spend in the funds allocated to the Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund. As the Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund have not met their original expectations (in that they were designed to increase community cohesion and address local priorities) it is therefore advocated that these Funds be incorporated into the WHQS Environmental Programme budget.

It was noted that the Caerphilly Homes Task Group raised the matter of future applications to the fund and that it was determined that if any projects emerge that would previously have been candidates for the two funds they will (if appropriate) be incorporated within proposals for specific estates and be subject to the consultation arrangements that will inform the decision making as to which project proposals can be supported. The Task Group also raised concerns around the allocation of funding and projects in the larger estates across the borough and sought reassurance that, when work on the Environmental Programme begins, consideration would be given to all estates. The Caerphilly Homes Task Group (by a majority vote and in noting there was one abstention) subsequently supported the report recommendation.

During the course of the ensuing debate, Officers responded to queries regarding current and future administration of these Funds, outlined eligibility criteria in respect of such funding, and highlighted the promotional work and engagement processes carried out by Council staff to encourage take-up of these Funds. Reference was made to the use of the Community Safety Fund to support the purchase and installation of mobile CCTV cameras for use on the housing estates. Discussion also took place regarding how the Environmental Programme would address mixed tenure estates and whether it would benefit private tenants in addition to Council tenants. Officers explained that Council-owned sections of these estates would be identified within the programme but that all residents on such estates would be eligible for inclusion in the engagement process relating to the programme.

Members sought clarification on the reasons for the proposed change in engagement strategy in respect of these Funds. Officers reiterated that despite their best efforts, the number and diversity of organisations requesting funding has been minimal, with feedback suggesting the application process was too complex. They explained that absorbing these Funds into the Environmental Programme will be a more proactive way of engaging communities in improving the quality of their environment. Members were also advised that there have been occasions where grants have been awarded to a number of organisations, but who have subsequently decided not to take up the funding offer.

A number of Members stated that they had been unaware of these Funds and expressed disappointment as to their proposed withdrawal. A query was raised as to whether these Funds could still be accessed for community initiative purposes at the present time and Officers indicated that this was contingent on the outcome of the forthcoming Cabinet decision on these proposals. If Cabinet are minded to approve the proposals then future applications will not be processed in the same way.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation from the Caerphilly Homes Task Group as set out in the report be supported. By a show of hands (and in noting there were 6 against with 1 abstention) the motion was declared lost.

The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee therefore did not support the recommendation to Cabinet that was set out in the Officer's report.

9. COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY REDUCTION POLICY - SECTION 13A (1) (C)

Steve Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance) presented the report, which sought the views of Members on a proposed Council Tax Discretionary Reduction Policy concerning Section 13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, prior to its presentation to Cabinet for approval.

Members were advised that Section 13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended gives discretion to billing authorities to reduce a liable person's council tax 'to such extent as it thinks fit', even to nil, whether on an individual basis or by prescribing one or more categories

The Section 13A discretion is in addition to various statutory reductions, discounts, disregards and exemptions that are already within existing legislation. The discretionary power was originally envisaged to be used in extreme cases affecting a limited number of council tax payers (such as a crisis or fire/flooding event). However, from 1st April 2013, the way in which support is provided to council tax payers on low income changed with the introduction of Council Tax Reduction Schemes throughout the UK.

In Wales the Welsh Government has committed to a 100% funded Council Tax Reduction Scheme until the end of March 2017. This is not the case in England and consequently an increase in Section 13A applications has been experienced. Any move by the Welsh Government to not fully fund the Council Tax Reduction Scheme from April 2017 may result in a rise in Section 13A applications in Wales. Any change in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme would require a report to full Council along with an assessment of the potential financial implications.

The Section 13A policy (appended to the report in draft form) aims to provide a more transparent and equitable way of determining applications received for discretionary council tax reduction.

Discussion took place regarding the support available to persons applying for discretionary council tax reduction and the available methods of appeal in cases of refusal. Officers explained that a financial assessment is required to support cases of financial hardship and that where required Council staff would offer support in completing the relevant income/expenditure form. Members were advised that under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, there is no right of appeal against the Council's use of discretionary powers, but the Council will accept a taxpayer's written request for a review of its decision if it is made within 28 days of the original decision. The review will be carried out by the Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer who will consider whether the applicant has provided any additional information against the required criteria that will justify a change of decision.

Officers explained that the Council will treat all Section 13A applications on their individual merits and emphasised that support is already available through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which is separate to the Section 13A Discretionary reduction. Officers also outlined the details of the limited number of successful Section 13A applications approved to date and it was agreed that further information regarding unsuccessful applications would be provided to Members following the meeting.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendation be referred to Cabinet for approval. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the Council Tax Discretionary Reduction Policy - Section 13A (1) (c) as set out in the Appendix to the report be approved.

10. REQUESTS FOR REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

Councillor Ms J.G. Jones requested a report in relation to dog fouling. She was advised that this comes under the remit of the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and was asked to re-direct her request accordingly.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

The Committee noted the following items for information, full details of which were included within the Officers reports. There were no items brought forward for review.

- (1) Treasury Management and Capital Financing Prudential Indicators Quarter 3 Monitoring Report (1st April 2015 to 31st December 2015);
- (2) Caerphilly Local Service Board Minutes - 1st September 2015;
- (3) Corporate Health and Safety Committee Minutes - 16th November 2015;
- (4) Caerphilly Homes Task Group Minutes - 10th December 2015;
- (5) Caerphilly Homes Task Group Minutes - 27th January 2016;
- (6) Pensions/Compensation Committee Minutes - 25th January 2016.

The meeting closed at 6.45 pm

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 31st May 2016, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 31ST MAY 2016

SUBJECT: POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholders.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee draft forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee work programme workshop on 1 March 2016. The draft work programme outlines the reports planned for the period June 2016 to April 2017.

4.2 The forward work programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members during the workshop and has been prioritised into three priority areas, priority 1, 2 or 3. Members are asked to consider the draft work programme alongside the cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is finalised and published on the council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

4.3 The draft Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1. The cabinet work programme is attached at Appendix 2.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Catherine Forbes-Thompson Scrutiny Research Officer
Consultees: Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
Appendix 2 Cabinet Work Programme

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
APPENDIX 1

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme July 2016 to April 2017			
Meeting Date: 12 July 2016			
Subject – (The report title will be listed here - a maximum of 4 agenda items per meeting)	Purpose – (This explains the purpose of the report being considered by scrutiny committee)	Key Issues – (This will list the key issues to be contained in the report – similar to the report summary)	Witnesses – (This will be the Officers, external witnesses or key stakeholders, identified by the Scrutiny Committee, who will be invited to attend and give evidence)
Reserves Strategy(P2)	Pre-decision	Following a review of the Reserves Protocol this report will seek Cabinet endorsement of a reserves strategy setting out details of the types of reserves held by the Authority, their purpose and the processes for authorising use of the reserves.	
HR Strategy (P2)			
Housing – Performance Management	Performance Monitoring	To monitor performance within Housing Services against set targets.	Director - Christina Harray Shaun Couzens

Meeting Date: 4 October 2016			
Subject – (The report title will be listed here - a maximum of 4 agenda items per meeting)	Purpose – (This explains the purpose of the report being considered by scrutiny committee)	Key Issues – (This will list the key issues to be contained in the report – similar to the report summary)	Witnesses – (This will be the Officers, external witnesses or key stakeholders, identified by the Scrutiny Committee, who will be invited to attend and give evidence)
Strategic Asset Management Strategy (P1)	WAO has identified a need for the authority to produce a Corporate Asset Management Strategy. Following a presentation to Audit Committee by WAO council officers were requested to develop a Strategy. A draft Strategy will be presented to Scrutiny for their comments.	The draft Strategy will identify the various assets that the authority is responsible for and where appropriate refer the reader to individual service asset strategies/plans. Where such individual strategies/plans do not exist this will be identified. The Strategy will set out the principles for the future management of the various assets and set direction, as far as is possible in these uncertain times.	
State of the Estate (P2)	To present to Scrutiny a first edition of a proposed annual State of the Estate Report . The report describes how Corporate Property manages the council's Building Estate and focusses upon: Size of the estate Condition Energy Use Efficiency of Use Cost Savings.	Key issues included in the report include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate office rationalisation and its impact on alternative office efficiency. • Sustainability of the Office portfolio • Building Condition Improvement • Cost Saving 	Colin Jones – Head of Performance & Property Services

<p>HRA Budget Monitoring (P1)</p>	<p>To provide Scrutiny members with an update on expenditure of the Housing Revenue Account budget for the first six months of the year</p>	<p>Key issues include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the overall budget available for the delivering the Housing Service • Highlight any budget variations including projected overspends and underspends • Provide an indication of the revenue contribution to the Capital Programme 	
<p>Treasury Management & Prudential Indicators Monitoring Outturn Report - 2015/16 (P2)</p>			

