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**Date: 8th April 2015**

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, 14th April, 2015** 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 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.	
To approve and sign the following minutes: -	
3 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd March 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 13).	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 To receive and consider the following Cabinet Reports\*: -
1. Land At Hendredenny, Caerphilly – 18th March 2015;
  2. Former Caerphilly Library, Morgan Jones Park - 18th March 2015;
  3. Response Repairs Policy - 18th March 2015;
  4. Rechargeable Repairs Policy - 18th March 2015;
  5. Joint Supplies Service – Constitution Amendment – 1st April 2015;
  6. Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 1st April 2015.

*\*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 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 13th April 2015.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports:-

- |    |  |          |
|----|--|----------|
| 7  | "Caerphilly Delivers" - The Caerphilly Local Service Board Single Integrated Plan.     | 9 - 40   |
| 8  | National Procurement Service (NPS) for Wales Progress Report.                          | 41 - 46  |
| 9  | Improvement Objective: Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities. | 47 - 56  |
| 10 | WHQS and Sheltered Housing Complexes.  | 57 - 64  |
| 11 | Draft Shared Parental Leave Policy.  | 65 - 92  |
| 12 | Update on Reserves.  | 93 - 100 |
| 13 | To record any requests for an item to be included on the next available agenda.        |          |

To receive and note the following information items\*:-

- |    |  |           |
|----|--|-----------|
| 14 | HRA Garages Update.  | 101 - 106 |
| 15 | Discretionary Rate Relief Applications.                      | 107 - 112 |
| 16 | Information Governance 2014.                                 | 113 - 130 |
| 17 | Caerphilly Local Service Board Minutes - 19th November 2014. | 131 - 140 |
| 18 | Caerphilly Homes Task Group Minutes - 19th February 2015.    |           |

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19 Pensions/Compensation Committee Minutes - 17th March 2015.

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*\*If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above information items to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Rebecca Barrett, 01443 864245, by 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 13th April 2015.*

**Circulation:**

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

And Appropriate Officers

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## POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 3RD MARCH 2015 AT 5.50 PM

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PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

L. Binding, C.J. Cuss, Miss E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, C. Hawker, G. Kirby, A. Lewis,  
C.P. Mann, D. Rees, R. Saralis, J. Taylor

Cabinet Members:

Mrs C. Forehead (Cabinet Member for HR and Governance/Business Manager),  
D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), Mrs B. Jones (Corporate Services),  
G. Jones (Housing)

Together with:

N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer), G. Williams  
(Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer),  
C. Singler (Allocations Officer), K. Williams (Private Sector Housing Manager), P. Smythe  
(Housing Repair Operation Manager), Fiona Wilkins (Public Sector Housing Manager),  
C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services  
Officer)

#### 1. WELCOME - MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Chair welcomed Mrs Diane Holroyd (Chair of the Standards Committee) to the meeting. Mrs D. Holroyd and Community Councillor Mrs G. Davies were present to observe the debate in respect of the Complaint made to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (Case number 201301753), which had been referred to this Scrutiny Committee by the Standards Committee.

#### 2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D.M. Gray, Ms J.G. Jones and Mrs J. Summers.

#### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

**4. MINUTES - 20TH JANUARY 2015**

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 20th January 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 20).

**5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE**

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

**6. CABINET REPORTS**

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

**7. REPORTS OF THE CABINET MEMBERS**

The Scrutiny Committee received reports from Cabinet Members G. Jones and Mrs B. Jones.

Councillor Mrs B. Jones referred to the budget that was approved at the Special Meeting of Council last week and advised that Caerphilly is in a strong position compared to many other local authorities, thanks to the ongoing prudent approach and effective budget management. A key part of the budget-setting process was ensuring that residents had the opportunity to have their say and help shape services and extensive consultation and engagement has been undertaken. She advised that attention will now be shifting to the 2016/17 budget and, although there are considerable challenges ahead, it is intended to remain focused on the goal of protecting services and jobs wherever possible.

The Cabinet Member was pleased to announce that the new website has been ranked as one of the best amongst all the Unitary Authorities in Wales. The Corporate Information Governance Unit has successfully managed a European Social Fund project on behalf of the Local Service Board to improve the sharing of personal information across the council, health, police and third sectors. The Head of Procurement, Liz Lucas, had been awarded a prestigious achievement award and been made a fellow of the Procurement Society and the Procurement Team were nominated for a national award and obtained "Highly Commended Winner" in the category "Go Small Business/Third Sector Initiative of the Year". She wished to place on record her special thanks to Natasha Ford for all her hard work in preparing the nomination. This was reiterated by those present. The Procurement Team have also been short listed in three categories for Welsh Procurement Awards.

Councillor G. Jones advised that the formal consultation process for the Common Allocations Policy ended on the 23rd February 2015, and all comments received will be considered in drafting the final version of the policy. Initial indications however suggest that the introduction of the Common Housing Register and Allocations Policy will be delayed in order to follow a compliant procurement process for a new I.T. system to support this initiative.

He then referred to a previous report that was submitted in relation to damp and condensation problems which was affecting a proportion of the housing stock and advised that a damp/condensation leaflet and an animated video are being developed, which will be made available via the Internet and social media. When finalised, Members will be advised and it will be promoted for tenants and residents.

With regards to affordable housing, Councillor G. Jones referred to the opening of the housing development on the old Aberbargoed hospital site and was pleased to announce that all of the properties (six one-bedroom flats, eight two-bedroom and nine three-bedroom houses) were occupied within two weeks of the scheme being completed. In relation to the smaller properties programme, Caerphilly has been successful in obtaining £1.5m of funding from the Welsh Government to support the smaller properties programme to provide much needed additional accommodation for those affected by the so called "bedroom tax". Schemes to utilise this funding have already been developed and are in the process of being progressed.

Councillor G. Jones then advised that with regards to the WHQS programme, the internal works programme is increasing in output with the number of property completions doubling in February to 96 completions from 46 in January. Due to pressure on the programme, various measures are being undertaken, including the Rixonway kitchen design pilot which is intended to increase surveying productivity. A review of the contract structure has identified the need for some additional requirements to support the in-house work force and particularly to address the external works programme in the Lower Rhymney Valley.

In closing, he made reference to the appointment of Fiona Wilkins to the position of Public Sector Housing Manager and, as she was present, Members congratulated her on her appointment. Reference was also made to the recent appointment of Marcus Lloyd as Deputy Head of Programmes.

Members were pleased to note that the internal works programme has doubled its output and that a report will shortly be presented to consider a sub programme for the sheltered housing complexes. They also wished to congratulate both Procurement and IT Services on their achievements.

A number of queries were raised on the Cabinet Members reports including the WHQS spend profile against target, citizens engagement, the profile of those occupying the Aberbargoed development, the role of apprentices in the WHQS programme (subject to ongoing discussion) and the external works programme reports. With regards to the latter, it was requested that Members are advised of the external works that are to be undertaken in their wards. It was explained that details of ongoing contracts are sent to each Member but in that following the survey there are different specification requirements for each property, it would be difficult to provide such detailed information. Reference was also made to the slippage of the programme and the revised timeline. Councillor G. Jones advised that details had previously been presented to both the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and this Committee.

Members thanked the Cabinet Members for their informative report and for responding to the queries raised.

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following reports.

### **8. COMPLAINT MADE TO THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES - CASE NUMBER 201301753**

Consideration was given to the report of the Monitoring Officer with that of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales regarding a maladministration complaint made against Caerphilly County Borough Council, which had been considered by the Standards Committee on 24th November 2014 and subsequently referred to this Committee. The Ombudsman made several recommendations which the Housing Department have accepted and agreed to implement.

The Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer advised that the Standards Committee are able to determine whether the matter should be referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. The grounds for referral are 'where, in the opinion of the Standards Committee there has been a serious failure in service delivery that would benefit from further consideration by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee'. Notwithstanding the foregoing, and in that Officers had attended the meeting of the Standards Committee to detail the progress that has been made to date, in that several of the recommendations refer to implementation within two/three months from the receipt of the report, the Committee determined that it would be beneficial for Members to monitor progress at the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

It was noted that since the presentation of the report to Standards Committee, all of the recommendations of the Ombudsman have been complied with. An assurance was sought that with regards to recommendation (f) as it relates to training, that appropriate training will be given to the relevant Housing staff. The Private Sector Housing Manager referred to the Housing Wales Act and changes to the homelessness agenda and confirmed that Housing staff, including allocation staff, continue to be trained on the circumstances when the Council's homelessness duties may be triggered and the steps that should be taken. Documentation is being reviewed to ensure that it supports the early recognition of when the Council's homelessness duties may be triggered and thus engaged.

During the course of the debate, a query was also raised on the housing allocation policy and specifically if applicants are made aware when changes are made to their standing. It was noted that a new framework is being introduced to assist the transition from a points to banding system and amendments are being made to the storage of data. It is intended that a letter will be generated for the applicant when any changes are made.

It was suggested that the report should be referred to the Audit Committee in order that the implementation of the recommendations can be monitored and, if required, recommendations be brought back to this Committee. It was noted that the protocol for the referral of reports from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales from the Standards Committee to the relevant subject scrutiny has been agreed by Council and the terms of reference of the Standards Committee and the Constitution amended accordingly. As such there would be a requirement to change both to enable the report to be presented to either the relevant subject scrutiny or Audit Committee in order that progress on any recommendations can be monitored.

It was unanimously agreed that the necessary changes be made to both the terms of reference of the Standards Committee and the Constitution to enable the report to be referred to either the relevant subject scrutiny or Audit Committee, and in the meantime the report be presented to the next meeting of the Audit Committee. Members were reminded that this would require a report to full Council.

## **9. RESPONSE REPAIRS POLICY**

The report, which was considered and endorsed by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 11th December 2014, detailed the proposed implementation of a Response Repairs Policy for all Council properties. Response repairs are defined in the policy as repairs that are required by tenants to existing elements of their property and tenants need to be aware of the arrangements the Council has in place for providing this service.

It was explained that the former 2004 policy was more of a staff training and procedure manual, which included a policy statement and was not intended to provide information for tenants, and as such was not made available on the Council's Internet site. It is intended that the revised policy will be published on the Housing website and will be supported by detailed internal procedures and practices applied uniformly across the Housing service. It will be revised every three years unless there is an earlier change in legislation and will be supported by detailed internal procedures.



The Response Repairs Policy highlights the activities and responsibilities involved in delivering a response repairs service to all Council properties by the in-house Housing Repair Operations team. The report also highlights its commitment to providing an effective and responsive housing repairs and maintenance service in order to ensure high levels of tenant satisfaction along with protecting the value of its housing stock.

Members were advised that the Council, as Landlord, has an obligation to keep its housing stock in a good state of repair and the principles that have been included within the Response Repair Policy document in order to promote the understanding of the Council's legal responsibilities and mutual obligation in relation to response repairs were noted.

During the course of the debate, reference was made to paragraph 3.2.6 of the Policy as it related to landlords lighting and as to how this is monitored in communal areas. The Chief Housing Officer advised that there is a requirement that lighting in communal areas is checked on a weekly basis and those that are reported are dealt with. He indicated that he would investigate the specific query raised by the Member.

Having fully considered the report and the recommendation contained therein, and in taking into account proposals within the rechargeable repair policy, it was moved and seconded that it be recommended to Cabinet that the introduction of a Response Repairs Policy be supported. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the recommendation of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group to support the introduction of a Response Repairs Policy be endorsed.

## **10. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report which detailed proposals to implement a Housing Services Rechargeable Repairs Policy for Council tenants, former Council tenants, owner-occupiers and leaseholders. It was noted that this policy is intended to complement the Recharge Procedure which has been in place for many years and provide guidance to staff when recharging for repairs.

Members were advised that the Council as Landlord has an obligation to keep its housing stock in a good state of repair and will do this when repairs are reported, with no cost to the tenant, providing the repair is a Landlord responsibility and is required as a result of fair wear and tear. Tenants have a responsibility to act responsibly and maintain their homes to a satisfactory standard and condition, but when a repair has been identified as not being caused through fair wear and tear, the Council may recharge the cost to the tenant.

It was noted that the overall aim of the Rechargeable Repairs Policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective maintenance of the Council's housing stock. The policy gives information on the definition of rechargeable repairs, the criteria, the cost of repairs, and the monitoring and review process and refers to Section 21 of the Tenancy Agreement which advises tenants of their responsibilities.

It was accepted that the vast majority of Council tenants have not or are unlikely to be recharged for undertaking repairs. However such a policy needs to be in place to deal with the situations where tenants fail to act responsibly and maintain their homes to a satisfactory standard and condition. The reason behind a discount is to try to incentivise tenants to pay the charge in full earlier and for more tenants to pay. A query was raised as to the ability of a person to pay the charge and whether it will be affected by the introduction of the universal credit system. The Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer advised that there will be a report on the roll out of the universal credit system presented in due course, although it is not anticipated that it will affect housing benefit. If there are difficulties, a payment plan can be arranged through Sundry Debtors, if required. It is proposed that a review is undertaken after 6-12 months, as this will enable Officers to assess how successful or otherwise the discount has been to generate higher levels of income and recovery overall.

A query was raised in relation to communication and as to whether tenants are advised of the possible charge when they contact the Centralised Repairs Team. From complaints received by certain Members, this did not always seem to be the case. It was reported that the Team do advise of this requirement (if the repair is not fair wear and tear). When tenants report repairs outside working hours they are advised that if the repair is determined as not being an emergency, a recharge will apply. Some repairs are also pre-inspected and the Officer will advise the tenant at that time. Certain repairs are also post inspected. Once the Policy has been approved it is intended that there will be further training on the specific requirements.

Comments were also made in respect of the rechargeable repairs definition (as detailed on page 69), to the requirement to complete a Declaration of Truth form and to the number of times such can be used. It was explained that where the tenant has reported that the damage to the property occurred as a result of either criminal or anti-social behaviour, the form is required to be returned within 14 days otherwise a recharge will normally be applied. There is no restriction on the number of times this can be used.

With regards to paragraph 7.4 'where the tenant uses the Council's out of hours emergency service due to accidental or criminal damage (not fair wear and tear), the call out charge will be recharged to the tenant, in addition to the cost of any repair undertaken' clarification was sought as to how it is determined whether the damage is accidental or criminal. It was confirmed that there is a requirement to complete a Declaration of Truth form. It was suggested that this paragraph be amended to reflect that the cost of the repair will depend on the damage that has been undertaken as reflected in the Declaration of Truth form.

Reference was also made to notification when works are to be carried out to leasehold properties. The Chief Housing Officer advised that where there are major works as part of the formal process a letter of intent is sent. When details of the works are identified, a further notification under a Section 20 notice is served giving a further 28 days notice of the intended works. In relation to WHQS works, it was requested that detail of works to be carried out are notified to Ward Members. It was explained that in view of the numerous repairs in the different properties it would not be possible to provide such information.

Reference was made to paragraph 7.6 of the Policy, which advised that 'Where a prior appointment has been made with the tenant to carry out a repair and access is not available the tenant will be recharged for the cost of the no access call at the standard rate (no minimum charge applies)'. A query was raised as whether this applies when the Council fail to attend at the appointed time. The Chief Housing Officer advised that the Council operate an appointment system for the majority of response repairs and when a tenant fails to give access at the agreed time a recharge is made. This charge is associated with time taken for the call by the operative, cost of the vehicle etc and is a standard one off charge. In order to ensure fairness, the policy has introduced an agreement that if the Council fail to attend an appointment at the agreed time compensation to the tenant, based on the standard charge, will be considered providing loss of income can be evidenced. It was requested that paragraph 7.6 be amended to reflect that compensation to the tenant will be considered.

It was clarified that the purpose of the Recharge Policy is to reduce expenditure on the repairs service by recovering the costs of repairs, which are not incurred as a result of fair wear and tear and to encourage tenants to maintain the property to an acceptable standard. A query was raised in relation to the amount that is recouped and the action taken to trace those who have left their property without notice. It was noted that recharges for 2013/14 in relation to repairs to void properties amounted to £174k, which relates to 6% of the total expenditure for repairs and whilst every effort is made to trace those tenants who have left without notice, this has not been particularly successful.

With regards to repairs to common areas within flats, it was noted that unless it can be determined who caused the damage, the cost is apportioned to the number of flats in that block.

A query was also raised as to whether there is an inspection policy in place to ensure that the requirements of the tenancy agreement are being adhered to. The Chief Housing Officer advised that there is no policy in place at the moment but that he intended to bring forward a report to a future meeting.

With regards to the role of the Review and Appeals Panel, and the procedure for tenants to follow if they wish to have their recharge reviewed, it was proposed that a Member be included in the proposed representation. In noting the content of the policy (as appended to the report) which detailed the circumstances when a recharge will be made, the cost and how a tenant can ask for a review if they disagree with the recharge being made, it was requested that it be clarified within the Policy that the need to issue a recharge will depend on the damage that has been undertaken and receipt of a Declaration of Truth form.

Members noted that the Policy will be accessible on the Housing website and supported by detailed internal procedures and agreed practices to be applied uniformly across housing.

It was noted that consideration had been given to offering only current tenants a discount of 25% if payment is made within 28 days from the date of the invoice. The Repairs and Improvement Group proposed that this be increased to 50% where payment is made within 35 days from the date of the invoice. It was proposed by the Chief Housing Officer that this should be 25%. This would need to be monitored to determine whether a discount increases the level of income received from these invoices in respect of rechargeable repairs. Members proposed that the trial period quoted of 6-12 months be amended to include 'or at the earliest opportunity'.

Following consideration of the report, and taking account of the views expressed by Members on the content of the document, it was moved and seconded that subject to the amendments proposed during the course of the meeting (and detailed within the recommendation), the following be referred to Cabinet for consideration. By a show of hands and in noting that there was one abstention in relation to recommendations (iii) and (iv) these were agreed by the majority present.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:-

- (i) subject to an amendment to paragraph 7.4 to reflect that the cost of the repair undertaken will be depend on the damage that has been undertaken and receipt of a Declaration of Truth form and paragraph 7.6 being amended to reflect that if the Council fail to attend an appointment at the agreed time compensation to the tenant will be considered, the Rechargeable Repairs Policy be approved and adopted;
- (ii) subject to the addition of a Member in its Membership, the establishment of a Review and Appeals Panel be supported;
- (iii) a discount of 25% be introduced when current tenants make payment within 35 days from the date of the invoice for both rechargeable repairs and end of tenancy repairs;
- (iv) the introduction of a discount be the subject of a review within 6-12 months (or at the earliest opportunity) in order to establish its success in respect of improving the amount of income received for the HRA.

#### **11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL FINANCING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS MONITORING REPORT (1ST APRIL 2014 TO 31ST DECEMBER 2014)**

Consideration was given to the report which provided details of Treasury Management activities and Capital Financing, together with the related Prudential Indicators for the period

1st April - 31st December 2014. It also outlined the Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/2015 as set out in the Annual Investment Strategy and Capital Financing Prudential Indicators Report.

With regards to treasury management, the report made reference to the loans administered by the county borough, utilisation of debt rescheduling, long-term investments, short-term investments (deposits), economic outlook, bank tender and the Treasury Management Advisors contract. In relation to Prudential Indicators, it detailed the capital financing requirement, prudential indicators - "Prudence" and "Affordability," and capital expenditure and funding.

A query was raised in relation to short-term investments. The Acting Director of Corporate Services explained that the value of short-term deposits at 31st December 2014 is made up of a spread of periods up to a maximum of three months. The low returns reflect the Council's current risk appetite as well as current interest rates. The Acting Director reminded Members that the Treasury Management Strategy had changed so that investments could be made outside of the debt management office with a little more risk for more return. Reference was also made to internal borrowing and it was noted that due to the current level of interest rates, the difference between long-term borrowing rates and short-term investment rates has given rise to a cost of carry risk. The current policy of internal borrowing is not sustainable in the long-term, but where prudent the policy of internal borrowing will be utilised. With regards to the bank tender, it was confirmed that the contract would be awarded to Barclays.

A Seminar in late Summer/early Autumn would provide updated benchmarking information to determine whether the change in strategy had seen an impact.

Members noted the content of the report and thanked the Acting Director of Corporate Services for responding to the questions and issues raised during the course of the debate.

## **12. REQUESTS FOR REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA**

There were no requests for any reports to be prepared for consideration at a future meeting of the scrutiny committee.

## **13. 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. Write-off of Debts.
2. Discretionary Rate Relief Applications.
3. Corporate Health and Safety Committee Minutes – 13th November 2014.
4. Caerphilly Homes Task Group Minutes – 11th December 2014.
5. Pensions/Compensation Committee Minutes – 12th January 2015.
6. Non-Domestic Ratepayers Consultation Meeting Minutes – 3rd February 2015.
7. Summary of Members Attendance – Quarter 3 – 1st October 2014 to 31st December 2014.
8. Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

The meeting closed at 19.15 pm.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2015, they were signed by the Chair.

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CHAIR



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: “CAERPHILLY DELIVERS” – THE CAERPHILLY LOCAL SERVICE BOARD SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES**

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

- 1.1 To provide an update to members of the CCBC Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the progress, monitoring and delivery of “Caerphilly Delivers” - the Caerphilly Local Service Board’s (LSB) Single Integrated Plan, in order to facilitate their scrutiny of the Plan.
- 1.2 This report will be supplemented by a presentation on the performance of the Greener Caerphilly Outcome at the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 In June, 2012 the Welsh Government published “Shared Purpose – Shared Delivery: guidance on integrating Partnerships and Plans”, which provided statutory guidance to and required LSB’s to rationalise their respective Partnership “landscapes” and produce a Single Integrated Plan to discharge statutory planning and delivery obligations.
- 2.2 Caerphilly LSB developed and produced “Caerphilly Delivers” – their Single Integrated Plan, which was approved by the LSB and CCBC in April, 2013.
- 2.3 Whilst Caerphilly LSB has overall responsibility for the production, implementation and delivery of the Plan, requirements detailed in the Welsh Government guidance for the scrutiny of the LSB in delivering its Single Integrated Plan are undertaken by the CCBC Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.4 In April, 2014, the CCBC Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered a report which provided an overview of the above and outlined the LSB “Performance and Delivery Framework” being used to monitor the performance and delivery of the Plan.
- 2.5 This report provides an update on the progress, monitoring and delivery of “Caerphilly Delivers” – the LSB’s Single Integrated Plan.

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

- 3.1 “Caerphilly Delivers” satisfies the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Government in “Shared Purpose – Shared Delivery: guidance on integrating Partnerships and Plans”, and statutory responsibilities under:
  - Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009: Community Strategies and Planning

- Children Act 2004 including Children & Families (Wales) Measure 2010 and Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010
- Childcare Act 2006
- National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

#### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 During 2013/14 and into 2014/15, the Single Integrated Plan has continued to be delivered and its performance monitored following the processes outlined in the aforementioned “Performance and Delivery Framework” document.
- 4.2 Diagrams of the Performance and Delivery structures are attached at Appendices 1 and 2.
- 4.3 In summary, the delivery of “Caerphilly Delivers” is co-ordinated/actioned via one Partnership Group (ie: the Leads Group). The Leads Group consists of a designated “lead officer” (from a Partner organisation), who each lead on one of the SIP Outcomes, as follows:
- Prosperous Caerphilly – Pauline Elliott (CCBC, Head of Regeneration and Planning)
  - Safer Caerphilly – Superintendent Marc Budden (Gwent Police, LPU Commander)
  - Learning Caerphilly – Keri Cole (CCBC, Assistant Director – Education)
  - Healthier Caerphilly – Samantha Crane (ABUHB, Head of Partnerships & Networks)
  - Greener Caerphilly – Katy Stevenson (Groundwork Wales, Chief Executive)
- 4.4 The Leads Group (assisted by the Delivery Group) is responsible and accountable to the LSB for the production and delivery of action plans to achieve each priority, which in turn support the achievement of the identified Outcomes.
- 4.5 Each Lead Officer submits a highlight/exception report and scorecard for their respective Outcome for consideration, discussion and comment at quarterly LSB meetings. In rotation, a Lead Officer presents their highlight/exception report and scorecard at every LSB meeting.
- 4.6 All papers considered by the LSB are published on the Caerphilly LSB website, the hyperlink to which is: <http://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/communityplanning/content/local-service-board-current-minutes-0>
- 4.7 As an example, attached at Appendices 3 and 4 are the Greener Caerphilly Outcome Quarter 3 2014/15 highlight/exception report and scorecard, which were recently considered by Caerphilly LSB when it met on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2015. These will be subject of a presentation at this meeting.
- 4.8 The Caerphilly LSB Annual Report 2013/14 has been published on the above website, the hyperlink to which is: <http://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/communityplanning/content/caerphilly-local-service-board>
- 4.9 In exercise of the requirement to scrutinise the Caerphilly LSB’s delivery of its Single Integrated Plan, members will be aware that the CCBC Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee (when acting as the CCBC Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee) also scrutinises the Safer Caerphilly Outcome. In addition it also receives the ‘approved’ Notes of Caerphilly LSB meetings as an information item.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 “Caerphilly Delivers” was developed based on the principles of:
- Sustainable Development, where social justice and equality of opportunity for all is promoted, whilst enhancing and respecting the natural and cultural environment;

- Equalities and Welsh Language, where Equalities and the Welsh Language are promoted and mainstreamed in accordance with legislative requirements and strategic equality objectives;
- Community Cohesion, where people from different backgrounds enjoy similar life opportunities, understand their rights and responsibilities, trust one another and are trusting of local institutions to act fairly.

5.2 “Caerphilly Delivers” affects every person within Caerphilly county borough regardless of their individual circumstances or backgrounds. This Council and LSB partners recognise that people have different needs, requirements and goals, and will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between communities. This Council and LSB partners will also work to create equal access for everyone to services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be justified. “Caerphilly Delivers” was equality impact assessed.

5.3 A wide variety of Equality organisations were included in the consultation process and their responses were either reflected in the Plan or considered in the respective action plans, dependent upon their strategic or operational relevance.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Caerphilly LSB, via European Social Fund grant, appointed a Programme Manager (Partnership Development and Collaborative Improvement) to co-ordinate the development, production, implementation and delivery of “Caerphilly Delivers”. This grant funding concluded at the end of November, 2014. In consideration of funding of this post into 2015/16, CCBC Corporate Management Team is awaiting the outcome of a bid to the Welsh Government LSB Development Fund (maximum £30,400) and further discussion with LSB partners.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Caerphilly LSB and CCBC Corporate Management Team continue to consider how the delivery of the Plan is supported, cognisant of 6.1 above

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 All consultee responses have been considered within this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Members of the CCBC Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider and note the contents of this report generally, scrutinise the Greener Caerphilly Outcome specifically and consider their future scrutiny of the delivery of the Plan.

