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(Tel: 01443 864267 Email: morgah@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 30th September 2015

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If you have any queries please contact the Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services by email pricea4@caerphilly.gov.uk or telephone 01443 863150

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of **Council** will be held in the **Council Chamber, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Tuesday, 6th October, 2015** at **5.00 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 Mayor's Announcements.
- 3 Presentation of Awards.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



- 4 Declarations of Interest.
Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of 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: -

- 5 Council held on 21st July 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 9). 1 - 4
- 6 To receive and consider the Annual Improvement Report by Wales Audit Office. 5 - 52

To receive and consider the following reports from the meeting of Cabinet held on 30th September 2015.

- 7 Local Development Plan 2015 - Annual Monitoring Report 53 - 66
- 8 Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Action Plan (CAA and CAMP) Final Draft 2015. 67 - 74
- 9 Annual Performance Report 2014/15. 75 - 234

To receive and consider the following reports.

- 10 Scrutiny Review 2015 - Democratic Services Committee - 16th September 2015. 235 - 250
- 11 Welsh Government Consultation on Draft Directions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales. 251 - 264
- 12 City Deals - Cardiff Capital Region. 265 - 268

To receive and answer questions received under Rules of Procedure 10(2) which may have been submitted after the preparation of the agenda

Circulation:

All Members And Appropriate Officers



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 21ST JULY 2015 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor L. Gardiner- Mayor
Councillor D. Price - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

M. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, H.A. Andrews, Mrs K.R. Baker, J. Bevan, L. Binding, Mrs A. Blackman, D. Bolter, Mrs P. Cook, H.W. David, W. David, H.R. Davies, D.T. Davies, C. Durham, C. Elsbury, Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. E. Forehead, Mrs J. Gale, N. George, C.J. Gordon, R.W. Gough, Mrs P. Griffiths, D.T. Hardacre, D. Havard, C. Hawker, G.J. Hughes, G. Johnston, Mrs B.A. Jones, Ms J.G. Jones, S. Kent, G. Kirby, A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan, Mrs G. Oliver, R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, M.J. Prew, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, D. Rees, K.V. Reynolds, J.E. Roberts, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, S. Skivens, Mrs E. Stenner, Mrs J. Summers, J. Taylor, L.G. Whittle, T.J. Williams, R. Woodyatt

Together with:-

C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), D. Street (Director of Social Services), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services), C. HARRY (Corporate Director - Education and Community Services), L. Dallimore (Medium Term Financial Plan Program Co-ordinator), G. Williams (Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), A. Price (Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer), E. Sullivan (Committee Services Officer)

1. WEB-CASTING FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Interim Chief Executive reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed and would be made publically available in live and archive form via the Council's website. He advised that decisions would be made by show of hands.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms. L. Ackerman, A. Angel, Mrs G. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, D.G. Carter, C. Cuss, N. Dix, J.E. Fussell, A.G. Higgs, K. James, M.P. James, Ms P. Leonard, D.W.R. Preece and A. Rees.

3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the many events and visits that he and the Deputy Mayor have undertaken since the last meeting and expressed his thanks to those who attended the Charity Launch and Civic Service. He confirmed that to date, £6,370.00 had been raised for his chosen charities, Ty Hafan and McMillan Nurses.

4. PETITION - POTENTIAL LOSS OF SWIMMING FACILITIES AT CEFN FFOREST LEISURE CENTRE

The Mayor received a petition from Councillor C. Hawker presented on behalf of local residents regarding the potential loss of swimming facilities at Cefn Fforest Leisure Centre and indicated they would be referred to the appropriate directorate for attention.

5. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Sports Leadership Academy Award

Members were informed that Caerphilly County Borough Council had been awarded Sports Leaders UK, Leadership Academy status.

UK Leadership Academy status has only been awarded to a small number of organisations throughout the United Kingdom and recognises the excellent standards of delivery of the Sports Leaders UK awards and qualifications. The status award acknowledges Sport Caerphilly as a beacon of good practice and reflects their commitment to the philosophy of Sports Leaders UK and the benefits of leadership to young people and the community.

Mr T. Wallis and Mr D Thomas representing Sport Caerphilly came forward to receive the award from the Mayor and Mr R. Guy from Sports Leaders UK.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Interim Chief Executive provided advice to Members on declarations of interest as they related to the Annual Directors Report on the Effectiveness of Social Care Services 2014-15. He advised that given the general nature of the report, there was no requirement for them to declare in this instance.

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

7. COUNCIL - 9TH JUNE 2015

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

Council held on 9th June 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 13).

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following report.

8. ANNUAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES 2014-15

The report, which detailed the key messages that had been identified in the preparation of the sixth Annual Director's Report on the Effectiveness of Social Care Services, was presented to the meeting of the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 23rd June 2015. After due consideration, it was recommended that the Report be noted and the submitted to Council for adoption.

Members were advised that the process of compiling the report has been undertaken in accordance with the Annual Council Reporting Framework. It will be the sixth Annual Director's Report and its aim is to provide a summary outlining the effectiveness of how CCBC delivers Social Services to its citizens. The report provides details on the Directorate's performance for 2014-2015 and the priority areas for development in 2015-16. In 2014-15 the Directorate set itself a number of specific divisional priorities. The progress achieved in relation to these priorities is shown throughout the document.

The Directorate has also identified a number of priority areas for development in 2015-16. These are also shown throughout the document and have informed the Directorate's Annual Service Plan for 2015-16. Following presentation to Council on 21st July 2015, the Annual Director's Report will be made available to members of the public, partner agencies and stakeholders by the statutory deadline of 1st September 2015.

Reference was made to the national introduction of the 'Living Wage' and the impact that this could have on costs and smaller care providers. The Director of Social Services acknowledged this as an issue for all local authorities and confirmed that the potential budgetary impact had been recognised.

Clarification was sought in relation to the LAC Reviews which were noted to have fallen back from the Welsh average. Members were advised that this was primarily due to the complex nature of the reviews and the need to ensure that a comprehensive, thorough and effective assessment was undertaken. The Directorate was aware of challenges in this area which would be monitored going forward.

Members acknowledged the importance of engaging with children and young people with regard to service provision and concern was expressed at the loss of the Children's Rights Officer post. It was felt that without a dedicated Officer acting as conduit between the individual, Council and Government the voices of children and young people could be missed. The Director of Social Services outlined the various channels available to the children and young people of the borough as well as the role and responsibilities that each individual Social Worker played in this regard. In recognising the concerns raised Mr Street confirmed that he would approach the Assistant Director of Children Services and request that a report on the matters raised be presented to a future meeting of the Health Social Care and Well Being Scrutiny Committee.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the contents of the Annual Director's Report on the Effectiveness of Social Care Services 2014-15 be noted and adopted.

9. QUESTIONS UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(2)

There were no questions submitted under Rule of Procedure 10(2).

The meeting closed at 17:40pm

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2015 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR



COUNCIL – 6TH OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT BY WALES AUDIT OFFICE

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the content of the Annual Improvement Report (AIR) and to advise members on the monitoring process for progressing all proposals for improvement recommended or suggested by the Wales Audit Office (WAO).

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report presents the WAO AIR, which is the regulators summary of CCBC's performance against our statutory duty for 2014/2015. This report is to inform members of how the Council monitors and tracks proposals that are made for improvement by WAO so members can have assurance a robust process is in place for following up on the suggested improvements.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 2009 Local Government Measure puts a duty on an authority to 'make arrangements to continuously improve'. These arrangements and their effectiveness are assessed by the WAO with the results published within the AIR.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Council receives three improvement 'outputs' a year from WAO, one provides feedback on the Improvement Objectives that we set for the year ahead and asks if we complied with the legislation in producing them, the second is a report which looks back at our performance for the previous financial year and the third and final is the AIR which summarises all the regulator work and their findings throughout the year.
- 4.2 As the AIR is a public document summarising other reports throughout the year, any recommendations for improvement made previously are already known and have already been reported to Corporate Management Team and Audit Committee documented in a register.
- 4.3 The process adopted is that when an Improvement Report is received (in draft) it is sent to Corporate Management Team initially to view the proposals and take a view on whether the proposals are value adding.
- 4.4 Once feedback is given and the report is finalised the recommendations for improvement are recorded in one of two registers – the Improving Governance Board Register or the general Regulator Register.

- 4.5 Actions to address the recommendations or proposals with named officers and dates of completion are recorded in both registers.
- 4.6 The progress against both registers is reported to CMT and to Audit Committee, with the last update being provided to Audit Committee 10 June 2015.

The headline within the attached report recognises that:

“Based on the work of the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General considers that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure during 2015-16”

- 4.7 There are no new recommendations for improvement. The report notes that the recommendation made in January regarding making a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances has now been addressed.

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 There are no financial implications to this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications to this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

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

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Council endorse the AIR and the process for routine monitoring of any outstanding proposals.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The Council has a statutory duty to implement actions from the local government measure and consider guidance for ways in which to do this. The AIR is the public report, which tells the public if the council has complied and how well it has done so, therefore it is important Council has opportunity to question content from the AIR and gain assurance that a monitoring process is in place to make any agreed improvements.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Measure 2009.

Author: Ros Roberts, Corporate Performance Manager - robber@caerphilly.gov.uk
Consultees: Nicole Scammell - Acting Director Corporate Services and Section S151 Officer
Chris Burns - Interim Chief Executive

Colin Jones - Head of Performance and Property
Christina Harry – Corporate Director Education & Community Services
Dave Street – Corporate Director Social Services
Councillor David Hardacre – Cabinet Member Performance and Property

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Annual Improvement Report 2014/2015

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Annual Improvement Report 2014-15

Caerphilly County Borough Council

Issued: August 2015

Document reference: 370A2015



This Annual Improvement Report has been prepared on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales by Non Jenkins, Allison Rees and Martin Gibson under the direction of Alan Morris and supported by the work of PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Huw Vaughan Thomas
Auditor General for Wales
Wales Audit Office
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Cardiff
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The Auditor General is independent of government, and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. The Auditor General undertakes his work using staff and other resources provided by the Wales Audit Office Board, which is a statutory board established for that purpose and to monitor and advise the Auditor General. The Wales Audit Office is held to account by the National Assembly.

The Auditor General audits local government bodies in Wales, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. He also conducts local government value for money studies and assesses compliance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

Beyond local government, the Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Assembly Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales.

The Auditor General and staff of the Wales Audit Office aim to provide public-focused and proportionate reporting on the stewardship of public resources and in the process provide insight and promote improvement.

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Summary report

Purpose of this report

- 1 Each year, the Auditor General is required to audit the improvement planning and reporting arrangements of Welsh councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national park authorities, and to assess whether each authority will meet statutory continuous improvement duties¹. This work has been undertaken on behalf of the Auditor General by staff of the Wales Audit Office. **Appendix 1** provides more information about the Auditor General's powers and duties in local government.
- 2 In addition, the Auditor General undertakes an in-depth corporate assessment at each authority on a cyclical basis (currently at least once every four years). In the intervening years, in addition to audits of improvement planning and reporting, the Wales Audit Office audit team, on behalf of the Auditor General, will keep track of developments and focus further assessment work on a number of key themes, developed in discussion with each authority.
- 3 This Annual Improvement Report (AIR) summarises the audit work undertaken at Caerphilly County Borough Council (the Council) since the last such report was published in May 2014. This report also includes a summary of the key findings from reports issued by 'relevant regulators', namely: the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW); Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn); and the Welsh Language Commissioner. Nonetheless, this report does not represent a comprehensive review of all the Council's arrangements or services. The conclusions in this report are based on the work carried out at the Council by relevant external review bodies and, unless stated otherwise, reflect the situation at the point in time that such work was concluded.
- 4 Taking into consideration the work carried out during 2014-15, the Auditor General will state in this report whether he considers that the Council is likely to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement for 2015-16.
- 5 This statement should not be seen as a definitive diagnosis of organisational health or as a prediction of future success. Rather, it should be viewed as providing an opinion on the extent to which the arrangements currently in place are reasonably sound insofar as can be ascertained from the work carried out.
- 6 We want to find out if this report gives you the information you need and whether it is easy to understand. You can let us know your views by e-mailing us at info@audit.wales or writing to us at 24 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9LJ.

¹ Duties and requirements contained within the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure).