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
APPENDIX 1

Meeting Date: 15 November 2016			
Subject – (The report title will be listed here - a maximum of 4 agenda items per meeting)	Purpose – (This explains the purpose of the report being considered by scrutiny committee)	Key Issues – (This will list the key issues to be contained in the report – similar to the report summary)	Witnesses – (This will be the Officers, external witnesses or key stakeholders, identified by the Scrutiny Committee, who will be invited to attend and give evidence)
Corporate Budget Monitoring (P1)			
B & B use as Emergency Accommodation (P1)	To provide a further update to members of Scrutiny on the use of B&B accommodation for the temporary placement of homeless persons	The report will highlight the historical trend on the use of B&B accommodation for placing homeless persons and the reasons for such use. The report will also provide information on the measures that Housing Services have taken to reduce such use and provide an update on the current position	
Housing Complaints & Representations (P2)	To provide members of Scrutiny with information on all representations and complaints received by Housing Services during the 201/16 financial year	Key issues include:- Identification of the numbers and types of representations and complaints received for the year. Comparison of data with previous years Analysis of the data to identify the areas of service that receive the highest level of representations and complaints. Highlighting any lessons learned from analysing the data.	

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Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
APPENDIX 1

Meeting Date: 17 January 2017			
Subject – (The report title will be listed here - a maximum of 4 agenda items per meeting)	Purpose – (This explains the purpose of the report being considered by scrutiny committee)	Key Issues – (This will list the key issues to be contained in the report – similar to the report summary)	Witnesses – (This will be the Officers, external witnesses or key stakeholders, identified by the Scrutiny Committee, who will be invited to attend and give evidence)
HRA Charging Report (P1)	To advise members of Scrutiny of proposed forthcoming charges for 2017/18 and in particular any increased charges relating to the Housing Revenue Account prior to seeking Cabinet approval.	Charges that will be incorporated within the report will include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council house rents • Garage rents • Service charges relating to Sheltered Housing Schemes 	
Whole Authority Budget Monitoring (P1)			
HRA Budget Monitoring Report (P2)	To provide Scrutiny members with an update on expenditure of the Housing Revenue Account budget for the first six months of the year	Key issues include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the overall budget available for the delivering the Housing Service • Highlight any budget variations including projected overspends and underspends • Provide an indication of the revenue contribution to the Capital Programme 	

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Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
APPENDIX 1

Meeting Date: 28 February 2017			
Subject – (The report title will be listed here - a maximum of 4 agenda items per meeting)	Purpose – (This explains the purpose of the report being considered by scrutiny committee)	Key Issues – (This will list the key issues to be contained in the report – similar to the report summary)	Witnesses – (This will be the Officers, external witnesses or key stakeholders, identified by the Scrutiny Committee, who will be invited to attend and give evidence)
WHQS Programme Re-profiling and associated Capital Programme (P1)	To review progress with the implementation of the WHQS Programme, re-profile over the remaining years where necessary, and set out a capital programme budget for 2017/18.	To consider the implications of slippage within the internal and external works programmes, establish if works need to be re-phased. Examine the implications on the community sequence and potential overlaps between internal and external works. Review the resourcing issues given the commitment to deliver the WHQS Programme by 2020.	
Housing Service Charges (P2)	To present to Scrutiny proposals for the de-pooling of service charges in sheltered housing schemes and the introduction of service charging for provision of new services for general needs tenants	Key issues include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations on the Council’s ability to introduce service charges arising from the current tenancy agreement. • The implications of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 as it relates to service charging of tenants of sheltered housing schemes. • Potential financial impact of de-pooling on tenants of sheltered schemes and associated implications for future viability of a number of schemes. 	

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Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
APPENDIX 1

Meeting Date: 11 April 2017			
Subject – (The report title will be listed here - a maximum of 4 agenda items per meeting)	Purpose – (This explains the purpose of the report being considered by scrutiny committee)	Key Issues – (This will list the key issues to be contained in the report – similar to the report summary)	Witnesses – (This will be the Officers, external witnesses or key stakeholders, identified by the Scrutiny Committee, who will be invited to attend and give evidence)

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
APPENDIX 1

Meeting Date: to be confirmed			
Subject – (The report title will be listed here - a maximum of 4 agenda items per meeting)	Purpose – (This explains the purpose of the report being considered by scrutiny committee)	Key Issues – (This will list the key issues to be contained in the report – similar to the report summary)	Witnesses – (This will be the Officers, external witnesses or key stakeholders, identified by the Scrutiny Committee, who will be invited to attend and give evidence)
Care & Repair Merger (P2)	This is an information report to provide members with details of the merger of the Care and Repair Service between Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent	To advise members on the new arrangements as a result of the merger	
Leaseholder Consultation Report (P3)	To provide a further report on leaseholder charges as requested by Scrutiny members	Key Issues will include -Value for Money/Procurement -Responsibility for charges relating to damage -Good practice including information from other landlords and Welsh Government -Leaseholder representation	
Equalities & Welsh Language Annual Report (P3)	The purpose of this report is to consider the Equalities and Welsh Language Annual Reports on Monitoring and Improvement. That related to Welsh Language must be published before the end of June each year. The report related to Equalities must be published once each financial year and so this report will serve the purpose of both sets of legislation.	These are progress reports based on data from the previous financial year and are published by the Council by the end of June each year on the website. It is a requirement that the reports are seen and approved by agreed internal governance processes before being published. Equalities and Welsh Language issues do generate debate.	Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)

	The report will go to Cabinet	This year's report is shorter than previous versions and covers 4 key areas.	
Welsh Language Standards Year Strategy (P3)	<p>This report should be seen by Scrutiny, prior to Cabinet and Full Council. Under Standard 145 of the new standards local authorities are required to:</p> <p><i>“produce, and publish on your website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how you propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in your area; and the strategy must include (amongst other matters) - (a) a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5 year period concerned, and (b) a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).”</i></p>	<p>The 5-Year Strategy will be drafted based on existing policies but in addition encompassing the requirements of the new Welsh Language Standards. The existing policies that would form part of the 5-Year Strategy are: Welsh medium education growth, current language commitments in the Strategic Equality Plan, Youth Service Plans, “More Than Just Words” for Social Services, and the local voluntary sector language profile.</p> <p>There will be a consultation process to gather agreement of the content of the strategy</p>	Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)

<p>HR Policies and Welsh Language Standards 99-119 *NEW*</p>	<p>A number of HR related standards require internal HR policies to reflect the legal right of staff to be able to have internal discussions and paperwork relating to their employment available in Welsh. This report should be seen by Scrutiny, prior to Cabinet and Full Council. There will need to be a change to a number of HR policies. It is envisaged that a single report may cover all changes.</p>	<p>A generic overarching approach will be adopted to revise all affected HR policies in the same way. The report will cover how this approach will allow the authority to meet its legal requirements in complying with the Welsh Language Standards. The affected policies and the cross matching to each relevant standard will be explained in the report</p>	<p>Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language) Head of Human Resources This report will be drafted as a Corporate Services report since it relates to HR issues</p>
<p>Caerphilly Local Assessment of Well-being. 1st draft assessment 2nd draft assessment (possible Members Portal item) Final assessment for Corporate Approval</p>	<p>CCBC Statutory Partner Role: The Caerphilly Public Service Board is required to produce a local assessment of the economic, social and cultural well-being of the authority which must be subject to Corporate approval by the statutory member before it can be adopted by the Public Service Board. The 1st Draft assessment will be completed by October 2016 and Scrutiny should have the opportunity to consider the content prior to final consultation</p>	<p>The Local Assessment of Well-being will consider the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the local authority area. The structure of the assessment will follow the 7 Well-being goals for Wales. In addition it is a requirement that the assessment examines the situation in 5 defined community areas as well as the authority as a whole. The PSB has determined that the 5 community areas will follow the 5 former community planning areas and hence the assessment document will consider each of these in turn as well as the future trends for the area.</p>	<p>Corporate Policy Manager Senior Policy Officer</p>

	<p>with the wider public and partners.</p> <p>The 2nd Draft assessment will be complete by December 2016 following consultation. The final assessment must be approved by Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council before it is formally adopted by the PSB. This should take place in January/February 2016.</p> <p>{ P & R will sit as the Partnership Scrutiny Committee over the same timescale and the assessment may form part of this work programme also }</p>		
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18TH MAY 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
<p>Corporate Plan</p> <p>Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, Drafft 2016/17 Cynllun Corfforaethol (Amcanion Lles)</p>	<p>The Councils Corporate Plan with its Well-Being Objectives for 2016-2017 sets out the Council priorities for the coming year together with the consultation results and the intended outcomes. The Council has a statutory duty (Local Government Measure 2009) to produce objectives and set out to the public what those objectives will be for the year ahead. The plan also details why those specific objectives were chosen and how they will be measured. The progress of the Corporate Plan will be monitored by Council Scrutiny committee's</p>	<p>Performance Management</p>