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

10.1 Whilst the statutory requirement to produce and deliver the Single Integrated Plan is the responsibility of Caerphilly LSB, the statutory guidance recognises the requirement for effective scrutiny and that Local Authorities have the statutory duty and experience in exercising this scrutiny function.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

### 11.1 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Part 2: Ss 37 – 46).

Author: Howard Rees, Programme Manager (Partnership Development and Collaborative Improvement), CCBC

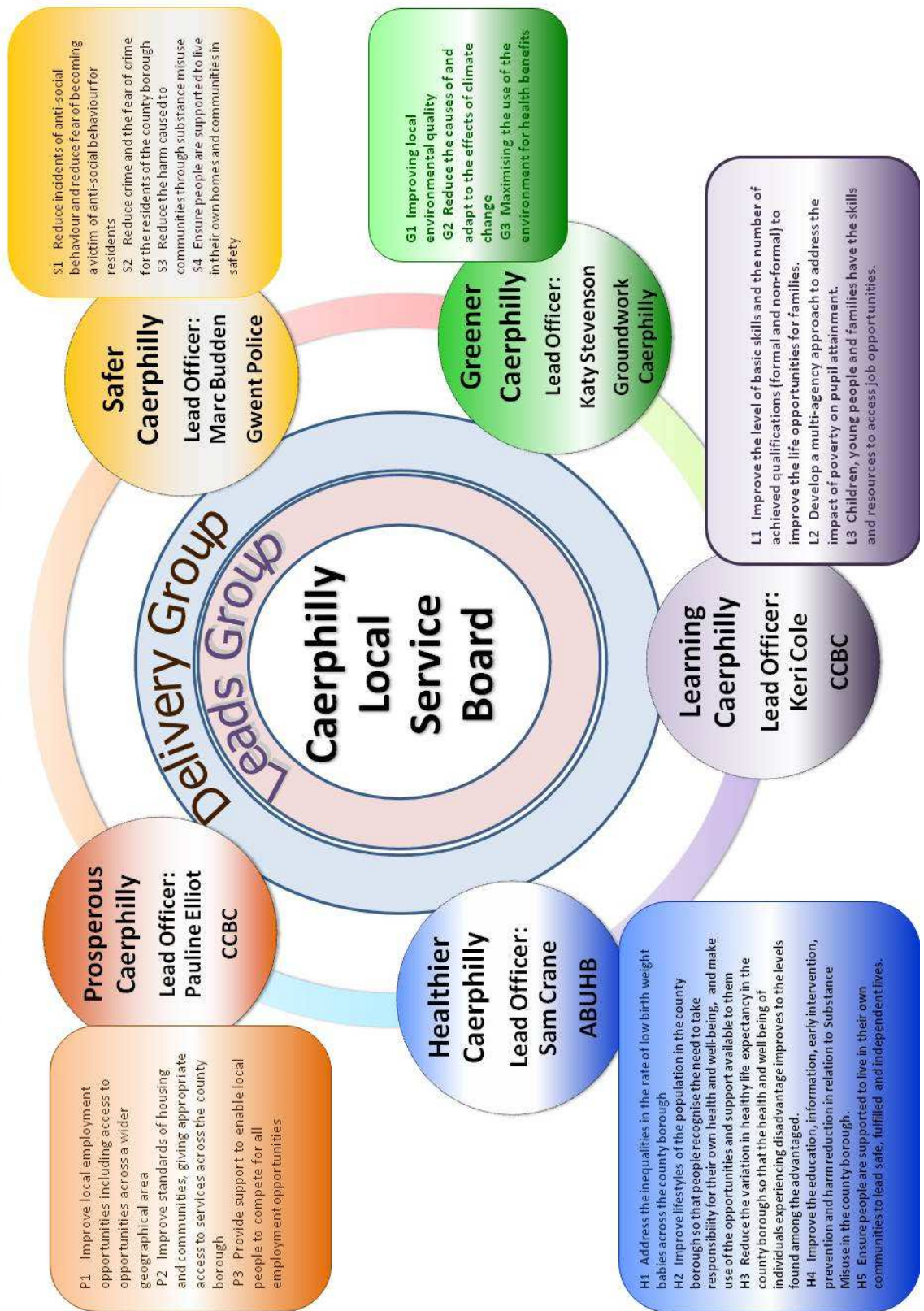
Consultees: Members of Caerphilly LSB  
Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive, CCBC  
Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive, CCBC  
Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services, CCBC  
Nicole Scammell, Acting Corporate Director Corporate Services, CCBC  
Members of the Caerphilly LSB Leads Group  
David Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language), CCBC

#### Appendices:

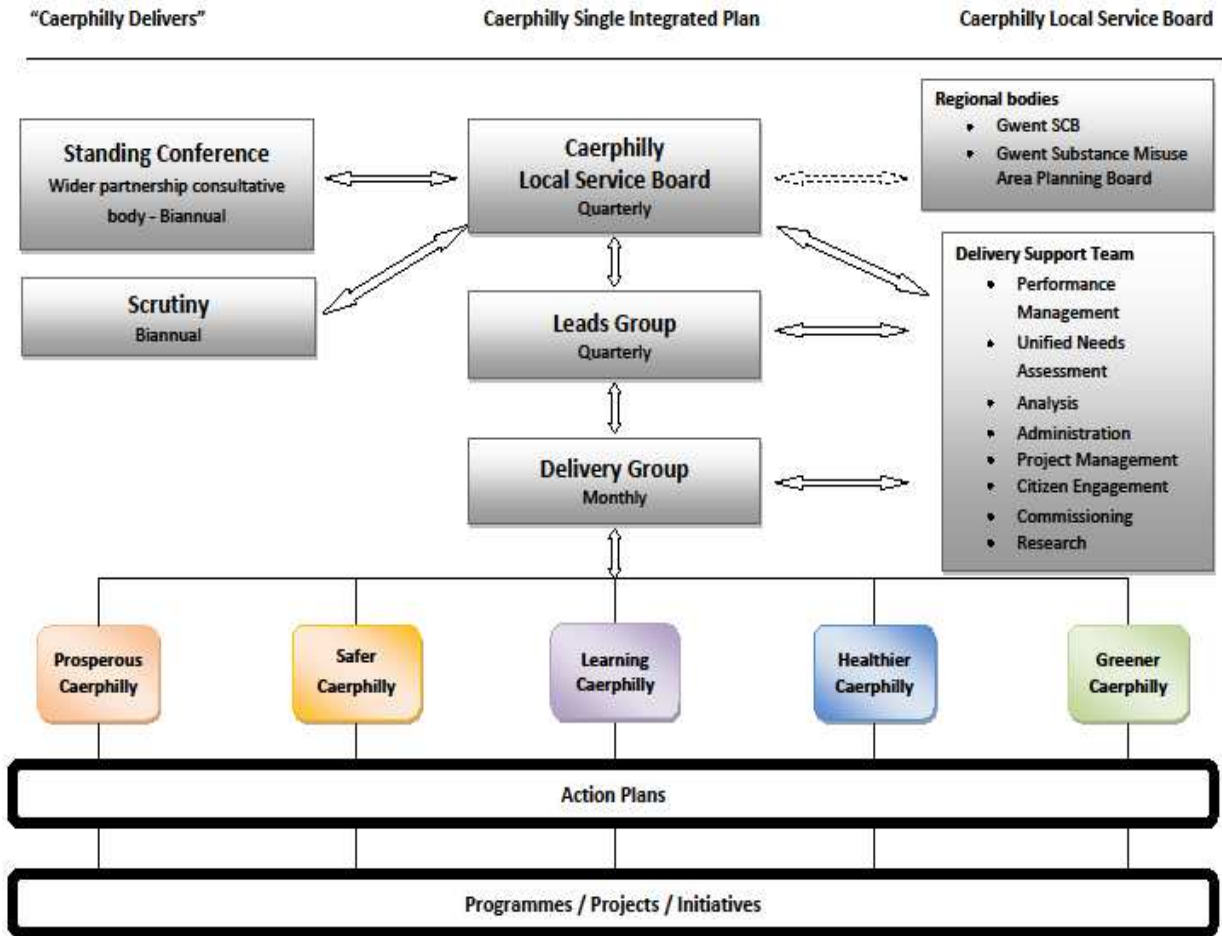
Appendices 1 and 2      Diagrams of “Caerphilly Delivers” Performance and Delivery structures.  
Appendix 3              Greener Caerphilly Outcome Q3 14/15 highlight/exception report.  
Appendix 4              Greener Caerphilly Q3 14/15 scorecard.



# “CAERPHELLY DELIVERS” – Delivery Structure



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A greener place Man gwyrdach



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## GREENER CAERPHILLY

APPENDIX 3

A *Greener Caerphilly* aims to:

- Safeguard and, where necessary, enhance the living environment in the Caerphilly county borough for its own sake
- Secure quality of life for local people and visitors now and in the future.

Based on the findings from the Caerphilly LSB UNA, the Single Integrated Plan development days, and the work of the Living Environment Partnership, three priority areas for working towards a Greener Caerphilly have been identified; these are:



**G1** Improve local environmental quality.



**G2** Reduce the causes and adapt to the effects of climate change.

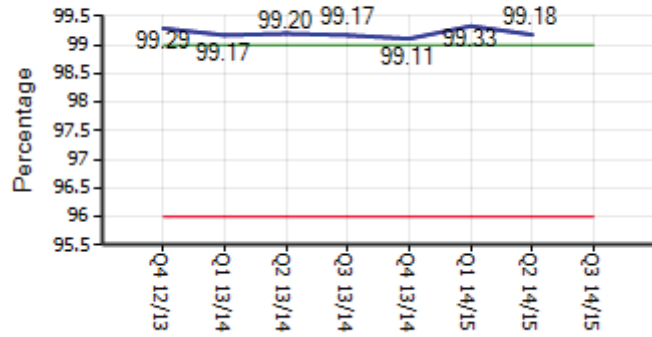


**G3** Maximise the use of the environment for health benefits.



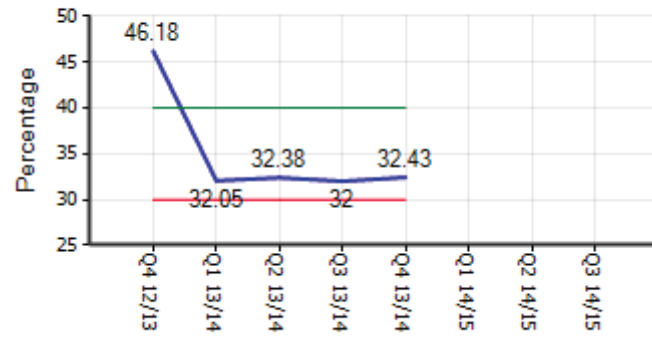
## Priority G1: Improve local environmental quality

STS006 The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days



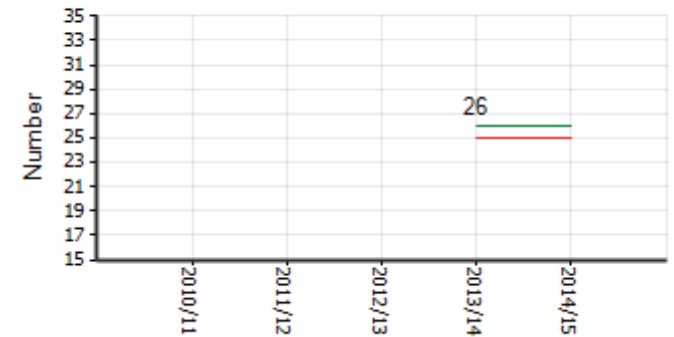
Period	Comment
Q3 14/15	

STS007 The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents which lead to enforcement activity



Period	Comment
--------	---------

No of the 26 priority Local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species remaining stable or improving



Period	Comment
2014/15	26 animal and plant species were surveyed at selected sites across the county borough in 2013/14. This was the first year of monitoring for these species, so will form the base line of data on which to assess population change in future years. In order to take account of natural fluctuations, assessments on change will be made after 4 years of data have been gathered.



## Priority G1: Improve local environmental quality

### Fly Tipping - Priority Action

Period	Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Q3 14/15	Actively seek to prosecute those caught fly-tipping, and publicise prosecutions and the penalties imposed on those caught fly-tipping.	Partners continue to actively seek to prosecute those caught fly-tipping.  Fly-tipping Wales have provided 8 covert cameras for partners to use at fly-tipping hotspots.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35
Q3 14/15	Ensure better sharing of intelligence between partners.	Enforcement working group meetings continue to be held with partners across S Wales.  Fly-tipping Action Wales has produced an e-learning package on intelligence awareness which accessible via the partners page of their website	⊖	In Progress	On Track	25
Q3 14/15	Ensure the fast and effective clean-up of fly-tipping when it occurs.	Caerphilly County Borough Council continues to respond quickly to reported fly-tipping, and were ranked 3rd in Wales for the speed of response in 2013/14.  Data on response rates is collated on a 6-monthly basis, for the first 2 quarters of 2014/15, 99.18% of incidents were cleaned up within 5 working days.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35
Q3 14/15	Improve the GPS fly-tipping mapping system.	Fly-tipping Action Wales are trialling the new improved GPS Flymapper system. This is a web based system which shows incidents (with photograph) on a digital map.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35
Q3 14/15	Provide an education and information programme to make people aware of where and how waste can be legally disposed of, and of the damage that fly-tipping causes	Partners took part in a "Take Pride in Your Community" programme to encourage greater awareness of fly-tipping.  Fly-Tipping Wales have provided Duty of Care advice to social housing officers and private landlords.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	40
Q3 14/15	Work to ensure harsher penalties for those convicted of fly-tipping.	The consultation on Strengthening Enforcement Authorities Powers to Seize Vehicles for Certain Waste Offences launched on 15th December 2014.  The aim is to help enforcement authorities prevent illegal waste activities more effectively than at present. This will reduce the impact of waste crime on the environment, while helping to bring about a level playing field for the legitimate waste industry and encouraging growth through investment	⊖	In Progress	Ahead	50



## Priority G1: Improve local environmental quality

### Biodiversity - Priority Action

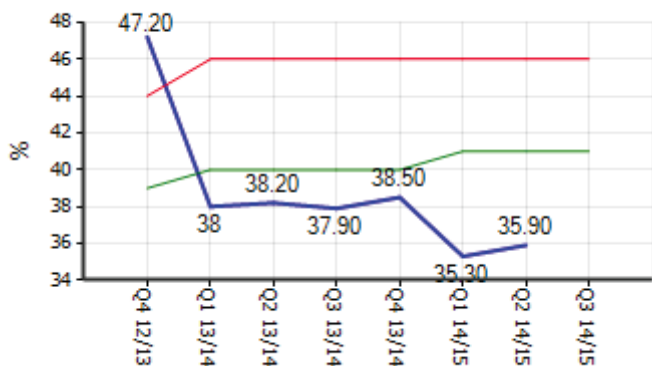
Period	Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Q3 14/15	Engage with land owners of sites of high wildlife value to encourage sympathetic management.	Go Wild is held in Caerphilly every other year with the alternate year being held in Blaenau Gwent. This year the event was held in Blaenau Gwent at Bryn Bach Park on the 24th June and the Caerphilly Biodiversity Partnership attended and carried out activities with members of the public to encourage pollinators	⊖	In Progress	On Track	50
Q3 14/15	Monitor key indicator species and habitats to ensure biodiversity within the county borough is stable or increasing.	Monitoring of river fly has continued on the Rhymney River and data passed to the Riverfly Partnership Coodinator. Monitoring of indicator species has continued during the autumn of 2014. Information has yet to be collated.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35
Q3 14/15	Raise awareness of biodiversity to members of the public via key events such as Go Wild and the Big Cheese.	Go Wild is held in Caerphilly every other year with the alternate year being held in Blaenau Gwent. This year the event was held in Blaenau Gwent at Bryn Bach Park on the 24th June and the Caerphilly Biodiversity Partnership attended and carried out activities with members of the public to encourage pollinators	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35
Q3 14/15	Review Biodiversity Action Plan targets to ensure actions are relevant and achievable.	Further review of the action plan has been delayed due to loss of staff. Progress will be continued when staff resources allow	⊖	In Progress	Behind	20
Q3 14/15	Work with partners to control and reduce priority invasive species in the county borough	A significant amount of work was undertaken in quarter 3 to control invasive species. The Greener Caerphilly supported project to spray and control Giant Hogweed was completed with several new sites identified and sprayed. Work to control Japanese Knotweed continued.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	40
Q3 14/15	Work with partners to report incidence of pollution in our streams and rivers.	Groundwork has removed a number of barriers to fish migration on the River Sirhowy, Rhymney and Nant Bargoed and has secured funding to continue until 2017.  Monitoring of river fly has continued on the Rhymney River and data passed to the Riverfly Partnership Coodinator.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35
Q3 14/15	Work with partners to secure funding and grant support for biodiversity projects in the county borough	Groundwork with the support of other partners submitted a Nature Fund application for Healthy Valleys Rivers. This was unfortunately unsuccessful, but Groundwork's NRW Competitive fund application 'Healthy Rivers' was successful. Caerphilly CBC has secured a South Wales non-native invasive species programme through NRW's Competitive Fund.  The Upland Project and Pollinator Project were successful bids and action to deliver projects are underway, with a completion date of June 2015.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	25





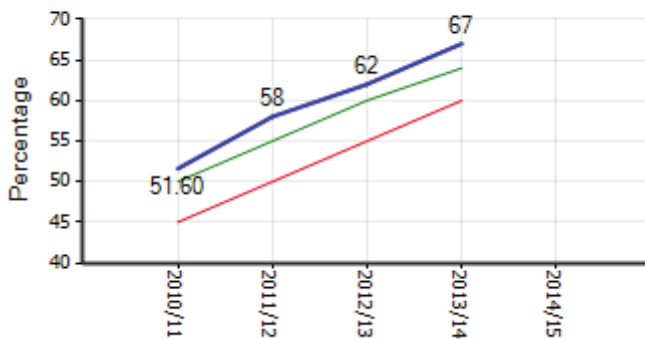
## Priority G2: Reduce the causes of and adapt to the effects of climate change

WMT004 The percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill



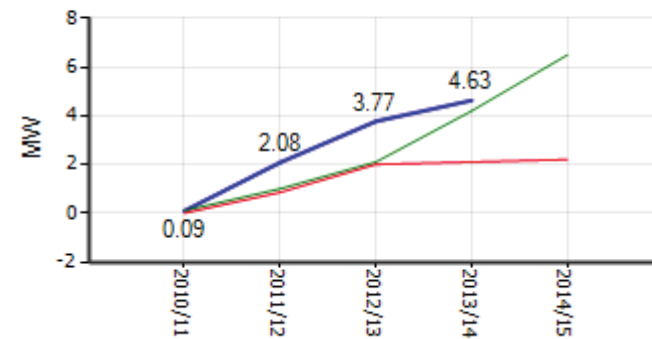
Period	Comment
Q3 14/15	

% of schools with the highest (green flag) award under the Eco Schools programme as at 31st March



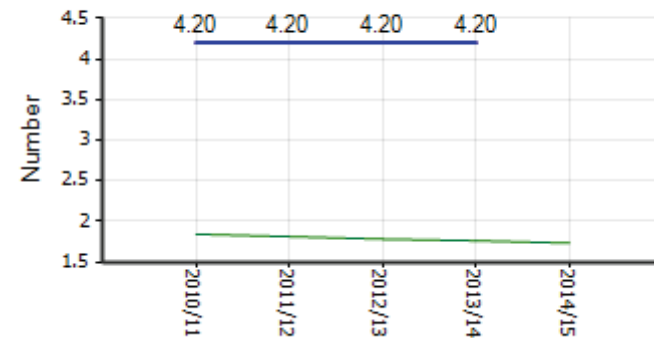
Period	Comment

The amount of energy generated (MW) from renewable sources in the county borough as at 31st March



Period	Comment
2014/15	Generating energy, both heat or electricity, from fossil fuels releases green house gases, which contribute to global warming and climate change. Energy generated from renewable sources such as wind, water and the sun does not generate green house gases and therefore does not contribute to climate change. Our aim is therefore firstly to reduce the amount of energy that we use, and secondly to increase the percentage of our energy generated from renewable sources.

The average ecological footprint of a resident in the borough



Period	Comment
2014/15	



## Priority G2: Reduce the causes of and adapt to the effects of climate change

### Waste/Recycling - Priority Action

Period	Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Q3 14/15	Increase the number of Recycle on the Go! facilities.	Additional Recycle on the Go sites are being identified to increase the numbers of facilities available.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	40
Q3 14/15	Increase the uptake of food waste recycling projects.	CCBC continues to provide food waste recycling service to schools and the authority's main office complexes. This is helping us to enhance more biodegradable waste from landfill and in turn meet the recycling targets.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	30
Q3 14/15	Promote home composting.	Partners continuing to provide the subsidised sales service on home composters for the public and in turn help minimise waste and make use of valuable biodegradable materials.	⊖	In Progress	On Track	30
Q3 14/15	Work in partnership to raise awareness of waste issues through a programme of events, campaigns and projects.	<p>Partners are continuing to deliver awareness raising events across the County Borough to raise awareness of the waste mountain and the importance of reusing and recycling more.</p> <p>Additional funding has recently been secured to roll out a schools educational campaign.</p> <p>The Furniture Revival now offers a 'Community Repaint' service which collects reusable, leftover paint and re-distribute it to individuals, families, communities and charities in need.</p>	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35



## Priority G2: Reduce the causes of and adapt to the effects of climate change

### Eco Schools - Priority Action

Period	Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Q3 14/15	Develop and provide sustainable development advice to assist teachers including curriculum links and lesson plans.	<p>An outdoors training event on using the environment for literacy and numeracy work was held in October, delivered by Natural Resources Wales. This was funded by the CEQ small grant fund administered by the Greener Caerphilly partnership.</p> <p>an ESDGC Literacy and Numeracy Framework teacher resource pack has been developed for year 2, year 6 and year 9, as a partnership project with the All Wales LA ESDGC Officer Group. These have been sent out to all schools in the CCB.</p>	⊖	In Progress	On Track	40
Q3 14/15	Provide specific technical support on sustainable development issues to head teachers, teachers and school governors.	<p>The Caerphilly Solar Schools project is now complete. 16 schools and 1 education centre have received solar PV installations.</p> <p>A new 'Sustainable Caerphilly' website, with a specific section for schools on ESDGC has been developed.</p>	⊖	In Progress	Ahead	45
Q3 14/15	Support schools to enable them to achieve awards under the Eco Schools programme.	<p>64 schools (71%) have achieved an Eco School Green Flag award (15 schools – 1st flag, 10 schools-2nd flag, 24 schools – 3rd flag and 14 schools – 4th flag (Platinum award)).</p> <p>Three Eco School training sessions held for 26 schools, covering the Eco School process and the Platinum Award.</p> <p>Eco School support visits made to 8 schools to help them progress through the eco school award scheme.</p>	⊖	In Progress	Ahead	40



## Priority G2: Reduce the causes of and adapt to the effects of climate change

### Renewable Energy - Priority Action

Period	Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Q3 14/15	Develop two wind turbines in Oakdale Business Park with a total generating capacity of 5MW.	The installation of the 2 turbines was undertaken in December 2013, with commissioning undertaken in February 2014. This action is now complete.	+	Complete	Ahead	100
Q3 14/15	Provide information and support to business and residents on renewable energy sources, options and funding.	Partners continue to support businesses and residents. The Councils Sustainable Energy Officers plus the Energy Saving Trust and Carbon Trust are actively engaged in the county borough. The Green Doctors programme has provided support and advice to community groups. This 4 year programme was completed successfully in this quarter. Housing Associations continue existing programmes to provide advice and to install renewable energy technology in their properties. In the third quarter of 2014/15, ninety-two new photovoltaic (PV) systems were installed in the county borough bringing the total to 1,834. One new wind turbine (500kW) was installed. These new installations have increased the total capacity of renewable energy by 804kW to a total of 5.936 MW.	o	In Progress	On Track	35
Q3 14/15	Seek to secure funding to implement renewable energy projects in the county borough.	The Local Delivery Strategy for a follow-on programme for the RDP, including a sustainable energy element to work with local communities has been submitted to Welsh Government. Discussions are ongoing with utility companies to secure ECO funding for work in the county borough. Additional funding has been secured for work in Phillipstown through the Arbed scheme.	o	In Progress	On Track	25

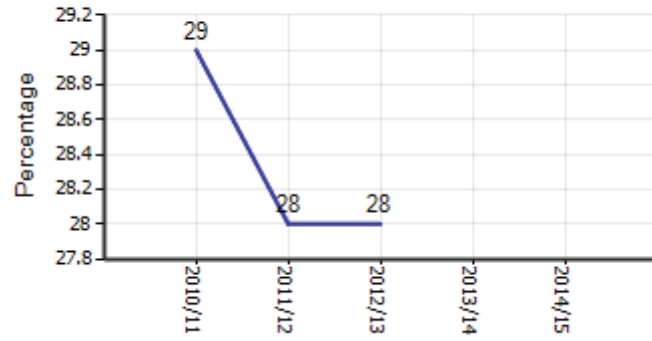
### Ecological Footprint - Priority Action

Period	Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Q3 14/15	Encourage individuals to calculate and understand their ecological footprint using the Sustainable Caerphilly tool.	The Council's website continues to promote the use of the on-line tool, however a reduction in staff resources means that the programme of workshops and events has been reduced.	o	In Progress	Behind	22
Q3 14/15	Raise awareness of the local and global issues of resource consumption.	Work against this action has been reduced due to a reduction in resources. The Climate Change Woodlands programme is not being run in 2014/15 due to budget constraints. Associated workshops have also been reduced.	o	In Progress	Behind	30



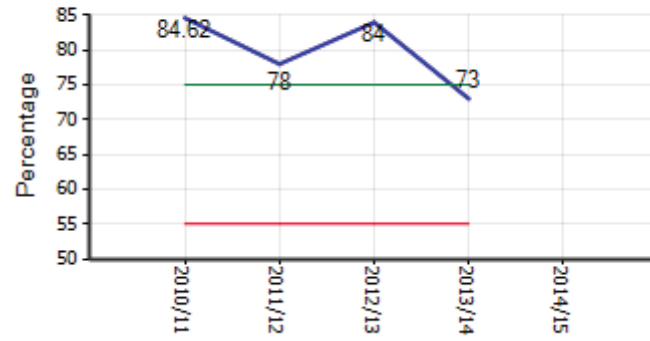
### Priority G3: Maximise the use of the environment for health benefits

Physically active on 5 or more days in the past week - Age standardised percentage of adults - Caerphilly



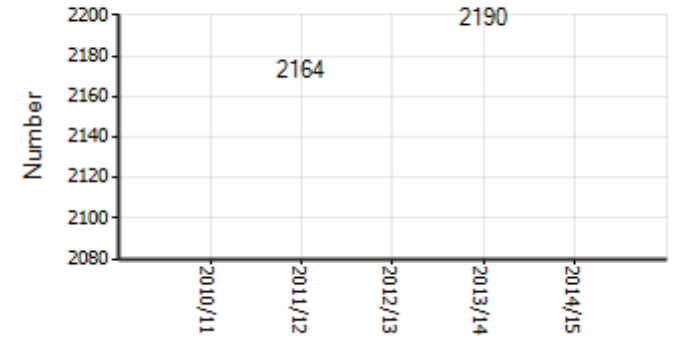
Period	Comment

% Rights Of Way which are considered easy to use by members of the public



Period	Comment

Number of allotment plots in active use (as at March each year)



Period	Comment



## Priority G3: Maximise the use of the environment for health benefits

### Priority Action

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Develop a better measure of whether people are accessing the environment for the benefit of their health.	Groundwork's Go Green for Health programme team has been appointed, and are looking at technologies available to monitor the use of the environment for health.	⊖	In Progress	Behind	18
Increase the number of people taking part in healthy walking groups	<p>Come Outside has supported both the Penybryn Walk Group and Hafal Blackwood in participating in healthy walks throughout the borough, with walks including Dark Sky Wales Planetarium viewings and planet geocache and quiz which had 17 participants.</p> <p>Come Outside are hoping to increase walk distance and understanding / appreciation of the natural environment with Hafal. Further geocache sessions, a hawk walk and local historical walks are in the plan for the future.</p>	⊖	In Progress	On Track	40
Support and promote the use of allotments.	<p>Work continues to be undertaken with allotment associations to bring vacant plots back into use and to develop new plots.</p> <p>A new Federation has been formed to manage sites in the former Islwyn area on behalf of the Authority (Caerphilly East Allotment Federation).</p> <p>The work includes a grant scheme of £10,000 from the Authority's Community Schemes Fund for 2014/15.</p>	⊖	In Progress	On Track	35



## Priority G3: Maximise the use of the environment for health benefits

### Priority Action

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status	Progress Status	% Complete
Seek to secure funding to implement projects to maximise the use of the environment for health in the county borough.	With support from partners, Groundwork's Go Green for Health programme has secured £800,000 from the BIG Lottery. The team has been appointed, the programme will begin delivery in Spring 2015.	⊖	In Progress	Ahead	30
Support the development of safe outdoor play spaces through the implementation of the Play Strategy	<p>GAVO offer support to groups that wish to develop outdoor play spaces and will assist with community consultation and the completion of funding applications.</p> <p>Work has been carried out with 3 local primary schools investigating the opportunities to develop school grounds that can be open to local communities as safe outdoor play spaces.</p> <p>Play Wales has produced toolkits for developing and managing play spaces and the use of school grounds during out of school hours.</p> <p>The work of the play strategy has now been transferred to the Play Sufficiency Action Plan.</p>	⊖	In Progress	On Track	30

## Greener Caerphilly - Exceptions Report

### **2014/15 - Qtr3 update:**

For further information, please refer to the

**"Caerphilly Delivers" - Single Integrated Plan**

**Highlight & Exception Report (Dated January 2015)**

Whereby, the LSB is requested to consider and comment on any actions/performance/recommendations documented.