2014-15 performance audit and inspection work

- 7 In determining the breadth of work undertaken during the year, we considered the extent of accumulated audit and inspection knowledge as well as other available sources of information including the Council's own mechanisms for review and evaluation. For 2014-15, we undertook improvement assessment work under three themes: use of resources; governance; and performance.
- 8 The work carried out since the last AIR, including that of the 'relevant regulators', is set out below:

Project name	Brief description	Dates when the work was undertaken
Delivering with Less – Environmental Services	Review of the impact of cuts in resources on environmental services.	November 2013 to January 2014
Welfare Reform	Review of arrangements to manage the impact of welfare reform.	December 2013 to March 2014
CSSIW National Inspection: Safeguarding and Care Planning of looked after children and care leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours	Assessment of the quality of Safeguarding and Care Planning.	January to May 2014, published in August 2014
Arrangements to support safeguarding of children	Review of the Council's governance and management arrangements to provide assurance that children are safeguarded and that any concerns can be highlighted effectively and efficiently.	March to May 2014, published in October 2014
Wales Audit Office Annual 'Improvement Plan' Audit	Review of the Council's published plans for delivering on improvement objectives.	June 2014
Wales Audit Office Financial Position Assessment	Review of the Council's financial position and how it is budgeting and delivering on required savings.	July to September 2014

Project name	Brief description	Dates when the work was undertaken
Audit of the Council's Accounts	Audit to ensure that the Council's accounts are prepared in accordance with the appropriate guidance and present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions for the year ending March 2014.	July to September 2014
Wales Audit Office Annual 'Assessment of Performance' Audit	Review of the Council's published performance assessment, including testing and validation of performance information.	October 2014
Data Quality Review	Review of the Council's data quality arrangements.	October 2014
CSSIW Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2013-14	An evaluation of the key areas of progress and areas for improvement in the Council's Social Services for the year 2013-14.	October 2014
Corporate Governance Inspection follow-up	Review of the Council's progress in addressing the recommendations made in the Corporate Governance Inspection published in January 2014 and the two Reports in the Public Interest published in March and September 2013.	October to December 2014
Sustainability of Social Services	Gwent-wide review, undertaken with CSSIW, of the sustainability of Social Services considering performance, management, and revenue expenditure over multiple years.	April 2014 to January 2015
Welsh Language Commissioner	Response to the Council's 2013 14 Annual Monitoring Report on its Welsh Language Scheme.	February 2015

Based on the work of the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General considers that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure during 2015-16

- 9 The Auditor General has reached this conclusion because:
- a The Council has responded swiftly and effectively to address most of the recommendations made in our Special Inspection Report issued in January 2014². Improvements have been made to the Council's governance arrangements.
 - b The Council has good financial management arrangements in place with a prudent approach that has delivered a surplus on its budget each year. The financial outlook for the Council is challenging but it is addressing areas for improvement to help deliver its future savings plans.
 - c The Council has an interim chief executive in post who is clear of his objectives and priorities for the Council. The interim responsibilities of members of the Corporate Management Team have been reviewed and changed, and are considered by the Council to be more logical and manageable.
 - d Social Services has built on its previous good performance and explored opportunities to further develop services to reflect local need and respond to national legislative change.
 - e Estyn has not identified any significant concerns about the Council over the past 12 months and continues to work closely with the Council to monitor and challenge the performance of all education services for children and young people in the area.
 - f The Council complied with its improvement planning and reporting duties under the Measure.
 - g The Appointed Auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's accounting statements stating that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions.
- 10 However, we have identified some key areas where further improvement is needed. This includes the need to address: the effectiveness of scrutiny, internal audit, and the more strategic aspects of Human Resources (HR) and workforce planning; and to develop the Council's self-evaluation arrangements.

- 11 Court proceedings and disciplinary investigations are continuing in relation to the issues about senior pay identified in the Report in the Public Interest issued in March 2013³. Consequently, a degree of uncertainty remains at the Council until these proceedings are concluded.
- 12 That said, over the past two years the Council has demonstrated that despite this uncertainty it has continued to deal with normal business, and responded to increasing financial challenges. However, we are aware that the Council is now facing challenges in relation to the delivery of its leisure and waste services. We will assess the progress made by both services as part of our 2015-16 performance audit work at the Council.

Headlines – a summary of key findings

- 13 The table below summarises the key findings of reports issued since the last AIR by the Wales Audit Office, the CSSIW, and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Audit of accounts	The Appointed Auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's financial statements on 30 September 2014, stating that they presented a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions – September 2014.
Improvement planning and reporting audits	We issued audit certificates stating that the Council had discharged its duties under the Local Government Measure (see Appendices 2 and 3).
Use of resources	<p>The Council had good financial management arrangements in place and recognised that it needed to address some areas for improvement to help deliver its future savings plans.</p> <p>The Council had a good track record of operating within its budget and had developed a framework to monitor the delivery of its proposed savings in 2014-15.</p> <p>The Council's future plans and arrangements to deliver savings were adequate and improvements were being implemented.</p> <p>Wales Audit Office – May 2015.</p>

³ Audit of Accounts 2012-13 Report in the Public Interest

Governance

The Council had made good progress in addressing most of the recommendations from the Special Inspection report and Public Interest Reports but still needs to further improve other aspects of its governance arrangements.

Wales Audit Office – January 2015 full report available at www.audit.wales

The Wales Audit Office reported on the Council's arrangements to support safeguarding of children in October 2014.

The governance, accountability and management arrangements for overseeing whether the Council is meeting its safeguarding responsibilities to children had some weaknesses which the Council is addressing.

The Council's arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its safeguarding responsibilities to children had some weaknesses which the Council must address.

The Council's approach to identifying and acting on improvements in its safeguarding arrangements had some weaknesses which the Council was addressing.

Wales Audit Office – October 2014.

Performance

Most of the Council's environmental health services were performing well but due to cuts in resources the Council will find it difficult to fulfil new statutory duties to protect the public and the environment in the future – December 2014.

The Council had committed most of its Discretionary Housing Payments allocation but because of weaknesses in its management and monitoring of funds, it was not clear if those in the greatest need are receiving help.

Wales Audit Office – January 2015.

The Council had further improved its data quality arrangements.

Wales Audit Office – October 2014.

Caerphilly Social Services built on its previous good performance and explored opportunities to further develop services to reflect local need and respond to national legislative change.

CSSIW Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2013-14 – October 2014. Full report available at www.cssiw.org.uk.

CSSIW undertook a National Inspection of safeguarding and care planning for looked after children and care leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviour.

CSSIW August 2014. Full report is available at www.cssiw.org.uk.

Performance (continued)

The Council was considering how to use financial and performance data from our Social Services Sustainability work across the five Gwent councils to plan for future social services provision.

Wales Audit Office – February 2015.

The Welsh Language Commissioner commented in February 2015 that the Council had taken steps to improve the use of Welsh in the workplace but had made slow progress to increase the bilingual content of their website.

www.comisiynyddygybraeg.org

Estyn did not undertake any specific reviews at the Council this year, but continues to monitor and challenge the Council's education services.

Recommendations

- 14 Given the wide range of services provided by the Council and the challenges it is facing, it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:
- a make proposals for improvement – if proposals are made to the Council, we would expect it to do something about them and we will follow up what happens;
 - b make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made, the Council must prepare a response to that recommendation within 30 working days;
 - c conduct a special inspection and publish a report and make recommendations; and
 - d recommend to Ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way.
- 15 Formal recommendations made by the Auditor General during the course of the year are set out below. Authorities must prepare a response within 30 working days of receiving them. Lower-priority issues, known as proposals for improvement, are contained in our other reports but may be referred to later on in this report. We will continue to monitor both the Auditor General's recommendations and proposals for improvement during the course of our improvement assessment work.

Recommendations

R1 The Council should take a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances.
This recommendation was made in January 2015 and was contained in our report on the Follow up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest. A lawful decision on the buy-out of the essential car user and annual leave allowances was taken by the Council on 27 January 2015.

- 16 The Auditor General also makes recommendations that may be relevant to councils in his Local Government National Reports. A list of relevant recommendations contained in reports issued in 2014-15 can be found in [Appendix 5](#).
- 17 Recommendations made by the CSSIW during the course of the year are set out below.

CSSIW recommendations

The Council should:

- R1 Develop the commissioning strategy for older people.
- R2 Interrogate the reasons for delayed discharge and put in place strategies to monitor and improve the progress of this.
- R3 Continue to develop methods for supporting and developing skills of foster carers.
- R4 Examine factors contributing to the rise in children placed on the child protection register.
- R5 Continue to develop outcome measures for new services.
- R6 Continue to develop method/frameworks for quality review.
- R7 Continue to develop mechanisms to improve corporate oversight.

Detailed report



Use of resources

- 18 Information on the Council's income, expenditure and staffing levels is set out in [Appendix 6](#).

Audit of the Council's accounts

- 19 On 28 November 2014 the Appointed Auditor issued an Annual Audit Letter to the Council. The letter summarised the key messages arising from his statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 as the Appointed Auditor and his reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice. The Appointed Auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's accounting statements stating that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions. The Annual Audit Letter can be found in [Appendix 4](#) of this report.

The Council had good financial management arrangements in place and recognised that it needed to address some areas for improvement to help deliver its future savings plans

- 20 In May 2015 the Wales Audit Office reported that the Council had a good track record of operating within its budget. Historically, savings were identified and achieved before the start of the year and a framework had been developed to monitor the delivery of the 2014-15 savings proposals.

The Council had a good track record of operating within its budget and had developed a framework to monitor the delivery of its proposed savings in 2014-15

- 21 The Council delivered a surplus on its budget in each year between 2011-12 and 2013-14. The Council takes a forward looking approach to identify its savings requirements, allowing it to do so in a planned and measured way. Budgets had been set taking into account the level of savings already identified and achieved in prior years. As such, until 2014-15, there had been no unachieved savings to monitor.
- 22 In 2013-14, there had been a number of savings to be achieved during 2014-15, rather than being brought forward as a saving in advance from the preceding year. The Council was developing a framework to regularly monitor and report the delivery of savings. Financial targets had been allocated for each individual saving identified, along with a risk assessment based on impact and likelihood of success. Progress made against the savings targets was monitored and reported to Members together with the regular budget monitoring reports.
- 23 The Council had historically determined that it would hold General Funds of approximately £10 million in reserve. In the final accounts for 2013-14, the general fund balance was £16 million as at 31 March 2014 and total usable reserves were £97 million. It had not needed to use its General Reserves to offset service overspends.

The Council's future plans and arrangements to deliver savings were adequate and improvements were being implemented

- 24 The Council had a corporate framework in place for financial planning and demonstrated adequate financial management and control. However, the Council's priorities and improvement objectives were not explicitly considered in determining the Council's savings. The Council recognised that the level of savings required was such that there would need to be more effective prioritisation of services going forward. This prioritisation needs to take into account the priorities and improvement objectives agreed in the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 25 Whilst the Council had a good track record of operating within its budget, the Council recognised that its current approach to delivering savings may no longer be sustainable. The Council had estimated that it will need to achieve savings of £39 million over the next three years.
- 26 The Council had set out its draft savings proposals for 2015-16, following a series of special scrutiny committee meetings to consider the proposals. As part of these proposals, the Council proposed to maximise the use of any 'excess' General Fund balances for Capital/Invest to Save Schemes rather than to use its reserves to offset savings requirements in the short term.
- 27 At the time of our field work the Council had been developing a new framework to monitor savings. We advised that separate monitoring of the performance of savings plans, particularly where recurrent savings were required, would become increasingly important. This monitoring would also enable the Council to evaluate and learn from those savings plans that were met in full and those that were not. Without explicit monitoring of savings, the achievement of a balanced budget may mask failure to deliver agreed savings, particularly if there are one-off factors that were not part of the savings plan, but which reduce net spending. For example, achievement of a balanced budget may be due to a one-off underspend rather than the achievement of a savings plan.
- 28 Since completing our field work the Council has told us that budget monitoring reports are now presented to scrutiny committees and include information on:
- a the progress that service areas have made on achieving their savings proposals for that financial year;
 - b savings proposals that have and have not been achieved; and
 - c where underspends are 'one-off' in nature.

Governance

The Council made good progress in addressing most of the recommendations from the Special Inspection report and Reports in the Public Interest but still needs to further improve other aspects of its governance arrangements

The Council implemented most of our recommendations

- 29 The Council addressed the majority of our recommendations made in our Special Inspection report issued in January 2014⁴ on the Council's corporate governance arrangements and the recommendations made in the two Reports in the Public Interest on setting chief officers' pay⁵ and essential car user and annual leave allowances⁶. There were clear plans with timetables to address the small number of outstanding actions.
- 30 The Council clarified and reinforced governance and decision-making roles. It provided training to members and officers on governance and decision-making powers and it was evident that there was greater awareness of and adherence to the rules and regulations.
- 31 The Improving Governance Programme Board continued to be effective in driving the implementation of the Council's Improving Governance action plan. It continued to report regularly to members.
- 32 The Council strengthened its procurement policies and procedures and the profile and role of the procurement function were enhanced. Similarly, the Council strengthened risk management arrangements at both a corporate and service level and improved the format of the risk register.

The Council has now taken a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances

- 33 At the time of publishing our Special Inspection follow-up report, the Council had not taken a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances. We advised the Council to address this as soon as possible, which it did in January 2015.

⁴ Caerphilly County Borough Council – Special Inspection 2013-14

⁵ Audit of Accounts 2012-13 Report in the Public Interest

⁶ Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances – Report in the Public Interest

Completion of some outstanding areas was due in the next few months

34 At the time of our Special Inspection follow-up in December 2014, work was underway by the Council to address the outstanding recommendations. Many of these outstanding recommendations were due to be implemented in the next three to four months. Roles and responsibilities for whistle-blowing procedures are now clearer and, in November 2014, the Council adopted a new whistleblowing policy adapted from guidance provided by the whistleblowing charity: Public Concern at Work'. Webcasting of Council meetings was implemented in March 2015. Electronic voting also went live at the Council meeting in January 2015. However, due to technical problems, this technology was suspended part way through the meeting and the Council reverted to voting by a show of hands. Electronic voting is now being reconsidered. In the meantime, the minutes of the Council meetings will record if a decision is carried unanimously, the number of councillors voting against the motion and the number of those abstaining.

More work was required to improve scrutiny, internal audit, and self-evaluation; and to develop a human resources strategy and workforce planning

The effectiveness and impact of scrutiny were mixed and its role needs to be clarified

- 35 The majority of actions contained within the Council's Scrutiny Improvement action plan had been fully or partly completed. It was evident that procedural changes to the way scrutiny meetings were conducted had been fully implemented. Further training had also been provided to members. The level and quality of challenge posed by Scrutiny members had improved in the last year. Scrutiny members were still keen to develop their roles. The Council was participating in the Gwent Scrutiny Challenge programme facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.
- 36 However, many of the officers we interviewed told us that the effectiveness of scrutiny was limited and its role had become confused. Our observation of two scrutiny committees supported these views. Meetings were very long and the agendas lack focus. It was not always clear why items were being considered or how these topics related specifically to the role of scrutiny.
- 37 The Council needed to improve the prioritisation of agenda items so that members are able to focus on the Council's priorities and areas where they would have the greatest impact. A prioritisation matrix had been drafted to help better manage the Scrutiny Committees' work programmes. It is important that this matrix is used consistently across all Scrutiny Committees.