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15TH JUNE 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
<p>Tenant Participation Strategy</p> <p>Strategaeth Cyfranogiad Tenantiaid 2016 - 2019</p>	<p>This report outlines the Purpose of the new Strategy, its 4 Key Objectives, along with information on how it was developed. The strategy also refers to the development of an Action Plan to support the delivery of the strategic objectives over the next 3 years.</p>	<p>Housing</p>
<p>Housing Repairs - Review of Recharge Discount</p> <p>Trwsio Tai - Adolygiad o Ad-daliad Disgownt</p>	<p>The purpose of this report is to review the impact on income and recovery levels of the recent trial to offer tenants a 25% discount for prompt repayment of invoices for rechargeable repairs and end of tenancy works. This trial was introduced following the submission of a report to Cabinet on 18th March 2015 and members' are asked to consider the recommendation to withdraw the trial as cost benefits have not been realised</p>	<p>Housing</p>
<p>Regeneration and Planning Division Capital Allocation 2017/18</p> <p>Dyrannu Cyfalaf Is-adran Adfywio a Chynllunio 2016/17</p>	<p>Budget proposals 2016/17 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/21.</p>	<p>Engineering – Project Development Team</p>
<p>Provision of Additional Supported Temporary</p>	<p>To seek Cabinet approval for Housing to enter into a lease agreement for an additional fully supported temporary accommodation facility for</p>	<p>Housing</p>

APPENDIX 2

Accommodation Llys Tabernacle Darparu Llety Dros Dro â Chymorth Ychwanegol - Llys Tabernacl	homeless persons to reduce the use of B&B provision.	
Voluntary Sector Grants Capital Allocation 2016/17 Dyraniad Cyfalaf Grantiau Sector Gwirfoddol 2016/17	To seek approval of the Voluntary Sector Grants capital allocation for 2016/17.	Public Protection

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15TH JUNE 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
29TH JUNE 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
Cabinet Forward Work Programme	To seek Cabinet endorsement of the Forward Work Programme for the period April 2016 to June 2016.	Legal and Democratic Services
Governance Arrangements – SEW Education Achievement Service Trefniadau Llywodraethu Gwasanaeth cyflawni addysg de ddwyrain cymru	Update to current governance arrangements to reflect the new National Model of Regional Working for Education Consortia.	

APPENDIX 2

13TH JULY 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
Community and Leisure Services Division – Various Issues Relating to Fees for Specific Services	The report outlines a number of service areas where there are either new services to be offered that require fees to be set or where fee increases have not been implemented for a number of years such that the fee structure is no longer sustainable and/or is not recovering the full cost of the service. The report therefore seeks cabinet approval to introduce certain new fees and to increase or change the fee structure of others.	Community and Leisure Services
Winter Maintenance Plan	To seek endorsement of the council’s annual approach to Winter Maintenance	Engineering Services

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27TH JULY 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
Provisional Outturn for 2015/16	This report will provide Cabinet with details of the provisional revenue budget outturn for the 2015/16 financial year prior to the annual audit by the Authority’s External Auditors, Grant Thornton. The report will provide an overview of the Council’s financial performance and will set out the reasons for any significant variations against budget.	Corporate Finance
Reserves Strategy	Following a review of the Reserves Protocol, this report will seek Cabinet endorsement of a reserves strategy setting out details of the types of reserves held by the Authority, their purpose and the processes for authorising use of the reserves.	Corporate Finance
Financial Resilience Report		Corporate Finance

7TH SEPTEMBER 2016	Key Issues	Service Area

21ST SEPTEMBER 2016	Key Issues	Service Area

5TH OCTOBER 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
Highway Maintenance Plan	To seek endorsement of the Council's approach to maintaining its highway network	Engineering Services

19TH OCTOBER 2016	Key Issues	Service Area

2ND NOVEMBER 2016	Key Issues	Service Area

16TH NOVEMBER 2016	Key Issues	Service Area
Highway Asset Management Plan	To update on the current All Wales approach to Asset Management and seek endorsement for CCBC's development of its Highways Asset Management Plan	Engineering Services
Treasury Management – Review of MRP Policy	This report will set options for revising the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy to identify potential savings to support the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).	Corporate Finance

APPENDIX 2

Mid-Year Budget Monitoring (Whole Authority)	This report will provide details of projected whole- Authority revenue expenditure for 2016/17 along with details of any significant issues arising. The report will also update Cabinet on progress in delivering approved savings for the 2016/17 financial year.	Corporate Finance
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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 31ST MAY 2016

SUBJECT: YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CORPORATE SERVICES

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with a performance update for Corporate Services. This involves taking a look back over the last twelve months of our performance highlighting the exceptions and then looking forward i.e. future challenges, setting out our key objectives/priorities for the next twelve months, identifying areas for improvement.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 During 2015/16 there was evidence of excellent performance, but also an area of poorer performance. Members are reminded that it is important for officers to take an honest approach to this process to ensure areas that require improvement are identified and supported. 2016/17 will continue to be driven by the need to deliver better services with less resource.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Corporate Services provide direct and indirect support to all of the Corporate Priorities and Improvement Objectives.
- 3.2 The Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015 places a number of legal duties on public bodies in Wales to meet the legally binding 'common purpose' for 7 Strategy Well-Being goals. This report links into each goal as follows (this has been based on an incremental approach/view):-
- A sustainable Wales – delivering services in accordance with available resource. Reducing assets to a sustainable level. Maximising income collection to support service provision. Ensuring the most appropriate use of our third party spend to address sustainable alternative goods and material whilst developing and enhancing local supply chains.
 - A prosperous Wales – prompt processing of Council Tax and Housing Benefits, ability of residents to access key services and support either digitally or face to face via customer contacts. Effective use of third party spend to foster engagement of local supply chains which will facilitate regeneration opportunities in and around the borough. Effective use of appropriate Community benefits will support jobs and community engagement.
 - A Healthier Wales – no direct links to Corporate Services, although support is provided to those front line services that deliver this goal. Ensure where appropriate all contracts reflect requirements which contribute to the Healthy Wales agenda.

- A more equal Wales – ensuring all groups including vulnerable and hard to reach have access to the Authority. Procurement, Customer Services and IT play a key role.
- A Wales of cohesive communities –Corporate Services facilitates the delivery of this goal via front line services
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language – compliance with Welsh language standards raised as a challenge
- A globally responsible Wales – rationalisation of assets should reduce carbon footprint. Developing sustainable supply chains who are globally and socially responsible will assist with the over-arching principles.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 A summary is provided for each service area of Corporate Services below.

4.2 Corporate Finance

4.2.1 Overview

The services provided by Corporate Finance are essentially twofold. The Council Tax/Business Rates, Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction and Income Sections provide front-line services to the public. In addition to this, a range of support services are provided to every Directorate of the Council and these include Accountancy, Treasury Management, Payments, Insurance & Risk Management and Internal Audit.

Corporate Finance has 178 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff split - 81 FTE frontline and 97 FTE support services and some of these are based in the larger Council Directorates enabling the delivery of some financial services to be devolved.