Bwrdd Iechyd  
Aneurin Bevan  
Health Board



Heddlu  
Gwent  
Police



## **“Caerphilly Delivers” - Single Integrated Plan Highlight Report & Scorecard**

### **Outcome: Greener Caerphilly**

#### **Priorities:**

1. Improving local environmental quality
2. Reducing the causes and adapting to the effects of climate change
3. Maximising the use of the environment for health benefits

**Date:** January 2015

#### **Context:**

This report highlights the progress of the above Outcome & Priorities contained within “Caerphilly Delivers” – the Single Integrated Plan (SIP).

**Section 1** is the report presented to the Leads Group on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2015.

### ***The LSB is requested to consider and comment on the following actions/recommendations:-***

1. Note the contents of this report
- 2.
- 3.

Following consideration of the recommendations, the Leads Group will progress actions on behalf of the LSB:

Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted	Partially Accepted/ Amended	Rejected & reasons stated
1.			
2.			
3.			

## **Section 1: Greener Outcome - SIP Highlight Report**

### **General update**

The Annual Report 2013/14 summarising the work of the Greener Caerphilly Outcome Theme Group has been approved and circulated. The report includes a section on the contribution that the work of the Greener Theme and partners are making towards the objectives of other Themes.



A full version of the Greener Caerphilly Annual Report 2013-14 can be found on the Caerphilly County Borough Council's Sustainable Development website, which also has a section on the work of Greener Caerphilly:

<http://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/sustainablecaerphilly/greener-caerphilly>

Information is provided below for highlights/exceptions against the 3 agreed priorities.

<b>'What do we want to do?' (Priorities)</b>	<b>G1. Improving local environmental quality</b>
<b>Partners helping us to achieve this:</b>	Caerphilly County Borough Council, Natural Resources Wales, Fly-Tipping Wales, Groundwork, South East Wales Rivers Trust, Gwent Wildlife Trust
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paul Cooke

### Where are we now?

#### **Performance Indicators.**

The “percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days” fell slightly from 99.33% in 2013/14 to 99.18% in the first 6 months of 2014/15. However this is above the target of 99.0% and is among the best in Wales. The other indicators under this priority are updated annually

### What has worked well? (Successes)

Each year CCBC has provided funding, from its Community Schemes budget to the Greener Caerphilly partnership to be managed as a small grants fund to facilitate and stimulate partnership working. Projects should be undertaken by at least 2 partnership organisations, and should provide at least £1 for £1 match funding. The Greener Caerphilly Leadership Group has received £14,200 for projects in 2014/15.

For 2014/15 a total of 8 projects were awarded grants, all of which contribute to at least one of the priorities. One project supported was the “Rural Skills” project.

#### **Rural Skills**

The project has provided training courses on dry stone walling and hedge laying. A total of 12 one day courses were held.



*Participants proudly showing off their "Welsh Border Style" hedge created on their training course.*

Traditional skills such as dry stone walling, hedge laying and woodland coppicing have played an important role in the distinctive and unique landscape that we see around us today. Unfortunately, the change in land management practices over the past century has resulted in many of these features being left neglected and falling into disrepair. It is hoped that by gaining these skills through the taster sessions the farming community will be encouraged to maintain, restore and upgrade the rural heritage. Several attendees indicated that the course could assist their farming businesses with the possibility of diversifying into contract work.

### **Healthy Rivers**

The Healthy Rivers and River Schools projects are partnership projects co-ordinated by Groundwork Caerphilly and involving the South East Wales Rivers Trust (SEWRT), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and CCBC. The projects were established with the aim of removing the barriers to salmon migration up the River Sirhowy, engaging local people, and undertaking environmental improvement to the River Sirhowy to improve its Ecological Status under the Water Frame Work Directive (WFD). The projects have proved to be a huge success, and this was confirmed with the discovery of salmon nests north of Blackwood in 2014. This is the first time that this has occurred in over 100 years.



Installation of a pre barrage at Penmaen weir to enable salmon to pass upstream

Since then further work has been undertaken to remove barriers further upstream including extensive work at the Markham Colliery Tunnel. **The result of this work is that for the first time the whole length of the Sirhowy in Caerphilly county borough is now navigable for salmon.** This has resulted in the Ecological Status of the river being upgrade to “Good” for the first time since the classification was introduced.

### What are the challenges/barriers?

Financial constraints are beginning to squeeze budgets for partnership working. Environmental work, which is generally discretionary rather than statutory, is under particular pressure. There is the potential for some decisions to impact on this priority.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, new arrangements came in for residents who wish to use vans and trailers at household waste recycling centres (civic amenity sites). Residents using vans and trailers under 1.8 metres to deposit household waste must collect a free tipping permit from a council cash or Customer First office beforehand. To ensure that the sites are only used by Caerphilly county borough residents, proof of residency will be required, along with the vehicle registration document. Permits will be single use and must be handed in at the site. Residents will be entitled to up to six free van permits in a 12-month period. Luton vans, tippers and trailers, which are greater than 1.8 metres in length will no longer be able to access these sites. No commercial/trade waste will be allowed at any of the sites.

It is possible that these changes may result in an increase in fly-tipping incidents.

**What actions are we going to take to improve? (Next steps)**

The approved projects funded by the Caerphilly Environmental Quality Small Grants fund are making a significant contribution to partnership working against this priority. The challenge is to maximise the opportunities and benefits resulting from this work.

Two new funding streams are coming on line in 2014/15 – the Nature Fund and the new Rural Development Plan programme. Greener Caerphilly partners will be heavily involved in developing projects to ensure that the maximum benefit can be secured to improve the local environmental quality of Caerphilly county borough.

<b>'What do we want to do?' (Priorities)</b>	<b>G2. Reducing the causes and adapting to the effects of climate change</b>
<b>Partners helping us to achieve this:</b>	Caerphilly County Borough Council, Natural Resources Wales, Carbon Trust, Groundwork, United Welsh Housing Association, Charter Housing, Partnership For Renewables, Constructing Excellence Wales, Cardiff University.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paul Cooke

**Where are we now?**

**Performance Indicators.**

**The percentage of schools with the highest (green flag) award under the Eco Schools programme.** At the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, 64 schools (71%) have achieved an Eco School Green Flag award (15 schools – 1<sup>st</sup> flag, 10 schools-2<sup>nd</sup> flag, 24 schools – 3<sup>rd</sup> flag and 14 schools – 4<sup>th</sup> flag (Platinum award)).

**The amount of energy generated (MW) from renewable sources in the county borough.** In the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2014/15, ninety-two new photovoltaic (PV) systems were installed in the county borough bringing the total to 1,834. One new wind turbine (500kW) was installed. These new installations have increased the total capacity of renewable energy by 804kW to a total of 5.936 MW.

**What has worked well? (Successes)**

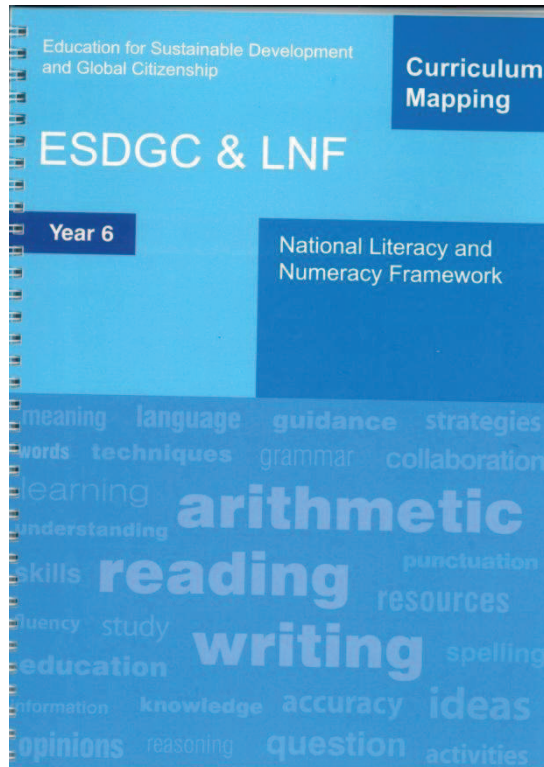
**Mapping Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship against the new National Literacy and Numeracy Framework**

The Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Officer for CCBC worked with the All Wales Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) Local Authority Officer group to map ESDGC against the new National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF), to identify how the areas can be taught using ESDGC.

ESDGC has been mapped against the LNF for years 2, 6 and 9, with suggested activities, website links and resources for each of the elements within the framework.

These documents will help schools embed the requirements of the new National Literacy and Numeracy Framework within their curriculum planning, and include ESDGC as a theme for classroom teaching.

Within the Caerphilly county borough, every school has received a printed copy of the relevant version, plus they have received all versions by email.



### **Rural Green Doctors**

Groundwork's, Rural Development Plan funded, Rural Green Doctors programme was successfully completed at the end of September 2014. The programme engaged with community venues and offered free energy saving advice to 77 venues in rural areas of Caerphilly. 68 of these venues followed the energy advice and implemented an energy saving measure.

As a result of the community venues being more efficient, they will be more attractive as a venue. For example, some venue users reported to the venue management that the space they hired was too cold for their use. In these instances, Rural Green Doctors supported the venue to change their heating controls to ensure the room was warmer when needed and the temperature was reduced when the room was not in use.



Providing energy advice to  
Ebenezer Church Hall

### **Furniture Revival**

The Furniture Revival is a community based social enterprise based in the Rhymney Valley whose core environmental aim is the diversion of waste from landfill, via the free collection of household furniture and electrical appliances within the Caerphilly Borough. The items collected are then made available for reuse and redistribution at affordable prices to those in need. In 2014 the project reused an estimated 160 tonnes of furniture and electrical goods.

In the past year Furniture Revival has expanded its reuse activities to include a Community RePaint Project aimed at the reuse of unwanted paint within the local community – it has reused over 7500 litres of paint with 20 Community Groups benefiting from free paint donations





The Furniture Revival has also formed partnerships with other social enterprises to increase the reuse of other products such as books through the Book Revival Project and carpets tiles through the Community Refloor Project, which has reused over 2040 tiles, to date

### **What are the challenges/barriers?**

The current Rural Development Plan programme has come to an end. This included the Rural Green Doctors and the Council's Sustainable Energy project, which provided energy advice to farms and rural businesses. At present there has been no confirmation of any follow on funding to continue this work.

Cuts by central government to programmes to support energy projects for the hardest to treat homes, and to support the most vulnerable residents, will mean that there will be less funding for these projects in the next few years. There is some uncertainty as to the exact nature and content of the new European Programmes and which sustainable energy and climate change work will be eligible.

### **What actions are we going to take to improve? (Next steps)**

Partners are working together to develop projects to secure funding from a variety of sources. A Local Delivery Strategy (LDS) has been submitted to Welsh Government for a further round of Rural Development Plan funding. This submission includes a sustainable energy element. Partners are also seeking to secure Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding from the main energy companies.

<b>'What do we want to do?' (Priorities)</b>	<b>G3. Maximising the use of the environment for health benefits</b>
<b>Partners helping us to achieve this:</b>	Caerphilly County Borough Council, Natural Resources Wales,, Groundwork, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Communities First,
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paul Cooke

**Where are we now?**

**Performance Indicators.**

All indicators under this priority are monitored on an annual basis

**Develop a better measure of whether people are accessing the environment for the benefit of their health.**

A considerable amount of work is ongoing across the county borough, both as part of the Greener Caerphilly Theme and the Healthy Caerphilly Theme. There are strong links with the Well-Being Improvement Network (WIN), which leads on this within the Health Theme

**What has worked well? (Successes)**

**Go Green for Health**  
 With the support of partners Groundwork has been successful in securing £800,000 from the BIG Lottery for its Go Green for Health(GG4H) programme. The programme is a 'community prescription' of activity in the outdoors designed to prevent ill health and improve the management of chronic conditions. The GG4H programme combines using the natural environment with innovative technology and approaches to increasing a community's active levels. Although open to all community members, the programme is keen to support individuals with chronic conditions and assist them with techniques to manage these conditions and getting more active.

The GG4H programme will be piloted in the Mid Valleys West Communities First Cluster area in Caerphilly, encouraging people from Greater Bargoed, Gilfach, Cefn Hengoed, and surrounding areas to become more active their local green spaces.

The programme will have three distinct elements which include:

- one 2 one support for individuals with barriers to being active,
- technology to get all residents active in their local areas,
- volunteer led activity encouraging sustainability of the programme's message.

**Increase the number of people taking part in healthy walking groups**  
 Building on the success of the Council, Health Board and Let's Walk Cymru run pedometer challenges, a Community Pedometer Challenge has been established

with partnership work involving existing partners and local walking groups. Currently over 100 people have signed up.

Planning is ongoing for the Caerphilly Challenge Series 2015 Twmbarlwm Trek with volunteers planning all routes (for the first time). Islwyn Ramblers have planned the 10, 15 and 22-mile walks with some assistance from the countryside service and the stroller groups are currently planning the shorter walk.

### **What are the challenges/barriers?**

Budget constraints are likely to impact heavily on this work. Environmental work is generally discretionary rather than statutory, and is therefore under particular pressure. Facilities such as country parks are particularly vulnerable.

Parking charges were introduced in car parks at the main country parks in the county borough, from Monday the 11th of August. The charges apply Monday to Sunday and Bank Holidays from 7 am – 7 pm. This has the potential to, at least initially, reduce the number of people using the country parks, including those using them as a starting point for the led walks programme.

This highlights a key issue with this area of work, in that potential savings available to one organisation may impact to a greater extent on another. The savings to the council may be considerably exceeded by future potential costs to the health service if it results in people becoming less active and less fit.

### **What actions are we going to take to improve? (Next steps)**

The work on this priority has been slow to get started, however a task and finish group has now been agreed, based on the work being undertaken by Communities First and the newly approved Groundwork “Go Green for Health” project.

Monitoring the use of country parks and the number of people on the led walks that start at them, will be undertaken to understand the impacts of the newly introduced car parking charges.

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## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: NATIONAL PROCUREMENT SERVICE (NPS) FOR WALES PROGRESS REPORT**

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

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

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the progress made with the National Procurement Service (NPS) for Wales and to seek the views of Scrutiny on the proposed recommendations to Cabinet on the Authority's future working arrangements with the NPS.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Cabinet received a report in November 2012, which made recommendations to join the Welsh Governments National Procurement Services. Members approved the recommendations within the Report.
- 2.2 At the time of reporting in 2012, the level of information available to Officers from the NPS was high level and lacked detail as to the actual category areas that would be adopted on an 'All Wales' basis. The National Procurement Service has been in operation for over twelve (12) months, individual category details are currently being defined. We are now in possession of a detailed forward work plan (pipeline) for the next two (2) years (an electronic copy of which is available upon request from Procurement Services - [procurement@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@caerphilly.gov.uk)).

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

- 3.1 The information contained within this report supports and facilitates the following key strategies:
- Buying Smarter in Tougher Times
  - Wales Procurement Policy 2012
  - Caerphilly CBC Procurement Policy and Strategy 2013

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 In 2012, Cabinet approved the action to join the National Procurement Service for Wales for the following ten (10) Category Areas:
- Information Communication & Technology
  - Utilities

- Facilities & Management Services
- Human Resources
- Consultancy
- Healthcare
- Construction Materials (Outside the WHQS Remit)
- Furniture & Soft Furnishings
- Mail Services
- Clothing

- 4.2 The Authority via a Cabinet decision decided to opt out of the NPS and to continue with the Authority's own Procurement Strategy for the following Category areas:
- Vehicle Management
  - Catering
  - Legal Services
  - Construction Materials Associated with WHQS
  - Stationery – as long as the Joint Supplies (CBS) is in existence
  - Educational Supplies – as long as the Joint Supplies (CBS) is in existence
- 4.3 Within the last twelve (12) months the NPS has awarded three (3) contracts and are currently in the procurement process for fourteen (14) (via four (4) formal contract notices, eight (8) prior information notices (PIN) and two (2) Speculative Notices). Contract Management of a number of existing contracts have also been transferred from the Welsh Purchasing Consortium (WPC) to the NPS.
- 4.4 As the NPS function continues to develop and we see the delivery of key contracts and frameworks, it may be beneficial for the Authority to consider using arrangements, which the Authority originally decided not to participate.
- 4.5 The NPS has a robust and complicated 'opt out' procedure for use if and when an organisation wishes to withdraw from a commodity area that it had initially committed to using. This process requires sign off by the Procurement Delivery Group and Procurement Board. This process is only applicable to organisations that have given a commitment to join a specific category area. To date only a limited number of "opt out" requests have been received and all have been rejected.
- 4.6 The decision taken by Cabinet in 2012 has left this Authority in a strong position when deciding which contracts should remain under the Authority's control, having opted out for a number of category areas as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of this report. The decision taken in 2012 has given the Authority greater flexibility than other Authorities whom decided to 'opt in' for all category areas. These Authorities now find themselves involved in lengthy processes when trying to opt out of a contract that is not suitable.
- 4.7 Given the prudent approach already taken there has not been a requirement to reconsider the Authority's position as we have worked successfully within the remit of the Cabinet decision taken in 2012. However, the NPS are currently tendering the provision of legal services, which is seen as beneficial to the Authority. Officers have therefore given a provisional indication that we would wish to participate going forward, subject to Cabinet approval.
- 4.8 Going forward the Authority will require flexibility in opting into contract arrangements, which are seen as beneficial to the Authority. It is therefore recommended within the report that Cabinet gives delegated authority to the Head of Procurement, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, to opt into such arrangements when able to demonstrate value for money for the Authority. All decisions to be supported by an internal business case and agreed with the appropriate Head of Service. The same flexibility will be required in relation to opt outs.

- 4.9 A decision was taken by the Joint Committee of the Welsh Purchasing Consortium (WPC) on 24 September 2014 that funding for the current WPC model will be terminated at 31 March 2016. As a result of this decision, the work of the WPC as we know it will cease. During the transition period of expiring WPC Contracts and starting new NPS Contracts it is possible that we will see gaps in the availability of compliant contracts. Therefore, the Authority will need to manage these issues as and when necessary to reduce the risks of non-compliance to the Authority.
- 4.10 The decision taken by the WPC Joint Committee is based on the fact that most of its work has now transferred to the NPS and to continue with such an organisation is an unnecessary duplication and cost to organisations such as Caerphilly CBC.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The NPS Delivery Group has recently noted that an All Wales Framework will promote the benefits of the Welsh language, in line with the proposed requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, and Equalities in Procurement is one of the Wales-specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.
- 5.2 The Council's Procurement pre-tender questionnaire contains a requirement that organisations undertaking work or providing services on behalf of the council do so in a manner that complies with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives. This ensures that third parties do not inadvertently put the council at risk of failing to comply with its Equalities and Welsh language statutory duties.
- 5.3 An **EqIA screening** has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Welsh Government has committed to an investment of £2.4 million per annum to develop the NPS for Wales. Welsh Government will centrally fund the NPS for three (3) years to 2016/2017, after which the model will switch to a self-funding rebate model from 2017/2018 onwards. It is envisaged that the NPS will charge 0.45% levy on all purchases through NPS Contracts to fund their operation.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The staffing implications for the development of a NPS are currently unknown. There is a possibility that some staff may have TUPE rights in relation to the commodity areas suggested as Common and Repetitive.

## **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Officers have been consulted on the content of the report and views have been reflected within the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider this report and its recommendations and comment for future consideration by Cabinet.

- 9.2 That the Authority remains opted out of the commodity areas in paragraph 4.2 of this report until such time that Officers can demonstrate best value to opting in.
- 9.3 That the Authority takes forward the opportunity to opt in to the Legal Services framework currently being developed by the NPS.
- 9.4 That the decision to opt in and or out of commodity areas in the future will be delegated to the relevant member of CMT for the service area and Head of Procurement in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.

## 10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure the Authority is making procurement decisions, which can demonstrate best value to the Organisation whilst maintaining adherence to the Authority's Procurement Strategy, which includes SME Development.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2000.

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Background Papers: Procurement Review Files (contains recent review)  
 Procurement KPI File  
 Procurement Spikes Observatory Database  
 NPS Full Business Case (available in the Members Library)  
 NPS Procurement Report (November 2012)



Appendices:  
Contact Procurement Services ([procurement@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@caerphilly.gov.uk)) for an electronic copy of the Procurement Activity Pipeline

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## POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015

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

**REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Local Government Measure 2009 requires all local authorities in Wales to set and publish a set of Improvement Objectives. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) will use these Improvement Objectives to evaluate the council's likelihood of improvement and following that, the level of actual improvement that is achieved for the citizens of Caerphilly.
- 1.2 This report is to provide members with the details of the proposed Council Improvement Objective for 2015-2016 relevant to this particular scrutiny and for members to scrutinise the objective by either accepting or amending the objective (Appendix 1).

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has reviewed its existing objectives and is finalising a new set of objectives for 2015/16 (as listed in Appendix 2).

The objective that is recommended to come to this committee for regular performance monitoring is: **Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities.**

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

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

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Cabinet has undertaken a review of the 2014/15 Improvement Objectives and has decided to recommend to Council to maintain an Objective for **Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities**. The Objectives must be published as soon as possible after the end of the financial year and although not stated in the Measure, informal expectation is no later than the end of the first quarter (June 2015).
- 4.2 Part of choosing an objective is to establish the following -
  - Relevance – Is this area relevant and identifies where there is an 'unmet' need?
  - Is this an area where we need to improve upon?
  - Consultation – are these areas what citizens want us to focus on?

- Funding – Does the Medium Term Financial Plan affect whether some of these activities can still be delivered?
- Is there any new legislation, demographic or any other changes that need to be taken into account?

4.3 This objective was chosen because the WHQS Programme is a corporate priority and there needs to be an acceleration in the pace due to slippage that arose in 2014/15. It is now a statutory requirement for achieving the WHQS by 2020 and there are annual targets that must be met if the programme is to be delivered by that date. The focus should be on the number of weekly completions (internal or external works) across all contract arrangements. This means we need to retain this as an improvement objective for 2015/16.

4.4 Appendix 1 shows the actual details of the objective, what difference we plan to make, how we will measure success and what resources we have to deliver this objective.

4.5 This report asks members to consider if they are content to support this Improvement Objective and planned outcomes. Members will also play a key role in monitoring the delivery of the Improvement Objective via regular updates to Scrutiny Committee.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no equalities implications to this report that have not been considered or would adversely affect any individual or group who fall under one of the protected characteristics or wider issues as shown in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 "The WHQS Programme has a ring fenced budget supported by the Housing Revenue Account and the annual Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) from Welsh Government. The budget for the capital programme for 2015/16 is £36m. All social landlords must achieve WHQS by 2020 and the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 contains powers for the Welsh Government to take sanctions against those organisations that do not demonstrate full compliance."

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no personal implications from this report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 The result of all consultations has been incorporated into this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Members support the Improvement Objective(s) detailed and monitor delivery progress.

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

10.1 To gain Members views and approval on the Council's Improvement Objectives for 2015/16.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Measure 2009.

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Consultees: Philip G Davy, Head of Programmes (WHQS - Implementation)  
Marcus Lloyd, Deputy Head of Programmes (WHQS - Implementation)  
Cllr David Hardacre, Cabinet member for Performance & Asset Management  
Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive  
Colin Jones, Head of Performance, Property and Policy

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities  
Appendix 2 List of 2015-16 Improvement objectives under consideration

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## Our Improvement Objective – 2015/16

### Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities.

#### **1. What difference do we plan to make?**

The Welsh Government and this Council believes 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 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 WHQ Standard, helping to improve the quality of life for the 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 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 program will transform council homes, the lives of our citizens and our communities.

## **2. Why we have chosen this**

The long-term affordability of housing, effects of the current credit crunch, fuel poverty and improving the quality of housing in the social sectors, are some of the main challenges facing the Authority.

Council homes across our County Borough will require over £200 million investment over the next few years as part of a Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme.

In 2012 Council tenants took part in a ballot to have their say about the future management of their homes and they voted to remain with the Council as their landlord.

We have outlined major spending plans in the “Your Home Your Choice” document to give our housing stock a massive facelift to meet the requirements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). This is a major flagship programme that will be a boost to the local economy. In addition, the Council has set the ambition that money spent improving homes should be a catalyst to wider regeneration, improving lives and communities.

In 2008, we had an independent housing stock condition survey carried out by a company called Savills, to determine the scope of the works needed to bring our council homes up to WHQS. We have also established a ‘Caerphilly Homes Task Group’ with 7 councilors and 7 tenant representatives, who periodically meet and discuss progress within the WHQS Programme and the improvements to the housing service. The Task Group is informed by A Tenant’s Repairs and Improvements Group.

## **3. Where are we now?**

During 2014/15, we set ourselves very ambitious plans in order to progress the WHQS investment plan. However, delays and slippage in beginning the internal works contract, retendering for the external contracts and surveying issues has meant some major slippage in our work programme to date. Over 3,500 properties were scheduled for either, internal and/or external repairs and improvements during 2014/15, but we are only likely to complete around 1,000, which emphasises the importance of keeping this priority as a focus of importance.

## **4. What actions are we going to take to improve?**

There needs to be a significant increase and emphasis in the work programmes during 2015/16 to address:

- And secure, the appointment of critical front line staff (e.g. Surveyors, Clerk of Works, Tenant Liaison Officers).
- The continued delivery of the capital investment programme in respect of internal and external repairs and improvements.
- The continued pursuit of external funding opportunities to support energy improvement measures.
- The understanding and importance of carrying out timely and sensitive adaptations that meet specific needs of certain individual households.
- And adhere to the standards set out in the Charter for Trust. This applies to both the in house workforce and contractors.



- Achieve and maintain the high levels of tenant satisfaction with the work undertaken to their homes.
- 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.

### **5. How will we know we have improved?**

We will be able to demonstrate that we have made improved changes to; the quality of our social housing stock, their surrounding environments and tenants lives, through:

- The number of Internal home improvements in accordance to the WHQS guidelines.
- The number of External home improvements in accordance to the WHQS guidelines.
- Tenant satisfaction levels with any works undertaken to their homes.

### **6. Who are we going to work with to deliver this objective?**

The Council will work with tenants, community groups, other public/private and third sector organisations, in-house work groups and contractors, to deliver the WHQS programme within Welsh Government guidelines and targets.

### **7. What resources do we have to deliver this objective?**

The Welsh Government and the Council has committed to an investment programme of £200 million to meet the WHQS standards by 2020. We now have a well-established management structure in place and a recently reviewed investment strategy. Delivery of the necessary changes and improvements are, and will be, subject to certain physical resource constraints and at the mercy of wider market influences (such as the availability of quality and efficient tradesmen, contractors, access to homes and delivery of quality installation and repair products and technologies).

IO – Evidence	2014/15 Result (baseline)	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Result
<b>We will measure how much we are doing using the evidence below</b>			
Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their external elements		2275	
Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their internal elements		2242	
Number of homes in local authority ownership brought up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (the number of houses that achieved the standard in the year).		909	
<b>We will measure how well we are doing using the evidence below</b>			
Internal work (all 4 internal components – Heating, Electrics, Kitchens and Bathrooms) completed within 20 days of start of works.		90%	
Charter Trust Standards: The Charter for Trust developed in consultation with tenants and staff, which will be assessed by specific questions on the customer satisfaction survey.  This 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 (before, during and after works).		90%	
<b>We will measure whether anyone is better off using the evidence below</b>			
% of tenants whose homes have been improved internally through the WHQS programme who are satisfied with the complete works.		80%	
Number of tenants whose homes have been adapted as part of the WHQS works to meet their specific needs		Dependant on the needs identified when delivering the WHQS programme, therefore we are unable to set targets for this measure.	