- 38 On the whole, members felt that the standard of officer reports was good. Performance information is discussed and challenged regularly at Scrutiny Committees. We understand the Council is reviewing what performance information should be considered by Scrutiny Committees.
- 39 There have been special scrutiny committees to consider the savings required to meet the budget shortfall. Task and finish groups have also been used in the past. The Council would benefit from using task and finish groups more frequently to review specific issues in more depth.
- 40 The Council provided further training on risk management to members of the Audit Committee. This essentially repeated the introductory training session undertaken last year. It had not been 'enhanced' training as our recommendation advised. The Council considered that the Audit Committee needed to put this training into practice. Further training needs would then be determined after the next member training needs analysis was undertaken. There was no ongoing programme of training and the Council needed to ensure that such a programme was put in place and implemented.

The Council had begun to address aspects of our recommendations to improve Internal Audit but it lacked a robust action plan to ensure it could keep track of progress

- 41 The Council had updated its Internal Audit Charter and put an Internal Audit Strategy in place, following consultation with the Audit Committee. The key challenge facing the Council was to ensure that these were now translated into practice.
- 42 Internal Audit was clearer about the improvements that were needed. The Internal Audit Plan included reviews on more strategic and broader operational risks, such as the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, but its predominant focus remained on financial areas.
- 43 The Council had not yet assessed itself against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards that came into effect in April 2013. However, we were advised that there were plans to do this as part of an exercise with neighbouring councils in 2015. A review of Internal Audit working papers found that there was continued scope for improvement in terms of the level of review and the quality of documentation.
- 44 The Council lacks a robust action plan to drive the improvements suggested in our Special Inspection report, which would enable regular monitoring of progress by officers and members. Consequently, there is a risk that the Council could lose sight of the need to continue to improve Internal Audit.

The Council had not realised the benefits of the strategic aspects of human resources and workforce planning although significant progress had been made in developing human-resources-related policies to facilitate the implementation of the Council's medium-term financial plan

- 45 In terms of HR, the Council's focus over the past 12 months had been on developing and agreeing a range of workforce tools and policies that would help the Council to achieve the level of savings needed in line with its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). These included policies on voluntary severance, compulsory redundancy and early retirement.
- 46 However, the Council still did not have an agreed HR strategy and implementation plan or an integrated workforce plan, despite our recommendation to do this three years ago, which was reinforced in the Special Inspection report last year. Senior officers needed to agree on the purpose and benefits of an HR strategy and workforce plan, particularly given the uncertainty of the future shape of the organisation. There had been a lack of corporate drive to ensure these were developed.
- 47 A workforce planning toolkit had also been developed to be used in conjunction with HR for those areas with the most pressing workforce issues. Workforce planning was also considered at both senior and operational levels to help meet the challenges facing the Council as a result of budget reductions. However, this workforce planning information had not been analysed or consolidated into a corporate document which the Council could use to inform its strategic planning.
- 48 Although officers felt that the lack of an HR strategy and workforce plan had not hindered planning, the pressures facing the Council are such that it is now more important than ever to have a robust HR strategy and action plan to ensure that resources are planned and utilised effectively.
- 49 To date, the Council had managed to avoid significant compulsory redundancies through vacancy management, natural wastage and redeployment. Nevertheless, the Council recognised that workforce transformation was needed to achieve the estimated £39 million of savings over the next three years. To achieve this transformation, strategic workforce planning will need to go hand in hand with reviewing service delivery. Effective workforce planning can result in substantial savings and can also bring other gains: a more agile workforce that is focused on delivering the best services for citizens and is in the best position to take advantage of the eventual economic upturn.

The Council had taken a measured approach to implementing self-evaluation but it had yet to agree the purpose of self-evaluation and how it would be used to inform corporate, service and financial planning remain unclear

- 50 The Council did not have a corporate approach to self-evaluation. With assistance from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Council developed a set of key principles and five questions, which each service used to provide a self-evaluation. The quality and detail of the completed self-evaluations were variable. There had been no involvement of members in completing the self-evaluations.
- 51 Officers had been unclear about the purpose of doing the self-evaluations. They were not being used to inform the Council's MTFP, for example. Self-evaluations had also been undertaken separately to the service planning process.
- 52 Whilst there was a lack of clarity about the way forward, we understand that a new revised self-evaluation template had recently been agreed, which would be integrated into the annual service improvement planning cycle. This template placed greater emphasis on how services compare with others on quality, outcomes, outputs and cost. The Interim Chief Executive and Cabinet Member for Performance Management would also meet with each Director and Head of Service to challenge the self-evaluations.
- 53 The Council's annual assessment of its 2013-14 performance complied with relevant statutory legislation. It was approved by full Council on 7 October and published on the Council's website on 13 October 2014. It provides a balanced assessment of the Council's performance in meeting its improvement objectives for 2013-14. It includes performance against statutory performance indicators as well as relevant local performance measures. Comparative performance against prior-year information is set out where available together with comparisons with other Welsh local authorities. A summary of the Council's collaborative projects is also included.

The Wales Audit Office reported on the Council's arrangements to support safeguarding of children in October 2014

- 54 During the period March to May 2014, we completed a review of the Council's assurance and accountability arrangements for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are being adhered to. The study examined what the Council itself had done to seek assurance that its arrangements to support safeguarding are effective by reviewing how the Council was discharging its safeguarding responsibilities at all levels: Cabinet, Senior Management Team, Scrutiny and individual officers.

The governance, accountability and management arrangements for overseeing whether the Council was meeting its safeguarding responsibilities to children had some weaknesses which the Council is addressing

- 55 The South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board covers the five Gwent councils and is the key body for overseeing safeguarding and child protection policy development. The Assistant Director of Children's Services represents the Council on the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board. The Council also has its own Learning and Review Group and there is a Corporate Parenting Board in place.
- 56 In May 2014 we reported that the Council did not have a corporate safeguarding policy and used the All Wales Children Protection Procedures. It was assumed that all members of staff were aware of whom they should raise any issues or concerns with; however, there were no corporate documents specifying who this would be. This weakened corporate accountability and assurance arrangements. A separate safeguarding policy was in place for the Education and Life Long Learning Directorate.
- 57 There was no lead cabinet member with specific responsibility for safeguarding, although the Cabinet Member for Social Services was recognised by many as holding these responsibilities. Safeguarding was not included in member role descriptions even though the Council was clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- 58 The Council had a number of related improvement objectives including: 'Ensure children and young people who are looked after are supported to achieve their full potential.' There was regular monitoring of progress against these improvement objectives and specific action plans for each improvement objective had been developed.

The Council's arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its safeguarding responsibilities to children had some weaknesses which the Council must address

- 59 A scorecard was produced to report performance against a large number of Children's Services indicators including 10 national and two local safeguarding-related performance indicators. Performance against the key national indicators showed that the Council was performing well. There were no indicators on corporate measures, such as training and recruitment checks.

- 60 There had been no reports presented to the Council's committees specifically on safeguarding, although some other related areas had been subject to scrutiny. Scrutiny committees also received updates against relevant improvement objectives every six months. Reporting to committees with regard to safeguarding was therefore limited.
- 61 Key HR policies had not been updated to reflect key changes in legislation, such as the Disclosure and Barring Services. The Council's recruitment policy was dated 2004. We understand this was now being reviewed. Systems were in place to ensure checks and balances were undertaken and we were advised that HR did not register new starters on the payroll until all appropriate checks had been undertaken.
- 62 In both the Social Services and Education and Life Long Learning Directorates, there was a clear audit trail of all training courses and attendees. However, mandated training on safeguarding was not provided to other services. Safeguarding was not part of the member induction. The Council had no assurance that elected members were adequately trained and supported to deliver this important role.

The Council's approach to identifying and acting on improvements in its safeguarding arrangements had some weaknesses which the Council was addressing

- 63 Mandatory training on data protection was undertaken by staff annually. Mandatory Protecting Information e-learning was launched last year. A report on the outcome of the schools' audits had been presented to Scrutiny. Safeguarding was a key element of the audit.
- 64 There are a number of examples where the Council had improved its arrangements regarding children's safeguarding including the use of social media and transferring records. The Gwent Missing Children Project had identified good practice within education in the Council and was in the process of replicating this across the South East Wales region.
- 65 The Education and Life Long Learning and Social Services Directorates had completed separate Section 28 Children's Act Safeguarding audits and submitted these to the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board's Business Manager for review and quality assurance. However, no assessment of corporate arrangements had been completed.
- 66 No internal audit or scrutiny reviews on safeguarding had been undertaken in the last five years.

Performance

Most of the Council's environmental health services were performing well but due to cuts in resources the Council will find it difficult to fulfil new statutory duties to protect the public and the environment in the future

- 67 In October 2014 we reviewed the Council's environmental health services as part of one of our all-Wales studies⁷. The study considered the impact of cuts in resources on the ability of the Council's environmental health services to deliver their statutory obligations. The report identified the following:
- a Since 2011-12 the Council had cut its budget for environmental health by 1.55 per cent and there was a two per cent reduction in the number of staff employed to deliver these services.
 - b The Council's environmental health service was mostly delivering a good or best practice level as judged against the Best Practice Standards.
 - c The Council's environmental health staff were mostly positive about the current standard of environmental health service. However, our public survey found that there was a low awareness of the Council's current performance or future plans.
 - d The Welsh Government was planning significant new legislation that would impact directly on the services provided by councils' environmental health teams. There was concern expressed at the time of our fieldwork by some councillors and Council staff that the introduction of new powers and duties at a time when services were being significantly cut back would prove unworkable.

The Council had committed most of its Discretionary Housing Payments allocation but because of weaknesses in its management and monitoring of funds, it was not clear if those in the greatest need are receiving help

- 68 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 heralds a significant change to the administration and distribution of benefits and will have a major impact on many citizens. In April 2011, the UK Government embarked on a programme of reform, which will culminate with the phased introduction of Universal Credit between October 2013 and 2017. A major focus of the UK Government's plans are changes to Housing Benefit, which are aimed at reducing annual expenditure in the UK by around £2.3 billion. These changes will mean that millions of households in UK will receive less in benefits, creating hard choices for them about how they use their money and manage financially on a day-to-day basis.

⁷ Delivering with less – the impact on environmental health services and citizens, Wales Audit Office, October 2014

- 69 In January 2015, the Auditor General published his report on how well councils are managing the impact of welfare reform changes on social housing tenants in Wales. . The report highlighted four examples of good practice relating to welfare reform in the Council. The report also reviewed the management and use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) by councils in Wales and concluded that the allocation, distribution, administration and use of these payments have significant inconsistencies and weaknesses.
- 70 In addition to the above, our review found that the Council has introduced some good systems to help customers apply for DHP but there are opportunities to further develop and improve these arrangements. For example, the Council has a dedicated page on DHP on its website, that includes comprehensive and useful information about DHP, but this does not provide a link to the Council's DHP policy or clearly set out how DHP monies will be used to help local people in housing need – for instance, homeless people or those social housing tenants affected by the spare room subsidy. The Council is currently consulting on its anti-poverty strategy and extending this strategy to consider the use of DHP in tackling poverty is an option the Council should consider. Since our review, the Council updated and approved its revised DHP Policy in June 2015 and it is available on the Council's website. The Council also approved its anti-poverty strategy on 9 June 2015.
- 71 We found that it is not easy to apply for DHP in Caerphilly. There is no application form available on the Council's website and applicants are notified that they must contact the Council to request an application form be sent to them. The application form focuses on the information the Council requires to make a decision and sets out the supporting information required from applicants. The Council considers that it has a customer focused approach to DHP applications but the evidence we have seen does not support this view. For example, if the Council has not previously seen the customer's bank statement then the Council asks the customer to produce bank statements to support their claim even where the applicant has recently applied for and been awarded Housing Benefit. The Council should consider the evidence it requires on a case-by-case basis to encourage take up.
- 72 The Council monitors the amount of DHP it has spent against the amount of money provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. The Council also monitors how many customers have been assisted and the amount of DHP money available to assist applicants. However, the Council does not monitor the number of landlords assisted to ensure there is good coverage across all sectors and areas, nor does it monitor the impact of its DHP payments and how these resources have helped customers affected by welfare reform and its impact on sustaining tenancies.

- 73 At the end of November 2014, the Council had spent £372,160 (97.4 per cent) of its £382,715 DHP allocation from the Department of Work and Pensions helping 1,193 applicants. It is clear that the Council is maximising the amount of DHP that is paid. However, due to weaknesses noted in paragraph 72, the Council cannot assure itself that it is always paying DHP to the right people, especially those in the greatest need of assistance.

The Council had further improved its data quality arrangements

- 74 Our comprehensive Data Quality Review was undertaken in the summer of 2013 and we reviewed the Council's subsequent actions as part of our follow-up to the Corporate Governance Inspection in the autumn of 2014.
- 75 The Council's central Performance Management Unit had continued to work with services to review and improve data quality arrangements relating to both national and local performance indicators. Definitions were in place for all local measures which related to the Council's improvement objectives. A definition pro-forma was used and work had been undertaken to test adherence to these definitions following weaknesses previously identified in this area at both the Council and other councils across Wales. The Council had made some changes to its measures as a result to ensure these were more appropriate and clearly defined. Reviews and walk-throughs of these new measures had been undertaken by the central Performance Management Unit.
- 76 The process of reviewing and testing national strategic indicators before submission to the Welsh Government had continued. Public Accountability Measures and local measures relating to the Council's improvement objectives were also validated. This provided the Council with the opportunity to identify and rectify any errors before submission and to learn from any errors. A risk based approach was used to identify those measures which would benefit from greater review.