4.2.2 What Went Well?

- a) The various teams within Corporate Finance continued to perform well during the 2015/16 financial year and all statutory targets were met. This has been achieved against a backdrop of downsizing many teams to address budget cuts.
- b) The various Corporate and seconded Accountancy Teams have played a pivotal role in supporting Heads of Service to identify and develop savings proposals to support the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This working relationship has been strengthened further during the last year due to the need to respond to the unprecedented cuts in funding.
- c) Effective financial planning and robust budget monitoring arrangements have helped the Authority to manage its financial affairs. We have continued the trend of delivering balanced budgets and identifying many savings in advance of need.
- d) The following table provides a summary of the key performance measures for Corporate Finance: -

Description	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Percentage of total Council Tax due for the financial year received by the Authority.	96.5%	96.4%	96.5%	96.7%	96.8%	97.0%
Percentage of total non-domestic rate (NNDR) due for the financial year received by CCBC.	96.6%	96.8%	97.0%	97.0%	97.2%	97.7%
Time taken in days to process housing benefit change events and new claims.	14	11.58	14	9.90	14	12.54
The number of housing benefit interventions completed per annum as a percentage of total caseload.	20%	20.12%	20%	19.46%	20%	21.77%
Sundry debtors collected within 3 months as a % of amounts due.	96%	98.6%	96%	98.2%	96%	97.7%
Percentage of undisputed invoices which were paid within 30 Days.	95%	93.26%	95%	95.5%	95%	94.01%
Average number of calendar days to make payment of undisputed Invoices to SME's.	13.00	14.26	13.00	12.2	13	13.93

- e) It is pleasing to report that 97% of all council tax bills issued for the 2015/16 financial year were collected in full, which is the highest amount achieved since Caerphilly CBC was formed in 1996. In each of the last 2 years the amount collected has increased by 0.3% and over a 3-year period collection rises to 99.5%, which means that the vast majority of residents do pay in full.
- f) During 2015/16 the Welsh Government commissioned KPMG (in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA)) to prepare a report on 'Administrative Costs in Welsh Local Authorities'. This review focussed on actual costs for the 2013/14 financial year and considered the full range of support services provided within Local Authorities. The report arising from the review generally reflected positively on Corporate Finance as demonstrated below: -

Description	CCBC	Wales Average
Cost of Finance per £1000 Gross Revenue Expenditure (GRE)	£8.17	£9.55
Cost per Invoice	£3.89	£3.53
Internal Audit – Cost per Chargeable Day	£258	£265
Housing Benefits – Cost per Weighted Case Load	£37.68	£45.57
Council Tax – Cost per Banded Dwelling	£12.00	£17.76

- g) The Society of Welsh Treasurers (SWT) is currently in the process of producing a new administrative costs benchmarking exercise through CIPFA which will focus on 2016/17 budgets and a report is expected by September 2016. It is anticipated that this will demonstrate the significant savings that Authorities have made since 2013/14 on “back-office” functions.
- h) During the 2015/16 financial year the Corporate Services Senior Management Team undertook an internal survey to determine satisfaction levels with the services provided by the Directorate of Corporate Services. There were 25 responses to the survey and the following results were revealed for the services provided by Corporate Finance: -
- 89% of those who have recently contacted Accountancy were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided.
 - 100% of those who have recently contacted Sundry Debtors & Cashiers were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided.
 - 94% of those who have recently contacted Internal Audit were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided.
- i) The audit and regulatory reports in relation to the services provided by Corporate Finance have generally been positive: -
- The annual external audit of the NNDR3 Return in 2015/16 was completed without any qualification or comment to the Welsh Government.
 - Following the external audit of the Authority’s 2014/15 financial statements, the auditors (PwC) included the following comments in their ISA260 Report to the Audit Committee: -

“We have no concerns about the qualitative aspects of your accounting practices and financial reporting. We found the information provided to be relevant, reliable, comparable, material and easy to understand. We concluded that accounting policies and estimates are appropriate and financial statement disclosures unbiased, fair and clear.”

“We have not encountered any significant difficulties during the audit to date. We received information in a timely and helpful manner and were not restricted in our work.”

“We did not identify any material weaknesses in your internal controls”
 - HMRC regard Caerphilly CBC as a low risk Authority and as a consequence they do not impose as rigorous an inspection regime on us as those Authorities regarded as a high risk.
 - Internal Audit reports on financial systems have not reported any major issues.
 - The Council’s Insurance Team now handle motor claims in-house dealing with in excess of 500 claims per annum with a value of circa £1.5m. Our claims handling processes were recently subject to an external review by Gallagher Bassett. This resulted in an exemplary rating with an overall assessment score of 97.7%, which is a significant achievement.

4.2.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- (a) The average time taken to process housing benefit change events and new claims was 10.96 days for 2015/16 (9.90 days in 2014/15). This dip in performance needs to be considered in the context of ongoing reductions in DWP funding and the significant IT downtime experienced during 2015/16 following the rollout of iGels. The IT systems used by the Benefits Section play a major part in performance so the Acting Director of

Corporate Services & Section 151 has recently agreed to replace circa 40 iGels with PCs.

- (b) One respondent to the internal survey undertaken by the Corporate Services Senior Management Team highlighted capital budget monitoring as an area that can be improved. The Interim Head of Corporate Finance and the Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer have acknowledged that this is an area that would benefit from a review and as such this has now been included as a priority in the Corporate Finance 2016/17 Service Plan.
- (c) The ongoing austerity programme will require additional savings to be delivered. It is anticipated that the Authority will need to find further total savings of around £25m for the period 2017/18 to 2020/21. There is a risk that this savings requirement may be higher due to emerging issues arising from the National Living Wage, the Apprenticeship Levy and changes to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) funding formula.
- (d) There will be significant demands on finance staff arising from the need to support Heads of Service and Service Managers to identify savings. This may present risks in relation to capacity and the need to ensure that core functions are still delivered and statutory deadlines are met.
- (e) Full implementation of Universal Credit could impact on customers' ability to pay Council Tax.
- (f) It is anticipated that the statutory deadline for the production of the Council's Draft Accounts will be reduced by one month to the 31st May from the 30th June. Furthermore, the statutory deadline for the completion of the external audit of the Authority's accounts will be reduced by two months to the 31st July from the 30th September. These changes have already been agreed in England and are currently being considered by the Welsh Government. If the changes are agreed for Wales they will be phased in from the 2018/19 financial year and will present significant challenges to maintain the quality and accuracy of the financial accounts. The Corporate Accountancy Team is being proactive in dealing with this potential change and is working closely with the external auditors (Grant Thornton) on a trial basis to aim to complete the audit of the 2015/16 accounts by the 31st July 2016. The auditor's report will then be presented to the Audit Committee and Council in September 2016. If this goes well we will aim to complete the audit of the 2016/17 accounts and secure Council approval of the accounts by the end of July 2017. We will then be meeting the revised statutory deadlines well in advance of them being formally implemented.
- (g) The introduction of the CIPFA Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the internal demands on the service will need to be carefully managed as we move forward. Client engagement will be crucial to ensure that priority areas are identified for review.
- (h) The ongoing austerity programme will continue to impact upon Corporate Finance in two ways. Finance Teams will need to identify their own further savings and will also need to support frontline services in meeting their savings targets. Finance staff will be called upon to assist in the review of services including supporting the Improving Services Programme.
- (i) The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act will introduce new legislation in respect of charging for social care. The Act will necessitate a move to new models of social care which will need to be supported by costed business cases and sound financial governance.
- (j) The Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015 will need to be incorporated into financial planning processes.

4.3 Communications, Health & Safety, Human Resources

4.3.1 Overview

Following changes to the Council's Leadership Team, Health and Safety and Human Resources are now managed by the same Head of Service and as a result of changes within IT, the Communications team is temporarily managed by the Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development. These changes have been welcomed and provide the opportunity for the three teams to support the Council with the change agenda. Staff are allocated as follows:-

Communications	14 FTE
Health & Safety	28 FTE
HR & Payroll	63 FTE

4.3.2 What Went Well?

(a) The KPMG Administrative Cost review, June 2015, included a cost and activity analysis of HR and Payroll. At the time the review was undertaken, HR within Caerphilly was the fourth highest in terms of cost of HR activity and cost of HR per employee of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales. However, should this exercise be undertaken again now, the cost would be considerably lower due to the number of posts taken out of the structure to balance the budget at the start of 2016/17 and also to achieve the MTFP savings targets. The Payroll expenditure per employee was lower than the Welsh average and also the Payroll expenditure per payslip was lower than the Welsh average.

(b) Performance Indicators are as follows:-

% of agency workers with over 2 years service (HRA) as at 31.03.16 **7.03**

% of agency workers with over 2 years service (non HRA) as at 31.03.16 **2.93**

Number of leavers in 2015/16 (non schools):

Early Retirement	13
Voluntary Severance	53
Compulsory Redundancy	16
(14 as a result of end of fixed term contract)	

% payments submitted on time to HMRC, Local Government Pension Scheme, Teachers Pension **100**

% RTI files submitted on time **100**

(c) Payroll was one of the 23 employers out of the 63 that the Greater Gwent administer Pensions for (32% of the membership), that provided the Pension Fund with the information that they required by the deadline of 30 April 2015, to reconcile the individual members records and prepare the Annual Benefit Statements. This was an excellent achievement from Payroll as the introduction of the new CARE scheme complicated requirements, but it meant that all CCBC members of the LGPS had an Annual Benefit Statement, unlike some other organisations.

(d) The Council is leading the way in Wales with its successful use of social media and other digital channels to engage and communicate with residents and other key stakeholders. The Communications team has played a strategic role in leading the Authority's public consultation and engagement agenda on major pieces of work including the MTFP consultation, Household Survey, Velothon consultation, etc.