Further information regarding “The Welsh Housing Quality Standard” can be found in the revised guidance for the social landlords on interpretation and achievement of WHQS July 2008, or by access to the Welsh Government website as follows:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housing-and-regeneration/housing-quality/welsh-standard/?lang=en>

**Full Set of Improvement Objectives under consideration for 2015/2016**

- Carbon Management: Energy and water conservation
- Raise the standards of educational attainment in identified vulnerable groups
- Tackling Poverty - specifically “Caerphilly residents are able to improve their income levels”
- Health and Wellbeing – focus on Smoking Cessation and Obesity (still being developed)
- Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities – (WHQS).

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## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: WHQS AND SHELTERED HOUSING COMPLEXES**

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

- 
- 1.1 The attached report was presented to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 2nd April 2015.
  - 1.2 The views expressed at the Caerphilly Homes Task Group meeting will be verbally reported to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 14th April 2014, prior to consideration of the report by Cabinet.

Author: Rebecca Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report and appendices to Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 2nd April 2015 – Agenda Item 4.

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## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 2ND APRIL 2015

**SUBJECT: WHQS AND SHELTERED HOUSING COMPLEXES**

**REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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

- 1.1 To consider a WHQS programme delivery change relating to the sheltered housing complexes. The report is seeking the views of the CHTG prior to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and presentation to Cabinet for decision.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Arising from a number of setbacks the WHQS Programme is under severe pressure to complete by 2020. Additional measures are under active investigation to expand the capacity to cope with the volume of work. The report advocates an alternative approach to implement the WHQS programme in relation to the sheltered complexes. In summary the management and delivery of the WHQS works on the sheltered schemes could be out sourced to a suitable multi disciplinary consultancy leaving just the client role in house.

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

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards.
- 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.”

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 The report presented to CHTG on 11<sup>th</sup> December on the Review of WHQS Investment Strategy and HRA Capital Programme 2015/16 outlined that major slippage had arisen during the 2014/15 financial year and that this would cause additional pressure due to the increase in the volume of properties that will need to be completed over a shorter timescale. The report presented a revised investment strategy and the implications were explained in terms of the numbers of properties that would need to be completed on a weekly basis and the rate of expenditure that would have to be achieved based on the budget estimates.

- 4.2 Since that report was prepared and agreed by Cabinet further significant slippage has been identified within the in house programme of work and with the small lots programme.
- 4.3 The programme for 2014/15 originally envisaged that either internal or external works would be completed to 3,713 properties. It is estimated that the completions by March 2015 will now be around 1000 properties i.e. around 27% of what was originally planned.
- 4.4 The WHQS Project Board has reviewed the position and concluded that unless measures are put in place to increase capacity and to expedite the implementation of such measures there is a serious threat that the WHQS will not be achieved by 2020.
- 4.5 The Council has 33 sheltered housing schemes (see appendix 1) categorised as:
- All flats and communal facilities are under one roof
  - Bungalows or flats grouped around a separate communal block
  - Blocks of flats and communal facilities under one roof plus external blocks of flats
- 4.6 In addition there are 12 units at Tredegar Street which are managed as part of the Tredegar Court Extra Care Scheme.
- 4.7 As a result of the sheltered housing review during 2013 it was resolved to reclassify four schemes without communal facilities at Denscombe, Grange Close, Nantddu, and Waunfach and these schemes will be dealt as part of the main WHQS Programme (these schemes are not included in appendix 1). Internal works at Grange Close are being undertaken in the 14 /15 financial year by the in house work force.
- 4.8 Communal facilities include lounge, kitchen, laundry, guest room, staff office. In respect of these areas it will be necessary to consider heating, electrics, emergency lighting, fire panels, kitchen, toilet facilities, DDA compliance, carpets, furnishings, decoration. The communal areas are classed as public buildings and the landlord has statutory maintenance responsibilities. In carrying out improvement works the opportunity should be taken to remove redundant plant to reduce ongoing responsibilities.
- 4.9 It was the original intention that improvement works to the sheltered complexes would be integrated within the main programme and internal and external works would be undertaken separately in accordance with the community sequence. The communal areas were to be dealt with as part of the external works programme. However around a third of the complexes have central boiler plant and some of these are in urgent need of replacement. This may also involve replacing pipe work and radiators in individual flats. In these circumstances it is not practical to split the communal work (external) from the individual units (internal work), at least as it relates to heating. The central boiler plants are commercial installations which have not been included in the scope of the work of any of the contract arrangements. The contract arrangements for external works are different in each of the three areas and were not specifically designed with the sheltered complexes in mind.
- 4.10 For those complexes which include communal facilities and flats under one roof serviced by central boiler plant it will be better to package the internal and external work together. However in view of the wider pressures on the programme there is the possibility of bundling the sheltered complexes (around 1000 accommodation units representing 10% of the stock, but note possible exclusions below) into a completely separate programme of work to be managed and delivered independently of the main programme. This potentially could speed up part of the programme but there are resource implications as to how this might be achieved. Neither the WHQS nor Procurement teams have the capacity to fast track the sheltered schemes alongside other current commitments. It is therefore advocated that consideration be given to out sourcing the management and delivery of the WHQS for the sheltered schemes to a suitable multidisciplinary consultancy with only the client role retained in house. The scope of the brief might also extend to include the tenant liaison role.



- 4.11 The WHQS business plan included provision for the conversion of bedsits to flats at two schemes, Castle Court and Waunfawr House. The remodelling is not a WHQS requirement but clearly expenditure on WHQS works on the existing schemes could be abortive if it is the intention to remodel the schemes at a future date. Conversion of 2 bedsits to one flat will have implications in terms of the total stock and rental income.
- 4.12 Three further schemes were identified for possible remodelling, St Mary's Court, Ty Melin, and Ynyswen, as part of the sheltered housing service review. The feasibility of conversion / remodelling has yet to be undertaken and no capital funding has been identified. The location of some schemes raises further questions about suitability and in some instances it may be better to completely demolish and redevelop. In response to the report the Chief Housing Officer has also raised concern about the long term future of Britannia Close. Given lack of funding and uncertainty about remodelling / conversion or redevelopment it is suggested that the six schemes affected be removed from the WHQS Programme and addressed after 2020, other than essential (health and safety) / emergency works.
- 4.13 The remaining 27 schemes would comprise the sheltered complex programme to 2020 (approximately 770 units).

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An EqIA has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and for low level or minor negative have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out.
- 5.2 The implementation of the WHQS Programme will ensure compliance where appropriate with current Building Regulations and DDA requirements. The Council's procurement processes include equalities requirements and compliance by third party contractors undertaking WHQS work.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Based on the Savills stock condition survey for the 27 schemes there is a budget provision of £10.1m (£3.1m external works, £7.0m internal works) in the business plan, which takes account that the internal works at Ysgwyddwyn have been completed. However the full extent of the work can only be determined by survey of the individual complexes. If this programme of work is outsourced to a multi disciplinary consultancy there would be fees incurred which have not been budgeted. An indicative percentage cost would be 10-12% of capital expenditure but negotiable dependent on how the commission is structured. It may be necessary to deal with essential health and safety works through ad hoc contract arrangements where these cannot be delayed.
- 6.2 It will also be necessary for the Council to maintain ongoing statutory responsibilities alongside the WHQS improvement works. There is an ongoing review to ensure there are compliant contract arrangements in place for all statutory maintenance on the sheltered complexes including those where remodelling/improvements may be deferred.
- 6.3 Even if early decisions are made on the six schemes identified for remodelling it would not be prudent to commit further major unbudgeted expenditure in the period to 2020. The buy out of the HRA will impose a borrowing cap which will result in limited headroom to cope with additional costs. There is already evidence to suggest the WHQS budget may be under pressure as a result of increased costs, for example in Rowan Place, Rhymney, and the tender costs for the small lots programme in the Eastern Valleys. In addition ongoing surveys are indicating extensive damp related problems on a number of the housing estates.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Action is being taken to increase the resources within the WHQS team. There has been limited success to date in filling a number of technical vacancies but even with these additional posts the capacity to manage the volume of work against the timescale pressure remains a major risk. Outsourcing part of the programme increases capacity and spreads the risk and will improve the confidence of delivery by 2020. The client role will be undertaken within the WHQS team.
- 7.2 A procurement process will be required to appoint a multi disciplinary consultancy. There is the possibility of using the professional services framework established by the National Procurement Service which will shorten the timescale.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 Comments received have been incorporated within the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 In view of the pressures on the WHQS programme the CHTG recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet that the sheltered complexes are packaged into a separate programme and the management and delivery is outsourced to a suitable multi disciplinary consultancy, including the option of tenant liaison.
- 9.2 The 6 complexes identified in the report where future remodelling or redevelopment is under consideration be taken out for the WHQS Programme in the period to 2020 and dealt with once decisions have been made about the long term future of these properties.

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

- 10.1 To increase the resource capacity to be able to manage and deliver WHQS by 2020 and to avoid abortive costs on those complexes which may be subject to alternative proposals for remodelling or redevelopment.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Housing Acts 1985, 1996, 2004. This is a Cabinet function.

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Consultees:

Cllr Gerald Jones	- Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr Barbara Jones	- Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Chris Burns	- Interim Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell	- Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Shaun Couzens	- Chief Housing Officer
Liz Lucas	- Head of Procurement
Marcus Lloyd	- Deputy Head of Programmes
Steve Greedy	- Project Manager
Colin Roden	- Project Manager
Alan Edmunds	- Project Manager

- Jane Roberts-Waite - Strategic Co-ordination Manager
- Lesley Allen - Principal Accountant
- Rhys Lewis - System & Performance Manager
- Joanne Green, - Housing Manager, Older Persons Services
- Gail Williams - Monitoring Officer/Principal Solicitor

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Sheltered Housing Schemes

## Appendix 1

### Sheltered Housing Schemes

1. All flats and communal facilities e.g. communal lounge, kitchen, laundry, guest room, etc are under one roof:-

Alexandra Court  
Highfield Court  
St Marys' Court  
Ty Bedwellty  
Ty Isaf  
Ty Melin  
Ty Mynyddislwyn  
Waunfawr House  
Ynyswen

2. Bungalows or flats grouped around a separate communal block housing the warden's office and communal facilities:-

Bryn Road  
Glynderw  
Glynsifi  
Greenacres  
Grove 1  
Grove 2  
Hafod y Bryn  
Heol Islwyn  
Horeb Court  
Maesteg  
Oaklands  
Pleasant Place  
Prospect Place  
St Clares  
St Peters Close  
The Willows  
Waunrhydd  
Woodland View  
Y Glyn

3. Blocks of flats and communal facilities under one roof plus external blocks of flats. Tenants in external blocks of flats share communal facilities housed in the main building:-

Britannia Close  
Castle Court  
Gwyddon Court  
St Gwladys Court  
Ysgwyddgwyn

Plus 12 units at Tredegar Street managed alongside the Tredegar Court Extra Care Scheme.



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: DRAFT SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY**

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

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

- 1.1 The report is seeking the views of Members prior to its presentation to Cabinet for approval for the introduction of a Shared Parental Leave Policy for the employees of Caerphilly County Borough Council.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report brings forward a Shared Parental Leave Policy to allow employees leave to care for a child after birth or placed for adoption in the year following the birth or adoption. Shared parental leave is a statutory right for all children due to be born or placed for adoption on or after 5 April 2015. The draft policy outlines the arrangements and notification requirements before a period of Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and the entitlement to pay during the SPL period.

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

- 3.1 The Policy links to the People Management Strategy and therefore to all other strategies, including the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance. The Council relies on employees to deliver all its strategies and service provision.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 Shared Parental Leave allows employees leave to care for a child after birth or placed for adoption in the first year following the birth or adoption. Shared parental leave is a statutory right for all parents with children due to be born or placed for adoption on or after 5 April 2015. The draft policy outlines the arrangements and notification requirements before a period of SPL and the entitlement to pay during the SPL period. A copy of the draft policy has been attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.2 As all employers in England and Wales are required to implement the provisions of the new legislation, (the legislation became effective on 1 December 2014 for any births or placements for adoption taking place on or after 5 April 2015.) it was suggested by the HR Directors Network which includes all Welsh Local Authorities that a working group be established to draw up a common policy across all twenty-two Councils in Wales, with only minor differences to take account of any local arrangements in place e.g. leave arrangements, contacts for pension issues, etc. A working group was set up in November 2014, which included an officer

from the Council and the attached draft policy has been predominately, with a few minor local changes, based on the outcome of the group's work. The local changes include references to annual leave and bank holidays, pension contributions and salary sacrifice arrangements. These local changes mean that except in relation to the pay and for antenatal/post natal classes, employees who take advantage of the SPL policy are afforded the same rights as employees who take either maternity or adoption leave.

- 4.3 SPL allows employees who are parents for babies or newly adopted children the opportunity to share up to 52 weeks leave between the parents should they wish to do so. This can be at different times or concurrently.
- 4.4 In order to qualify for this type of leave the mother has to curtail her maternity or adoption leave and give notice of her intention to take advantage of SPL. The other parent also has to be eligible to take advantage of SPL. Even if the other parent is ineligible for SPL, the Council's employee may still be eligible, but they do not have to work for the same employer, just as long as they are eligible for the leave.
- 4.5 Employees are required to give their Manager a minimum of eight weeks notice to take SPL. Leave can be taken in one continuous block, i.e. a period of continuous SPL or by giving notice that three separate periods of leave are requested during the SPL period, i.e. discontinuous leave. Employees are able to return to work in between periods of SPL. Under the legislation, the Council is able to refuse discontinuous leave requests or request that the leave is taken at an alternative time. Employees are able to change the date that they require the leave to start as long as this allows for the eight weeks notice prior to both the new and original commencement date of the SPL.
- 4.6 The Shared Parental Pay (General) Regulations 2014 ("the statutory scheme") provide that employees who take advantage of SPL (whether male or female) are only entitled to statutory payments (£139.58 per week from 5 April 2015 or 90% of normal earnings if lower.) The Council's Maternity and Adoption Policies, which are based on nationally agreed terms and conditions, provide a higher element of occupational pay as is the case for maternity and adoption leave. The Local Government Association and the Welsh Local Government Association have confirmed that there is no proposal to amend the nationally agreed terms and conditions to provide for enhanced shared parental pay. Although the Civil Service has adopted such a scheme, few employers across the UK have adopted enhanced shared parental pay schemes.
- 4.7 Paying enhanced occupational pay only to women on maternity leave or the main adopter on adoption leave is a provision, criterion or practice (PCP) with which some men and women cannot access may be indirectly discriminatory but it is considered justified in the circumstances. The cost of providing enhanced shared parental pay is considered prohibitive in light of the current savings required. The costs would also be disproportionate to the discriminatory impact as both female and male employees can access the statutory shared parental pay.
- 4.8 The option of removing the enhanced occupational maternity pay so that all employees receive pay in line with the statutory schemes has been considered but this would involve the Council moving away from nationally agreed terms and conditions and it may mean that the Council would have difficulty recruiting younger female employees. It may also mean that the Council has difficulty retaining employees who expected to be able to access the enhanced occupational maternity pay when they joined the Council. There is also concern that there may be disruption to the Council's services if larger numbers of employees have access to generous leave schemes. The Council is also conscious that to allow a more generous shared parental pay scheme than other local employers may mean that the Council is subsidising leave schemes of other less generous local employers.
- 4.9 Where both parents qualify for statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) they must decide how this period of pay (up to 37 weeks) is to be divided between them. The number of weeks where payment is made cannot exceed the 39 weeks of the maternity/adoption leave period.

It should be remembered that mothers, under health and safety legislation, must have a period of two weeks maternity/adoption leave after the birth or placement for adoption so there are only 37 weeks ShPP that can be shared between the parents.

- 4.10 In the same way that employees on maternity and adoption leave are able to return to work for up to ten days to maintain contact by undertaking Keeping in Touch days, employees on SPL are able to return to work for up to twenty days during the SPL period. Whilst undertaking these SPL In Touch (SPLIT) days, employees are paid their normal salary for the hours worked. It is not compulsory for employees to undertake these SPLIT days.
- 4.11 The introduction of SPL has resulted in the right to Additional Paternity Leave being withdrawn (as it is replaced with SPL), the Council's Paternity Leave Policy will be amended to reflect this change.
- 4.12 Previously when an employee commenced maternity or adoption leave, Managers were able to plan on the employee being absent for a given period of time. This allowed the employee's absence to be covered either by other employees absorbing the duties or by appointing someone for the maternity/adoption leave period. This will be more difficult under SPL as employees are able to return to work during the SPL period for up to three separate periods of time. It may mean that the type of cover arrangements used may change to that of temporary week to week contracts or agency cover to accommodate any discontinuous arrangements. As the take up of SPL is unknown at the moment, the Council is unsure whether this will pose a problem for resources in the future.
- 4.13 The new policy will be placed on the Council's HR Support Portal and employees will be made aware of the new policy via an all user email to employees and Managers. Managers of employees who do not have access to the Council's email system or Intranet will be asked to make their employees aware of the new policy. A series of Frequently Asked Questions will also be posted on the Council's Intranet to help both employees and Managers understand the provisions of the legislation and the Council's policy.
- 4.14 The policy will apply to all employees except those employees directly employed by schools. For the policy to apply to schools each School Governing Body is required to adopt the policy. The HR Strategy and Development Team will be working with colleagues in the EAS to facilitate this process.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An EIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance and some potential negative impact has been identified affecting one or more of the target equality groups. A full EIA has been carried out and the summary and recommendations are included below. The completed EIA is attached as Appendix 2.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The financial implications are not known at present, as it will depend on the number of employees who take advantage of the Shared Parental Leave Policy.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The personnel implications of introducing this policy are covered in the main report. There will be implications for covering this leave, particularly if it is taken discontinuously - this will be managed by each Service Area.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no other consultation responses other than those included in the report. The Council's Trade Unions and Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language) have been consulted on the introduction of the new policy.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members are asked to note that the Shared Parental Leave Policy is based on the statutory entitlement and in all aspects other than pay it mirrors the Council's Maternity and Adoption Policies.
- 9.2 Cabinet be advised that Members do not recommend that the Council adopts an enhanced Occupational Shared Parental Pay scheme.
- 9.3 Cabinet be advised that Members do not recommend that the Maternity Pay scheme is reduced to the statutory scheme only.
- 9.4 That Members consider the contents of the Report and recommend to Cabinet that the Shared Parental Leave Policy attached at Appendix 1 is adopted.

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

- 10.1 Shared Parental Leave is a statutory right and this policy sets out the Council's processes. Introducing an enhanced scheme for Shared Parental pay or reducing the Council's Maternity Pay Policy (which would involve changing the terms and conditions of all existing employees) could be cost prohibitive and may not be compatible with the Council's People Management Strategy in recruiting and retaining a balanced workforce.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972  
Local Government Act 2000  
Employment Rights Act 1996  
Shared Parental Pay (General ) Regulations 2014  
Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014

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Chris Burns, Sandra Aspinall, Dave Street, Corporate Management Team  
Gareth Hardacre, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development  
HR Service Manager (Customer Services)  
HR Managers  
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
Angharad Price, Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Dave Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Welsh Language and Equalities)  
HR Strategy Group  
Councils recognised Trade Unions

Background Papers: Shared Parental Pay (General ) Regulations 2014  
Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014  
Shared Parental Leave – A Good Practice Guide for Employers - ACAS  
Department of Business and Skills Technical Guide  
Advice Received From Both The Local Government Association and the Welsh Local Government Association



Appendices:

Appendix 1 Draft Shared Parental Leave Policy

Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment

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# Shared Parental Leave Policy

<b>Version of Policy:</b>	<b>Version 1</b>
<b>Draft Number:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Policy Ratified By:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date Ratified:</b>	
<b>Effective Date of Policy:</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> April 2015</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	
<b>Applicable To:</b>	<b>All Caerphilly employees except employees directly employed by Schools unless the School Governing Body has adopted the Policy.</b>
<b>Equalities Sentence:</b>	<b>All Equalities considerations have been taken into account when drafting this Policy. These have been reflected in all documentation during the consultation and governance processes.</b>

The Council's recognised trade unions have been consulted on this policy.



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### NOTES

In this policy, the term Manager is used to encompass anyone who has the responsibility of managing employees, including Head teachers. The policy is available on the Council Intranet site, from Managers, or from HR.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Caerphilly County Borough Council believes that its employees are its most valuable resource. Lack of recognition of an employee's outside commitments helps to contribute to negative effects, which may result in low morale, poor service provision and excessive overhead costs.
2. Caerphilly County Borough Council is committed to Equal Opportunities and the principles of work life balance working practices and seeks to ensure that policies and practices meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
3. This Scheme embraces the statutory requirements of current legislation.
4. This policy must be cross-referenced with all other relevant Council policies and procedures.

## WHAT THE POLICY COVERS

5. This policy outlines qualifying employees' right to take shared parental leave (SPL) to care for a child due to be born or placed for adoption on or after 5th April 2015. It also outlines the arrangements and notification requirements before a period of SPL and the entitlement to pay during SPL.
6. SPL gives you and your partner more flexibility in how to share the care of your child in the first year after birth or adoption than simply taking maternity/adoption and paternity leave. Assuming you are both eligible, you will be able to choose how to split the available leave between you, and can decide to be off work at the same time or at different times. You may be able to take leave in more than one block.
7. This policy must be used to apply for any periods of SPL.
8. If you are the mother you cannot start SPL until after the compulsory maternity leave period, which lasts until two weeks after birth.
9. If you are the child's father or the mother's partner, you should consider using your two weeks' paternity leave before taking SPL. Once you start SPL you will lose any untaken paternity leave entitlement. SPL entitlement is additional to your paternity leave entitlement.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

10. SPL allows employees with the main caring responsibilities for babies or newly adopted children the opportunity to share up to 52 weeks leave between parents should they wish to do so. The 52 weeks is reduced by any maternity leave that is taken – there is a compulsory period of 2 weeks maternity leave. SPL does not replace ordinary paternity leave.
11. The only provision for parents having a child via a surrogacy arrangement under this legislation is where a parental order has been made. The Council will deal with requests for SPL in these circumstances on a case by case basis. Heads of Service should discuss any cases with HR.
12. To be entitled to SPL you must:
  - be the mother, father, or main adopter of the child, or the partner of the mother or main adopter (each will be referred to in this policy as a parent – a partner is a spouse, civil partner or someone living with you in an enduring family relationship but not your sibling, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew);

- have (or share with the other parent) the main responsibility for the child's upbringing;
- have at least 26 weeks continuous service with the Council [or continuous local government service] at the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth or at the week in which the main adopter was notified of having been matched for adoption with the child (known as the relevant week);
- still be in continuous employment until the week before any SPL is taken.

In addition the other parent must:

- have at least 26 weeks employment (employed or self employed) out of the 66 weeks prior to the relevant week;
- have average weekly earnings of at least £30 during at least 13 of the 66 weeks prior to the relevant week.

13. If the other parent meets these conditions, but does not qualify for SPL themselves, the Council's employee may still be entitled to the whole SPL period.

#### **ENTITLEMENT TO SHARED PARENTAL PAY**

14. In addition to the requirements regarding entitlement to leave as outlined above, if you wish to claim Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) you must have an average weekly earnings equal to or above the Lower Earnings Limit over the eight week period ending with the relevant week.
15. A maximum of 39 weeks ShPP (reduced at least by the 2 weeks compulsory maternity leave period) is payable and this will be reduced by the number of week's statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance already taken by the mother or main adopter. ShPP is a standard weekly rate (or 90% of your normal weekly earnings if this is lower) which is set by the government each tax year.
16. In all cases the statutory notification, declaration and information requirements must be followed. In particular there are limited exceptions to the requirement to give 8 weeks notice. These are
- In the case of the father/partner, where the mother dies.
  - In the case of the mother, where the father/partner dies.
  - Where the baby is born more than 8 weeks early.
17. The Shared Parental Pay (General) Regulations 2014 do not provide for you to be paid 90% of earnings for the first 6 weeks of the ShPP period where this is higher than the statutory rate as is the case for statutory maternity/adoption pay. You are not able to work for any other employer, whilst on a period of ShPP, unless the arrangement was in place prior to the commencement of the ShPP.
18. If both parents qualify for ShPP they must decide who will receive it or how it will be divided and inform their respective employers in writing accordingly. ShPP will end once the total received by both parents (including any weeks of SMP, MA or SAP) reaches 39 weeks. The legislation also prescribes a date after which no further ShPP will be paid even if the full 39-week entitlement has

not been used up. In relation to the birth of a child, ShPP must be used before the child's first birthday. In relation to the adoption of a child, ShPP must be used before the first anniversary of the date the child was placed for adoption. SLP and ShPP may be suspended where you are too ill to care for your child. In that situation, you may be entitled to sick pay if you are not fit for work.

## SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE OPTIONS

19. SPL allows the leave to:
  - start on any day of the week;
  - only be taken in complete weeks (e.g. starts on Tuesday and finishes following Monday);
  - be taken in up to three separate blocks of leave;
  - be taken by both parents at the same time as long as the combined leave does not exceed a total of 50 weeks, taking into account the need for the mother/main adopter/intended parent to take a minimum of 2 weeks;
  - be taken at separate times by the parents.
20. You and your Manager should, where possible, have an informal discussion prior to you giving formal notification of your intention to take SPL so that statutory (and contractual) entitlements to other types of leave and pay can be discussed, and to ensure that plans for any discontinuous periods of leave can be considered as early as possible (See Pattern of Shared Parental Leave below).

## SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE CONDITIONS

21. You have the option to choose SPL at any time whilst you are eligible (within a year of the birth/adoption) as long as you meet the notification requirement of notifying at least eight weeks before the start date, apart from in the limited exceptions outlined in paragraph 16 above.
22. You have the option to give three separate notifications of a period of SPL.
23. Parents do not have to be working for the same employer to be eligible. A mother/main adopter can only share parental leave with **one** other person. It should be noted that SPL can only be used by the mother/main adopter after they have either returned to work, or given notice that reduces their maternity/adoption leave, confirming when the maternity/adoption leave will come to an end in the form of a 'maternity curtailment notice'. This notice is binding and cannot be withdrawn except in the following circumstances:
  - if it becomes apparent that neither parent is entitled to SPL or ShPP;
  - if the curtailment notice was given before the birth and is revoked within 6 weeks of the birth (in this case another curtailment notice can be submitted);
  - if the other parent dies.

## NOTICE OF ENTITLEMENT AND INTENTION

24. The notification requirements for SPL and ShPP are very specific and detailed. Other than for specific exceptions the legislation does not allow the Council to waive the 8 week notification period.

25. You will need to complete the form at Appendix 1 as fully as possible which has been designed to assist you to provide the required information and declarations. You should return this form to your Line Manager, who will forward it on to HR.
26. The minimum requirements by law are:-
  - ' A maternity curtailment notice' (if appropriate);
  - Notice of entitlement and intention;
  - A period of leave notice.
27. In practice, at least your first period of SPL will be identified in your initial notice of entitlement and intention to take SPL. You are entitled to submit a maximum of a further two 'periods of leave' notices. Each notice must be given at least eight weeks before you want to start a period of leave, stating the dates of the leave and the dates on which ShPP will be claimed, if applicable.
28. If your first 'period of leave' notice is given prior to the birth/placement of your child, the notice may express the start date in relation to the date of birth/placement, for example 'starting two weeks after the baby is born for a period of four weeks'.

#### **PATTERN OF SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE**

29. SPL can be taken as either a 'continuous' block or multiple 'discontinuous' blocks.

##### ***A Continuous Block***

This is an unbroken period of leave, e.g. for a period of six weeks leave. If you are eligible for SPL, you have a statutory right to take SPL in this way.