Social Services built on its previous good performance and explored opportunities to further develop services to reflect local need and respond to national legislative change

- 77 The CSSIW reported⁸ that in 2013-14 Caerphilly Social Services built on its previous good performance and explored opportunities to further develop services to reflect local need and respond to national legislative change.
- 78 There were new appointments to the senior management team and the Council achieved permanent appointments to the posts of director and assistant director for both children's and adult services. This had provided a more secure platform on which the department can make progress and develop services.
- 79 The director's report provided a comprehensive picture of the current status of social services in Caerphilly. This included reflection on the previous year's priorities and achievements and areas for development in the year ahead. The report set out how priorities within the Council's single integrated plan align with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and described how the Council would continue to develop its services to meet the requirements of the Act. This was reflected in the priorities identified for the coming year.
- 80 A review of services had started and there had been a focus on beginning to make the transition to new working arrangements. This included exploration of new ways of working to meet demographic change, future legislative requirements and financial challenges. There was continuing commitment to consolidating and improving the quality of current provision. Consultation about change and development had been undertaken and the Council continued to develop methods for seeking people's views regarding services.
- 81 The report outlined plans for integration of health and social care services in relation to services for older people with complex needs in a general context, as well as specific areas of collaboration highlighted for further development. Links to the corporate policy to support equality and the Welsh language were provided within the report and there was evidence of progress towards meeting the requirements of "More than Just Words", the Welsh Government's strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health and Social Care.
- 82 The director reported that social services managed to end 2013-14 with an under spend of £1.9 million and was planning for further savings of £2.06 million in 2014-15. The Council reported that these savings would be achieved through efficiency savings and a review of discretionary services.

CSSIW undertook a national inspection of safeguarding and care planning for looked after children and care leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviour

- 83 During 2014-15 the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) undertook an inspection of safeguarding and care planning of looked after children and care leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviour. The inspection was carried out as part of the CSSIW national thematic inspection programme. The methodology for the review was undertaken in each local authority across Wales, between January and May 2014. The aim of the national inspection was to assess the quality of care planning across Wales and whether it effectively:
- a supported and protected looked after children and care leavers;
 - b identified and managed the vulnerabilities and risky behaviour of looked after children and care leavers;
 - c promoted rights based practice and the voice of the child;
 - d promoted improved outcomes for looked after children and care leavers; and
 - e promoted compliance with policy and guidance.
- 84 Findings from the individual local authority inspections and the CSSIW national overview report can be found on the [CSSIW website](#).

The Council was considering how to use financial and performance data from our Social Services Sustainability work across the five Gwent councils to plan for future social services provision

- 85 As part of our Social Services Sustainability work across the five Gwent Councils, we produced a document for the Council that presented:
- a future demand for social services in Caerphilly through benchmarking population projections for children and older people; and
 - b a suite of graphical analyses that combined financial and performance data for social services in Caerphilly over multiple years and which also placed Caerphilly within the context of the other 21 Welsh councils.
- 86 There were no recommendations or conclusions from our work as we provided each council with a data pack that displayed the information from a different

perspective and facilitated a Gwent-wide workshop for Directors of Social Services and Directors/Heads of Finance to discuss. We received positive feedback on the output and await to see how Caerphilly uses this approach as part of its internal challenge processes.

Steps had been taken to improve the use of Welsh in the workplace but slow progress had been made in increasing the bilingual content of the website

- 87 The role of the Welsh Language Commissioner was created by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. New powers to impose standards on organisations came into force through subordinate legislation on 31 March 2015. The Welsh Language Commissioner will continue to review Welsh-language schemes by virtue of powers inherited under the Welsh Language Act 1993.
- 88 The Welsh Language Commissioner works with all councils in Wales to inspect and advise on the implementation of language schemes. It is the responsibility of councils to provide services to the public in Welsh in accordance with the commitments in their language schemes. Every council is committed to providing an annual monitoring report to the Welsh Language Commissioner outlining its performance in implementing the language scheme. The Welsh Language Commissioner analyses every monitoring report, provides a formal response and collects further information as required.
- 89 The Welsh Language Commissioner reported that a new intranet portal had been developed to provide resources to assist the use of Welsh in the workplace. There were effective procedures for mainstreaming the Welsh language into the improvement plans of services through the self-evaluation process, and the Welsh language received due consideration in the process of assessing the impact of new policies. Slow progress had been made in increasing the bilingual content of the website. The redevelopment of the website had enabled the Council to set the foundations for stronger central management of content, thus increasing Welsh-language content. An increase in the number of Welsh speakers was reported compared to last year. This was mainly due to improving the process of recording language skills, not because more Welsh speakers had been recruited. Five hundred and seventy-four jobs were advertised during the reporting period. Two (0.3 per cent) posts required that Welsh language skills were essential and 17 (three per cent) as desirable. More than 200 individuals received Welsh-language training, a significant increase on last year. The full report of the Welsh Language Commissioner is available from www.comisiynyddygybraeg.org

The Council's education services continue to be monitored and challenged by Estyn

- 90 Estyn had not undertaken any specific reviews at the Council this year. However, Estyn's Link Inspectors continue to work closely with the authority to monitor and challenge the performance of all education services for children and young people in Caerphilly County Borough.

Appendix 1 – Status of this report

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake an annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. This requirement covers local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

This report has been produced by staff of the Wales Audit Office on behalf of the Auditor General to discharge his duties under section 24 of the Measure. The report also discharges his duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether, as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17, he considers that the authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

Improvement authorities are under a general duty to ‘make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions’. Improvement authorities are defined as local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities.

The annual improvement assessment is the main piece of work that enables the Auditor General to fulfil his duties. The improvement assessment is a forward-looking assessment of an authority’s likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. It also includes a retrospective assessment of whether an authority has achieved its planned improvements in order to inform a view as to the authority’s track record of improvement. The Auditor General will summarise his audit and assessment work in a published annual improvement report for each authority (under section 24).

The Auditor General may also, in some circumstances, carry out special inspections (under section 21), which will be reported to the authority and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22). An important ancillary activity for the Auditor General is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments.

Appendix 2 – Audit of Caerphilly County Borough Council’s 2014-15 Improvement Plan

Certificate

I certify that I have audited Caerphilly County Borough Council’s (the Council) Improvement Plan in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) and my Code of Audit Practice.

As a result of my audit, I believe that the Council has discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

Respective responsibilities of the Council and the Auditor General

Under the Measure, the Council is required to prepare and publish an Improvement Plan describing its plans to discharge its duties to:

- make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions;
- make arrangements to secure achievement of its improvement objectives; and
- make arrangements to exercise its functions so that any performance standard specified by Welsh Ministers is met.

The Measure requires the Council to publish its Improvement Plan as soon as is reasonably practicable after the start of the financial year to which it relates, or after such other date as Welsh Ministers may specify by order.

The Council is responsible for preparing the Improvement Plan and for the information set out within it. The Measure requires that the Council has regard to guidance issued by Welsh Ministers in preparing and publishing its plan.

As the Council’s auditor, I am required under sections 17 and 19 of the Measure to carry out an audit of the Improvement Plan, to certify that I have done so, and to report whether I believe that the Council has discharged its duties to prepare and publish an Improvement Plan in accordance with statutory requirements set out in section 15 and statutory guidance.

Scope of the Improvement Plan audit

For the purposes of my audit work I will accept that, provided an authority meets its statutory requirements, it will also have complied with Welsh Government statutory guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

For this audit I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information, or whether the Improvement Plan published by the Council can be achieved. Other assessment work that I will undertake under section 18 of the Measure will examine these issues. My audit of the Council's Improvement Plan, therefore, comprised a review of the plan to ascertain whether it included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the plan complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Council had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing its plan.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 17 and 19 of the Measure cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.

Huw Vaughan Thomas
Auditor General for Wales

CC: Lesley Griffiths, Minister for Local Government and Government Business
Non Jenkins, Manager
Jackie Joyce, Performance Audit Lead

Appendix 3 – Audit of Caerphilly County Borough Council’s assessment of 2013-14 performance

Certificate

I certify that I have audited Caerphilly County Borough Council’s (the Council) assessment of its performance in 2013-14 in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) and my Code of Audit Practice.

As a result of my audit, I believe that the Council has discharged its duties under sections 15(2), (3), (8) and (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

Respective responsibilities of the Council and the Auditor General

Under the Measure, the Council is required to annually publish an assessment which describes its performance:

- in discharging its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions;
- in meeting the improvement objectives it has set itself;
- by reference to performance indicators specified by Welsh Ministers, and self-imposed performance indicators; and
- in meeting any performance standards specified by Welsh Ministers, and self-imposed performance standards.

The Measure requires the Council to publish its assessment before 31 October in the financial year following that to which the information relates, or by any other such date as Welsh Ministers may specify by order.

The Measure requires that the Council has regard to guidance issued by Welsh Ministers in publishing its assessment.

As the Council’s auditor, I am required under sections 17 and 19 of the Measure to carry out an audit to determine whether the Council has discharged its duty to publish an assessment of performance, to certify that I have done so, and to report whether I believe that the Council has discharged its duties in accordance with statutory requirements set out in section 15 and statutory guidance.

Scope of the audit

For the purposes of my audit work I will accept that, provided an authority meets its statutory requirements, it will also have complied with Welsh Government statutory guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

For this audit I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information. Other assessment work that I will undertake under section 18 of the Measure may examine these issues. My audit of the Council's assessment of performance, therefore, comprised a review of the Council's publication to ascertain whether it included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the assessment complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Council had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing it.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 17 and 19 of the Measure cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.

Huw Vaughan Thomas
Auditor General For Wales

CC: Leighton Andrews, Minister for Public Services
Non Jenkins, Manager
Martin Gibson, Performance Audit Lead

Appendix 4 – Annual Audit Letter

Councillor Keith Reynolds
Leader
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Penallta House
Tredomen Park
Ystrad Mynach
CF82 7PG

Dear Councillor Reynolds

Annual Audit Letter – Caerphilly County Borough Council 2013-14

This letter summarises the key messages arising from my statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 as the Appointed Auditor and my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources

It is the Council's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the accounting statements;
- review the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the accounts.

Local authorities in Wales prepare their accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards. On 30 September 2014, I issued an unqualified audit opinion on the accounting statements stating that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions. My report is contained within the Statement of Accounts. The key matters arising from the accounts audit were reported to members of the Audit Committee in my Audit of Financial Statements report on 10 September 2014, and an update letter on matters that were outstanding on the day of the Audit Committee issued on 29 September 2014.

Significant adjustments of £74m were made to the statement of accounts in respect of the valuation of property, plant and equipment; both in relation to Council Dwellings and other fixed assets. The adjustments were in relation to both an issue within the fixed assets management system and errors in updating the fixed asset register by the finance department.

I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

My consideration of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed as part of the Improvement Assessment under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The Auditor General will highlight areas where the effectiveness of these arrangements has yet to be demonstrated or where improvements could be made when he publishes his Annual Improvement Report. On balance, I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place. Good progress has been made to address the significant weaknesses identified in the governance procedures and arrangements at the Council referred to in my previous Annual Audit Letter and, in the subsequent Special Inspection report issued in January 2014.

During October and November 2013, the Auditor General undertook a Special Inspection into the corporate governance arrangements at the Council, which included a follow up of the findings of the Appointed Auditor, who issued a Report in the Public Interest in March 2013⁹. The Special Inspection also examined the wider governance issues highlighted in the Auditor General's Annual Improvement Report, published on 10 September 2013¹⁰.

A second Report in the Public Interest on the Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances was published in December 2013, relating to issues which occurred in 2012-13¹¹.

Court proceedings and disciplinary investigations are continuing in relation to the issues reported in the Public Interest Reports. The Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Legal Services have been charged with misconduct in public office in relation to the findings of the first Report in the Public Interest, dated March 2013.

The report on the Special Inspection was published in January 2014¹² and concluded that a combination of a number of weaknesses inevitably led to governance failings at the Council and whilst it is making encouraging progress in improving its governance arrangements, it is too early to conclude whether these improvements can be sustained.

A follow-up review to determine the Council's progress in addressing the Auditor General's recommendations in the Special Inspection report and the recommendations made in the two Public Interest Reports has been undertaken recently. It has noted that good progress has been made in most areas in addressing the recommendations raised. The findings of this follow-up are due to be published in December 2014.

9 Audit of Accounts 2012-13 Report in the Public Interest

10 Annual Improvement Report Caerphilly County Borough Council

11 Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances – Report in the Public Interest

12 Caerphilly County Borough Council – Special Inspection 2013-14

I would like to highlight the following specific areas in this letter:

- The financial outlook for the Council remains challenging and financial planning and monitoring arrangements are in place to identify the funding gap and facilitate the savings required.
- The Council had generally good arrangements in place for the production and submission of its 2013/14 grant claims but there is some scope for improvement. In 2012-13, 52 grant claims were certified (34 in 2011-12). 25% of the grant claims certified by PwC in respect of 2012/13 were subject to a qualification letter (21% in 2011-12) resulting in a net adjustment of £682.6k on the total grant claim of £128.6m. Adjustments totalling £683.3k were isolated to two claim forms. 90% of the grant claims were submitted by the Council on time (82% in 2011-12).

I have not yet issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts has been completed as there are a number of matters raised by the public which I am currently considering.