- (e) A survey undertaken amongst Management Network and Members, to assess levels of satisfaction with the services provided to internal clients prior to Christmas 2015 and the services were rated as follows in terms of important and very important:

Communications	96%
Health and Safety	92%
Human Resources	79%
Payroll	88%

- (f) All Schools buy the Health and Safety, Payroll and Human Resources SLA's and we are looking at an SLA with Schools for the Communications team for the next financial year. In addition, 65 Primary Schools bought an additional SLA with Health and Safety, which was offered for the first time and feedback from the Schools that bought this additional SLA evidenced 99% overall satisfaction.
- (g) An SLA service was established with Cardiff City Council for the provision of Health and Safety Management support and advice services in 2016 following their approach to the Council. There are potential opportunities over the next 3 years to bring more money in to CCBC as a result of the SLA with Cardiff City Council, especially around training, Schools SLA Service, Fire Risk Assessments and possibly Occupational Health.

4.3.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- (a) Changes to legislation that impact on the business of each team.
- (b) Potential reputational risks to the Council from matters in the public domain as detailed in this document.
- (c) Prepare for the introduction of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the impact that will have on the three service areas.
- (d) Delivering the HR Strategy as this is a key outstanding action following the Review of Corporate Governance.
- (e) Downsizing the workforce in the light of reduced spend in a sensitive manageable way i.e. having fit for purpose policies.

4.4 Performance Management

4.4.1 Overview

Performance Management arrangements have continued to be strengthened across the council and those improvements have been recognised by WAO. In particular a process of self-evaluation has been further developed and has improved individual service planning. Challenge sessions led by the Interim Chief Executive and Cabinet Member for Performance Management, Property and Asset Management were undertaken to review the self-evaluation reports.

The council has continued the use of its Ffynnon data base to communicate performance across the authority. It is widely used at service level and for informing members of performance matters. The data base was initially fully financially supported by WG but that support has been withdrawn.

The Performance Management Unit (PMU) has naturally involved itself in the introduction of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and fully anticipates that the Act and the formation of the Public Service Board will have a significant impact on the future direction of its work.

The way the council communicates performance via statutory performance reports produced by the PMU for the public (Corporate Plan and Annual Performance Report) has been recognised in an independent survey to be amongst the best in Wales.

4.4.2 **What Went Well?**

- (a) Data quality has improved and compliance with all statutory improvement requirements such as publication of the council's Corporate Plan and the annual Performance Report completed within the appropriate time limits.
- (b) Internal training delivery responses are good.
- (c) Self-evaluation has been strengthened.
- (d) WAO has provided positive feedback on compliance. There have been no disqualifications on Performance indicators and the Auditor General's Annual Improvement Report (AIR) on the council was again positive, or at least as positive as these reports ever are.
- (e) The way the authority communicates performance (via the PMU) has been recognised in an independent survey commissioned by WG as being amongst the best in Wales.
- (f) Performance Management arrangements continue to be strengthened. For example Risk Management is higher in profile with key Corporate risks being reported to CMT/Cabinet and Audit Committee. The PMU has developed and published a Performance Timetable for the year to inform staff and other stakeholders of what is required and by when.
- (g) In a recent survey 84% of respondents rated the PMU as very important or important.
- (h) Ffynnon has been retained and is used extensively to communicate service performance to CMT/Cabinet and across services. Performance information is also provided regularly at Scrutiny, particular in relation to progress with Improvement Objectives. Ffynnon performance data is used in this report.
- (i) The Council has re-introduced Performance Management Scrutiny meetings.

4.4.3 **Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well**

- (a) There is a need to move from measuring compliance to supporting service improvement.
- (b) Prepare for the introduction of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the impact that will have on Performance Management and the Regulator's approach to monitoring/evaluation.
- (c) The introduction of the new Public Services Board and the unknown additional demands, if any, that may have on the PMU.

4.5 **Property Services**

4.5.1 **Overview**

Considerable progress has been made in the management of the council's Land and Building Estate since the development of the Council's Land and Building Strategy 2012. One of the key recommendations within that strategy was to introduce and develop a Corporate Landlord approach whereby responsibility for managing land and buildings was transferred from individual directorates to the corporate centre. This has enabled building users to focus upon service delivery by relieving them of building maintenance issues. Additionally the

centralisation of budgets has realised building condition improvements and cost savings due to economies of scale. Transfer across all building portfolios is not complete and is continuing.

Asset Management is at the forefront of the council's transformational changes. The closure of Pontllanfraith House and the alternative service provision arrangements that facilitated that closure has demonstrated that significant budget savings can be secured by challenging the way we work without reducing service provision.

Increasingly our schools are accessing Property Services' contract framework for building maintenance. A large proportion of Head Teachers are realising that working with Property Services and through the framework construction risks are greatly reduced and they are not exposing themselves to personal accountability by commissioning work independently.

4.5.2 What Went Well?

- (a) Corporate office rationalisation has gone extremely well. Pontllanfraith House was closed as planned in February 2016 realising a saving of £100k in 2015/16. A further £500k will be saved in 2016/17.
- (b) The site is currently being advertised for sale and the interest level is high.
- (c) Officers have successfully been relocated to Penallta/Tredomen and Tir-y-Berth.
- (d) Dyffryn House has been sold (subject to contract).
- (e) The value of Capital receipts from the disposal of land and buildings for 2015/16 is £883,710.
- (f) Property Services has produced a State of the Estate report which will be presented to Scrutiny in October. The report mirrors reports produced by central government and WG. Depending on how it is received the intention is that it will become an Annual Report.
- (g) Headline data from the report includes:
 - £4,099,637 capital receipts achieved from freehold disposal between 2011/16.
 - £2,280,770 NNDR savings achieved between 2011/16. Savings totalling £4,109,616 had been achieved prior to 2011. These savings include schools.
 - Carbon emissions reduced by 2,299 tonnes.
 - The useable net internal area of our key office accommodation (based on top three sites) has been reduced by 28.94%.
 - We now allocate an average of 6.65 sq.m. floor space to each workstation. The recommended workstation size to promote efficient space planning on office buildings is considered to be 6.5 sq.m. per workstation.
 - Office accommodation costs have reduced by 18.18% between 2014/15 and 2015/16.
 - The condition of our worst performing buildings (categories C+D) has improved by 61% from 2014/15 to 2015/16. This is partly due to improved survey information measurement.
- (h) Responsibility for the management of Statutory Testing and consequent remedial actions has been centralised to the Head of Property. The council has targeted a significant amount of outstanding remedial actions for electrical/legionella and gas and with the support of the Health and Safety (H&S) team brought the level of outstanding actions under control.

- (i) The centralised building Response Repairs team has established a supplier framework and processes circa 10,000 requests a year. It is comforting that this service is increasingly being used by our schools and offers them greater protection when dealing with Asbestos and other H&S issues as well as ensuring compliance with the new Construction, Design and Management (CDM) rules.

The following Reactive Maintenance KPI results were recorded for 2015/16:

- % of **Priority 1** requests responded to on time (within 2 hours) **95%** (1132/1192)
- % of **Priority 2** requests responded to on time (same day) **96%** (1589/1659)
- % of **Priority 3** requests responded to on time (within 24 hours) **94%** 4018/4268
- % of **Priority 4** requests responded to on time (within 5 working days) **94%** (742/792)
- Customer Service rated as good or excellent – 100%

- (j) Benchmarking:-

- The Building Consultancy compares its fee charges with others. Typically its fee average is 11.25% of Project Cost compared to a Private Provider at 12.15%. Additionally the build costs of the capital projects delivered by the Building Consultancy are compared to those delivered by other authorities. The build cost of the schools delivered in house is amongst the most economic in Wales.
- In terms of FM we have compared our salary costs with similar public services such as the Local Health Board (LHB) and found them to be very competitive. Similarly Asset Management has compared its salary base with the District Valuer's office and found it to be competitive.
- Property data is benchmarked across Wales via National KPIs. It is difficult to gain an overall comparison position but the improvements identified in paragraph 3 leaves the council well placed.

- (k) Property Services has worked with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to bring forward the Risca Flood Alleviation Scheme. Works commenced in September 2015 and are scheduled for completion by June 2016. The scheme is part funded by the Council and on completion will reduce the number of properties in Risca subject to flooding in an extreme event from 752 to 459, a difference of 293 properties. Additionally land previously blighted by potential flooding could become developable.

- (l) Phases 1-3 of the school development at Y Gwindy (formerly St Ilan) have been completed. The project was designed and project managed by the Building Consultancy and was completed on time and within the budget of £20m. This project is particularly interesting as it combines the architectural challenges of the refurbishment of an abandoned listed structure, refurbishment of a former 1980s teaching block and construction of new facilities and bringing them all together as a cohesive development.