If you request a continuous period of leave in each period of leave notice, you will be entitled to take that period of leave and this will be confirmed to you in writing.

##### ***Discontinuous Block***

This is a period leave but with breaks in between the leave where you return to work, e.g. 3 weeks leave, followed by a return to work for 6 weeks, followed by another period of leave.

30. Discontinuous leave can only be taken with the Council's agreement, and once a request for discontinuous leave has been made the request must be discussed by you and your Line Manager within a period of 14 calendar days. Your Manager will discuss your requests with you to determine whether the request
  - can be accommodated and the leave approved;
  - propose an alternative pattern of leave which can be agreed;
  - or the request can be refused.

Your Line Manager's decision will be confirmed in writing.

31. If no agreement is reached within two weeks of the period of leave notice being submitted you can:



- take the leave requested in one continuous block, beginning on the original start date;
- take a continuous block of leave starting on a new date, as long as the new date is later than the original start date and your Line Manager is notified of the new date within five days of the two week period referred to above;
- withdraw the request at any time up to the 15th day after it was originally made. If the request is withdrawn in these circumstances it will not count as one of the three requests allowed.

## **VARYING A PERIOD OF LEAVE**

32. You can submit a request to vary a period of leave in the following ways:
- vary the start or end date as long as the variation is requested at least eight weeks before the original start date and the new start date;
  - vary or cancel the amount of leave requested at least eight weeks before the original start date;
  - request that a single period of leave becomes a discontinuous period of leave or vice versa.
33. A variation will count as one of your three periods of leave notice requests (See above) unless:
- it is made as a result of the child being born earlier or later than the expected week of childbirth. The usual eight week notice requirement may be modified if the child is born early and the new start date for the period of leave is the same length of time following the birth as in the original notice. In this case notice to vary the start date should be given as soon as reasonably practicable after the birth of the child;
  - the Council has requested the variation.

## **SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE - KEEPING IN TOUCH DAYS (SPLIT DAYS)**

34. The Council has the right to ask you to attend work on occasional days during the SPL period. These days could be for training, to attend department meetings, or just for keeping in touch in line with same principle as KIT days for maternity and adoption leave. There is no obligation on you to work during SPL and there is no obligation on the Council to offer you work. You will accrue pension for any SPLIT days worked.
35. There are 20 SPLIT days available during SPL which are in addition to the 10 KIT days available during maternity and adoption leave.
36. You may work for up to 20 SPLIT days without bringing the SPL to an end. Any work undertaken during SPL will not extend the SPL period. If you undertake any work you will be paid at your normal rate of pay inclusive of any ShPP entitlements.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS DURING SPL**

37. Your contract of employment continues in force during your period of SPL and you are entitled to receive all your contractual benefits, except for remuneration. SPL does not affect incremental salary increases or honorarium payments. If you are entitled to receive a telephone allowance as part of your remuneration you will continue to do so for the period of your paid SPL.

## PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

38. Pension contributions will continue to be made during any period when you are receiving Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) but not during any period of unpaid SPL. Your contributions will be based on actual pay whilst the Council's contributions will be based on the salary that you would have received had you not been taking SPL. If you wish to consider making additional payments you should contact Payroll.

Your pension benefits will remain the same as if you had not been absent from work on SPL. If you require any further details on the Scheme please contact the Greater Gwent Pensions Section at Torfaen County Borough Council on 01495 766266 or alternatively visit the website [www.greatergwentpensions.co.uk](http://www.greatergwentpensions.co.uk).

## ANNUAL LEAVE AND BANK HOLIDAYS

39. SPL does not affect annual leave entitlement and existing conditions of service apply. Therefore an employee will be entitled to their full annual leave provision during the period of their SPL. An employee may end their SPL and immediately commence annual leave, without having to physically return to work. This must be agreed with the Line Manager in the normal manner. If an employee's SPL spans two years and they have not used all of their annual leave prior to commencing their SPL they will be able to carry any remaining annual leave into the new year.
40. SPL does not affect Bank Holiday entitlement and existing conditions of service apply. Any employee who is on SPL will receive a day back in lieu. Employees may return to work and immediately commence accrued Bank Holiday leave. This must be agreed with the Line Manager in the normal manner.

## SALARY SACRIFICE

41. If you have joined any of the Council's salary sacrifice schemes, arrangements will be made with you to ensure that any salary sacrifice schemes continue during your period of SPL as part of your continuing contractual benefits and in line with the similar arrangements in place for those employees on Maternity and Adoption leave. When you return to work, the total value of the salary sacrifice payments accrued during the period where no salary reduction has taken place will be notified to you and an agreement made with Payroll as to how the outstanding amount will be repaid.

## RETURNING FROM SPL

42. If you wish to return early from SPL you must notify your Line Manager at least eight weeks before both the original end date and the new end date. The Council can insist that you still take the eight week notice period as SPL before returning.
43. If you return to work immediately after a period of SPL which (together with any statutory maternity/adoption leave taken in relation to the same child) is **26 weeks or less**, you will return to the same job.
44. If you do not wish to return to work at the end of a period of SPL, you must give your Line Manager notice in the usual way.
45. If you return to work immediately after a period of SPL which (together with any statutory maternity/adoption leave taken in relation to the same child) is **26 weeks or more** you will normally be entitled to return to the same job unless that is not reasonably practicable in which case you will return to another job which is suitable and appropriate under the circumstances.

46. Your right to return means that you will return on terms and conditions that are no less favorable than those that would have been applied had you not been absent. Your return will be at the same level of seniority, pension rights and any other similar rights.
47. Under Flexible Working legislation the Council shall take all reasonable steps to accommodate requests from employees to return on less or different hours following a period of SPL. Employees have no automatic right to return to work on reduced hours and such requests shall be considered in light of operational and organisational considerations. Please refer to the Council's Flexible Working Policy for details.

#### **PROTECTION FROM DETRIMENT AND DISMISSAL**

48. You are protected from suffering detriment or unfair dismissal for reasons related to taking, or seeking to take SPL.
49. This policy and its associated provisions covers employees on fixed term contracts. If the fixed term contract ends immediately before or during the SPL period, the future of the post will be decided after considering the operational requirements of the Service.

#### **FRAUDULENT CLAIMS**

50. The Council can, where there is a suspicion that fraudulent information may have been provided or where the organisation has been informed by the HMRC that a fraudulent claim was made, investigate the matter further in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure, acting in a non-discriminatory manner in relation to any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. There is also provision in the legislation for the Council to check any employee's entitlement to ShPP or SPL.

#### **INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICY**

51. In the event of a dispute relating to the interpretation of this policy the Head of Workforce and Organisational Development or the Human Resources Service Manager will make the final decision on interpretation.

#### **REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

52. A review of this policy will take place when appropriate. Any amendments will be consulted on with all the relevant parties. However, in the case of amendments relating to legislative requirements, the scheme will be amended and reissued.

**APRIL 2015**

**Notice Of Entitlement And Intention To Take Shared Parental Leave (SPL) Form**

Employees with a child due to be born or placed for adoption on or after 5th April 2015 who wish to take shared parental leave (SPL) to share the main caring responsibilities with the other parent/partner must submit this form to their Line Manager at least eight weeks before the start date of the first period of SPL.

To be entitled to SPL you must:

- be the mother, father or main adopter/intended parent of the child, or partner of the mother or main adopter/intended parent (referred to in this form as parent);
- have (or share with the other parent) the main responsibility for the care of the child;
- have at least 26 weeks continuous service at the 15th week before the expected week of birth or at the week in which the main adopter was notified as having been matched for adoption with the child (known as the relevant week);
- still be in continuous employment until the week before any SPL is taken.

The other parent must have at least 26 weeks employment (employed or self-employed) out of the 66 weeks prior to the relevant week and have average weekly earnings of at least £30 during at least 13 of those weeks.

Please refer to the Shared Parental Leave Policy before completing this form.

**Section 1 - Basic Details**

<b>Employee Name:</b>	
<b>Employee Number:</b>	
<b>Service Area:</b>	
<b>Child's expected date of birth/date of placement for adoption:</b>	
<b>Child's actual date of birth/date of placement for adoption (if known):</b>	
<b>Start date of mother/main adopter's/intended parent's maternity/adoption/surrogacy leave (or pay period:*)</b>	
<b>End date of mother/main adopter's/ intended parent's maternity /adoption/surrogacy leave (or pay period *):</b>	

\* the start and end dates of the statutory maternity/adoption/surrogacy pay or maternity allowance period if the mother/main adopter/intended parent is not entitled to statutory leave

## Section 2 - Shared Parental Leave Details

The total amount available is 50 weeks minus the number of weeks leave/pay already taken by the mother/main adopter/intended parent according to the dates given in Section 1.

<b>Total number of weeks SPL available:</b>	
<b>Number of weeks SPL you intend to take:</b>	
<b>Number of weeks SPL the other parent intends to take:</b>	
<b>Indication of start and end dates of SPL that you intend to take:</b>  <i>This indication is non-binding. You must submit a formal period of leave notice for each period of SPL you wish to request for it to be binding. Complete the section below if you wish your request for any/all of these periods of leave to be treated as a period of leave notice</i>	
<b>Do you wish the dates indicated for the period/s of leave to constitute a formal (binding) period of leave notice?:</b> <b>Delete as applicable</b>	Yes/No Yes for the following dates only:

## Section 3 - Shared Parental Pay Details

The total amount of Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) which may be available is 37weeks minus the number of weeks' pay already taken by the mother/main adopter/intended parent according to the dates given in Section1.

<b>Total number of weeks ShPP available:</b>	
<b>Number of weeks ShPP you intend to claim:</b>	
<b>Number of weeks ShPP the other parent intends to claim:</b>	
<b>Indication of start and end dates of your ShPP periods:</b>	

**Section 4 - Employee Notice Of Curtailment Of Maternity/Adoption/Surrogacy Leave**

Complete this section if you are the employee named in this notice and you are the mother or main adopter or intended parent. You must give at least eight weeks' notice of your curtailment date. If you are entitled to maternity leave the curtailment date must be at least two weeks after the birth of your child (four weeks if you work in a factory).

I wish my maternity leave to end on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date)

**Section 5 - Employee Declaration**

I confirm that I meet the following conditions:

- I am the mother, father or main adopter or intended parent of the child, or the partner of the mother or main adopter;
- I have (or share with the other parent) the main responsibility for the care of the child and am taking SPL in order to care for the child;
- I have at least 26 weeks continuous service with the Council at the 15th week before the expected week of birth or at the week in which the main adopter was notified of having been matched for adoption with the child (known as the relevant week):
- I intend to be in continuous employment until the week before any SPL is taken;
- If I am claiming shared parental pay I have average weekly earnings equal to or above the Lower Earnings Limit over the eight week period ending with the relevant week I agree to inform the Council immediately if I cease to meet the conditions for entitlement to SPL or ShPP.

If you are the mother or main adopter or intended parent:

- I have submitted a curtailment of maternity/adoption/surrogacy leave notice by completing Section 4 above

<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Print Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

**Section 6 Declaration Of Other Parent**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>National Insurance Number::</b>	

I confirm that I meet the following conditions:

- I have at least 26 weeks employment (employed or self-employed) out of the 66 weeks prior to the 15th week before the expected date of birth or at the week in which the main adopter was notified as having been matched for adoption with the child (known as the relevant week);
- I have average weekly earnings of at least £30 during at least 13 weeks of the 66 weeks prior to the relevant week;
- I agree to inform your employee immediately if I cease to meet the two conditions above;
- I consent to your employee taking SLP and ShPP as set out in Sections 2 and 3 above.

If you are the mother/main adopter/intended parent:

- I have curtailed my maternity leave and pay/adoption/surrogacy leave and pay/maternity allowance or will have done so by the time your employee starts SPL.

I consent to you processing the information contained within the declaration.

<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

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# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

December 2014

## THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

<b>NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL*</b>	Shared Parental Leave Policy
<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	Directorate of Corporate Services
<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	HR
<b>CONTACT OFFICER</b>	Susan Christopher
<b>DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION</b>	2017

**\*Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, 'proposal' is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities issues have been consciously considered throughout the decision making processes of the work undertaken by every service area in the Council and work done at a corporate level.

The form should be used if you have identified a need for a full EIA following the screening process covered in the Equalities Implications in Committee Reports Guidance document (available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal on the intranet).

The EIA should highlight any areas of risk and maximise the benefits of proposals in terms of Equalities. It therefore helps to ensure that the Council has considered everyone who might be affected by the proposal.

It also helps the Council to meet its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011. There is also a requirement under Human Rights legislation for Local Authorities to consider Human Rights in developing proposals.

The Council's work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the Strategic Equalities Objectives and Action Plan 2012.

This approach strengthens work to promote Equalities by helping to identify and address any potential discriminatory effects before introducing something new or changing working practices, and reduces the risk of potential legal challenges.

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal (the Committee report guidance mentioned above, the Consultation and Monitoring guidance) and the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team can offer support as the EIA is being developed - the contact email is [equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk).

## PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

<b>1</b>	<p><b>What is the proposal intended to achieve?</b>  <i>(Please give a brief description of the purpose of the new or updated proposal by way of introduction.)</i></p> <p>The policy gives employees their statutory entitlement to shared parental leave and pay as part of their terms and conditions of employment.</p>
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<b>2</b>	<p><b>Who are the service users affected by the proposal?</b>  <i>(Who will be affected by the delivery of this proposal? e.g. staff members, the public generally, or specific sections of the public i.e. youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits etc.)</i></p> <p>Employees</p>
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## IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

<b>3</b>	<p><b>Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals?</b>  <i>(What has been done to examine whether or not these groups have equal access to the service, or whether they need to receive the service in a different way from other people?)</i></p> <p>The policy is only applicable to employees who meet the statutory requirements (An EIA was completed by the UK Government when the statutory scheme was introduced.) Under Local Government terms and conditions of service, which are nationally agreed, there is a more beneficial system of Occupational Maternity leave and pay; shared parental leave and pay applies only when maternity leave is curtailed.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p>

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<b>4</b>	<p><b>What are the consequences of the above for specific groups?</b>  <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect affect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy or savings proposal differ dependent upon people’s disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, language, religion/belief?)</i></p> <p>The policy ensures that any employees who are parents can take leave in the first year after the birth of their child or after adoption. The policy applies to both male and female employees who have the main responsibility of caring for a child.</p> <p>While shared parental leave is designed to give both parents the opportunity to participate in caring for their child during its first year, the operation of the scheme is dependent on the mother choosing to bring her maternity leave to an end or the main adopter bringing their adoption leave to an end. In <a href="#"><u>Shuter v Ford Motor Company Ltd ET/3203504/13</u></a>, a male employee whose employer failed to provide enhanced additional paternity pay while providing enhanced maternity pay claimed direct and/or indirect sex discrimination. The tribunal rejected Mr Shuter's analogy with <i>Alvarez</i> when he argued that his comparator was a female employee who had given birth and taken maternity leave exceeding 20 weeks. The rationale behind this comparator was that, since the earliest point at which a woman could elect to end her maternity leave and transfer the balance to the other parent, the purpose of leave from that point was for childcare. The tribunal considered that the right to take additional paternity leave was not a free-standing right but was dependent on the mother choosing to return to work. In each case, the mother would make that decision in the light of her own personal circumstances. The Council do not therefore consider that not paying enhanced occupational shared parental pay is direct discrimination.</p> <p>However, the Council accepts that paying enhance occupational pay only to women on maternity leave and main adopters on adoption leave is a provision, criterion or practice (PCP) with which some men and women cannot access, and may be indirectly discriminatory. In <i>Shuter</i> (above), the only question for the tribunal (due to Ford conceding the other points) was whether Ford could justify its PCP, of paying women basic pay when on leave beyond 20 weeks after the birth of a child when looking after the child, as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The tribunal accepted that Ford's aim in paying full basic pay to women on maternity leave was to recruit and retain women in its male-dominated workforce. The tribunal concluded that this aim was being successfully achieved by the enhanced maternity package, as demonstrated and supported by documentary evidence going back to 1999. The tribunal also accepted that the aim was legitimate.</p> <p>The Council has a balance of female and male employees. The enhanced occupational maternity pay has been a part of local government terms and conditions for many decades. The enhanced adoption pay is also part of nationally agreed terms and conditions. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest</p>
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	<p>that they enable the Council to recruit and retain female employees. In addition to this, the Council has acknowledged that it has an ageing workforce and is actively considering ways to encourage younger employees. Enhanced occupational maternity pay is also a key tool in recruitment of younger female employees.</p> <p>The cost of providing enhanced shared parental pay is considered prohibitive in light of the current austerity and savings required. The costs would also be disproportionate to the discriminatory impact as both female and male employees can access the statutory shared parental pay. The option of removing the enhanced occupational maternity and adoption pay so that all employees receive pay in line with the statutory schemes has been considered but this would involve the Council moving away from nationally agreed terms and conditions and it may mean that the Council would have difficulty recruiting younger female employees. It may also mean that the Council has difficulty retaining employees who expected to be able to access the enhanced occupational maternity pay when they joined the Council. There is also concern that there may be disruption to the Council's services if larger numbers of employees have access to generous leave schemes.</p> <p>The Council is also conscious that to allow a more generous shared parental pay scheme than other local employers may mean that the Council is subsidising shared parental pay, adoption and maternity schemes of other less generous employers.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p>

## INFORMATION COLLECTION

<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Is full information and analysis of users of the service available?</b>  <i>(Is this service effectively engaging with all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation of uptake by one or more groups? If so, what has been done to address any difference in take up of the service? Does any savings proposals include an analysis of those affected?)</i></p> <p>It is not known at present what the take up of shared parental leave or pay may be. The policy will be reviewed to consider the implications once it has begun.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p>

## CONSULTATION

<b>6</b>	<p><b>What consultation has taken place?</b> <i>(What steps have been taken to ensure that people from various groups have been consulted during the development of this proposal? Have the Council's Equalities staff been consulted? Have you referred to the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance?)</i></p> <p>Consultation has been undertaken with the Council's recognised trade unions, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language), Legal and Governance, Corporate Management Team, HR Strategy Group.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p>

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

<b>7</b>	<p><b>How will the proposal be monitored?</b> <i>(What monitoring process has been set up to assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community, or that the savings proposals are achieving the intended outcomes with no adverse impact? Are comments or complaints systems set up to record issues by Equalities category to be able analyse responses from particular groups?)</i></p> <p>The decision on whether the statutory Shared Parental Leave Scheme is to be retained or an enhanced Shared Parental Leave Scheme is to be introduced will be reviewed one year after the introduction of the Scheme. This review will be undertaken looking at the numbers of applications for Shared Parental Leave received, feedback from other local Councils in Wales, any case law, any complaints and trade union feedback received.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p>

<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>How will the above be evaluated?</b>  <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p> <p>Review to be undertaken one year after the policy has been effective, taking account of the feedback received from the avenues identified above.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p> <p>Evaluation of the feedback received.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified?</b>  <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equality training of some sort?)</i></p> <p>Training for HR employees in operation of the policy/legislation – undertaken on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015.</p> <p>Guidance provided to Managers on the operation of the policy in the light of requests that they receive.</p> <p>Equalities guidance document on entitlements of parents to Shared Parental Leave and associated policies to be placed on the HR Support Portal for all employees.</p> <p>Frequently Asked Questions to be added to the HR Support Portal.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p> <p>Equalities guidance to be written and Frequently Asked Questions to be added to the HR Support Portal.</p>

10	<p><b>Where you have identified mitigating factors in previous answers that lessen the impact on any particular group in the community, or have identified any elsewhere, please summarise them here.</b></p> <p>Please refer to Section 7.</p>
11	<p><b>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment?</b>  <i>(What use will you make of this document i.e. as a consultation response, appendix to approval reports, publicity etc. in addition to the mandatory action shown below?)</i></p> <p>To inform any future decisions on the policy.</p>
	<p><b><u>Actions required</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EIA, when completed, to be returned to <a href="mailto:equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk">equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk</a> for publishing on the Council's website.</li> </ul>

<b>Completed By:</b>	Susan Christopher
<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2015
<b>Position:</b>	Principal HR Officer
<b>Name of Head of Service:</b>	Gareth Hardacre





## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON RESERVES**

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

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

1.1 To present the Scrutiny Committee with details of the usable reserves held by the Authority.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 The report provides details of the usable reserves held by the Authority. The Appendix to the report shows an opening balance of £97.165m (in accordance with the audited Statement of Accounts for the 2013/14 financial year), anticipated movements for 2014/15 and the projected balance on reserves as at the 31st March 2015.

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

3.1 Ensuring that adequate General Fund balances are maintained to meet any unforeseen expenditure and the establishment of specific reserves to meet known future financial commitments are key elements of prudent financial management.

### **4. THE REPORT**

4.1 Appendix 1 provides details of the Authority's usable reserves. Members will note that the audited opening balance totalled £97.165m and that the projected balance as at the 31st March 2015 is £89.080m. The following paragraphs provide a detailed commentary on the reserves: -

#### **4.2 General Fund**

4.2.1 As part of the annual budget setting process the Section 151 Officer recommends to Council a prudent level of General Fund reserves. In recent years £10m has been recommended which is circa 3% of the Authority's net revenue budget. Members will recall that at its meeting on the 25th February 2015 Council approved the budget for the 2015/16 financial year. This included the proposed use of General Fund balances resulting in a projected balance as at the 31st March 2015 of £10.078m.

#### 4.3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

4.3.1 HRA funds must be ring-fenced and cannot be transferred into General Fund balances. The projected balance on the HRA usable reserves as at the 31st March 2015 is £15.333m and much of this funding will be utilised for the £200m WHQS Capital Programme.

#### 4.4 Capital Reserves

4.4.1 The total projected capital reserves of £28.932m are ring-fenced for the Authority's Capital Programme, including approved matched funding for 21st Century Schools.

#### 4.5 Corporate Services

4.5.1 The projected year-end balance on Corporate Services reserves is £22.999m. The following table provides further details: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
Trehir Reserve	0.585	Required by External Auditors for former landfill site.
Invest to Save Reserve	0.157	To provide repayable one-off financial support for service initiatives that deliver cashable savings.
Insurance Earmarked Reserve	4.807	Self-insurance facility. Authority's insurance excess is £250k. All claims below this level are funded through the reserve.
Risk Management Reserve **	0.551	To support risk management initiatives that mitigate insurance claims.
Service Initiative Reserve	0.157	To support Corporate building schemes.
Electoral Admin Reserve	0.219	Funding set-aside annually for local elections.
Health & Safety Initiatives	0.182	To meet unavoidable cost pressures in Council establishments.
PC Replacement Reserve	1.738	This is committed to fund the current upgrade of IT equipment and Microsoft Office across the Authority (details included in a report to P&R Scrutiny in June 2014).
PFI Equalisation Reserve	12.953	Committed to funding approved PFI Schemes.
Salix Finance	0.272	To support energy saving initiatives.
Other	1.378	Mainly accumulated retained service underspends.
<b>Total: -</b>	<b>22.999</b>	

4.5.2 Members will note from the above table that the £1.378m 'Other' reserves relate in the main to accumulated retained service underspends. Cabinet has previously agreed a policy whereby service areas retain 50% of reported underspends at the financial year-end. Conversely, any service based overspends are carried forward by the service areas responsible for generating the overspends. This approach has worked well as there is full ownership and accountability by Senior Officers in respect of delivering a balanced budget. Moving forward these retained surpluses are likely to be required to support the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (particularly in relation to severance costs to support down-sizing).

#### 4.6 Environment Directorate

4.6.1 The projected year-end balance on Environment Directorate reserves is £0.915m. The following table provides further details: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
Community Regeneration Reserves	0.202	Approved funding to be drawn down.
Area Forum Reserve	0.163	This will be utilised to support agreed MTFP savings in this area.
Cemeteries Reserve **	0.266	Funds set-aside to meet the capital cost of future land acquisition for Cemeteries.
Accumulated Service Underspends	0.284	As per agreed policy (see paragraph 4.5.2)
<b>Total: -</b>	<b>0.915</b>	

#### 4.7 Education & Leisure

4.7.1 The projected year-end balance on Education & Leisure reserves is £6.043m. The following table provides further details: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
Local Management of Schools **	1.659	Accumulated underspends on Local Management of Schools revenue budget. Reserve maintained to support potential redundancy costs in schools, statutory maintenance costs and other unforeseen unavoidable cost pressures.
Service Initiative Reserve	0.122	Fire alarm upgrades and equalisation of Home to School Transport costs.
Schools PFI Earmarked Reserves **	0.512	Contingent sum for unforeseen cost pressures for 2 PFI schools.
School Balances	2.746	Net overall retained underspends ring-fenced to schools.
Accumulated Service Underspends	1.004	As per agreed policy (see paragraph 4.5.2)
<b>Total: -</b>	<b>6.043</b>	

#### 4.8 Social Services

4.8.1 The projected year-end balance on Social Services reserves is £2.059m. The following table provides further details: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
Community Activities Reserve	0.042	To support trading activities in Day Centres.
Service Initiatives Reserve	0.500	Operation Jasmine (£112k), Immediate Response Team (£343k), Other (£45k).
Accumulated Service Underspends	1.517	As per agreed policy (see paragraph 4.5.2)
<b>Total: -</b>	<b>2.059</b>	

4.8.2 £343k of the Service Initiatives Reserve was originally set-aside to fund a pilot Immediate Response Team within Children's Services to deal with situations where children are at risk of becoming 'looked after' by the Authority. Due to revenue budget underspends across the Social Services Directorate in recent years the Team has been funded from core revenue budget and there has been no requirement to draw on the reserve. Furthermore, due to the success of the Team in avoiding potentially expensive placements, funding for the Team has now been built into the Social Services revenue budget from the 2015/16 financial year. However, demographic change is likely to impact on the Social Services revenue budget in future years and Members will recall that for the 2015/16 financial year no growth has been allocated to Social Services for these potential pressures. At this stage, it would be prudent to retain the reserve of £343k along with the 'Accumulated Service Underspends' of £1.517m.

#### 4.9 Released/Partially Released Reserves

4.9.1 The budget proposals approved by Council at its meeting on the 25th February 2015 included the release of reserves totalling £757k to General Fund balances (as detailed in item 8 of Appendix 1). However, Members will note from the Appendix that reserves were only partially released in two areas and that balances of £1.030m and £1.690m remain.

4.9.2 The balance of £1.030m relates to approved funding set-aside in previous years to meet potential pension deficits and this funding is likely to be required.

4.9.3 The following table provides a summary of the other remaining balance of £1.690m: -

Reserve	Amount £m	Description
Careline	0.112	Cumulative underspend on the revenue budget.
Counsel Fees	0.294	These costs can be volatile and the reserve is maintained to support the core revenue budget, which has been reduced for 2015/16.
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	0.065	Cumulative underspend on the revenue budget of circa £14m.
Apprenticeship Scheme	0.697	This will be utilised to support agreed MTFP savings in this area.
Members Services **	0.272	Cumulative underspend on the revenue budget.
Grants to the Voluntary Sector	0.116	Cumulative underspend on the revenue budget. Circa £30k of this will be used in 2015/16 to support MTFP savings on the Grants to the Voluntary Sector revenue budget.
Other **	0.134	Cumulative underspends on HR recruitment advertising budget and legal costs.
<b>Total: -</b>	<b>1.690</b>	

4.10 The items marked \*\* in the tables in this report are currently under review. However, Members should note that any further sums identified for release to General Fund balances can only be used for one-off purposes.

## 5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process does not need to be applied.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 As detailed throughout the report.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

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

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the content of the report.

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

10.1 To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee is provided with details of the usable reserves held by the Authority.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Local Government Acts 1998 and 2003.