The financial audit fee for 2013-14 is currently expected to be higher than the agreed fee set out in the Annual Audit Outline due to the additional work required in respect of asset valuations.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Pamment (PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP)
For and on behalf of the Appointed Auditor

28 November 2014

cc: Chris Burns, Chief Executive

Appendix 5 – National report recommendations 2014-15

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
May 2014	Good Scrutiny? Good Question!	R1 Clarify the role of executive members and senior officers in contributing to scrutiny.
		R2 Ensure that scrutiny members, and specifically scrutiny chairs, receive training and support to fully equip them with the skills required to undertake effective scrutiny.
		R3 Further develop scrutiny forward work programming to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a clear rationale for topic selection; • be more outcome focused; • ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired; and • align scrutiny programmes with the council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements.
		R4 Ensure that scrutiny draws effectively on the work of audit, inspection and regulation and that its activities are complementary with the work of external review bodies.
		R5 Ensure that the impact of scrutiny is properly evaluated and acted upon to improve the function's effectiveness; including following up on proposed actions and examining outcomes.
		R6 Undertake regular self-evaluation of scrutiny utilising the 'outcomes and characteristics of effective local government overview and scrutiny' developed by the Wales Scrutiny Officers' Network.
		R7 Implement scrutiny improvement action plans developed from the Wales Audit Office improvement study.
		R8 Adopt Participation Cymru's 10 Principles for Public Engagement in improving the way scrutiny engages with the public and stakeholders.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
July 2014	Young people not in education, employment or training - Findings from a review of councils in Wales	R1 Together with partners, map and review expenditure on NEETs services to better understand the resources required to deliver the Framework.
		R2 Clarify their strategic approach to reducing the proportion of 19 to 24 year olds who are NEET as well as their approach for 16 to 18 year olds.
		R3 Focus on young people with significant or multiple barriers to engaging with education, employment or training rather than those who are more likely to re-engage without significant additional support.
		R4 Develop their objectives and targets for reducing the number of young people NEET so that they can be held to account and their work aligns with the Welsh Government's targets and objectives.
		R5 Ensure that elected members and partners fully understand that councils have a clear responsibility for leading and co-ordinating youth services for 16 to 24 year olds.
		R6 Improve the evaluation of the effectiveness and relative value for money of the services and interventions in their area that are intended to reduce the proportion of young people who are NEET.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
October 2014	<p>Delivering with less – the impact on environmental health services and citizens</p>	<p>R1 Revise the best practice standards to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • align the work of environmental health with national strategic priorities; • identify the wider contribution of environmental health in delivering strategic priorities of the Welsh Government; and • identify the benefit and impact of environmental health services on protecting citizens. <p>R2 Provide scrutiny chairs and members with the necessary skills and support to effectively scrutinise and challenge service performance, savings plans and the impact of budget reductions.</p> <p>R3 Improve engagement with local residents over planned budget cuts and changes in services by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consulting with residents on planned changes in services and using the findings to shape decisions; • outlining which services are to be cut and how these cuts will impact on residents; and • setting out plans for increasing charges or changing standards of service. <p>R4 Improve efficiency and value for money by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the statutory and non-statutory duties of council environmental health services. • Agreeing environmental health priorities for the future and the role of councils in delivering these. • Determining an 'acceptable standard of performance' for environmental health services (upper and lower) and publicise these to citizens. • Improving efficiency and maintaining performance to the agreed level through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – collaborating and/or integrating with others to reduce cost and/or improve quality; – outsourcing where services can be delivered more cost effectively to agreed standards; – introducing and/or increasing charges and focusing on income-generation activity; – using grants strategically to maximise impact and return; and – reducing activities to focus on core statutory and strategic priorities. <p>R5 Improve strategic planning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying, collecting and analysing financial, performance and demand/need data on environmental health services; • analysing collected data to inform and understand the relationship between 'cost: benefit: impact' and use this intelligence to underpin decisions on the future of council environmental health services; and • agree how digital information can be used to plan and develop environmental health services in the future.

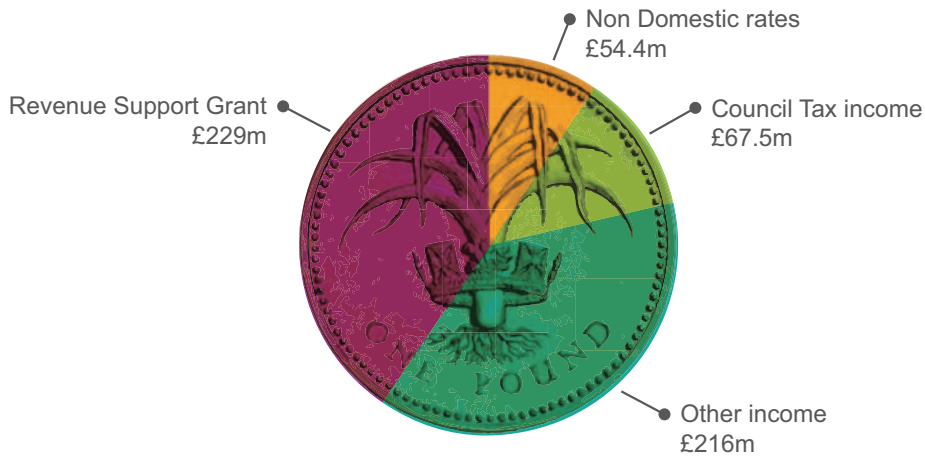
Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
January 2015	Managing the Impact of Welfare Reform Changes on Social Housing Tenants in Wales	<p>R1 Improve strategic planning and better co-ordinate activity to tackle the impact of welfare reform on social-housing tenants by ensuring comprehensive action plans are in place that cover the work of all relevant council departments, housing associations and the work of external stakeholders.</p>
		<p>R2 Improve governance and accountability for welfare reform by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appointing member and officer leads to take responsibility for strategic leadership on welfare reform and be accountable for performance; and • ensuring members receive adequate training and regular briefings on welfare reform to be able to challenge and scrutinise performance and decisions.
		<p>R3 Ensure effective management of performance on welfare reform by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting appropriate measures to enable members, officers and the public to judge progress in delivering actions; • ensuring performance information covers the work of all relevant agencies and especially housing associations; and • establishing measures to judge the wider impact of welfare reform.
		<p>R4 Strengthen how welfare-reform risks are managed by creating a single corporate-level approach that co ordinates activity across the Council and the work of others to provide adequate assurance that all the necessary and appropriate actions to mitigate risk are taking place.</p>
		<p>R5 Improve engagement with tenants affected by the removal of the spare-room subsidy through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of regular advice and information on the options open to them to address the financial impact of the change in their circumstances; • the promotion of the ‘Your benefits are changing’ helpline; and • the provision of support to tenants specifically affected by the removal of the spare-room subsidy to participate in regional/national employment schemes.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
January 2015	<p>Managing the Impact of Welfare Reform Changes on Social Housing Tenants in Wales</p>	<p>R7 Improve management, access to and use of Discretionary Housing Payments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing a clear policy or guide that is available in hard copy and online to the public that sets out the Council's policy and arrangements for administering Discretionary Housing Payments; • clearly defining eligible and non-eligible housing costs covered by Discretionary Housing Payments in application forms, policy documentation and applicant guidance leaflets; • clearly setting out the maximum/minimum length of time that such payments will be provided; • setting and publishing the timescale for the Council making a decision on Discretionary Housing Payments applications; • including information within public literature on the Council's policy for right to review or appeal of a decision and the timescales and process to be followed in deciding on these; and • clearly define the priority groups for Discretionary Housing Payments in public literature to ensure that those seeking assistance, and those agencies supporting them, can assess whether such payments are a viable option to address their housing and financial needs.

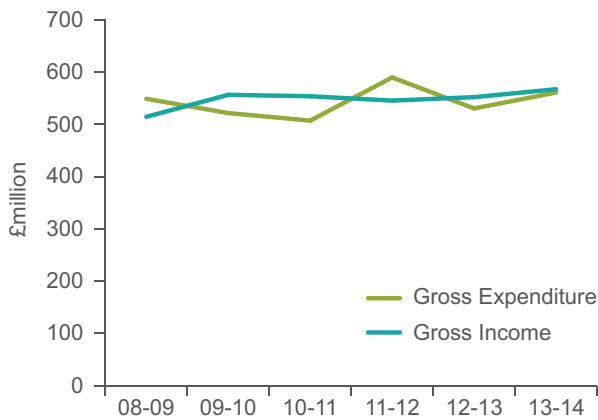
Appendix 6 – Information about the Council’s income, expenditure and staffing levels

Graphics for illustrative purposes

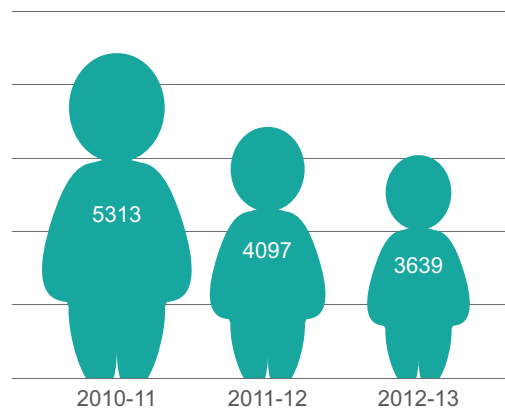
Total Gross Income 2013-14



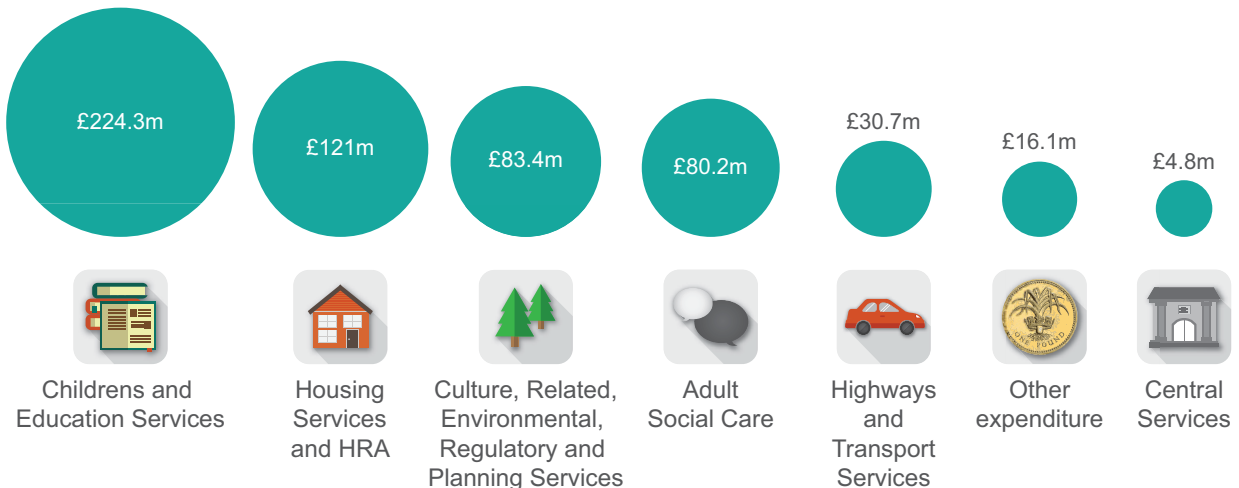
Total Income and Expenditure



Number of whole time equivalent staff 2010-11 to 2012-13



Total Gross Expenditure by service area



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COUNCIL - 6TH OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015 - ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

- 1.1 The attached report was presented to Cabinet on 30th September 2015. The recommendations of Cabinet will be reported at the meeting.
- 1.2 Members will be asked to consider the recommendations of Cabinet.

Author: Helen Morgan, Senior Committee Services Officer

Appendix - Report to Cabinet - 30th September 2015

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CABINET – 30TH SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

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

- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 15th September 2015, prior to its presentation to Cabinet and thereafter Council. It outlines the findings and recommendations of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP) 2015 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 1.2 Members were asked to note the overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 2015 AMR, which provides an oversight into the implementation of the LDP over the monitoring period. For the first time, the AMR also provides information on the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which was introduced on 1st July 2014. Due to this recent introduction, only planning applications approved after that date would be CIL liable and only those that have commenced on site would have generated income. Therefore no income was raised in the monitoring period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and consequently no schemes have been undertaken.
- 1.3 The 2015 AMR concludes that substantial progress has been made in implementing the LDP up to 2021. However, the 2013 AMR triggered the first review of the LDP in October 2013 as a result of these findings, and these issues remain the same for the 2015 AMR. The lack of a five-year supply is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed, as evidence indicates that it is unlikely that this position will improve in the next few years. There could be a need to release limited greenfield sites in the short term to address the supply issue. The review of the LDP will further address the land supply issue through the allocation of sites that are capable of being delivered in viable parts of the county borough.
- 1.4 The 2015 Annual Monitoring Report recommendations are as follows:-
 - R1 The 2015 Annual Monitoring Plan has indicated that substantial progress has been made over the plan period in implementing the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021.
 - R2 The 2015 Annual Monitoring Report has indicated that there is a continuing need to release limited greenfield sites in the short term to address the lack of a five year housing land supply.
- 1.5 During the course of the debate, discussion took place in respect of the use of those brownfield sites previously identified for development, prior to the consideration of any future greenfield allocations. Alternative sources of land supply were also suggested by Members. Officers outlined the reasons why the brownfield sites identified were not currently a feasible source of land supply, and gave assurances that all potential releases would be determined on their individual merit following a detailed assessment of the sites against the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan and taking into account all other planning and material considerations.

1.6 Following discussion on the content of the report, Members considered and noted the findings of the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report and the implications of the recommendations detailed therein. By a show of hands and the majority present (and in noting there were 3 against) the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet (and thereafter Council) that:-

- (i) the findings of the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report and the implications of the recommendations contained therein be noted;
- (ii) the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report be approved;
- (iii) the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report be submitted to the Welsh Government before the deadline of 31st October 2015.