4.5.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- (a) Bring forward land for disposal/regeneration as a result of the completed Risca Flood Alleviation Scheme. Property is currently working with NRW and their project designers, ARUP, on the preparation of individual site flood consequence assessments following completion of the flood protection works.
- (b) Maintain the momentum of the Statutory Maintenance improvements.
- (c) Complete the sales of Pontllanfraith House & Dyffryn House.
- (d) Continue with the Council's Asset Rationalisation programme.

- (e) Co-ordinate the development and agreement of a whole authority Asset Management Strategy as this is still an outstanding WAO proposal for Improvement.

4.6 **Procurement Services**

4.6.1 **Overview**

The function has 17.5 FTE officers, who provide a full range of services related to Strategic Procurement, eProcurement systems and support and Supplier Relationship Management. In 2015 the Service was awarded Welsh Governments Outstanding contribution award at the Welsh National Procurement Awards.

4.6.2 **What Went Well?**

- (a) Statistics, comparators and KPI's show that quantitatively the service has in the main improved performance year on year over the last 5 years.

Title	Actual
% of Local Suppliers Awarded Contracts – WPC 12 Area*	89.60
No. of Suppliers = 221 Local Suppliers Awarded Contracts to date (2015/16)	

*During 2015/16 221 local contractors were awarded contracts. This performance indicator only considered contracts awarded by Procurement therefore in order to achieve a more accurate reflection authority wide the KPI was amended during quarter 4 (15/16) During that period 89.60% of contracts awarded (all departments) were awarded to local contractors. The authority has agreed the definition of local as “suppliers within the region of the old Welsh Purchasing Consortium area”.

- (b) The latest Welsh Government Fitness Check (2014/15) describes the function as “mature, moving towards advanced”. This places the Authority as one of the top 5 performing procurement functions within Local Government in Wales.
- (c) The service can demonstrate good success in supporting the local economy through our work in developing local SME's.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
How much total spend is within The authority's definition of local	50%	54%	55%	56%

- (d) Provision of service has been maintained whilst meeting the challenges of the MTFP.
- (e) Officers are supporting the WG funded project team on the integrated health and social care collaborative commissioning programme.
- (f) Officers have been instrumental in supporting the work with the National Procurement Service.
- (g) The Authority has implemented key changes in the Public Procurement regulations (2015) such as dynamic purchasing system in transport services to ensure a more flexible approach to procurement are taken forward.
- (h) Implementation of the small lots exemption under the public procurement regulations to support local providers in delivery of the WHQS programme.

- (i) Implementation of strategic contracts such as the supply partner which provides flexibility in delivering the outcomes of the WHQS programme.
- (j) Procurement Officers continue to utilise the Caerphilly Community Benefits guide and actively consider initiatives linked to targeted recruitment & training and measure outcomes via the Welsh Government Community Benefits measurement tool for all suitable contracts in line with the WPPS. Some recent examples include WHQS Internal Works and the Construction of Islwyn High School.

Islwyn High School

Apprentice Starts/Completion 7

Work Experience 17

Trainees 2

WHQS Internal Works (Yr1) – Contract Services

FTE's 31

Apprentice Starts/Completion 4

Graduates 2

WHQS Internal Works (Yr1) – Keepmoat

FTE's 4

Apprentice Starts/Completion 6

Work Experience 1

Trainees 5

Graduates 2

4.6.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- (a) Further monitoring and recording of community benefit outcomes to ensure that they are deliverable are being recorded and that contractors/suppliers are delivering in accordance with the community benefit plan submitted at tender stage.
- (b) Continue to review our processes to ensure we improve and remove barriers to tendering. Recent engagement as part of the WHQS small lots programme has seen a number of local firms unable to bid for work or undertake the work once awarded contracts. The Authority need to support this area further.
- (c) Take forward electronic procurement to meet the needs of new legislation regarding electronic trading.
- (d) Understand the requirements of the Future Generations act and use the procurement function as a facilitator for change.

4.7 Corporate Customer Services

4.7.1 Overview

Corporate Customer Services are responsible for the 6 Customer Service Centres which deliver a range of services including DBS checks, assistance with Housing Benefit applications, and Payments; the Contact Centre which handles calls for a variety of service areas including Waste Management and Highways; the Blue Badge scheme; corporate reception services; and the corporate Switchboard.

4.7.2 What Went Well?

- (a) The service has performed well over the last year, with high levels of customer satisfaction, low cost per contact and very few complaints (800,000 contacts generated just 2 corporate complaints).
- (b) More than 275,000 visits were made to the Customer Service Centres during 2015, including 220,486 visits to make payments with a total value of £26.1 Million. This is

down from 290,782 received in 2011. Customer Satisfaction was high with 98% of customers satisfied with the service they received in Customer Service Centres. The changes to opening hours in October 2015 as part of MTFP were implemented with very few problems. Waiting times remained within target for almost all of 2015, but has shown a drop since the start of 2016 which reflects the change in service provision.

- (c) During 2015 4,971 Blue Badges were issued to residents. In a survey of customers all respondents said that they had been well treated during the process. The service has adapted to significant changes in legislation and WG Guidance with few problems and none of the adverse media coverage or criticism from AMs and MPs that other Welsh Local Authorities have received. The service is working closely with WG to improve the Blue Badge scheme across Wales and to implement further legislative changes.
- (d) During 2015 the Contact Centre answered 166,300 phone calls, replied to 35,000 e-mails from customers and forwarded 250,000 switchboard calls. Call answering performance remained within target values during every month of 2015 apart from September when the % of calls answered within 20 seconds dropped to 66.7% [Target=70%] and Unanswered calls rose to 5.3% [Target=5%]. This is due to long term sickness and maternity leave. Performance has dropped during 2016 again due to long term staff sickness issues with only 50% of calls being answered within 20 seconds during March. The attendance issues are currently being addressed in line with corporate policies.
- (e) Blackwood Customer Service Centre has moved into the Blackwood Library, the new Customer Service Strategy has been approved and the service has worked very closely with colleagues in IT to develop a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- (f) Customer Services PIs as follows:-

Title	Actual	Target
% Calls unanswered – year to date (YTD)	5.07	5.00
Average Waiting time at Customer First Centres (minutes) YTD	5.30	10.00
Average Speed of Answer in the Contact Centre (seconds) YTD	4.67	20.00
% of Contact Centre Calls answered within 20 seconds YTD	70.23	70.00

4.7.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- (a) The service needs to prepare for new ways of working which will include a degree of channel shift to meet the needs of the customer whilst supporting those with different needs.
- (b) Need to improve sickness levels which are high within the service and this area needs to be monitored and challenged to ensure compliance with the corporate sickness policy.
- (c) A number of internal procedures will need review this year as a result of internal failings. The service needs to have a modern look and feel with a high level of flexibility therefore new ways of working will be reviewed as part of the business improvement programme.

4.8 Legal Services

4.8.1 Overview

The service area can be split into three distinct service areas, Electoral services who are responsible for running and managing all elections and referenda in the Borough, in addition they are also responsible for ensuring that residents are registered to vote. Democratic Services have the responsibility for all duties associated with supporting the Council's democratic process including the scrutiny function. They provide advice and support to senior officers and all elected members. Legal Services provide a comprehensive legal service to the Council taking instructions from its client departments. The service is split into three small teams, corporate and governance advice (including corporate complaints), welfare and litigation and planning, land and highways. The area is headed up by the Interim Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer. In total there are 37 FTE's employed within the combined service areas.

4.8.2 What Went Well?

In relation to the Corporate Services survey mentioned earlier in the Report :-

- 84% of those who have recently contacted Democratic Services were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided.
- 90% of those who have recently contacted Legal Services were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided.

This table includes a small sample of the PIs for the service area on the whole all PIs were maintained or exceeded despite the fact that there have been several staff shortages caused by a delay in filling vacant posts (i.e. recruitment timelines).

Period	Title	Actual	Target	Intervention
Mar 16	% Completions where the client is informed within five days for the whole of the department	93	93	85
Feb 16 (no events in Mar 16)	% of members that scored training events as good or very good	100%	80	60

- (a) Despite staff shortages in key areas, staff worked well to cover gaps. On the whole PI's were maintained or exceeded. New and interim appointments have been successful and staff settled – now almost back to capacity.
- (b) Implementation of new training programme for Senior Members – very well received – programme submitted to WLGA Good Practice and Innovation Award.
- (c) It has been a busy time for Electoral Services, so far 5 by-elections and the recent Assembly and PCC Elections with the EU Referendum to come. Lessons learnt from last year include:- staff from across the service area assisting with elections, in order to address the capacity of the very small team.
- (d) Support of the scrutiny function by involving staff from Legal Services. In addition the physical move of Democratic Services has helped to build relationships and develop team working.
- (e) An excellent result was achieved in respect of a major civil litigation claim (settlement achieved via adjudication process).