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Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer  
Andrew Southcombe, Finance Manager, Corporate Finance  
Cllr Barbara Jones, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Appendices: -  
Appendix 1 List of Usable Reserves

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	Service Area	C.C.	Subj	Description	Audited Balance (31/03/14)	Anticipated Movement 2014-15	Projected Balance (31/03/15)
<b>1) General Fund</b>							
Corporate Services	CORPORATE BAL SHEET	9931	D781	FUND BALANCES -COUNCIL FUND	16,134,119	(6,056,119)	10,078,000
<b>Total General Fund</b>					<b>16,134,119</b>	<b>(6,056,119)</b>	<b>10,078,000</b>
<b>2) Housing Revenue Account</b>							
	HRA			VARIOUS	15,543,460	(210,000)	15,333,460
<b>Total HRA</b>					<b>15,543,460</b>	<b>(210,000)</b>	<b>15,333,460</b>
<b>3) Capital Reserves</b>							
All	CAPITAL EARMARKED RESERVES			VARIOUS	8,162,634	1,003,000	9,165,634
All	USEABLE CAPITAL RECEIPTS			VARIOUS	9,857,518		9,857,518
All	CAPITAL GRANTS UNAPPLIED			VARIOUS	9,909,216		9,909,216
<b>Total Capital Reserves</b>					<b>27,929,368</b>	<b>1,003,000</b>	<b>28,932,368</b>
<b>4) Corporate Services</b>							
Corporate Services	CORPORATE BAL SHEET	9931	D861	TREHIR RESERVE	584,549		584,549
Corporate Services	B/S CAP - CORPORATE	9985	D857	RESERVE - INVEST TO SAVE	792,470	(635,140)	157,330
Corporate Services	INSURANCE FUND	9987	D911	INSURANCE EARMARKED RESERVE	4,806,809		4,806,809
Corporate Services	INSURANCE FUND	9987	D935	RISK MANAGEMENT RESERVE	550,864		550,864
Corporate Services	HOUSING NON HRA BAL SHEET	9917	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	229,735		229,735
Corporate Services	HOUSING PRIVATE BAL SHEET	9918	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	242,344		242,344
Corporate Services	BUILDING CONSULTANCY	9925	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	54,203		54,203
Corporate Services	POLICY AND RESOURCES BAL SHEET	9926	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	288,416		288,416
Corporate Services	CORPORATE SERVICES BAL SHEET	9928	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	531,284		531,284
Corporate Services	PROPERTY - CORPORATE SERVICES	9924	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	157,392		157,392
Corporate Services	POLICY AND RESOURCES BAL SHEET	9926	D892	RESERVE - COMMUNITY REGEN FUND	31,697		31,697
Corporate Services	POLICY AND RESOURCES BAL SHEET	9926	D948	ELECTORAL ADMIN RESERVES	218,702		218,702
Corporate Services	CORPORATE SERVICES BAL SHEET	9928	D952	HEALTH & SAFETY INITIATIVES	682,383	(500,000)	182,383
Corporate Services	CORPORATE SERVICES BAL SHEET	9928	D953	CORPORATE PC REPLACEMENT RESER	1,737,676		1,737,676
Corporate Services	CORPORATE SERVICES BAL SHEET	9928	D828	SEW PFI EQUALISATION RESERVE	2,907,945		2,907,945
Corporate Services	CORPORATE SERVICES BAL SHEET	9928	D850	EDUC PFI EQUALISATION RESERVE	10,044,853		10,044,853
Corporate Services	B/S CAP - PROPERTY	9979	D944	SALEX FINANCE	272,450		272,450
<b>Total Corporate Services</b>					<b>24,133,774</b>	<b>(1,135,140)</b>	<b>22,998,634</b>

	Service Area	C.C.	Subj	Description	Audited Balance (31/03/14)	Anticipated Movement 2014-15	Projected Balance (31/03/15)
<b>5) Environment Directorate</b>							
Highways Balance Sheet	HIGHWAYS BALANCE SHEET	9908	D882	DLO SURPLUS / DEFICIT C/F	16,388		16,388
Directorate of Environment	PLANNING BAL SHEET	9923	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	207,758		207,758
Directorate of Environment	ECON DEVT & TOURISM BAL SHEET	9927	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	204,847	(160,000)	44,847
Directorate of Environment	HIGHWAYS BAL SHEET	9932	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	(7,876)	7,876	0
Directorate of Environment	DIRECTORATE OF ENVIRONMENT	9936	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	(30,141)		(30,141)
Directorate of Environment	TRADING STANDARDS	9937	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	31,011		31,011
Directorate of Environment	ENVIRON HEALTH BAL SHEET	9938	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	13,720		13,720
Directorate of Environment	ECON DEVT & TOURISM BAL SHEET	9927	D892	RESERVE - COMMUNITY REGEN FUND	190,804		190,804
Directorate of Environment		9927	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVE RESERVE	11,500		11,500
Directorate of Environment	PLANNING BAL SHEET	9923	D891	RESERVE - AREA FORUM	162,887		162,887
Directorate of Environment	COMMUNITY & LEISURE BAL SHEET	9939	D865	RESERVES - CEMETERIES	266,115		266,115
<b>Total Environment Directorate</b>					<b>1,067,014</b>	<b>(152,124)</b>	<b>914,889</b>
<b>6) Education &amp; Leisure</b>							
Education	EDUCATION BAL SHEET	9919	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	2,439,134	(397,416)	2,041,718
Lifelong Learning	CELL BAL SHEET	9921	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	772,089	(151,000)	621,089
Education	EDUCATION BAL SHEET	9919	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	150,182	(28,000)	122,182
Education	EDUCATION BAL SHEET	9919	D949	PFI SCHOOLS EARMARKED RESERVES	511,918		511,918
Education and Leisure	SCHOOLS BAL SHEET	9920	D785	RESERVES - DELEGATED SCHOOLS	2,746,415		2,746,415
<b>Total Education &amp; Leisure</b>					<b>6,619,738</b>	<b>(576,416)</b>	<b>6,043,322</b>
<b>7) Social Services</b>							
Social Services	SOCIAL SERVICES BAL SHEET	9922	D856	RESER - UNDER/ OVER SPEND C/F	1,717,053	(201,000)	1,516,053
Social Services	SOCIAL SERVICES BAL SHEET	9922	D859	RESER - SOC SERV COMM ACTIVI	42,262		42,262
Social Services	SOCIAL SERVICES BAL SHEET	9922	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	500,430		500,430
<b>Total Social Services</b>					<b>2,259,745</b>	<b>(201,000)</b>	<b>2,058,745</b>
<b>8) Released/Partially Released</b>							
Corporate	CORPORATE BAL SHEET	9931	D883	FORMER AUTH LIABILITY RESERVE	180,000	(180,000)	0
Corporate	CORPORATE BAL SHEET	9931	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	1,180,000	(150,000)	1,030,000
Corporate Services	HOUSING NON HRA BAL SHEET	9917	D897	RESERVE - PERFORMANCE GRANT	23,372	(23,372)	0
Corporate Services	POLICY AND RESOURCES BAL SHEET	9926	D893	RESERVE - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	28,097	(28,097)	0
Corporate Services	CORPORATE BAL SHEET	9931	D939	RESERVES -SUPERANN LIABILITY	24,269	(24,269)	0
Corporate Services	CORPORATE SERVICES BAL SHEET	9928	D897	RESERVE - PERFORMANCE GRANT	195,469	(195,469)	0
Corporate Services	CORPORATE SERVICES BAL SHEET	9928	D899	SERVICE INITIATIVES RESERVE	1,816,904	(126,491)	1,690,412
Directorate of Environment	PLANNING BAL SHEET	9923	D897	RESERVE - PERFORMANCE GRANT	4,206	(4,206)	0
Directorate of Environment	HIGHWAYS BAL SHEET	9932	D897	RESERVE - PERFORMANCE GRANT	6,429	(6,429)	0
Directorate of Environment	COMMUNITY & LEISURE BAL SHEET	9939	D897	RESERVE - PERFORMANCE GRANT	19,042	(19,042)	0
Directorate of Environment	COMMUNITY & LEISURE BAL SHEET	9939	D956	RESERVES - TREHIR REALISATION	100	(100)	0
					<b>3,477,888</b>	<b>(757,476)</b>	<b>2,720,412</b>
<b>GRAND TOTALS: -</b>					<b>97,165,105</b>	<b>(8,085,275)</b>	<b>89,079,829</b>





## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: HRA GARAGES UPDATE**

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

- 
- 1.1 Attached is the report previously requested by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee with regard to the letting of Council-owned garages.
  - 1.2 This report was also presented to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 2nd April 2015.

**Author:** Rebecca Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245.

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1** Report and appendices to Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 2nd April 2015 – Agenda Item 6.

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## **CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 2ND APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: HRA GARAGES UPDATE**

**REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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

- 1.1 The Policy and Resources Committee has requested a report on the letting of Council owned garages and is presented to the CHTG for consultation.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 A major review of the stock of HRA garages was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and the Cabinet Sub Committee in December 2012. A strategy was agreed to rationalise the portfolio, reduce the size of the stock through selective demolition of poor condition garages on low demand sites, repair and improve the stock, and to manage and market the garages as part of the HRA assets. Specific proposals were made for every HRA garage block in the County Borough and all relevant ward Members were consulted. A budget of £1.5m was agreed as part of the WHQS Programme to implement the proposals. Since that time commitments have been made within the Eastern Valleys which was agreed as the priority area and contracts are at various stages. In due course the programme will extend to implement the approved strategy for the garages in the Upper Rhymney Valley and the Lower Rhymney Valley.

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

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association home are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards.
- 3.2 The WHQS has a requirement that dwellings are located in attractive and safe environments, which includes parking and garaging requirements.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 At the time of the review in 2012 30% of the stock of garages were void. Although a small number have been demolished since the overall stock is largely unchanged (circa 1260) but the number of voids has increased to 40%. Of the garages which are occupied 72% are let to private individuals and only 28% to Council tenants. The garage sites exhibit a wide variety of conditions. Some of the garage sites are in poor condition with a complete lack of maintenance. Some sites attract anti social behaviour and empty garages may be broken into. Conversely there are some garages that are in very good condition and have been well maintained. More than 50% of the garages are located in the Eastern Valleys. The garage portfolio generates an income to the HRA of around £465,000 but the high level of voids show a loss of £184,000.

- 4.2 The review presented a comprehensive picture of all the garage sites and site specific proposals. The Caerphilly Homes Task Group and Cabinet Sub Committee accepted there was a need to rationalise the portfolio, reduce the size of the stock through selective demolition of poor condition garages on low demand sites, repair and improve the stock which is to be retained, consider the provision of some new garages built to a larger size more suited to a modern vehicle, and to effectively manage and market the garages.
- 4.3 The Area Housing Offices deal with the letting of the garages. The more popular sites may generate a limited waiting list but the number of voids far out weighs the number of potential tenants. All the housing offices have reported a very low demand with a limited number of re lets. The garages are advertised via the housing offices, the website and by site notices.
- 4.4 It is has been suggested that the rents are a deterrent to potential occupiers. The current weekly rent is £7.65 and the rent is due to increase to £7.80 per week from April 2015 (48 week). A comparative exercise with five other local housing authorities and two adjacent RSLs has been undertaken which shows Caerphilly as having one of the highest garage rents. The combined average rent would be £6.22 per week (over 52 weeks) compared with Caerphilly of £7-06 (52 week equivalent). The garage income is contributing to the WHQS Business Plan and any reduction in this income would need to be met from elsewhere in the HRA.
- 4.5 The impact of any reduction in the weekly rent is considered to be marginal in terms of demand. There are other factors that are a disincentive such as the remote location of some sites, poor lighting, anti social behaviour and disrepair. There is a preference to have cars parked on a drive or in front of the house rather than an insecure isolated garage compound. In addition most of the garages were constructed at a time when cars were smaller. Modern cars are wider and higher and some of the garages are very tight, not easy to get in and out. There are congestion issues on many of the Council's estates due to parked vehicles despite the existence of over 500 empty garages, but this has not led to an uptake on the empty garages.
- 4.6 The strategy for the HRA garages was approved just over 2 years ago and is in the process of implementation as part of the WHQS Programme. There is no significant change in the circumstances to those prevailing at the time of the review. Officers see no reason to depart from the agreed strategy that was subject to wide consultation prior to being agreed.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The report is for information and there is no requirement for an EqIA.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 A budget of £1.5m has been agreed to implement the recommendations in the approved strategy. The garage rents are reviewed annually as part of the HRA charges. The HRA income supports the WHQS programme. The rent increase (2%) for 2015/16 has recently been approved by the Council. Higher percentage rent increases are proposed by the local housing authorities and RSLs which provided comparative costs. A general reduction in the rent may increase demand marginally given there are very few people on the waiting list but it may also have the effect of reducing overall income with an adverse effect on the WHQS business plan. A big percentage of the garages are privately rented.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications that arise from this report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 No comments have been received from consultees.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 The report is for information. (A rationalisation and repair strategy for the HRA garages was approved in December 2012 and is being implemented as part of the WHQS Programme).

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

10.1 To meet a request from the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee for a report on the HRA garages.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government and Housing Acts.

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Consultees:

Cllr Gerald Jones	- Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing
Chris Burns	- Interim Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell	- Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Shaun Couzens	- Chief Housing Officer
Marcus Lloyd	- Deputy Head of Programmes
Lesley Allen	- Principal Accountant

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## POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015

**SUBJECT: DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF APPLICATIONS**

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

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

- 1.1 This report sets out details of applications for discretionary rate relief and notes the decision proposed by the Interim Head of Corporate Finance under delegated powers.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Council is able to assist a wide range of voluntary and sporting organisations by granting rate relief. This report contains details of applications received for discretionary rate relief and the proposals for the determination of the applications to be formally implemented on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2015.

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

- 3.1 The granting of rate relief is a very cost effective way in which the Council can pursue its Regeneration objective by giving financial assistance to local organisations.

### **4. THE REPORT**

#### **4.1 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1.1 Under the Council's Scheme of Delegation applications for discretionary rate relief submitted to the Council are determined by the Council's Head of Corporate Finance.
- 4.1.2 The determination is exercised following consideration of the Council's Policy on discretionary rate relief supplemented by guidance from Welsh Government and Central Government.

#### **4.2 THE APPLICATIONS**

##### **Greyhound Rescue Wales Ltd**

- 4.2.1 An application for top-up discretionary rate relief has been received from the above registered charity in respect of their charity shop at 173 High Street Blackwood, NP12 1AA from 6<sup>th</sup> October 2014 onwards.
- 4.2.2 The organisation is a registered charity and has therefore already been awarded 80% mandatory rate relief in accordance with rating legislation.

- 4.2.3 Members should be aware that currently the Authority would bear 75% of any top-up discretionary rate relief awarded, with the Welsh Government Pool bearing the remaining 25%.
- 4.2.4 To be eligible for discretionary rate relief, the organisation must satisfy the following conditions:
- a) the organisation or institution occupying the premises must not be established or conducted for profit; and
  - b) each of the organisation's main objects must be charitable, or otherwise philanthropic or religious, or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature, or fine arts.
- 4.2.5 Greyhound Rescue Wales' main objects are:
- To promote the welfare and relieve the suffering of greyhounds and greyhound cross breeds in need of care and attention, and in particular to provide and maintain rescue homes or other facilities for the reception, care and treatment of such animals.
  - To promote humane behaviour towards animals by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for greyhounds and greyhound cross breeds which are retired, unwanted or in need of care and attention by reason of sickness, poor circumstances or ill usage, and to educate the public in matters pertaining to animal welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering among animals. The animals are placed in such permanent homes as the Executive Committee may consider appropriate.
- 4.2.6 The organisation's articles state that the income and property of the charity shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the charity's objects.
- 4.2.7 The constitution also states that, on the dissolution of the charity, any assets remaining would be used firstly to meet any liabilities and then directly for the organisation's objects and by transfer to any other charity for the same or similar purposes. This satisfies the discretionary rate relief requirement for remaining assets to be used for charitable or non-profit making purposes.
- 4.2.8 Membership is open to individuals over eighteen or organisations approved by the charity's trustees interested in furthering the work of the charity. Membership fees range from £10 per annum for an unwaged person (£15 for a household) to £20 per annum for a waged person (£25 for a household).
- 4.2.9 The charity has been set up specifically to carry out the objects given in point 4.2.5 above and is not established or conducted for profit. In addition, the organisation's main objects are either wholly or mainly charitable, or concerned with philanthropy, social welfare and education, as required under the regulations.
- 4.2.10 The current annual business rate liability of the organisation's premises in Pontllanfraith is £8,041 and, if the Authority were to grant 20% top-up discretionary rate relief, the cost to the Authority of awarding the relief at current levels would be £1,206 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £402.
- 4.2.11 The Authority's policy for an organisation registered as a charity with the Charity Commission and occupying one or more rating assessments within the Authority's area with a cumulative rateable value not exceeding £100,000 is to award 20% top-up discretionary relief.
- 4.2.12 Taking the above matters into consideration, it appears that the 'Greyhound Rescue Wales' and its use of the premises satisfies all of the relevant qualifying criteria.
- 4.2.13 **Proposal (to be implemented on 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2015):  
20% top-up discretionary rate relief be awarded.**



## Career Choices Dewis Gyrfa Ltd

- 4.2.14 An application for mandatory rate relief and top-up discretionary rate relief has been received from the above organisation which is better known as 'Gyrfa Cymru Careers Wales' in respect of their four premises at:
- The Twyn Cardiff Road, Caerphilly, CF83 1JL
  - Castle House, Southern Street, Caerphilly CF83 1JL
  - 57 High Street, Blackwood, NP12 1BA
  - Abacus House, 44 Windsor Street, Caerphilly CF83 1FW.
- 4.2.15 The organisation is not a registered charity but has provided a letter from HM Revenue & Customs confirming that it is 'a not-for-profit organisation which does not amount to trade and therefore is not liable to corporation tax'. As the organisation has been granted an exemption from taxes under the provisions of Section 505 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988, it is to be regarded as if it were a charity and has therefore been awarded 80% mandatory rate relief in accordance with rating legislation.
- 4.2.16 Members should be aware that currently the Authority would bear 75% of any top-up discretionary rate relief awarded, with the Welsh Government Pool bearing the remaining 25%.
- 4.2.17 To be eligible for discretionary rate relief, the organisation must satisfy the following conditions:
- a) the organisation or institution occupying the premises must not be established or conducted for profit; and
  - b) each of the organisation's main objects must be charitable, or otherwise philanthropic or religious, or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature, or fine arts.
- 4.2.18 The organisation's objects state that it is to provide a comprehensive career, education and guidance service to individuals and organisations, linking education and business, utilising powers under various acts of Parliament such as the Employment and Training Act 1973 and the Education Act 2002.
- 4.2.19 Careers Choices Dewis Gyrfa Ltd is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Welsh Government which was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. It delivers a remit set by the Minister for Education and Skills. It provides free to all careers advice and guidance. The overall focus for its service is to help people make effective decisions and become independent in managing their careers. This includes making realistic career decisions and ensuring successful progression and positive outcomes for individuals, including appropriate training, further learning or employment, thereby contributing to the economic and social well-being of Wales.
- 4.2.20 The organisation is involved in facilitating links between employers, schools and colleges to enrich students' understanding of the world of work; it also helps to deliver projects such as Jobs Growth Wales and the Apprentice Matching Service.
- 4.2.21 The organisation's articles state that the income and property of the charity shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the charity's objects.
- 4.2.22 The articles also state that, on the dissolution of the company, any assets remaining would be used firstly to meet any liabilities and then, if any surplus remains, it would be transferred to any other charity for the same or similar purposes. This satisfies the discretionary rate relief requirement for remaining assets to be used for charitable or non-profit making purposes.
- 4.2.23 The company has been set up specifically to carry out the object given in point 4.2.18 above and is not established or conducted for profit. In addition, the organisation's main object is either wholly or mainly charitable, or concerned with philanthropy, social welfare and education, as required under the regulations.

4.2.24 The Authority's policy for an organisation registered as a charity with the Charity Commission, or qualifying to be treated as a charity, and occupying one or more rating assessments within the Authority's area with a cumulative rateable value not exceeding £100,000 is to award 20% top-up discretionary relief.

4.2.25 The current annual business rate liabilities of the organisation's premises are as follows:

- £9,342 for The Twyn, Cardiff Road, Caerphilly and, if the Authority were to grant 20% top-up discretionary rate relief, the cost to the Authority of awarding the relief at current levels would be £1401 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £467;
- £8,632 for Castle House, Southern Street, Caerphilly and, if the Authority were to grant 20% top-up discretionary rate relief, the cost to the Authority of awarding the relief at current levels would be £1295 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £432;
- £11,825 for Abacus House, 44 Windsor Street, Caerphilly and, if the Authority were to grant 20% top-up discretionary rate relief, the cost to the Authority of awarding the relief at current levels would be £1,774 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £591;
- £4,730 for 57 High Street, Blackwood and, if the Authority were to grant 20% top-up discretionary rate relief, the cost to the Authority of awarding the relief at current levels would be £710 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £236.

4.2.26 Taking the above matters into consideration, it appears that the organisation known as the 'Careers Choices Dewis Gyrfa Ltd' and its use of the premises, totalling £73,000 rateable value, satisfies all of the relevant qualifying criteria.

**4.2.27 Proposal (to be implemented on 21st day of April 2015):  
20% top-up discretionary rate relief be awarded.**

**Include Limited**

4.2.28 An application for top-up discretionary rate relief has been received from the above registered charity in respect of their two premises at:

Suite 1, Ground Floor, Block C, Van Court, Caerphilly, CF83 3ED from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 onwards.

Suite 2, First Floor, Block C, Van Court, Caerphilly, CF83 3ED from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 onwards.

4.2.29 The organisation is a registered charity and has therefore already been awarded 80% mandatory rate relief in accordance with rating legislation.

4.2.30 Members should be aware that currently the Authority would bear 75% of any top-up discretionary rate relief awarded, with the Welsh Government Pool bearing the remaining 25%.

4.2.31 To be eligible for discretionary rate relief, the organisation must satisfy the following conditions:

- a) the organisation or institution occupying the premises must not be established or conducted for profit; and
- b) each of the organisation's main objects must be charitable, or otherwise philanthropic or religious, or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature, or fine arts.

4.2.32 Include Limited's main objects are:

- To advance the education of the public by all charitable means.
- To further the formal and informal education of the public, particularly of those up to eighteen years and particularly by providing an educational environment instruction and teaching within a context of spiritual truths and moral values.
- To promote the establishment and running of schools, colleges, courses pastoral and personal training, counselling colloquia and supportive networks particularly those dedicated to the whole development of the child's potential personally, socially, academically, spiritually, economically, and with due reference to their employability, skills enhancement, family relationships and other such supportive groupings.

4.2.33 The organisation's articles of association state that the income and property of the charity shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the charity's objects.

4.2.34 The articles also state that, on the dissolution of the charity, any assets remaining would be used firstly to meet any debts and liabilities before being given or transferred to some other charitable institution for the same or similar purposes. This satisfies the discretionary rate relief requirement for remaining assets to be used for charitable or non-profit making purposes.

4.2.35 Include is a charity that provides alternative full-time education for students who cannot be maintained in mainstream educational settings. All students will have behavioural and emotional difficulties. Include has links with all the relevant services - social services, youth offending services and mental health services - providing educational programmes and inclusive opportunities for the most difficult group of students within the Caerphilly County Borough area. All projects are directly funded by the local education authority via Inclusion Services.

4.2.36 The charity has been set up specifically to carry out the objects given in point 4.2.32 above and is not established or conducted for profit. In addition, the organisation's main objects are either wholly or mainly charitable, or concerned with philanthropy, social welfare and education, as required under the regulations.

4.2.37 The current annual business rate liabilities of the organisation's premises are as follows:

- £18,447 for Suite 1, Ground Floor, Block C, Van Court, Caerphilly and, if the Authority were to grant 20% top-up discretionary rate relief, the cost to the Authority of awarding the relief at current levels would be £2,768 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £922;
- £18,210 for Suite 2, First Floor, Block C, Van Court, Caerphilly and, if the Authority were to grant 20% top-up discretionary rate relief, the cost to the Authority of awarding the relief at current levels would be £2,732 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £910;

4.2.38 The Authority's policy for an organisation registered as a charity with the Charity Commission and occupying one or more rating assessments within the Authority's area with a cumulative rateable value not exceeding £100,000 is to award 20% top-up discretionary relief.

4.2.39 Taking the above matters into consideration, it appears that the 'Include Limited' and its use of the premises, totalling £77,500 rateable value, satisfies all of the relevant qualifying criteria.

**4.2.40 Proposal (to be implemented on 21st day of April 2015):  
20% top-up discretionary rate relief be awarded.**

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report is to advise Members of the proposed determination of the application(s) for discretionary rate relief so the Council's full Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 These are contained within the report.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses which have not been reflected in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members note the proposed determination of the application(s) for discretionary rate relief under delegated powers which will be implemented on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2015.

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

- 10.1 As set out throughout the report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

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Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & Section 151 Officer  
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Background Papers:

Rate Relief Application Forms, contact ext 3421



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14TH APRIL 2015**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION GOVERNANCE 2014**

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

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

- 1.1 To inform Members of progress in assuring that the governance of information across the Council is effective during the calendar year 2014.
- 1.2 To inform Members about requests for information received under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI), and other associated legislation during 2014.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 As services become leaner and look for more efficient ways of working, information risk becomes greater and opportunities to make better use of the Council's information need to be seized. This is compounded by the potential monetary penalties for breaching the Data Protection Act, currently half a million pounds, but set to double with implementation of a new European Data Protection Directive.
- 2.2 The Council's Information Governance Work Programme resulted in a number of achievements during 2014, including implementation of a process to manage information risk and a successful ESF funded project to improve information sharing across the Caerphilly Local Service Board (LSB).
- 2.3 The demands of Freedom of Information and associated information rights legislation are an ongoing challenge, as numbers of requests increase year on year, and action has been taken to deal with these requests more efficiently.

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

- 3.1 Information governance is a key part of the Council's corporate governance and is reflected in the Annual Governance Statement section of the Statement of Accounts. Effective governance of the Council's information underpins all Council activities, including the Council's Improvement Objectives and Community Strategy.

### **4. THE REPORT**

#### Background

- 4.1 As services become leaner and look for more efficient ways of working, information risk becomes greater. Efficiencies gleaned from new technology, outsourcing functions to third parties, and sharing information with partners needs good information governance structures

to mitigate risk of data protection breaches and poor quality information leading to bad decision-making. The potential monetary penalties for breaching the Data Protection Act are currently half a million pounds, but are set to double with implementation of a new European Data Protection Directive, and reputational damage and loss of trust in the organisation would also be inevitable. The changes needed by the Council to meet current financial challenges also present opportunities to make better use of the Council's information through more streamlined records management and greater openness of non-confidential information across the organisation.

- 4.2 The Council's Information Governance Work Programme builds on previous work to comply with recommendations of Price Waterhouse Cooper and Wales Audit Office as part of national audits on governance of information in local authorities during 2011 and 2012. The programme also consolidates earlier work to implement Freedom of Information, Data Protection and associated information legislation over the last decade. The Programme focuses efforts of Information Governance Stewards Council-wide on mitigating information risks identified as part of the process to support the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), who is the Head of ICT and Customer Services.