1.7 Members are asked to consider these recommendations.

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

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 15th September 2015 – Agenda Item 8



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 15TH SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For members to consider the findings and recommendations of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan 2015 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 1.2 To recommend that the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report be approved by Cabinet and thereafter Council.
- 1.3 To recommend to Cabinet and thereafter Council that the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report be submitted to the Welsh Government (WG) in order to satisfy the Council's statutory requirements
- 1.4 Glossary of terms used in this Report

LDP	Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (Adopted November 2010)
Replacement LDP	Caerphilly County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan up to 2031
2015 AMR	Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan 2015 Annual Monitoring Report
WG	Welsh Government
SEA/SA	Strategic Environmental Assessment /Sustainability Appraisal
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 It is a statutory requirement that the Council submits an Annual Monitoring Report to the Welsh Government that monitors whether or not the LDP is being implemented successfully. The overall purpose of the AMR is to identify whether the LDP Strategy, or any the Strategy Policies are not being implemented and if they are not identify steps to rectify this.
- 2.2 This is the fourth AMR to be prepared for Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP) and it monitors the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015. The Council is required to submit the 2015 AMR to Welsh Government by the 31st October 2015.
- 2.3 Monitoring of the plan for 2014/15 indicates that one new Strategy Policy has been triggered, specifically SP4 Settlement Strategy. Specifically monitoring indicates that one of the five Principal Towns vacancy rates exceeded 20% for the first time during this monitoring period.

- 2.4 The 2015 AMR also includes the results of the SEA/SA monitoring, which is required by the SEA Directive and national guidance. The SEA/SA monitoring found an overall positive change in the state of the environment, meaning that the environmental position has improved slightly since the adoption of the LDP in 2010.
- 2.5 The 2015 AMR is also required to include information relating to 12 mandatory indicators, which are specified by Welsh Government. These indicators are included in Section 6 of the 2015 AMR.
- 2.6 An overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 2015 AMR provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the LDP over the monitoring period. Of particular note for 2014/15 is the following:
- The annual house-building rate increased slightly from 344 in 2013 to 351 dwellings in 2014 and to 414 dwellings in 2015.
 - The housing land supply figure decreased from 2.9 in 2013 to 2.5 years in 2014 and to 1.9 in 2015 using the Welsh Government preferred residual method.
 - To date 4052 units (49% of the total housing requirement) has been delivered.
 - The average house price increased from £94,272 in 2014 to £98,881 in 2015.
 - Unemployment rose from 8.4% to 8.6%.
 - The number of residents in employment decreased from 78,700, to 76,600.
 - There was a general drop in commuting rates as a percentage of all commuting both in terms of out commuting for work (36% to 30%) and out commuting generally from 50% to 49%.
 - Vacancy rates in the Principal Towns of Caerphilly and Risca/Pontymister decreased over the period whereas vacancy rates in, Blackwood and Bargoed increased. Vacancy rates in Ystrad Mynach remained the same.
 - Footfall in the Principal Town Centres in general increased.
 - Customer satisfaction with the countryside recreation on offer in the county borough was sustained at 83%.
 - The use of aggregates within the construction industry continued to fall.
- 2.7 For the first time the AMR also provides information on the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy, which was introduced in the county borough on the 1st July 2014.
- 2.8 As CIL was only introduced on the 1 July 2014, only planning applications approved after that date would be CIL liable and further, only those that have commenced on site would have generated income. Unsurprisingly therefore, no income was raised in the monitoring period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 and consequently no schemes have been undertaken.
- 2.9 The 2015 AMR concludes that substantial progress has been made in implementing the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021. However it is important to note that the 2013 AMR triggered the first review of the LDP in October 2013 as a consequence of its findings. These issues remain the same for the 2015 AMR.
- 2.10 The lack of a five-year land supply is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed, as the evidence available indicates that it is unlikely that this position will improve in the next few years. There could be a need to release limited greenfield sites in the short term to address the supply issue. The review of the LDP will further address the land supply issue through the allocation of sites that are capable of being delivered in viable parts of the county borough.
- 2.11 The 2015 AMR recommendation is therefore as follows:

Recommendations

- R1** *The 2015 Annual Monitoring Plan has indicated that substantial progress has been made over the plan period in implementing the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021.*

R2 *The 2015 Annual Monitoring Report has indicated that there is a continuing need to release limited greenfield sites in the short term to address the lack of a five year housing land supply.*

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare and review a Local Development Plan for its area to provide the policy framework for the development and use of land within the County Borough. On 23 November 2010, the Council formally adopted the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021(LDP) and has since been monitoring the progress of the plan through its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 3.2 The submission of the 2015 AMR to Welsh Government is a statutory procedure associated with the Adopted LDP. The LDP has, through its preparation, incorporated the Council's land use objectives and the AMR monitors whether the LDP, and therefore the Council's Land Use Objectives, are being successfully implemented.

4. THE REPORT

Background

- 4.1 The Council formally adopted the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP) on the 23 November 2010. Following the adoption of its LDP, the Council has a statutory obligation, under section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area. Further, section 76 of the Act requires the Council to produce information on these matters in the form of an Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government. The 2015 AMR monitors the period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 and it is required to be submitted to WG by the 31 October 2015.
- 4.2 The 2015 AMR once again considers whether the Development Strategy that underpins the LDP remains valid; and whether or not the Strategy Policies contained in the LDP are being effective in delivering the Development Strategy and meeting the objectives of the plan until such time as the Replacement LDP is adopted.
- 4.3 It is important to note that the 2013 AMR triggered the first review of the LDP in October 2013 as a consequence of its findings. The issues highlighted within the 2013 AMR that triggered the first review of the LDP remain the same for the 2015 AMR.
- 4.4 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 and the LDP Manual (available on the Welsh Government web site) specify what the 2015 AMR is required to include as follows:
- An Executive Summary.
 - Review of changes to national and regional policy and guidance and their implications for the LDP.
 - SEA/SA Monitoring based on the SEA/SA Monitoring Framework (LDP Appendix 18).
 - LDP Monitoring based on the LDP Monitoring Framework (LDP Appendix 19).
 - Statutory Indicators.
 - Recommendations on the course of action in respect of policies and the LDP as a whole.
- 4.5 In addition to the above, the 2015 AMR also considers external influences which impact on the implementation of the LDP but which are very much outside of the Council's control. Nevertheless the Council should consider whether or not a change in its policy framework could serve to alleviate some of the issue raised by these external factors.

- 4.6 Copies of the full 2015 AMR entitled “Caerphilly County Borough LDP Annual Monitoring Report 2015” together with the background statistical tables have been placed in the resource library for members’ information.

Report of Findings

External Conditions

- 4.7 As the review of the plan has already been triggered, the contextual changes that may affect the AMR and any policies within the plan will be considered as part of this process in a comprehensive and holistic way. These contextual considerations will include, but are not exclusive to, the introduction of the Planning (Wales) Bill, the updating of Planning Policy Wales, the revision of Technical Advice Note 1, Technical Advice Note 12, Technical Advice Note 21 and the introduction of Technical Advice Note 23.
- 4.8 The downturn in the economy continues to have a marked effect on house building rates and therefore on the delivery of affordable housing. Viability continues to be an issue in overall house building and this has an adverse impact on the levels of affordable housing that can be delivered through the planning system.
- 4.9 All neighbouring local planning authorities are well advanced with the preparation of their respective development plans providing a local policy framework for development decisions within the region.
- 4.10 The Cardiff LDP identifies land for the provision of 41,000 dwellings, including 18,000 on greenfield sites in north Cardiff; and Newport LDP allocates 10,350 dwellings, 1,540 of which are in the east of Newport on the boundary with Risca / Pontymister. This provision could undermine the development strategy for the Southern Connections Corridor, which advocates new development on brownfield land.

Local Considerations

- 4.11 The 2013 AMR (2012-13) recommended that an early review be instigated in light of the following significant local considerations. Specifically:
- The lack of a five-year housing land supply is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed, as the evidence available indicates that it is unlikely that this position will improve in the next few years; and
 - The need to identify suitable sites for new schools as a consequence of the Council’s ambitious school rationalisation programme.
- 4.12 The LDP is currently under review with an anticipated adoption date for the Replacement LDP of October 2017.

Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring

- 4.13 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires local authorities to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as part of the preparation of the LDP. In addition to this the LDP Regulations requires a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to be undertaken. In preparing the LDP the council undertook joint SEA and SA and produced and published its SEA/SA Report in conjunction with the LDP.
- 4.14 The SEA Directive also requires that the council monitor the state of the environment through monitoring the sustainability objectives set out in the SEA/SA Report. This forms an integral part of the AMR and is contained in Section 4.

LDP Policy Monitoring

- 4.15 The LDP Monitoring considers each of the 22 Strategy Policies against the LDP monitoring Framework to identify whether the policies are being effective and to identify any policies that

are not being implemented. The Framework consists of 29 Indicators (overarching measures considered against time related targets) and 53 Factors (specific measures considered against a fixed Trigger Point). Both the Indicators and Factors are statistical measures relating to the delivery of a specific Strategy Policy and consideration of the Indicators and Factors will indicate whether the Policies are being implemented. Where an indicator does not meet a target, or a factor reaches a trigger point, it could indicate that the policy is not being implemented.

- 4.16 An overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 2015 AMR period provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the LDP over the past 12 months. Of particular note for 2014/15 is the following:
- The annual house-building rate increased slightly from 344 in 2013 to 351 dwellings in 2014 and to 414 dwellings in 2015.
 - The housing land supply figure decreased from 2.9 in 2013 to 2.5 years in 2014 and to 1.9 in 2015 using the Welsh Government preferred residual method.
 - To date 4052 units (49% of the total housing requirement) has been delivered.
 - The average house price increased from £94,272 in 2014 to £98,881 in 2015.
 - Unemployment rose from 8.4% to 8.6%.
 - The number of residents in employment decreased from 78,700, to 76,600.
 - There was a general drop in commuting rates as a percentage of all commuting both in terms of out commuting for work (36% to 30%) and out commuting generally from 50% to 49%.
 - Vacancy rates in the Principal Towns of Caerphilly and Risca/Pontymister decreased over the period whereas vacancy rates in, Blackwood and Bargoed increased. Vacancy rates in Ystrad Mynach remained the same.
 - Footfall in the Principal Town Centres in general increased.
 - Customer satisfaction with the countryside recreation on offer in the county borough was sustained at 83%.
 - The use of aggregates within the construction industry continued to fall.
- 4.17 Monitoring of the plan for 2014/15 indicates that one new Strategy Policy has been triggered, specifically SP4 Settlement Strategy. Specifically monitoring indicates that one of the five Principal Towns vacancy rates exceeded 20% for the first time during this monitoring period.
- 4.18 Given the importance of housing delivery to the strategy there is a need to consider the following key policies as part of the 2015 AMR.
- SP14 Total Housing Requirements.
 - SP15 Affordable Housing Target.
- 4.19 The 2014/15 JHLAS indicates that the housing land supply has fallen to 1.9 years using the residual method. Where the land supply is less than 5 years, TAN 1 states that local authorities must take steps to increase the supply of housing land. This may include reviewing the development plan, releasing land in its ownership, expediting planning applications or securing the provision of infrastructure for particular sites.
- 4.20 The review of the adopted LDP is underway and this will look in-depth at the identification of additional development land to satisfy the 5-year land supply requirements of TAN1. However in the intervening period there could be a need to release limited greenfield sites in the short term to address the supply issue.
- 4.21 Further the Council should seek to release housing land in its control to the market and should ensure that planning applications are expedited as far as is practical to make land readily available for development.
- 4.22 No further intervention is necessary at this time, as all policies will be reassessed as an integral part of the review process along with all other policies contained within the plan.

Statutory Indicators

- 4.23 The LDP Manual requires that the AMR include information relating to 12 specific indicators. The information in respect of these is already contained within the LDP and SEA/SA monitoring frameworks and has been taken into account through the monitoring process.
- 4.24 The LDP Regulations also require that the AMR sets out information in respect of housing delivery in the County Borough since the Adoption of the plan. In particular the Regulations require that the AMR includes:
- The housing land supply taken from the current Housing Land Availability Study; and
 - The number (if any) of net affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA's area.
- 4.25 Housing land availability information is monitored for the period April to end of March annually through the Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS). Information must be provided for the period in respect of which the AMR is made; and the period since the LDP was first adopted or approved. This information is set out in Appendix 1.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 4.26 The Community Infrastructure Levy CIL was introduced in Caerphilly County Borough on 1 July 2014. It is a mandatory charge that is levied against all new qualifying development.
- 4.27 In order to ensure that the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy is open and transparent, the Council must prepare an annual report on CIL. This can be a bespoke report or can be included in an existing reporting mechanism, such as the annual monitoring report which reports on the LDP. This is a sensible mechanism for reporting on CIL as it is inextricably linked to the LDP. The 2015 AMR is the first AMR therefore to also report on the implementation of CIL.
- 4.28 The CIL Report must be published on the Council's website by 31 December each year, for the previous financial year, i.e. in this instance for the reporting period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.
- 4.29 It is important to note that CIL only becomes payable on the commencement of the chargeable development, therefore it is inevitable that there is a delay between the formal introduction of the levy and funding being secured. As CIL was only introduced on the 1 July 2014, only planning applications approved after that date would be CIL liable and further, only those that have commenced on site would have generated income. Unsurprisingly therefore, no income was raised in the monitoring period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 and consequently no schemes have been undertaken.
- 4.30 For completeness, there is a requirement for the Charging Authority to pass 15% of the CIL income to the relevant Community Council and for this also to be reported through the AMR. Clearly as no income was raised during this monitoring period no funds have been passed to any of the community councils in the county borough.

AMR Conclusions & Recommendations

- 4.31 The AMR concludes that whilst the LDP Development Strategy remains sound, the downturn in the economy has had a marked effect on house building rates. Viability continues to be an issue in overall house building and this has an adverse impact on the levels of affordable housing being delivered through the planning system.
- 4.32 The lack of a five-year land supply is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed, as the evidence available indicates that it is unlikely that this position will improve in the next few years. There could be a need to release limited greenfield sites in the short term to address the supply issue. The review of the LDP will further address the land supply issue through the allocation of sites that are capable of being delivered in viable parts of the county borough.