- (f) The Lexcel Inspection for legal services was successful and accreditation maintained. The inspection recognised several areas of good practice.

4.8.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- (a) Implementation of Scrutiny Review, Action Plan ongoing to ensure that this is a success.
- (b) Additional work as a result of Welsh Language Standards.
- (c) Ever increasing numbers of child care cases. On analysis there is no apparent reason for this, the situation will remain under review.
- (d) There have been a number of difficult Non-Accidental Injury Cases received over the last year.

4.9 IT & Central Services

4.9.1 Overview

IT and Central Services provides a complex range of services underpinning the Authority's and its schools' information and communications technology (ICT) requirements plus other essential services including the management of information governance matters (incorporating advice and guidance regarding the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts), corporate records centres, mail and courier services and the central typing function.

The Division has 94.98 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff based over three sites (Penallta, Tredomen and Enterprise Houses). Staff are allocated as follows:- 81.7 FTE in IT and 13.28 FTE in Central Services. An additional 9 FTE staff are funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dedicated to providing IT and performance management services to Housing Services and the WHQS Programme and are based over two sites (Penallta and Cherry Tree Houses).

4.9.2 What Went Well?

- (a) Despite resource reductions at both operational and managerial levels many significant achievements have been completed during the year as shown by the examples below. However, it is accepted that some aspects of the service have been below par due to the necessary diversion of resources to deliver mandatory technological changes and the organisation's business requirements, particularly IT support to the WHQS programme.
- (b) In the main key PIs showed good performance, except for system availability issues.

	Actual	Target	2014/15 Result
IT Network & System Availability* ¹	99.71%	99.70%	99.44%
Call Resolution (IT Helpdesk) * ²	90.67%	92.00%	91.49%
Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests answered within 40 calendar days* ³	64.00%	70.00%	79.78%
FOI/EIR Act requests responded to within 20 working days* ⁴	85.00%	80.00%	77.79%

(c) Members should note:-

*1 – Figures based upon availability of all major network connections and significant systems. KPIs to be separated in 2016/17 to give more accurate view of service.

*2 – Results below target for past two years where significant technical change has been implemented. This period has seen a 31.11% increase in total calls logged annually causing this dip in performance.

*3 – Results below target. This has been due to a significant influx of complex requests in Q4 (63% increase on Q3).

*4 – Targets exceeded for the first time following revision of business processes.

(d) In addition to the above the following went well during 2015/16:-

- IT Service met its MTFP targets.
- IT had a critical involvement in the asset rationalisation programme associated with the closure of Pontllanfraith House.
- Replacement of unsupported technologies affecting approximately 4,000 desktop computers and 450 servers.
- Upgrade of MS Office to consistent version for all customers.
- Upgrade of the email system infrastructure which serves approximately 4,500 mailboxes.
- IT updated its ISO27001 Information Security Management accreditation to the new standard.
- IT maintained its Public Services Network (PSN) Connection Compliance Certificate to assure access to and secure communication with the rest of the public sector.
- Corporate Information Governance Unit (CIGU) FOI request response compliance has improved and now exceeds national targets.
- Staffing resource reduction in Central Services (CIGU, Mailroom and Typing Services) realised with business as usual.

4.9.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- (a) Improve reliability and performance of services offered, particularly system availability and performance as this did not go well during 2015/16.
- (b) Continue to need to meet requirements of MTFP / Business Improvement Portfolio savings targets.
- (c) Respond to the Shared Resource Services (SRS) collaboration option, this will involve consultation, including Members.
- (d) Maintain IT security and information governance standards.
- (e) Benchmark service against other Welsh LAs.
- (f) Seek further income generation opportunities.

4.10 Sickness Absence in 2015/16 for Corporate Services

The following table shows sickness levels for 2015/16:-

Directorate	Service Area	% Sick Short Term	% Sick Long Term	Overall Absence %
	Corporate Finance	1.63	2.17	3.80
	Human Resources	1.20	1.67	2.86
	Information & Citizen Engagement	1.84	2.81	4.65
	Legal & Governance	0.83	2.28	3.11
	Performance & Property	1.66	2.42	4.08
	Procurement Services	2.09	3.17	5.26
	Director & Staff	0	0	0

Corporate Services		1.60	2.38	3.98
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5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required as the report is for information.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications to this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications to this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultations that have not been included in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The Committee is asked to consider the content of the report and where appropriate question and challenge the performance presented.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Performance Management Scrutiny affords members the opportunity to challenge, inform and shape the future performance of the services that are presenting their priorities for 2016/17.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Measure 2009.

Author: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & Section 151 Officer
 Consultees: Cllr B Jones, Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
 Cllr C Forehead, Cabinet Member for HR & Governance/Business Manager
 Cllr D Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Performance & Asset Management
 R Roberts, Performance Manager, Corporate Services
 Steve Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance
 Colin Jones, Head of Performance & Property
 Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
 Liz Lucas, Head of Procurement & Customer Services
 Paul Lewis, Interim Head of ICT
 Lynne Donovan, Interim Head of HR and OD

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 31ST MAY 2016

**SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE IO5 – INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOMES
TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND COMMUNITIES**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update progress against Improvement Objective (IO5) - Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities for the 2015/16 financial year.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 During the course of 2015/16 1415 properties have benefitted from internal improvements against a target of 1835, a performance of 77%. Eight external works contracts have reached practical completion relating to 203 properties in Markham, Argoed, Oakdale and Hengoed. This is well below the target of 1520. However there is significant pipeline of external works on the ground, at contract award stage or being tendered. The estimated out turn capital expenditure is circa £25m (the actual figure will be confirmed when the accounts are closed in May 2016).
- 2.2 Note the targets of 1835 (internals) and 1520 (externals) were agreed in year as a result of reprofiling the programme and are lower than the original targets that were set prior to the start of the 2015/16 financial year.
- 2.3 For 2015/16 the objective has been assessed as partially successful.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards. The Welsh Government requires that the standard is achieved by 2020.
- 3.2 The Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017 has a priority to “Improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the County Borough”.
- 3.3 The Council’s Local Housing Strategy “People, Property and Places” has the following aim:- “To provide good quality, well managed houses in communities where people want to live and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations”.
- 3.4 *The WHQS Programme contributes to the Council’s anti poverty strategy launched in June 2015.*

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The last report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny committee on I05 in November 2015 explained that the WHQS Programme was subject to reprofiling resulting in some community sequence changes. The reprofiling was presented to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group in December 2015 and approved by Cabinet in February 2016. This resulted in changes to the targets for internal and external work for 2015/16.
- 4.2 Internal works completions for 2015/16 are 1415 against a target of 1835, a performance of 77%. An additional 93 voids have been brought to WHQS (internally) by Housing Repair Operations (HRO). The slippage is due to a number of reasons including no access to properties, contractors' under performance, capacity within the WHQS to provide complete contract packages with adequate lead in periods, delays with external asbestos surveys, backlog of OT intervention plans. During the year there has been concerted effort to improve the position on a number of fronts. However the no access is a growing problem which represents around 40% of the slippage.
- 4.3 The no access properties will be removed from the year end slippage so they do not distort the carried forward properties where works can be undertaken. The carried forward properties into the 2016/17 financial year represent around 8 to 10 weeks work across all the internal works contract arrangements.
- 4.4 Whilst the slippage situation needs to be minimised it is unlikely to be completely eradicated as there will always be issues affecting individual properties and as far as practical consideration is given to tenants when work is being planned. For example, with Easter falling at the end of the financial year a number of properties were postponed due to tenants not wanting work going on in their homes during the Easter period.
- 4.5 Based on the performance levels achieved during 2015/16 there is sufficient flexibility to complete the internal works programme by March 2020.
- 4.6 Eight external works contracts have been completed during the 15/16 year. Seven of these are small lots contracts in the Eastern Valleys and the other is the Unity bungalows in Hengoed. Although the external works programme has suffered a number of setbacks there is a significant volume of work in the pipeline. Delays were caused during 2015/16 as a consequence of decisions taken by the Project Board to review the external works specification due to concerns about escalating costs. This resulted in a number of areas having to be re-surveyed. It has also been necessary to respond to survey findings which in many cases are resulting in an increased amount of work beyond that anticipated based on the original Savills stock condition survey. In particular the prevalence of damp and mould is an increasing problem.
- 4.7 The HRA garage programme is being managed by Building Consultancy and a provisional timetable has been issued to complete all the remaining work by April 2017.
- 4.8 There are two major gaps in the current contract arrangements. These relate to the external works in the LRV (including the Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest estates, following a review of the small lots in the EV) and the sheltered housing schemes (internal and external works). Decisions have recently been taken on how these aspects of the programme will be taken forward.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required as the report is for information.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Capital Programme for 2015/16 is £36.2m. It is projected that the out turn capital expenditure will be circa £25m (to be confirmed when the accounts are closed) resulting in an underspend of £11m. The underspend will be utilised to fund the future years programme.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The volume of work and maintaining the pace is placing the WHQS team under pressure. A review of the senior management within Caerphilly Homes has been initiated and this is likely to lead to further reviews of the delivery arrangements. Fundamentally there has to be the capacity to cope with the volume of work. Staff movement and recruitment will be a continuing risk to the delivery of the programme.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Comments have been incorporated in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report and to agree or challenge the judgement of partially successful at the full year stage.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To advise Members of the progress made in 2015/16 in meeting the improvement objective and to gain agreement on the judgement of the service as to progress made to date.