#### Information Governance Progress

- 4.3 The ESF Sharing Personal Information Project, managed on behalf of the Caerphilly LSB, successfully achieved its objectives, as evidenced by an external evaluation in Nov 2014. These included development of Wales Accord for Sharing Personal Information (WASPI) Information Sharing Protocols in six key areas, including domestic abuse, missing children, Team Around the Family and for individuals at risk of not being in employment, education or training (NEET). Elearning supplemented with Apps for use on mobile devices and printed leaflets, calendars and posters have been well received by staff, improving knowledge across LSB organisations in when and how to share information. Work is ongoing to offer this training framework across Wales to support WASPI. The Council's Leader delivered a presentation to close the project's multi-agency information sharing conference in November 2014, and representatives from all sectors welcomed the support provided by the project in making difficult decisions about how to share information. Members of the former Project Steering Group are continuing to progress this work across the LSB, and are exploring possibilities for regional working across the former Gwent area in future now that the project has ended.
- 4.4 Heads of Service are tasked with reporting regularly to the SIRO on information risk levels in their service area, to comply with the Council's Information Risk Policy and enable assurance of the Council's information risk in the Annual Governance Statement. Awareness raising sessions have continued to be delivered to Senior Management Teams by Corporate Information Governance Unit (CIGU) and the Unit arranged for the National Archives (TNA) to facilitate training for all Heads of Service at Ty Penallta in January 2015 on management of information risk. The Council also hosted training for SIROs from organisations across South and West Wales by TNA on the same day. The events received good feedback, but timely submission of information risk updates is still patchy across service areas, and the SIRO will be regularly updating Corporate Governance Panel on returns received. Therefore the information risk process is being reviewed with assistance from the Cabinet Office SIRO Policy Lead to make sure it is as streamlined as possible, whilst still providing assurance that risk is low and enabling issues to be identified that need to be addressed.
- 4.5 Reports to CIGU of incidents that may have breached the Data Protection Act have increased, with 9 potential breaches reported in 2014. However this is regarded as a positive change, as it evidences that the ongoing training programme has raised staff awareness of the need to notify CIGU so that an investigation can be carried out and mitigation measures implemented. Of the 9 incidents notified last year, 7 were found to be breaches of the Act and measures were put in place to mitigate risk and reduce likelihood of a repeat in future. During 2014, the Council signed a Data Protection Undertaking as a result of two data protection breaches relating to use of CCTV and surveillance that were voluntarily notified to the ICO in 2013. The Council committed to following the ICO's Employment Practices Code, and Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee were advised on 20 January 2015 that for the foreseeable

future the review of the current arrangements will be held in abeyance and the use of employee surveillance will remain on hold. The Council also decided to conduct an audit of CCTV usage Council-wide, which is currently ongoing.

- 4.6 The Information Governance Training Programme has achieved good results. 99.5% of computer-using staff passed the Protecting Information elearning course during 2013-2014, and it was re-launched this year as a mandatory annual course to mark European Data Protection Day. The Information Governance Training Officer came into post during 2014 on a one-year fixed-term contract to deliver workshops tailored to service needs. At the end of February 2015 staff from across the majority of the Council's services had been trained in the following key subjects:

<b>Course</b>	<b>Computer users</b>	<b>Non computer users</b>
Protecting Information (3 hours)	769	136
Freedom of Information (1.5 hours)	189	
CCTV and Data Protection (1.5 hours)	50	
Full day records management (full day)	27	

Additional guidance for line managers to train non-computer users has also been issued to supplement the Data Protection Policy and leaflets sent to all staff with the Code of Conduct in 2013. Over the final two months of the workshop element of the Training Programme, the focus will be on delivering short courses on records management and ensuring all staff that have expressed an interest in training have an opportunity to attend. Members' training has continued, with 3 sessions during 2014 for those Members who could not attend the two sessions delivered in 2013. This training has now been made a mandatory requirement each year, and thirty six Members were trained on 2 March 2015. One more session will be arranged to give remaining Members an opportunity to attend. Non-attendance could result in a referral to the Standards Committee as a potential breach of the Member's Code of Conduct.

- 4.7 Improvements to the Council's practices inline with the Records Management Policy continue, to ensure compliance with the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act. The Council's Information Asset Register continues to be updated and linked with information risk assessments so that decisions can be made on whether changes to access permissions and storage requirements are needed to address key risk areas. Vital records identified in the Register have been incorporated into the Council's business continuity planning process. Practical guidance on managing email has also been issued. Accreditation of service areas with the British Standard on legal admissibility of electronic information (BS10008) continues, with HR and Building Cleaning currently in the process of being accredited. Services currently holding the standard include:

- Council Tax
- Public Sector Housing and Housing Strategy and Performance
- Housing Benefits
- Engineering Projects Group
- Learning, Education and Inclusion
- Social Services Brokerage
- Social Services Accountancy Team

Guidance on managing records that relate to European funded projects to comply with Wales European Funding Office (WEFO) requirements has been issued, and work is ongoing to manage storage of those records until WEFO authorises destruction.

- 4.8 Work at Glamorgan and Gwent Archives continues to safeguard and make available historically important information to discharge the Council's duty under S.60 of the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994, and Corporate Information Governance Unit attends quarterly Joint Committee meetings to support the Council's Members. Council records deposited with the archives services are actively used by the public and Council officers, for example in litigation cases, land ownership queries or determining origins of older joint arrangements with other organisations.

4.9 FOI and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests continue to increase, and improving the Council's rate of response within 20 working days was highlighted as an action in the Annual Governance Statement for 2014-2015. Performance is monitored quarterly so that action can be taken at an early stage if compliance rates fall below target. Additional actions have included:

- Mandatory briefings for all Senior Management Teams;
- Reduction of internal deadline for requests from 15 to 12 working days;
- Requirement introduced to notify CIGU within 5 working days whether all information is held by the service area, so that other services can be notified promptly;
- Chief Executive is notified when requests pass the internal compliance date, and sends reminders direct to service areas;
- Staff continue to be trained on FOI requirements as part of the Information Governance Training Programme;
- Review of the Council's Publications Scheme to make as much information proactively available as possible.

The following section gives further detail on information requests received during the 2014 calendar year.

Requests for information during 2014

4.10 The total number of information requests covered by FOI and EIR, as well as Data Protection Subject Access Requests (DPA SARs), received during 2014 is illustrated in the table below, alongside percentage increase on the previous year.

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% increase</b>
FOI/EIR information requests	1057	1081	2.3%
DPA Subject Access Requests (SAR)	84	96*	14.2%

\*An additional 37 people requested more information on making a SAR application, but did not go on to formally submit the request.

Corporate Finance, Public Protection and People Management received the most FOI/EIR requests, and Social Services and People Management received the most SAR requests during this period. See appendices 1 and 2 for more detailed information on numbers of requests for each Service Area across each quarter of 2014.

In addition, Corporate Information Governance Unit also dealt with 16 information request appeals (detailed in paragraph 4.14), investigated 9 potential data protection breaches and dealt with over 100 requests for data protection advice including advice on new ways of working. The Unit also part-seconded 3 members of staff to the ESF Sharing Personal Information Project.

4.11 Percentage of requests processed in compliance with legal timescales is illustrated in the table below, and further details can be found in Appendices 3 and 4:

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
FOI/EIR information requests	72%	76%
DPA Subject Access Requests (SAR)	62%	80%



The increase in compliance rate is reflective of the smaller increase in request numbers in 2014 compared to 2013 as well as extensive efforts to raise awareness of the need to comply with statutory deadlines across the Council. The Council still needs to improve to meet the Information Commissioner's target of 85% of FOI requests answered within 20 working days, and with request volumes increasing every year, this is an on-going challenge.

- 4.12 FOI/EIR applicants do not have to disclose who they are, but from information we have gathered we know that numbers of requests made by AMs, campaign groups, trade unions and commercial organisations rose again, but requests from Councillors, MPs, and press decreased, although freelance journalists may be making requests as private individuals. Increasing numbers of SARs are partly caused by requests for access to CCTV images, and has prompted a review into extent of CCTV usage across the Council, which will be reported back to Corporate Governance Panel in the coming months.
- 4.13 All information was provided for 823 requests (77%), representing a 3% increase on 2013. A further 87 requests received part of the information requested. 46 requests were refused as they would have exceeded the cost threshold to answer and 2 were refused because they were repeated requests. The remaining refused requests were due to application of exemptions determined by the Council's Exemption Panel, mainly due to presence of personal information or due to information being already available, for example through committee reports. The number of requests refused due to information already being available has decreased from 73 in 2013 to 37 in 2014 mainly due to information about public health funerals being made available on the Council's website, causing researchers to search the website rather than send in individual requests, which leads to less demand on staff. Information relating to National Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) will also be put on the Council website soon to reduce demand on Corporate Finance staff of dealing with frequent individual requests. See Appendices 5 and 6 for further detail.
- 4.14 The number of requests received for internal appeal reduced from 24 to 11 in 2014. Internal appeals are investigated by a senior officer who was not involved in the original request. Of the cases that are now resolved, the original decision was upheld by the Council in 5 cases, and partly upheld in 3 further cases with some additional information provided at internal appeal stage. The number of requests referred to the Information Commissioner increased from 3 to 5 during this period, although three of these related to requests handled by the Council during 2013. Two of the applicants were not happy with the outcome of the internal appeal and contacted the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) requesting an investigation. In addition, a further 3 applicants contacted the ICO without going through the internal appeal process. As a result of ICO investigations, 3 appeals were upheld and one partially upheld, all of which led to further information being supplied. The remaining appeal was not upheld, but the ICO investigation did identify delays in the Council's handling of the request.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no potential equalities implications of this report and its recommendations on groups or individuals who fall under the categories identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan. There is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment Questionnaire to be completed for this report. The Council provides FOI information in the format that the applicant requests, and this combined with Welsh language responses to FOI requests made in Welsh contributes to compliance with the Council's Strategic Equality Objective 4 - Communication Access.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial implications may result from the programme of improvements necessary to assure the Council's information during this period of significant Council change.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The Information Governance Work Programme has implications on the workloads of staff.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 Consultations have taken place and are reflected in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 It is recommended that the contents of the report be noted.

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

10.1 To be advised of the ongoing work to assure information governance arrangements across the Council and of increasing demands being placed on the organisation to meet legal obligations to respond to information requests.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Freedom of Information Act 2000.

11.2 Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

11.2 Data Protection Act 1998.

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Cllr Barbara Jones, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services  
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Gail Williams, Acting Head of Legal Services and Governance  
John Rogers, Principal Solicitor  
Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager  
Carl Evans, Assistant Information Officer  
David Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities & Welsh Language)  
Corporate Governance Panel  
Information Governance Project Team

Appendices:

Appendix 1 FOI/EIR requests by Directorate/Service Area  
Appendix 2 DPA SAR requests by Directorate/Service Area  
Appendix 3 FOI/EIR - Timeliness  
Appendix 4 DPA SAR - Timeliness  
Appendix 5 FOI/EIR - Outcomes  
Appendix 6 FOI/EIR - Use of Exemptions (FOI) and Exceptions (EIR)

<b>(FOI) and (EIR) by Directorate/Service Area Involvement</b> - Note that a single request can involve more than one Directorate/Service Area																
Due to restructuring, Service Areas have been re-aligned.	Total 2011		Total 2012		Total 2013		Total 2014		1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr. 2014		2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr. 2014		3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr. 2014		4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr. 2014	
	Single	Multi	Single	Multi	Single	Multi	Single	Multi	Single	Multi	Single	Multi	Single	Multi	Single	Multi
Chief Executive	4	12	2	5	5	17	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Deputy Chief Executive	1	8	1	4	9	10	2	3	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0
Engineering & Transport	44	40	49	22	73	28	62	40	27	12	23	13	4	9	8	6
Planning & Regeneration	52	42	68	24	48	60	55	54	11	14	14	18	16	13	14	9
Public Protection	78	30	82	19	76	43	99	29	21	7	27	11	31	5	20	6
Community & Leisure (was Public Services)	42	54	46	41	51	50	68	47	22	13	19	20	15	10	12	4
Corporate Finance	102	82	106	38	131	68	167	61	46	22	37	20	39	8	45	11
Housing	21	30	42	27	41	44	31	50	8	18	5	17	10	10	8	5
ICT	77	39	41	21	68	22	83	36	27	9	18	11	24	9	14	7
Legal & Governance	43	69	45	32	64	52	50	48	16	18	17	14	8	9	9	7
People Management	79	49	105	31	95	63	70	44	20	11	15	15	17	11	18	7
Performance & Property	22	40	17	19	15	27	20	40	3	14	4	15	3	8	10	3
Education	55	67	75	23	66	49	54	41	23	13	14	14	9	8	8	6
Social Services	61	87	107	44	110	61	113	42	34	11	18	17	33	6	28	8
Procurement	Not previously recorded separately						14	16	-	-	3	7	8	8	3	1
H&S	Not previously recorded separately						2	12	-	-	0	6	1	5	1	1

**Note:** Education and Social Services have designated staff that co-ordinate requests for the whole of their Directorates. Requests attributed to these departments may have been handled by different service areas within the respective Directorates

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**Data Protection by Directorate/Service Area Involvement**

Note that a single request can involve more than one Directorate/Service Area

	Total 2009	Total 2010	Total 2011	Total 2012	Total 2013	Total 2014	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr. 2014	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr. 2014	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr. 2014	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr. 2014
All	0	1	0	1	0					
Chief Executive	2	1	0	1	0	2			2	
Deputy Chief Executive	0	0	0	0	5	2			2	
Social Services	34	22	28	25	30	44	11	11	13	9
Housing	3	4	3	6	2	2			2	
Education	5	7	5	6	6	8	1	3	4	
Public Protection	1	1	3	4	9	6	1		5	
Community & Leisure (Public Services)	0	0	0	0	5	4			3	1
Engineering & Transport	0	0	2	2	2	6		1	3	2
Planning & Regeneration	0	7	9	8	15	10	1	1	4	4
ICT	0	0	0	0	2	1	1			
Corporate Finance	1	5	2	5	2	2			2	
Legal & Governance	1	1	4	4	1	8	3	2	3	
People Management	2	5	15	19	15	19	3	5	7	4
Performance & Property	0	0	0	1	0	12	1	1	5	5
H&S	Not previously recorded separately					10	1	3	5	1
Procurement	Not previously recorded separately					2			2	

**Note:** Education and Social Services have designated staff that co-ordinate requests for the whole of their Directorates. Different service areas within the respective Directorates may have handled requests attributed to these departments.

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<b>Performance statistics in relation to the Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations</b>										
<b>TIMELINESS</b>	<b>Total 2009</b>	<b>Total 2010</b>	<b>Total 2011</b>	<b>Total 2012</b>	<b>Total 2013</b>	<b>Total 2014</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. 2014</b>
Number of requests received that fulfil the definition of a request (Freedom of Information Act 2000 & Environmental Information Regulations 2004) Note: excludes requests which were subsequently withdrawn	579	683	828	858	1057	1081	320	276	255	230
Of these the number which fully or mostly fall under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI)	459	612	790	838	1039	1061	316	271	248	226
Of these the number which fully or mostly fall under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR)	120	71	38	20	18	20	4	5	7	4
Number of requests received that have been processed in full within the normal legal compliance time i.e. 20 working days	452 (78%)	498 (74%)	689 (84%)	645 (77%)	750 (72%)	803 (76%)	238 (74%)	203 (74%)	185 (76%)	177 (79%)
The number of FOI/EIR requests where the 20 working day deadline has been extended as permitted by legislation	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Number of FOI & EIR requests on hold at the time of compiling statistics awaiting a response from applicant (fees or clarification)	1	5	3	20	13	18	0	3	10	5
Number of requests received that have not been processed in full within the normal legal compliance deadline i.e. 20 working days (inc. those still outstanding)	126 (22%)	180 (26%)	136 (16%)	196 (23%)	294 (28%)	259 (24%)	82 (26%)	69 (26%)	60 (24%)	48 (21%)

Note: the requests out for clarification have not been included in the compliance calculation as they are currently “on hold” and therefore the clock has stopped ticking

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<b>Performance statistics in relation Subject Access Requests – Data Protection Act.</b>										
<b>TIMELINESS</b>	<b>Total 2009</b>	<b>Total 2010</b>	<b>Total 2011</b>	<b>Total 2012</b>	<b>Total 2013</b>	<b>Total 2014</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Qtr 2014</b>
Number of requests received that fulfil the definition of a request (Subject Access Request – Data Protection Act 1998)	44	43	63	60	85	96	22	22	26	26
Number of requests received that have been processed in full within the normal legal compliance time i.e. 40 calendar days	29 (66%)	34 (79%)	55 (87%)	42 (70%)	53 (62%)	77 (80%)	17 (77%)	20 (91%)	20 (77%)	20 (77%)
Number of requests received that have not been processed in full within the normal legal compliance deadline i.e. 40 calendar days	15 (34%)	9 (21%)	8 (13%)	18 (30%)	32 (38%)	19 (20%)	5 (23%)	2 (9%)	6 (23%)	6 (23%)

In addition to the SARs recorded above, the Information Unit dealt with a further 37 applicants who did not go on to submit the paperwork required to make a formal SAR.

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<b>OUTCOMES (FOI / EIR)</b>	<b>Total 2009</b>	<b>Total 2010</b>	<b>Total 2011</b>	<b>Total 2012</b>	<b>Total 2013</b>	<b>Total 2014</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Qtr 2014</b>
Number of requests where all information requested has been provided	441	506	624	559	784	823	249	211	182	181
Number of requests where part of the information requested has been provided (*includes requests where part of the information was refused as the costs would exceed the appropriate limit)	59	78	103	122	83	87	23	23	23	18
Number of requests where the applicant has been informed that the information requested is not held (advice and assistance provided)	17	10	19	22	38	23	7	6	3	7
Number of requests withdrawn by applicant	14	19	16	20	11	11	1	5	3	2
Number of requests refused as they were considered vexatious	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of requests refused as they were considered repeated	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	2	0	0
Number of requests refused in full as the costs would exceed the appropriate limit (see above*)	2	14	34	51	33	30	14	6	5	5
Number of requests refused in full	40	36	70	118	100	69	22	15	20	12
Number of request on hold at time of compiling statistics awaiting response from applicant (clarification)	Info. not included in previous reports			17	13	18	0	3	10	5
Number of requests outstanding at time of compiling statistics				17	38	59	19	16	17	7

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<b>Use of Exemptions (FOI) and Exceptions (EIR)</b> Note that a single request can cite more than one specific exemption / exception as a reason for refusal	<b>Total 2009</b>	<b>Total 2010</b>	<b>Total 2011</b>	<b>Total 2012</b>	<b>Total 2013</b>	<b>Total 2014</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2014</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Qtr 2014</b>
For requests under the Freedom of Information Act, number which cited one of the following exemptions as a reason for refusal										
S.(21) - Information provided by other means	4	29	3	36	73	37	22	11	15	4
S.(22) - Information intended for future publication	0	1	3	3	1	2		1		1
S.(23) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters										
S.(24) - National security										
S.(26) – Defence										
S.(27) - International relations										
S.(28) - Relations within the United Kingdom										
S.(29) - The economy										
S.(30) - Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities	0	1	0	3	1					
S.(31) - Law enforcement	0	0	5	13	16	10	3	2	3	5
S.(32) - Court records, etc	0	1	0	0						
S.(33) - Audit functions										
S.(34) - Parliamentary privilege										
S.(35) - Formulation of government policy, etc										
S.(36) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs	1	1	0	0						
S.(37) - Communications with Her Majesty, etc. and honours										
S.(38) - Health and safety	1	0	0	0						
S.(40) - Personal information	26	25	22	13	29	22	4	8	5	10
S.(40) – Transfer to SAR	0	0	0	0	1					
S.(41) - Information provided in confidence	1	0	1	0						

	Total 2009	Total 2010	Total 2011	Total 2012	Total 2013	Total 2014	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2014	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2014	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2014	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2014
S.(42) - Legal professional privilege	0	0	5	0	1	1	1			
S.(43) - Commercial interests	1	4	6	2	7	9	1	2	4	2
S.(44) - Prohibitions on disclosure	0	1	2	0						
FOI Refusal – costs	0	0	39	55	38	46	14	11	13	8
FOI Neither confirm nor deny	0	0	2	0		1			1	
Refused – repeated	0	0	1	0	1	2		2		
For requests under the Environmental Information Regulations, number which cited one of the following exceptions as a reason for refusal										
R. 3(a) - Exempt personal data	12	1	1	0						
R. 4(a) – Do not hold	0	2	0	1	1					
R. 4(b) - Manifestly unreasonable	0	1	0	0		1			1	
R. 4(c) - Too general	0	1	0	0						
R. 4(d) - Work in progress / incomplete data	0	0	0	0		1				1
R. 4(e) - Internal communications	0	1	0	0						
R. 5(a) - Adverse effect on international relations, defence, national security or public safety										
R. 5(b) - Adverse effect on course of justice or conduct of inquiries										
R. 5(c) - Adverse effect on intellectual property rights										
R. 5(d) - Impinges on confidentiality of a public authority's work										
R. 5(e) - Impinges on confidentiality of commercial or industrial information										
R. 5(f) - Adverse effect on interests of person who provided the information	0	0	1	0		1			1	
R. 5(g) - Adverse effect on protection of environment to which information relates						1		1		
R.6(1)(b) Accessible by other means						1		1		

# Agenda Item 17

## Caerphilly Local Service Board



### Notes of Meeting

Held at 9:30am on  
Wednesday, 19th November, 2014  
Hafod Deg House, High Street, Rhymney.

**Present:-**

Cllr Keith Reynolds (Chair)	Chair of Caerphilly LSB and Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council
Chris Burns	Interim Chief Executive, Caerphilly County Borough Council
David Jenkins	Chair, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
Judith Paget	Chief Executive , Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
Brandon Williams (for Jeff Farrar)	Chief Superintendent, Gwent Police
James Owen	Deputy Director, Expert Services & People Division, Welsh Government
Martin Featherstone	Chief Executive, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations

**In attendance:-**

Keri Cole	Manager, Learning Education and Inclusion, CCBC
Sara Mutch	Manager, Flying Start, CCBC
Tina McMahon	Manager, Community Regeneration, CCBC
Marcus Lloyd	Deputy Head of Programmes, WHQS, CCBC
Jane Roberts-Waite	Strategic Coordination Manager, CCBC
Robert Hartshorn	Head of Public Protection, CCBC
Jonathan Pinkney	Regional VI Project Officer, BGCBC
Howard Rees	Programme Manager, CCBC
Emma Sullivan	Democratic Services Officer (Notes)

Point	Matter	Action
1.	<p><b><u>Welcome:</u></b> Cllr KR welcomed everyone to Hafod Deg House, introductions were made and thanks expressed to Tina McMahon and her team for their warm welcome and to Jane Roberts-Waite for facilitating the site visit to Rowan Place in Rhymney.</p>	
2.	<p><b><u>Previous Notes and Matters Arising:</u></b> The noted of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising - Minute No. 8 - Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board</b> HR confirmed that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was still to be agreed and signed. It was noted that this would be circulated in due course prior</p>	

Point	Matter	Action
	to its progress through the respective CCBC Cabinet and Council processes. It would also need to be considered through respective governance processes by ABUHB and other partners, as appropriate.	
3.	<p><b><u>Update on ‘Caerphilly Delivers’ - the LSB Single Integrated Plan:</u></b></p> <p><b>a. Learning Caerphilly Outcome Scorecard and Highlight/Exception Report:</b> Keri Cole (KC) and Sara Mutch (SM) were welcomed to the meeting and provided a presentation which focused on the early part of children’s educational lives and the role of the ‘Flying Start’ programme, as it related to the Learning Caerphilly outcome scorecard.</p> <p>The importance of the home as the first influence in a child’s life was emphasised as the value that parents place on literacy and numeracy directly related to that of the child. KC advised that parents that struggled at school were often reluctant to take an active part in school life and the relationship between school and home in these circumstances was key, with extreme poverty being the major barrier to parental involvement in education.</p> <p>‘Flying Start’ provided a vital pre-school link with 2246 children aged between 0-3 years benefiting from the initiative. The impact of the programme was illustrated through the case study ‘Tracy’s Story’. SM described the way in which ‘Flying Start’ helped to develop Tracy’s youngest child socialisation skills and supported Tracy herself when she suffered a series of crises within the family.</p> <p>The importance of collaborative partnerships was acknowledged and the work done with The Parents Network, Families First and Communities First on the “Petra the Penguin” literary project was highlighted as a model of good practice and a copy of the finished book distributed. The project has proved to be a massive success and it was hoped that sales of the book would eventually make the project self-sustaining. SM advised that other local authorities were now using “Petra the Penguin” model as a platform for their own literacy projects.</p> <p>In terms of performance for 2014, KC confirmed standards were rising steadily and that for the first time Caerphilly’s secondary schools at Level 2+ and broken through the 50% attainment threshold. The importance of developing the relationship between family and school was recognised as the biggest challenge going forward and the different ways in which a child can be supported by the school when any barriers to attainment were highlighted.</p> <p>In concluding the presentation KC advised that further case studies were available for the Board Members information. The Chair thanked KC and SM for their presentations and Board Members questions were welcomed.</p> <p>Clarification was sought on the impact of Welsh Governments’ Combined Outcomes Framework project and how this would affect delivery of local projects. SM confirmed that Flying Start worked closely with Communities First, Families First, partners and WG on all aspects of commissioning to ensure that there was no duplication. HR confirmed that Flying Start, Communities First and Families First in Caerphilly were exemplars of joint supportive working for delivery on the ground.</p> <p>JP referenced the increase in referrals being received for child/young adult mental health services and advised of the growing struggle with emotional wellbeing. JP confirmed that more resources and links between Social Services/Education and Health were required if early interventions were to be secured. KC confirmed that Caerphilly’s Youth Forum had identified mental health concerns as one of its top 3 priorities. KC acknowledged that schools understandably, often struggle to</p>	



Point	Matter	Action
	<p>understand the difference between absolute mental health and behavioural issues. Board Members were advised that a significant investment had been made to develop a Behaviour Strategy which would include a comprehensive training programme. SM advised that training would be delivered in line with the Solihull approach so that Health Visitors, Foster Carers and Parents were able to access a programme of training. JP confirmed that the ABUHB would be happy to work with Caerphilly on this to ensure health links into the programme. KC advised that a meeting with Dr David Williams had been scheduled on the strategy.</p> <p>The Chair sought clarification as to whether it would be possible to share data on this issue so that the authority could better understand the scale of the problem and was advised that this would be considered going forward.</p> <p>CB sought clarification as to the breaking of the 50% barrier at Level 2+ with regard to the remarking of examination papers. KC confirmed that remarking had taken Caerphilly over the 50%. It was noted that Caerphilly schools were currently the 2nd fastest improver in Wales, however all schools across Wales were also improving. KC was encouraged by the fact that the growth was steady with all schools showing improvement. The difficult choices facing Head Teachers in terms of a schools ability to meet an individual child's needs and requirements and the impact that these would have on that schools position within the bench mark was referenced.</p> <p>The LSB noted the presentation.</p>	
b.	<p><b>Other Outcome Highlight/Exception Reports:</b></p> <p><b>Prosperous Caerphilly:</b> The report outlined the progress made against the Prosperous Caerphilly priorities P1, P2 and P3.</p> <p>Clarification was sought in relation to educational attainment and job opportunities and whether these were joining-up and making the required connections. HR agreed to take this forward to the lead officer on this objective and bring back to the next meeting.</p> <p>TM referenced the work being done with David Adamson on the skills gap. It was noted that the Prosperous Caerphilly group were looking at how to influence the skills training provided in order to meet the needs of the labour market.</p> <p>MF referenced the recently published Sheffield Hallam University study on "The Impact of Welfare Reform on the Welsh Valleys" and the alternative growth figure quoted therein. This was discussed at length and Board Members were advised that the author would be speaking at the next Standing Conference.</p> <p>Having fully considered the Prosperous Caerphilly report the LSB agreed the recommendations contained therein.</p> <p><b>Safer Caerphilly:</b> The report outlined progress made against the Safer Caerphilly priorities S1, S2, S3, S4 and S5.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Rob Hartshorn, CCBC Head of Public Protection.</p> <p>A development against priority S4 (which includes domestic abuse provision in the borough) was the achievement of White Ribbon status by the local authority. This reflects the recent work done to support the Welsh Government 10,000 Safer</p>	HR