4.33 The 2015 AMR recommendation is therefore as follows:

Recommendations

R1 *The 2015 Annual Monitoring Plan has indicated that substantial progress has been made over the plan period in implementing the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021.*

R2 *The 2015 Annual Monitoring Report has indicated that there is a continuing need to release limited greenfield sites in the short term to address the lack of a five year housing land supply.*

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct implications associated with this report. However any future review of policies and proposals contained within the LDP will require an equalities impact assessment to be carried out.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no new financial implications as a consequence of this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 All comments have been taken into account in the Committee Report.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To consider and note the findings of the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report and the implications of the recommendations contained therein.

9.2 To recommend that the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report be referred to Cabinet and Council for consideration.

9.3 To recommend to Cabinet and thereafter Council that the 2015 Annual Monitoring Report be submitted to the Welsh Government before the deadline of 31 October 2015.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To comply with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the LDP Wales Regulations 2005 and the SEA Directive.

10.2 To comply with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the LDP Wales Regulations 2005 and the SEA Directive.

10.3 To comply with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the LDP Wales Regulations 2005 and the SEA Directive

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to prepare and keep under review a Local Development Plan for the County Borough to act as a single framework for the control and use of land within its administrative boundary.
- 11.2 The Local Government Act 1998. The Local Government Act 2003. The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005.

Author: Rhian Kyte, Team Leader, Strategic and Development Plans
kyter@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Cllr Ken James, Cabinet Member For Regeneration, Planning & Sustainable Development
Cllr Tudor Davies, Chairman, Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee
Chris Burns Interim Chief Executive
Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration and Planning
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services/ Monitoring Officer
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager, Environmental Finance Group

Appendices

Appendix 1 Mandatory Indicator – New Dwelling Completions and Land Supply

Background Papers:

Caerphilly County Borough LDP Annual Monitoring Report 2015

[made available in the resource library]

Caerphilly County Borough LDP Annual Monitoring Report 2015 – Background Tables

[made available in the resource library]

Agenda Item 5 Report to Council, 23 November 2010

Agenda Item 6(1) Report to Council, 8 October 2013

- APPENDIX 1: MANDATORY INDICATOR - NEW DWELLING COMPLETIONS AND LAND SUPPLY

**New Dwelling Completions
Private /Affordable Split and Housing land Supply**

	2007 JHLAS	2008 JHLAS	2009 JHLAS	2010 JHLAS	2011 JHLAS	2012 JHLAS	2013 JHLAS	2014 JHLAS	2015 JHLAS	
	Apr 2006 Mar 2007	Apr 2007 March2008	Apr 2008 Mar 2009	Apr 2009 Mar 2010	Apr 2010 Mar 2011	Apr 2011 Mar 2012	Apr 2012 Mar 2013	Apr 2013 Mar 2014	Apr 2014 Mar 2015	Total
Private Sector	835	554	265	189	241	275	236	189		
H.A. Public	17	102	122	111	117	115	108	162		
Total	852	656	387	300	358	390	344	351	414	4052
Land Supply Residual method	17.3*	22.5*	21.2*	14.2*	4.3	3.5	2.9	2.5	1.9	

Figures taken from Joint Housing Land Availability Studies
 * *Figures realised under the Caerphilly UDP (LDP Adopted November 2010)*

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COUNCIL - 6TH OCTOBER 2015

**SUBJECT: BUTE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND CONSERVATION
AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN (CAA AND CAMP) FINAL DRAFT 2015**

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

- 1.1 The attached report was presented to Cabinet on 30th September 2015. The recommendations of Cabinet will be reported at the meeting.
- 1.2 Members will be asked to consider the recommendations of Cabinet.

Author: Helen Morgan, Senior Committee Services Officer

Appendix - Report to Cabinet - 30th September 2015

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CABINET – 30TH SEPTEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: BUTE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND
CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN (CAA AND CAMP)
FINAL DRAFT 2015**

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

- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 15th September 2015, prior to its presentation to Cabinet and thereafter Council. It sought the views of Members on proposals to adopt the Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan 2015 (CAA and CAMP) as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP).
- 1.2 Members were advised that Bute Town was first designated a Conservation Area on 20th October 1972. An Article 4 Direction for Bute Town has also been in place since 23rd April 1979. As a consequence of work associated with the bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for Bute Town, the Conservation Area has been reassessed, and on 11th February 2015 the Planning Committee resolved to extend and re-align the Conservation Area. They further resolved to replace the Article 4 Direction with a new, extended Article 4(2) Direction boundary, for the proper and sustainable management of the historic environment.
- 1.3 A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAA and CAMP) for Bute Town has now been produced which reflects the updated Conservation Area Boundary, and approval is sought to adopt this as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP). As this will supersede existing guidance, approval is also sought for the current 'Bute Town Conservation Area Design Guide' and 'Bute Town Conservation Area Enhancement Plan (August 2005)' to be consequently cancelled.
- 1.4 Following consideration and discussion of the report, the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet (and thereafter Council) that for the reasons contained therein:-
 - (i) the Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan 2015 (CAA and CAMP) be formally adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP);
 - (ii) the 'Bute Town Conservation Area Design Guide' and 'Bute Town Conservation Area Enhancement Plan (August 2005)' be consequently cancelled.
- 1.5 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

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

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 15th September 2015 – Agenda Item 7



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 15TH SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: BUTE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN (CAA AND CAMP) FINAL DRAFT 2015

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the views of Members on proposals to adopt the Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan 2015 (CAA & CAMP) as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP) prior to its presentation to Cabinet and Council.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Bute Town was first designated a Conservation Area on 20th October 1972. An Article 4 Direction for Bute Town has also been in place since 23rd April 1979 (confirmed 31st December 1979 by the then Welsh Office).
- 2.2 As a consequence of work associated with the bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for Butetown, the Conservation Area has been reassessed; and on the 11th February 2015 the Planning Committee resolved to extend and re-align the Conservation Area. They further resolved to replace the Article 4 Direction with a new, extended Article 4(2) Direction boundary, for the proper and sustainable management of the historic environment.
- 2.3 A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAA & CAMP) for Bute Town has now been produced which reflects the updated Conservation Area Boundary and this report seeks approval to adopt this as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP).

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Caerphilly County Borough Council Local Development Plan up to 2021 (Adopted Nov 2010) is the statutory framework for the development and use of land in the county borough. It seeks to reconcile the development needs of the population with the wider environmental concerns for the conservation of the man made and natural environment. The Key Objectives of the LDP of relevance are to:-

22 Maintain the vitality, viability and character of the County Borough's town and village centres and re-establish them as a focus for economic activity and community pride.

23 Maintain, enhance and develop a hierarchy of town and village centres which are easily accessible, and which meet the needs of all sections of the population.

24 Protect and enhance the overall quality of the historic natural and built environment of the County Borough.

- 3.2 Bute Town is an important 'Gateway' to the County Borough. The settlement has a high profile both in terms of its heritage importance and its strategic location, just south of the Heads of the Valleys Road.

The Welsh Government has several objectives, which include:-

- Enhancing the historic environment,
- Safeguarding historic buildings, and
- Ensuring that conservation areas are protected and enhanced.

- 3.3 Under Section 69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the local planning authority has a duty to determine from time to time, which parts of their area are of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to 'designate those areas as conservation areas.'

- 3.4 In addition, under Section 69(2) of the Act it is also the duty to review those parts that have been designated conservation areas under this section to establish whether the conservation area should be varied or cancelled as a result of such reviews.

4. THE REPORT

Background

- 4.1 Bute Town was first designated a Conservation Area on 20th October 1972. An Article 4 Direction for Bute Town has also been in place since 23rd April 1979 (confirmed 31st December 1979 by the then Welsh Office).
- 4.2 As a consequence of work associated with the bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for Butetown, the Conservation Area has been reassessed; and on the 11th February 2015 the Planning Committee resolved to extend and re-align the Conservation Area. They further resolved to replace the Article 4 Direction with a new, extended Article 4(2) Direction boundary, for the proper and sustainable management of the historic environment.
- 4.3 A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAA & CAMP) for Bute Town has now been produced which reflects the updated Conservation Area Boundary and this report seeks approval to adopt this as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP).
- 4.4 The CAA and CAMP have been derived from consultation with the residents of Butetown and the surrounding area. The results of the consultation were appended to the Committee Report that was considered by the Planning Committee on 11th February 2015.
- 4.5 There is now a need to formally adopt the Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal & Conservation Area Management Plan (2015) as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (November 2010). Once adopted this will supersede the 'Bute Town Conservation Area Design Guide' and 'Bute Town Conservation Area Enhancement Plan (August 2005).'

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An EIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance. No potential for unlawful discrimination and / or low level or minor negative impact has been identified, therefore a full EIA has not been carried out.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 All comments have been taken into account in the Committee Report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To recommend to Cabinet and thereafter Council that the Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan 2015 (CAA & CAMP) be formally adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP).

9.2 To recommend to Cabinet and thereafter Council that the 'Bute Town Conservation Area Design Guide' and 'Bute Town Conservation Area Enhancement Plan (August 2005)' be consequently cancelled.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To enable the Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan 2015 (CAA & CAMP) to be used as supplementary planning guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP).

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 S. 69(1), 69(2) & S. 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Author: Patricia Martin, Principal Conservation & Design Officer
Consultees: Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration and Planning
Tim Stephens, Group Manager, Development Management
Rhian Kyte, Team Leader, Strategic and Development Planning
Allan Dallimore, Team Leader, Urban Renewal

Background Papers:

Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal & Bute Town Conservation Area Management Plan (CAA & CAMP) Final Draft 2015

Bute Town Conservation Area Appraisal & Conservation Area Management Plan Final Draft 2015 has been made available in the Members' Resource Library.

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COUNCIL - 6TH OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2014/15

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

- 1.1 The attached report was presented to Cabinet on 30th September 2015. The recommendations of Cabinet will be reported at the meeting.
- 1.2 Members will be asked to consider the recommendations of Cabinet.

Author: Helen Morgan, Senior Committee Services Officer

Appendix - Report to Cabinet - 30th September 2015

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CABINET – 30TH SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2014/15

REPORT BY: INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet the Authority's Annual Self-Assessment called the Performance Report for 2014/15 and to seek the views and approval of Cabinet prior to its presentation to Council on the 6th October 2015.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Performance Report is a statutory requirement under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and an important part of the Council's Performance Framework. The Council is required to assess its own performance and provide the public with a balanced picture of that performance.
- 2.2 In addition, the report must show how the council performed against the Improvement Objectives it set itself for 2014/2015.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Annual Performance Report contributes towards the Single Integrated Plan, called 'Caerphilly Delivers'. The Annual Performance Report also details progress of the council's medium term priorities outlined in the CCBC Corporate Plan 2013-17, namely:
- Peoples social care needs are identified and met in a timely and appropriate way.
 - Children and Adults are safeguarded from abuse.
 - Improve standards across all year groups particularly key stage 3 and 4.
 - Identify vulnerable groups of learners and develop interventions to ensure needs are met.
 - Reduce the gap in attainment between pupils in advantaged and disadvantaged communities.
 - Promote the benefits of an active and healthy lifestyle.
 - Invest in our Council Homes and their communities to transform lives.
 - Affordability - Deliver a medium term Financial Plan aimed at ultimately providing a period of stability that helps the authority to have a range of services in the future that are sustainable.

The Council formally adopted the above priorities on June 2014. The priorities reflect the council's contribution to the delivery of the Single Integrated Plan together with manifesto commitments made by the ruling administration.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to publish its Performance Report no later than the 30th October each year. Full details of the plan are attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Upon approval by

Council, this report will be published on the Council's internet site and made available in hard copy at key council offices and libraries.

- 4.2 Whilst the document is kept in as plain a language as possible, it is a comprehensive sometimes, technical document so a summary of the plan will also be made more widely available to the public by the end of November.
- 4.3 The report primarily includes; A Director's position statement from each of our directorates; financial statements, progress and achievements made against our 5 Improvement Objectives and performance statistics with progress comments against the National Strategic Indicators and Public Accountability Measures (as prescribed by the Welsh Government) for 2014/15 for Local Authorities.
- 4.4 Detailed appendices of the Council's performance against its Improvement Objectives, using Ffynnon dashboards were scrutinised at spring / summer Scrutiny meetings and are attached as an appendix with the report.
- 4.5 **What does the Annual Performance Report tell us?**
- 4.5.1 In accordance with the Local Government Measure 2009 the Annual Performance Plan is focussed, but not limited to, the council's delivery of its Improvement Objectives and the Performance Report reflects that.

4.5.2 The council's Improvement Objectives (I.O.) for 2014/2015 were:

I.O.	Description	Status
I.O.1	Ensure children and young people who are looked after are supported to achieve their full potential.	Successful / closed for 15/16
I.O.2	Improve job opportunities by implementing the Council's Passport Scheme.	Successful / closed for 15/16
I.O.3	Develop an effective and accessible Youth Service that supports the personal and social development of young people	Successful / closed for 15/16
I.O.4	Improve Awareness, access, variety and use of leisure community and sporting facilities	Partially successful/ closed for 15/16
I.O.5	Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities	Partially Successful / carried forward to 15/16
I.O.6	Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless	Successful / closed for 15/16

The judgements above were made internally based upon whether the individual IO's had delivered the outcomes set. The judgements were scrutinised and validated via each individual scrutiny held across the Summer 2015. IO4 was judged as partially successful as we didn't make enough progress on our action plan and some of our key participation targets. IO 5 was judged as partially successful due to the slippage of the planned programme, which resulted in several targets not being met for some of the indicators that measure performance. The progress and mitigating actions on the Welsh Housing Quality Standard is reported on regularly to Policy and Resources Scrutiny and to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group.