11 STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Measures 2009.

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Consultees:	Cllr Dave V Poole	-	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing
	Cllr David Hardacre	-	Cabinet Member for Performance & Asset Management
	Christina HARRY	-	Corporate Director – Communities
	Nicole Scammell	-	Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
	Clive Davies	-	Chair Caerphilly Homes Task Group
	Cllr Elaine Forehead	-	Vice Chair Caerphilly Homes Task Group
	Shaun Couzens	-	Chief Housing Officer
	Marcus Lloyd	-	Deputy Head of Programmes
	Ros Roberts	-	Performance Manager
	Ian Raymond	-	Performance Management Officer

Appendix 1: Improvement Objective Scorecard

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Improvement Objectives

APPENDIX 1

IO5 - Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities

Outcomes:

The Welsh Government and this Council believe that everyone in Wales should have the opportunity to live in a good quality home within a safe and secure community. To help achieve this, the physical standard and condition of existing housing must be maintained and improved to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). The standard is seven main parts:

- In a good state of repair
- Safe and secure
- Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated
- Contain up-to-date kitchens and bathrooms
- Well managed (for rented housing)
- Are located in attractive and safe environments
- Meet and suit the specific requirements of the household (as far as reasonable and practicably possible). For example, catering for specific disabilities.

We will aim to ensure all council homes meet the WHQS, helping to improve the quality of life for people who live in those homes. The programme of work will create long-term arrangements, which will help sustain local jobs, offer skills development and training opportunities, and deliver wider community benefits.

By 2020, we want our communities to know:

- We delivered the best quality home improvements scheme to our tenants
- We did it with them and not to them
- Their homes created real jobs in our communities
- We delivered the whole project on time and in budget

These ambitions can only be achieved with the entire Council and tenants and other key stakeholders working together and we are confident that with their support this Programme will transform council homes, the lives of our citizens and our communities.

Improvement Objectives

IO5 - Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities

- **2015-16 – Out turn Summary**

We assessed this objective and judged it to be partially successful for the year 2015/16 because:

What have we done well over the last 6 months?

There has been progress with the internal works contracts since April 2015, achieving 77% of the target. Maintaining continuity of work for all internal works contracts has been difficult due to delays with asbestos surveys, a backlog of OT referrals, and the timescales of meter moves. All these factors have been addressed and there is an improving situation. The number of no access properties constitutes 40% of the slippage.

With the exception of rewires (where access will be enforced on safety grounds) on the third attempt to gain access the tenant will be advised that no response will be taken that improvement works are declined and the property will be recorded in the database as an acceptable fail on the basis of tenants choice.








The programme of external works in the Eastern Valleys (small lots) has run on from the 14/15 financial year causing knock on delays for this year's work programme. Seven small lots contracts have been completed in Markham, Argoed and Oakdale, together with 14 Unity bungalows in Hengoed. There is a significant amount of work on the ground both in the Upper Rhymney Valley and Eastern Valley. Most of the 15/16 contracts are expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

What areas do we need to improve on, and how are we going to do it?

The reprofiled programme approved by Cabinet in February 2016 will underpin the capital programme for 2016/17. Lead times are improving for surveying which will enable contract packages to be prepared further in advance. This will enable better advance planning for the work stage. Although the external works programme has suffered a number of set backs there is a significant volume of works in the pipeline. New contract arrangements will be procured for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley, for works to the sheltered housing schemes where required and to provide contingency arrangements for anywhere in the County Borough. Additional resources will be recruited to manage the number of contracts on the ground.

IO5 - Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities

Actions

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	% Complete
1. Secure the appointment of critical front line staff (e.g. Surveyors, Clerk of Works, Tenant Liaison Officers)	Full complement reached but now facing new staff turnover. Contractors also facing similar issues of turnover which is a reflection of the current buoyant construction industry.		Complete	100
2. The continued delivery of the capital investment programme in respect of internal and external repairs and improvements	Implementation of the 15/16 Capital Programme expenditure estimated at £25m against a budget of £36.2m. £11m carried forward to fund future year.		In Progress	70
3. The continued pursuit of external funding opportunities to support energy improvement measures	Contract awarded for EWI in Gelligaer and Pontllynn. Commenced May 2016. ECO grant funding circa 25%. ECO grant funding has become more restrictive due to changing Government policy.		In Progress	50
4. The understanding and importance of carrying out timely and sensitive adaptations that meet specific needs of certain individual households	Backlog largely eliminated. Adaptations are a response to identified need and will therefore vary between properties.		Complete	100
5. Adhere to the standards set out in the Charter for Trust. This applies to both the in house workforce and contractors	Continuity of work packages for contractors improving, which will benefit programming of work and limit the opportunity for contractors to avoid obligations under the Charter for Trust.		In Progress	75
6. Achieve and maintain the high levels of tenant satisfaction with the work undertaken to their homes	Overall satisfaction generally remains high but there have been particular problems in one area due to under resourcing by the contractor. Limits have been placed on the number of properties the contractor has open at any time.		In Progress	100
7. The promotion, uptake and success of bids submitted to the Community Improvement Fund, enabling community projects to add further benefits to communities across the County Borough	The number of applications remains very low. The Community Improvement fund has been the subject of a review and Cabinet decision on 30th March 2016. The remaining financial commitment will be amalgamated within the main WHQS Environmental Programme budget.		Not Met	0

IO5 - Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities

How much did we do?

Title	Actual	Target	Intervention	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago	Comment
Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their internal elements	1415.00	1835.00	1332.00	↑	471	Re-profiling of WHQS Programme approved by Cabinet on 3rd February 2016, agreed to change the 15/16 annual target from 2242 down to 1835. This is an annual target. The result reported is year to date so far.
Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their external elements	203.00	1520.00	1400.00	↓	103	This is an annual target determined by the high level community based programme approved by Cabinet in February 2016. Concerns about escalating costs led to review of the work specification resulting in the need for re-surveys. This set back the 15/16 programme.
Number of homes brought to WHQS as recorded on annual return to Welsh Government (The number of houses that have achieved WHQS standard in the year)		909.00	809.00		123	This figure is reported annually in August

How well did we do it?

Title	Actual	Target	Intervention	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago	Comment
Internal work (all 4 components) completed within 20 days of start of works		90.00	80.00		Data not avail due to data collection system failure	This KPI can be measured with Keystone but is dependent on programme information being input (target start and completion dates for all properties). Due to current continuity issues there is insufficient lead time to enable this to happen at present. As contract packages are provided further in advance it will be possible to request target dates for individual properties from contractors. This will be compared with actual time taken to measure whether target timescales are being met.
Charter for Trust Standards - The Charter for Trust developed in consultation with tenants and staff sets out the standards that tenants can expect when work is being undertaken in their homes, which will be assessed by specific questions on the customer satisfaction survey	83.00	90.00	85.00	↓	93	Currently below target largely as a result of poor performance by one contractor which has been addressed.

IO5 - Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities**Is anyone better off?**

Title	Actual	Target	Intervention	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago	Comment
Number of tenants whose homes have been adapted as part of the WHQS works to meet their specific needs	105.00				233	Unable to set forward targets. This is dependent on the needs identified when delivering WHQS programme, therefore we are unable to set targets for this. Adaptations will vary between properties and could be as simple as a grab rail or involve extensive works such as a wet room or RNIB kitchen.
% of tenants whose homes have been improved internally through the WHQS programme are satisfied with the completed works (The percentage of tenants whose house meets the WHQS standard that are satisfied)	84.00	80.00	72.00	↓	90	Overall satisfaction has fallen although still above target. The poor performance of one contractor was largely responsible for the reduction.

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