Point	Matter	Action
	<p>Lives agenda. It was noted that the re-launch of the Caerphilly Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Centre in Ystrad Mynach would coincide with White Ribbon Action Day on the 25th November 2014.</p> <p>With regard to priority S1, an update was given on the Gwent-wide response to the new Anti-Social Behaviour legislation and the present position of the process and documentation to support the new provisions noted.</p> <p>BW advised that Gwent Police had established a 'Hub' in Blackwood with 15 PCSO's designated to respond directly to high areas of anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>RH provided an update on priority S5 and the intention to develop substance misuse services at Hafod Deg House. The lack of a needle exchange facility in the north of the country borough was noted despite there being substance misuse needs identified in the area. It was noted that the proposal had been sent to Welsh Government for approval, the planning application submitted and consultation undertaken with the local ward members. RH confirmed that the response so far had been positive.</p> <p>Having fully considered the Safer Caerphilly report the LSB agreed the recommendations and actions contained therein.</p> <p><b>Healthier Caerphilly:</b> The report outlined progress made against the Healthier Caerphilly priority H2 which focused on emotional health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Board Members were advised of the concerns raised at the Delivery &amp; Leads Groups in relation to the difficulties in obtaining comparative data from the Health Board particularly in relation to the increase of prescribed antidepressants. It was noted that mental health and well-being was a priority for Neighbourhood Care Networks and that their support provided alternative therapies to prescription medication. JP confirmed that the ABUHB would be able to supply prescription by practice data and more generally other health related data, which had become problematic for Healthier Caerphilly colleagues to access for reporting purposes to the LSB.</p> <p>Having fully considered the Healthier Caerphilly report the LSB noted its content.</p> <p><b>Greener Caerphilly:</b> The report highlighted the progress made against priorities G1, G2 and G3.</p> <p>The projects commissioned were highlighted and Board Members were referred to the good community outcomes achieved and potential impact of budget reduction on service and on other outcomes.</p> <p>Having fully considered the Greener Caerphilly report the LSB noted its content.</p>	
c.	<p><b>Voluntary Sector and GAVO Update:</b> MF provided an update from GAVO and the voluntary sector. The impact of reduced financial resources on third sector service delivery and the need to maximise relationships at a regional level was emphasised and in particular collaborative working with Health Services. Internal changes to administration and IT services at GAVO in order to streamline operations were outlined and it was noted that office buildings and rents would also be looked at going forward in order to achieve further efficiencies.</p> <p>MF confirmed that partnership working would be further developed in order to maximise resources. It was noted that meetings had already been held with the</p>	

Point	Matter	Action
	<p>Citizen Advice Bureau and CCBC's Corporate Management Team (CMT) in order to present practical applications to local provision through the third sector and ensure that the Voluntary Sector was in the best position possible to move forward.</p> <p>The work done to develop awareness of "Social Enterprises" was highlighted that would culminate in a larger event to be held in March 2015. CCBC, ABUHB and local third sector organisation would be brought together to look at how they can support the delivery of public services and specific outcomes.</p> <p>The Chair thanked MF for his update and full discussion ensued.</p> <p>CB acknowledged the impact that loss of funding was having across the board and how this had forced organisations to work differently in order to retain services. The need to explore the potential and appropriate establishment of social enterprises to secure service retention was discussed at length. The positive impact that social enterprises could have on local economies was also discussed and Board Members agreed that they would welcome the development of a local provider network and fully supported the "Provider Fair" referenced above and scheduled for March 2015.</p> <p>JRW referenced the positive impact made by the WHQS programme on local business through its small lots provision and the environmental improvements programme. The possible involvement of tenant social enterprises in this programme was highlighted and JRW confirmed that tenants would be fully supported to undertake as much of this work as appropriate. Board Members were advised that a report on the revised timetable for the environmental works programme would be brought to the CCBC Caerphilly Homes Task Group and Cabinet shortly.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the forthcoming reports and acknowledged the benefits of WHQS programme was having on local businesses, the local economy and local communities was acknowledged.</p> <p>The Chair referenced "One Beat", a recent held voluntary sector event attended by Dave Roberts, Para-Olympian, in which he gave an inspirational speech on the impact that volunteers, had made on his life and the lives of other disabled people.</p>	
4.	<p><b><u>Welsh Government Effective Services For Vulnerable Groups (ESVG):</u></b></p> <p><b>a. Letter from ESGV Chair:</b> HR referred Board Members to the letter from the newly appointed Chair of the ESGV, Jeff Farrar (Chief Constable Gwent Police) which drew attention to recent reports, projects and reference the work being done with regard to information sharing and "Team Around the Family" projects.</p> <p><b>b. ESGV feedback on 'Improving Information Sharing' Exercise:</b> HR referred Board Members to the previously circulated ESGV feedback on the Improving Information Sharing exercise.</p> <p><b>c. ESGV update on learning from 'Team Around The Family' projects across Wales:</b> The ESGV update provided Board Members with a summary of evidence on the benefits of the Team Around The Family (TAF) approach, how it reflected on local practice and contributed to the embedding of the TAF approach in service delivery.</p>	

Point	Matter	Action
d.	<p><b>Update for LSB on the Caerphilly ‘Team Around the Family’ Project:</b>            HR introduced the report and gave apologies on behalf of Gareth Jenkins (Assistant Director Children’s Services) who was unable to attend today’s meeting. HR confirmed that if Board Members had any queries on the report he would refer them to GJ and invite him to attend at a later date if required. The report detailed the TAF model in Caerphilly and its benefits as well as providing examples of areas of success and the future challenges for the service.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the report but felt that it might have benefitted from some real-life case studies to better illustrate the success of the project.</p> <p>Board Members expressed their confidence in the TAF project and acknowledged the breadth of the work being undertaken and the difference it was making to Caerphilly’s most vulnerable families.</p> <p>The LSB agreed their support on any cross-cutting issues and to continue to provide strategic leadership on embedding approaches.</p>	HR/GJ
5.	<p><b><u>Update On LSB ESF Projects:</u></b>            HR advised Board Members of that the below LSB sponsored projects, funded via the European Social Fund, will close by 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2014 and will be subject to WG ESF project closure processes and a final closure report, which will be reported to the LSB in due course.</p> <p>a. <b>Vulnerability Intelligence:</b>            Jonathan Pinkney (JP), Regional VI Project Officer, BGCBC, introduced his report which updated the LSB on the Vulnerable Intelligence (VI) Project.</p> <p>The project sought to collate existing data from various public sector sources and present it as a source of improved intelligence around a range of indicators or characteristics of vulnerability. This data could then be utilised by the different public sector teams to develop operational planning and service delivery, focussing on early intervention and prevention, enabling more proactive and targeted person-centred service delivery across regional boundaries.</p> <p>The in-roads this data made to the understanding of vulnerability was noted and JP confirmed that the outputs produced had established ‘proof of concept’ and the projects focus would now be on how to use the intelligence going forward. It was noted that the independent evaluation process had commenced.</p> <p>The difficulties encountered when extracting data from the different systems was noted and the information sharing protocols required to ensure the safe exchange of information outlined. Analytics would now be working with practitioners and strategic leads to establish how the information could be modelled going forward and JP expressed his thanks to all the Officers involved as it presented a big commitment from all of the project partner organisations.</p> <p>In concluding PJ advised that it had provided an enhanced understanding of vulnerability and how data sharing could be used to improve quality and efficiency. It had highlighted how data could be better recorded in order to inform dialogue between professionals as well as the context of the data required to enable vital modelling to support targeted deliverability. The potential for modelling outputs to identify and therefore allow early interventions and support targeted deliverability for those falling within the vulnerability characteristics was acknowledged.</p> <p>The Chair thanked PJ for his report and the views of the LSB were welcomed.</p>	

Point	Matter	Action
	<p>Clarification was sought in relation to the projects closure process and Board Members were advised that a dissemination event would be planned to promote the project and give a holistic overview of its outcomes.</p> <p>Board Members queried why individuals that live alone had been excluded from the data parameters. PJ confirmed that the single person discount data had been used as the indicator and had not proved to be useful as a data set. There were also consent issues around the use of the data that could be shared. These were explained and the complexity of the collating of data whilst staying within the appropriate data protection legislation was explained.</p> <p>Clarification was sought as to next steps and the projects legacy going forward.</p> <p>HR referenced the forthcoming dissemination event which would present the outcome of the evaluation process and the way forward. Having established the proof of concept the future implementation would depend on the degree of involvement from Welsh Government. The potential benefits for early intervention and reduced costs were recognised by Board Members.</p> <p>The LSB agreed that continued Welsh Government involvement would depend on the projects evaluation and presentation of a sustainable model.</p> <p>The LSB having considered the report and taking into account that proof of concept had been established agreed that further discussions needed to take place on how best to engage with Welsh Government on the future of vulnerability intelligence modelling given its potential impact on public service provision.</p> <p><b>b. Programme Manager (Partnership Development and Collaborative Improvement):</b> HR advised Board Members that WG ESF would be expended by 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2014, when the project would close. However CCBC will temporarily fund the post until the end of the financial year, providing continued support and administration for the LSB, whilst the LSB decide the level of support required, its cost and future contributions thereto. Reference was made to the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Bill and its impact on LSB's was noted.</p> <p><b>c. Personal Information Sharing:</b> The report provided a quarterly update on the progress of the ESF LSB Information Sharing Project.</p> <p>Board Members noted the progress made and work yet to be done on the Personal Information Sharing protocols and action plan for LSB organisations, also noting that the National WASPI team would cease to be funded on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015.</p> <p>The Chair referenced the success of the recent dissemination event entitled "Information Sharing - adding value to partnership working" and acknowledged the positive feedback received.</p> <p><b>d. Passport Programme:</b> HR confirmed that additional funds had been made available from other sources to continue the project. TM advised Board Members of a conflict between Jobs Growth Wales and Communities First programme which was inhibiting the placement process. The conflicting programmes were confusing for employers and were actually prohibiting placement opportunities for young people from the most deprived communities. James Owen agreed to feed these issues back to Welsh Government.</p>	<p>LSB</p> <p>JO</p>

Point	Matter	Action
	<p>Clarification was sought as to the number of projects that would be spent out at the conclusion of the funding. HR confirmed that all projects apart from the Information Sharing project which might return approximately £20,000. However when taking into account the different project constraints (WG project approval processes, etc) it could be spent out by its conclusion.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill:</u></b></p> <p>HR confirmed that this item would be discussed as part of the Standing Conference update.</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>LSB Standing Conference:</u></b></p> <p><b>a. Feedback to LSB from Last Conference:</b>  HR provided feedback on the comments received following the last Standing Conference and noted that a number had referenced a lack of understanding on the work of the LSB.</p> <p>Board Members agreed that this needed to be considered in line with the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill and the development of Public Service Boards.</p> <p>Clarification was sought with regard to the potential make-up of a Public Service Board and an example discussed. Possible composition could be CCBC, ABUHB, South Wales Fire &amp; Rescue Service and National Resources Wales as core membership, with Welsh Government, Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner, Voluntary Sector plus other appropriate agencies as its invited members. It was agreed that the level of and extent to which the different agencies would be able to make a commitment for attendees would need to be considered strategically.</p> <p><b>b. Next Conference:</b>  The date and venue of the next Standing Conference was confirmed at Friday, 30th January, 2015 in the New Cottage Dance Centre, Ystrad Mynach, commencing at 10am.</p>	
8.	<p><b><u>LSB Anti-Poverty priority:</u></b></p> <p><b>a. Verbal Update Anti-Poverty Strategy:</b>  Rob Hartshorn (Anti-Poverty Champion and Head of Public Protection, CCBC) provided a verbal update on the Anti-Poverty Strategy. The multi-agency approach being taken forward in the Upper Rhymney Valley and Lansbury Park as part of the LSB Anti-Poverty priority was noted. RH advised on the development of a CCBC Anti-Poverty Strategy and highlighted that although this was currently a Council approach, partner organisations would be asked to make a commitment to the strategy going forward as poverty issues could not be tackled in isolation. It was noted that the endorsement of the LSB would be vital to the strategy's progress. It was noted that a strategy template would be presented to CCBC CMT shortly.</p> <p>Having considered the issues the LSB noted the update.</p> <p><b>b. "Vibrant, Viable Places" initiative and Hafod Deg:</b>  The report provided an overview of the Rhymney Regeneration Programme, funded by Welsh Government under its 'Vibrant, Viable Places' initiative.</p> <p>TM outlined the background of the Twyn Carno area and the bid to secure capital funding for the Hafod Deg building as a central point to support social outcomes</p>	

Point	Matter	Action
	<p>for the area. The impact of the WHQS programme on the regeneration and renovation programme at Rowan Place and the issues arising from it were highlighted.</p> <p>It was noted that the Hafod Deg building would continue to support service users with low level mental health needs, assisting integration into the community. The building would also establish a 'Training and Enterprise' hub with Job Centre Plus facilities to target long-term worklessness and would be closely aligned to the Welsh Government's LIFT programme. A café running nutritional courses as well as community food growing initiatives would also form part of the project. The Primary Mental Health Team would be represented and Drug and Alcohol Support Services would operate a needle exchange and support service from the building. The facility would provide an holistic approach to support and service provision to the local community.</p> <p>Clarification was sought as to whether a Royal British Legion outreach facility could also be accommodated on-site. TM confirmed that this could be possible once a better idea of the centres usage could be established. The Chair confirmed that there were a high number of veterans in the area who could benefit from more localised support.</p> <p>The budget spend was confirmed as £200,000 x Hafod Deg, £600,000 x Rowan Place (2015/16) and £200,000 x Hafod Deb (2016/17).</p> <p>The important role of the LSB going forward was acknowledged by all. The need to ensure a multi-agency approach to tackling poverty was stressed with the LSB as the overarching strategic lead. RH confirmed that all CCBC priorities tackled poverty in some aspect although this might not be directly noted within them. Poverty required a high level strategic commitment and although not implicitly stated within the Single Plan it had an anti-poverty basis.</p> <p>JP confirmed that the ABUHB acknowledged that in to "develop healthier communities" (an ABUHB strategic priority), it needed to tackle poverty and would welcome the pooling of resources and activity to target specific localities, with high levels of deprivation, in order secure positive outcomes.</p> <p>CB agreed that this project was an ideal opportunity to make the statement that poverty would not be tolerated. By bringing together jobs, training, social service support, health, lifestyle, living environment something very positive could be achieved in this area.</p> <p>TM acknowledged that this was a very ambitious undertaking, as the largest single investment the project was taking a strong anti-poverty stance with far reaching outcomes for quality of life, impact on educational achievement, health and a prosperous community.</p> <p>The LSB having fully considered its content noted the report.</p> <p>Board Members, together with officers, then undertook a site visit of Rowan Place, Rhymney.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Information Items:</b> Items circulated for information were noted.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b> At 9.30am on Tuesday, 3rd March, 2015 in meeting room 1.3 at CCBC Offices, Ty Penallta.</p>	

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## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP (WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH  
(SIRHOWY ROOM) ON THURSDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT 5.00 P.M.

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PRESENT:

C. Davies- Vice Chair (Presiding)

### Task Group Members:

Ms L. Ackerman, R.T. Davies, Mrs G. Green, K. James, Mrs S. Jones, Miss A. Lewis, C. Mann, M. McDermott, Mrs D. Moore, J. Moore.

S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer), P. Davy (Head of Programmes), E. Lucas (Head of Procurement), R. Thornett (Tenancy Enforcement Manager) and C. Evans (Democratic Services Officer).

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs B.A. Jones and Mrs D. Price.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Miss A. Lewis, Mr C. Davies, Ms G. Green, Mrs S. Jones, Mr M. McDermott, Mrs D. Moore and Mr J. Moore as Council Tenants declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in all agenda items.

Councillor L. Ackerman and G. Jones declared an interest in item 5, relating to the Community Safety Fund. Details are minuted with the respective item.

### 3. MINUTES – 11TH DECEMBER 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th December 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Councillor L. Ackerman and C. Mann requested it be noted that both had conflicting commitments at the time of the previous Task Group Meeting and had tendered their apologies.

#### **4. LOCAL EMPLOYMENT FUND – SUPPORTING LIFT.**

The report, which was presented by P. Davy (Head of Programmes – WHQS), sought the views of the CHTG on the virement of the allocation of the 2014/15 Local Employment Fund budget to Communities First in order to add value and enhance the Welsh Government's LIFT programme, which is aimed at supporting people in workless households into employment within the Upper Rhymney Valley and Caerphilly Basin Communities First Clusters.

The programme is aimed at supporting people who have spent more than 6 months out of work and who face the greatest barriers to becoming employable.

Originally, the Welsh Government advised that in Caerphilly county borough the LIFT programme would only be piloted in the Caerphilly Basin Cluster (including Lansbury Park) however, they have recently approved an expansion of the project to the Upper Rhymney Valley Cluster area (including the Twyn Carno ward) hence the proposal to allocate the fund for 2014/15 to enhance and support the delivery of the recently announced wider programme.

The geographical focus of the project was discussed and concerns raised that the Eastern Valleys Area of the county borough was not included in the project. Officers highlighted that LIFT is a targeted programme, specifically aimed at workless households and assisting to mitigate deprivation.

The Task Group sought further information on the support staff that would be allocated to the project, cost of the scheme and the outcomes and qualifications expected from the project. Officers highlighted that a LIFT Support Officer would be allocated to the project and progress and outcomes would be reported to the Task Group.

The Task Group, having fully discussed and considered the report, recommended that the item be deferred to the next available agenda, in order that the Author could be in attendance to answer detailed questions. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the report be deferred to the next available agenda for consideration.

#### **5. COMMUNITY SAFETY FUND – TARGET HARDENING AND SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.**

Councillor G. Jones declared an interest as member of the Care and Repair Board and Councillor L. Ackerman declared an interest in this item as a Co-opted Member of the Care and Repair Committee and Director of the Arms Length Company of Care and Repair (non-profit) and both left the meeting during its consideration.

The report advised Members of proposals to utilise £20,000 of the Council's WHQS Community Safety budget, to enhance the target hardening provision available to support victims of anti social behaviour and domestic violence.

The Community Safety Fund was created to support projects that aim to address community safety issues and help create a safer community environment.

During 2014/15 a number of discussions have taken place with representatives from the Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership, Gwent Police, Llamau, Communities First, Flying Start and Tenancy Enforcement regarding how the Fund could be best utilised. The discussions were assisted by the findings highlighted in the Safer Caerphilly Strategic Assessment, which suggested that whilst the overall crime rate in Caerphilly had reduced, the incidents of some types of crime had increased, notably violent crime, criminal damage and theft. Anti social behaviour had increased in a number of areas including Penyrheol, Risca and St James.

The Task Group noted the proposal to utilise £20,000 of the Council's WHQS Community Safety Fund 2014/15 to add value to existing work underway by the members of the Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership to help address the key community safety concerns highlighted in the Safer Caerphilly Strategic Assessment.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the report and sought further information on the consultation undertaken with tenants during the process. Officer advised that indirect consultation was conducted with tenants, through feedback from organisations operating in the key areas.

Members queried where the work would be undertaken and whether any had been implemented to date. Officers confirmed that the support would be targeted at communities with local authority housing estates but the specific areas would be dependent on the feedback from Police and Community Safety Partnership. The additional funding would enable existing initiatives to be extended.

Having fully considered the report, the Task Group unanimously supported proposal prior to a decision by the Head of Programmes, under delegated powers.

## **6. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TENANT REPRESENTATIVES ON THE CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP**

P. Davy (Head of Programmes – WHQS) provided an overview of the report, which outlined the Code of Conduct for the tenant representatives on the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG).

It was noted that as the Caerphilly Homes Task Group was not defined in the Council's Constitution as a committee of the Council, and Tenant Representatives were neither members of the Council or co opted members and the Members Code of Conduct did not apply. However, it was considered to be good practice for the tenant representatives to sign and abide by a Code of Conduct, which was specifically drafted for the tenant representatives on the CHTG as a consultative body.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the report and Code of Conduct and discussion ensued. Members raised concerns that their views and comments, voiced during the consultation process, had not been considered or incorporated and sought further information. Officers explained that there are limits to the number of Scrutiny Committees and following a review of the Constitution the role of the CHTG had been confirmed as a consultative body with the public housing scrutiny function being the responsibility of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

A Task Group Member highlighted that a Code of Conduct has been implemented at each of the groups and meetings they take part in and can be intimidating. Members have reservations about expressing their views, for fear of breaching the Code. Officers assured the Task Group that the Code of Conduct is intended to protect tenants and provide guidance and a mechanism to deal with complaints or misconduct.

The Task Group discussed the Complaints and Appeals process and expressed concerns for transparency within the process. Discussions ensued and it was felt that appeals should be conducted by an officer independent from the housing service. Officers agreed to consider that any final appeal should be dealt with by the Head of Legal Services.

## **7. DECISION FOR THE AUTHORITY TO BUY OUT OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) SUBSIDY ARRANGEMENTS**

The report, which was considered and approved by Special Council on the 17th December 2014, provided the financial business case and background for Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) to borrow funds from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), to buy itself out of the HRA Subsidy arrangements.

The Task Group noted that after lengthy negotiations, the Welsh Government and HM Treasury have reached an agreement that would allow the eleven Authorities in Wales with Council housing stock to exit from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system and become self-financing from April 2015. The negotiations have been undertaken on the basis of the completion of individual voluntary agreements with the 11 landlord Authorities rather than waiting for the primary legislation to be enacted.

Local Authorities would be required to buy their way out of the current HRA subsidy system with payment of a one off settlement figure to HM Treasury, and would be subject to a cap on HRA borrowing.

The new self-financing arrangements are planned to be in place from April 2015 and would increase revenue year on year for the eleven landlord Authorities.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the detailed report and consideration and discussion ensued.

Members sought details on the direct benefits the HRA Buy Out would have for the Authority and tenants. Officers highlighted that the sale of any land and income from rentals would be retained by the Local Authority. However, Members were asked to note that the buy out would have an impact on the overall borrowing cap.

Members noted that, at the time of Cabinet approval, all 11 Local Authorities had committed to the plan, however, due to movement in interest rates, the level of borrowing may change. Officers advised that an update would be provided to the Task Group in due course.

## **8. PROCUREMENT UPDATE REPORT.**

E. Lucas (Head of Procurement) updated the Task Group on the current position and delivery of Procurements in relation to the WHQS Programme.

There is an extensive range of procurement activity associated with the WHQS Programme. The major contract arrangements are in place in accordance with the contract structure agreed in September 2012 and there is on going activity associated with mini competitions and the small lots. Circumstances on the ground have also led to many ad hoc additional requirements and it is anticipated that these will continue to be a feature as the programme is progressed to 2020.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued around the capacity to manage the contracts. Officers highlighted that additional staff have been assigned to WHQS in order to manage the procurement process.

Questions were raised about the legality of limiting some contracts to contractors with a base in the Caerphilly county borough. It was noted that the legal advice had been fully considered when stipulating the specifications and it was confirmed that it was lawful to award on this basis.

The Task Group expressed their gratitude to the Procurement Team undertaking the extensive work for WHQS and were pleased to note the progress report.

## **9. HRA STAFF TURNOVER REPORT 2013/14.**

S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer), presented the Task Group with the report, which was requested by Cllr L. Ackerman at the CHTG meeting of the 18th September 2014. The report provided a breakdown of the salary savings that was reported in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Outturn Report 2013/14.

Members noted that the Housing Revenue Account Outturn Report had provided details of the final outturn for the HRA for the 2013/14 financial year. As part of the overall underspends it was noted from the report that £597k represented salary savings. The report also noted that 'There are a variety of reasons for this given the volume of staff, but the main causes are staff turnover £400k, and other savings such as long term sickness, opted out pension savings and vacant posts. There was also a reduction in expenditure on agency workers which was off-set by increased overtime costs. A detailed breakdown of the salary underspend achieved in 2013/14 was provided.

The Task Group considered the report and queried the overtime paid to staff. Officers highlighted that there was an overspend on the Overtime budget as a result of addressing service delivery with the current staff resources. It was noted that Overtime working is used in order to address increases in demand and the winter months of 2013/14 were the wettest recorded for many years which resulted in an increased number of repairs reported.

## **10. PAN GWENT DOMESTIC ABUSE PROJECT**

R. Thornett (Tenancy Enforcement Manager), provided an overview of the report which detailed a proposed pan Gwent social landlord's domestic abuse project and the financial cost of the project.

A group of social housing providers in Gwent have joined together to tackle the issue of domestic abuse. The group members are: Bron Afon Community Housing, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Charter Housing including Derwen, Melin Homes, Monmouthshire Housing, Newport City Homes and Tai Calon. Charter Housing is the lead organisation.

The pan Gwent group have agreed that in order to better tackle domestic abuse, a study needs to be undertaken to identify how social landlords can respond more effectively.

An 8 month project was proposed to undertake the necessary research and analysis and to develop a toolkit for use by social landlords. A project officer would be recruited to undertake the work as prescribed by the pan Gwent social landlord's domestic abuse group.

The Task Group noted that a bid was submitted to Welsh Government, which was not successful, however, the group members have agreed to use their own funding (£3.5k per member) to support the project.

Members expressed their support for the project and discussed the report. A Member proposed that research also be conducted from the perspective of the victim, which could be included in the policies. Officers thanked the Task Group Member and agreed to feedback the suggestion to the group.

## **11. CYD CYMRU COLLECTIVE ENERGY SWITCHING SCHEME**

S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer) presented the information report, which was considered and approved by Cabinet on the 21st January 2015.

Fuel poverty is high on the council's agenda. Domestic energy prices have been dramatically rising over recent years. The Energy Saving Trust highlights that energy prices have risen by 28% between 2008 and 2013.

Cyd Cymru is a collective energy-switching scheme developed to offer people in Wales an opportunity to save money by coming together to buy fuel "in bulk".

The scheme has been developed by Cardiff Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Council, with support from the Welsh Governments "Regional Collaboration Fund.

The Task Group noted that two switches have taken place between January and March 2014. A total of 6800 households across Wales have registered for the scheme and over 1500 households switched saving an average of £185 per household.

The Task Group thanked the Officer for the report and sought further details of customer support during and after the switch process. Officers highlighted that Energy Advice would be provided to customers at the beginning of the process but were not aware of any further support provided.

In noting that there was no financial support required from Local Authorities, a Member sought details on the running of the scheme. Officers confirmed that the scheme is in receipt of funding from the Energy Savings Trust.

The Caerphilly Homes Task Group noted the report.

#### **TO RECEIVE ANY REQUESTS FOR AN ITEM TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA**

The following requests were received:-

1. Councillor L. Ackerman requested a follow up report on the changes made in Sheltered Housing Service and user satisfaction.
2. A. Lewis requested a further report on the Code of Conduct and whether complaints could be referred to the Standards Committee.
3. A. Lewis requested a report on the outcomes from use of the LEF to support the Passport Programme and the White rose project.
4. A Lewis requested a report on the impact and effectiveness of CHTG on P&R and Cabinet decisions.

Task Group Members sought an update on mobile phones for the new Task Group Members. Officers confirmed that this matter is being progressed.

The meeting closed at 6.47 p.m.

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April 2015.

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CHAIRMAN



## PENSIONS/COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 17TH MARCH 2015 AT 9.00AM

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PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs J. Gale - Chair

Councillors:

W. David, J.E. Fussell, N. George (in place of D.M. Gray), Ms. J.G. Jones, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan

Appropriate Cabinet Member - Councillor D.V. Poole

Together with:

G. Hardacre (Head of People Management and Development), M. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services), L. Donovan (HR Service Manager - Customer Services), D. Regan (Lead Officer - Benefits and Finance), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer).

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D.M. Gray.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor W. David declared an interest in the application of MW (as the applicant is know to him) and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

#### 3. APPLICATIONS FOR EARLY RETIREMENT IN COMMUNITY AND LEISURE SERVICES

Members considered the public interest test certificate from the Proper Officer and concluded that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and it was:-

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure to them of exempt information as identified in paragraphs 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval for the early access to non-actuarially reduced pension benefits for eight cases under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for employees within Community and Leisure Services.

Following detailed discussion on each of the applications, and in considering to which voluntary severance will apply, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation within the report be approved. By show of hands (and in noting that Councillor David had declared an interest in the application from MW) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report and outlined at the meeting, the eight requests for the early access to non-actuarially reduced pension benefits under the Local Government Pension Scheme, to support Community and Leisure Services in achieving some of its required budgetary savings for 2015/16, be approved.

The meeting closed at 1.05pm