- 4.5.4 There are several ways to view data, performance against performance or performance against other authorities or moving up and down the rankings. For example some indicators although having moved down or stayed at a low ranking but have still improved year on year, or performance has declined but can still improve on the all Wales ranking. As such our Performance Report focuses on how well we have improved year on year but also gives explanations for deteriorating or improving performance in an all Wales context.
- 4.5.3 A summary of the national picture using the Welsh Government's National Measures shows the picture is mixed. Of the 43 National indicators, 42 were used as a comparison to create the

national picture across Wales. Of those measures Caerphilly saw (20) 48% of those improve upon their 2013/14 results and (18) 43% decline in performance compared to the 2013/14 result. 4 indicators (9%) maintained maximum performance levels (at the best they can be). Although statistically classed as 'maintained', if the 4 are added to the 20 indicators that improved it would bring the total number improved to 57% compared to the 2013/14 performance results.

4.5.4 Below is a break down of year on year improvement of National Indicators by Directorate

2014/15 year on year Performance Improvement by area compared to 2013/14							
	No.	Improved		Deteriorated		Maintained	
Education Including Library services	12	8/12	66.6%	2/12	16.6%	2/12	16.6%
Social Services	18	4/18	22%	12/18	67%	2/18	11%
Adult	7	2/7	29%	5/7	71%		
Children	11	2/11	18%	7/11	64%	2/11	18%
Environmental Including Affordable homes Food hygiene	12	8/12	67%	4/12	33%		
Total	42	20	48%	18	43%	4	9%
<i>This calculation does not include sickness absence per FTE (CHR002) as the measure was new to set for 2014/15</i>							

Reasons for performance of the individual indicators are included within the performance report.

4.5.4 Twelve of the indicators are in the "Upper Quarter" in Wales including 5 which are the best (1st) in Wales, some of these (including the 5) are:

- The percentage of pupils in LA care in an LA maintained school, aged 15 as at the 31st August who leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved qualification moved to 1st in Wales after being 5th in Wales last year.
- The percentage of final statements of special education needs issued within 26 weeks **excluding** exceptions maintained 1st in Wales for the second year running.
- The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19 maintained its 1st place in Wales.
- The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation. Moving from 9th last year to 1st in Wales for 14/15
- The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required, also maintained a 1st position
- The percentage of looked after children, who experienced one or more changes of school during a period of being looked after, was 2nd in Wales last year moving to 5th in Wales although this represents a difference of 0.2%.
- The rate of older people (65+) whom the Authority supports in the community per 1,000 population maintained a 3rd position in Wales.
- The rate of older people (65+) whom the Authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population maintained a position of 6th in Wales
- The average external point score for 16 year old looked after children, in any LA maintained learning setting moved from 15th last year to 5th in Wales this year
- The number of visits to public libraries during the year per 1,000 population was 4th in Wales from 9th last year.

4.5.5 Eighteen of the indicators are in the "Middle Quarters" and some of these include:

- The percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill was 10th in Wales, moving up one from 11th

last year and the percentage of municipal waste recycled was **15th** in Wales down from **5th** in the ranking last year.

- The percentage of highways inspected of a high or acceptable level of cleanliness moved up the ranking to **9th** from **10th** last year.
- The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days was **16th** in Wales where previously had been ranked **3rd** (this represents a percentage decline of 5% although performance is still high at 94%)
- The percentage of A,B & C roads that are in overall poor condition was **8th** in Wales, moving up from last years position of **10th**.
- The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of key stage 2 achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by teacher assessment is **15th** in Wales from **16th** last year but performance has improved 3 years running.
- The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75+ is this year **13th** in Wales. This has improved from **22nd** in Wales last year.
- The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year improved in performance but declined in ranking from **7th** to **8th** in Wales.
- The percentage of visits to sports and leisure facilities per 1,000 population was **16th** in Wales moving up one from **17th** last year.

4.5.6 Twelve of the indicators are in the “Lower Quarter” some of these include:

- The percentage of pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved the L2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and maths. Maintains **20th** in Wales although improved on last year.
- The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of key stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the core subject indicator, as determined by teacher assessment maintained **18th** in Wales from last year although there has been nearly a 10% improvement on performance over the last 3 years.
- Percentage of pupil attendance in *primary* schools stays at **18th** in Wales. There is no change in the ranking for the last 3 years although performance has improved year on year.
- Percentage of pupil attendance in *secondary* schools stays the same at **19th** in Wales for the last 3 years although performance has improved year on year.
- The percentage of all pupils in any LA maintained school, aged 15 at 31st August who leave compulsory education, training or work based employment without an approved qualification was **20th** in Wales having moved from **14th** in 13/14.
- The average external qualifications points score for all children, in any local authority maintained learning setting dropped to **22nd** in Wales, although performance has improved year on year.
- The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where risk has been managed is **21st** in Wales from **19th** in 13/14.
- The percentage of adult clients who are supported in the community during the year was **20th** in Wales, dropping from **1st** in Wales in 13/14.
- The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by a social worker moved from **13th** last year to **17th** in Wales this year
- Average number of calendar days taken to deliver a disabled facilities grant maintains its position **19th** in Wales although performance has a slight decline.
- The number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence cannot be compared against last year due to it being placed back in the national set this year after having been removed for 3 years. We were ranked **16th** in Wales for 14/15.

Details of Caerphilly’s performance in relation to Wales for all 43 indicators are included in the Performance Report.

4.5.7 Directors have used the Performance Plan to reflect on the performance of their individual directorates:

- Directorate of Chief Executives: page 17

- Directorate Corporate Services: page 31
- Directorate of Education and Community Services: page 37
- Directorate of Social Services: page 56

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Government Measure 2009 includes 'fairness' in its definition of improvement. The legislation also requires organisations to consider 'fairness' when setting priorities. There are 'no protected characteristics' to consider in the actual publishing of the Councils Performance Report and the report will be available in accordance with the Councils Welsh Language policy and in different formats and fonts on request.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications of this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct Personnel implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Performance Report has been collated via contributions made by all Directorates across the Council. All Heads of Service have contributed and been consulted on their relevant section. All other comments resulting from consultation have been incorporated into this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Cabinet recommends to Council they accept the Annual Performance Report 2014/15.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 There is a statutory duty on the authority to publish the Performance Report by the 30th October each year.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2009.

Author: Ros Roberts, Performance Manager, Performance Management

Consultees: Colin Jones, Head of Performance & Property Services
 Chris Burns, Chief Executive
 Christina Harry, Corporate Director, Education, Community & Leisure
 Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services
 Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services
 Cllr. D. Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Performance, Property & Asset Management
 Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring officer
 Angharad Price, Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer/Barrister

Background Papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Final Year Performance Report 2014/15

Annual Performance Report

Caerphilly County Borough Council

2014/15

Draft

Page 83

A greener place to live, work and visit
Man gwyrddach i fyw, gweithio ac ymweld



This report discharges the Authority's duty under the local government measure 2009 section 15.1-15.5 publication of improvement information

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Message from the Leader

Cllr. Keith Reynolds

This Performance Report is an important document which is produced every year as a way of reviewing how the Council is doing in a number of key areas.

Page 86 We are always working hard to do things better and raise standards in the way we deliver services to our residents. It is also important during these tough economic times that we demonstrate value for money in everything that we do.

Our dedicated workforce play a key role in helping us to achieve this and I would like to thank staff at all levels for their commitment to improving performance and delivering our priority objectives.

We are doing well in a number of areas, but it is also important that we acknowledge there are some things that need further improvement. We will remain focussed on addressing these issues in the future.

I would like to thank everyone who is involved in our ongoing improvement process, and I look forward to seeing the organisation achieve positive results in the future to benefit all sections of our community.

Introduction

Every year we publish a report on how we as a Council have performed during the previous year. This report tells the reader about our performance during 2014/15. Performance of the Council is routinely published in various forms however this is our opportunity to pull all information together to give the reader an overall picture. Some information is comprehensive and statistical so we also produce a user-friendly summary that is available in November each year.

When we ask whether we are making a difference to the communities we serve, addressing the priorities that are important to our citizens, we use some of the activities below to help us determine this. The following list is not exhaustive, but has been provided to give you an idea of the types of activities that the authority does to learn whether we are doing things as best we can:

- We use complaints, compliments and wider consultation to gather feedback and intelligence from our citizens and communities. For example, the citizens forum, viewpoint panel, youth forum, bi-ennial Household Survey, as well as operational intelligence from our partnership work with, the Police, Fire and Rescue, the Health Board, Volunteer Groups, Youth Justice Board, Contractors and other stakeholders.
- External regulators assess us and inspect our Services to ensure we are compliant with statutory legislation and local policies. For 2014/15 our regulators were; Wales Audit Office, Estyn and Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).
- Each Service Area carries out a Self Evaluation using a range of evidence to judge how it is performing and produces an annual Service Plan, to take forward and monitor its improvement actions.
- Each Service has its own 'Performance Scorecard' to monitor, analyse and report performance information throughout the year. Services maintain and monitor a Risk Register, which monitors things that could impede service delivery.
- Many of our Services form part of wider partnership or collaborative groups, where they produce partnership strategies, plans and programmes which they use collectively to monitor their activities and progress.
- Budget monitoring and financial statements of accounts are routinely and robustly reviewed.
- The Authority has in place several tiers of information reporting between officers and Councilors such as Scrutiny, Cabinet and Audit Committee. Our Audit Committee routinely monitors aspects of Risk and Complaints reporting. Our employees are engaged in annual appraisals, which we call Performance Development Reviews.
- The Welsh Government (WG) and European Commission, monitor activities and outcomes delivered against specific grant funded activities.
- We are beginning to study further in more detail the ways in which we work to see where waste can be eliminated and services improved.

How this Report is Structured

In providing an insight into authority performance it is important to know that the Authority is very diverse (providing over 500 types of services and has 9,500 staff) providing services from 'cradle to grave'. So to structure our self-evaluation and subsequent report for 2014/15 we provide an overview, and then focus on what we have done well, what has not gone so well and where we think we need to do better.

The report begins with introductions and a financial summary and contextual information on customer service, consultation results and our work in equalities and wider partnerships.

For ease of reading, we then cover in greater detail under the section **Our Performance**, a detailed assessment of each Directorate for 2014/15.

Each Directorate assessment will include the following information:

- Page 88
- The Directorate's overall annual performance statement
 - Financial information and analysis relating to the Directorate for 2014/15
 - 2014/15 Improvement Objectives for the Directorate*
 - Analysis of National Strategic Indicators (NSI) and Public Accountability Measures (PAM) for the Directorate for 2014/15
 - Assessment of our progress with our longer term priorities 2013-2017 (half time update) by Directorate

Our performance progress for our Improvement Objectives and our Outcome Agreements uses an overall assessment key of : **Successful**, **Partially Successful** and **Unsuccessful**. Also we provide the reader with a summary of progress and success for each of our Improvement Objectives for 2014/15. In the Appendix, we include full details on all the actions and measures for each Improvement Objective.

We conclude with an overall summary of our statutory performance (national indicators we are required to collect by the Welsh Government) and information on what our regulators have told us and where they think we can improve further.

We hope you enjoy reading about how your Authority is working to make a difference and welcome any comments or feedback that you may wish to make, whether on future content that you would like to see, thoughts on how you would like to see it or any questions on the report itself. If you would like to get involved please see the section called 'How to Contact us' on page 130 and will tell you how you can do that.

The Authority's Financial Summary

The Authority plans and approves its budgets on a 3 year medium-term financial planning cycle, which gives consideration to historical trends and spending patterns, national and local initiatives and access to multiple funding sources, some of which change year-on-year.

Our main principles to date have been to safeguard service provision and jobs and to provide improvements to our communities, its people, our infrastructure and surrounding countryside, whilst ensuring a prudent approach to financial decisions. In recent years, we have faced financial constraints that have, in some service areas, changed the way we do things (sometimes referred to as planned savings and disinvestments).

The financial outlook continues to be bleak and on top of significant savings already delivered in recent years, the Council has been working hard in recent months to identify further savings of £26m to enable balanced budgets to be delivered for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years. Unfortunately, recent announcements by the UK Government on public expenditure suggest that the financial situation may worsen which will require even more savings to be found.

The Council's Cabinet will receive a report in October 2015 outlining draft savings proposals for the 2016/17 financial year. These proposals will then be subject to a period of consultation ending in January 2016, with firm budget proposals being put to Council in February 2016.

The Authority manages two main categories of finances i.e. **revenue** (every-day running costs for services) and **capital** (specific costs for updating and maintaining key assets and implementing major new projects).

The table opposite provides a summary of revenue budgets and revenue expenditure for the period 2013/14 to 2015/16.

Expenditure (£m)	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16
	Budget	Spend	Budget	Spend	Budget
Corporate Services	70.26	56.98	68.26	57.57	66.14
Education	128.23	128.90	127.30	125.92	127.42
Community Services	60.37	59.94	58.16	57.31	54.74
Social Services	78.61	76.74	78.31	74.59	77.32
Total Net (£m)	337.47	322.56	332.03	315.39	325.62

Revenue:

Where does our money come from?

Income (£m)	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Revenue Support Grant	218.74	218.74	217.20	217.20	212.84
Business Rates (share)	54.38	54.38	55.38	55.38	50.85
Council Tax	53.94	55.21	56.34	57.75	58.85
Other Grants	10.41	10.41	1.91	1.91	1.88
Contribution from Reserves	0	0	1.20	1.20	1.20
Total Net (£m)	337.47	338.74	332.03	333.44	325.62

Service Area	Amount	Description
All	£3.8m	Whole Authority cost pressures including inflationary increases and revenue support for the Council's Capital Programme
Social Services	£1.0m	Additional funding to meet the increasing demand for services.
Corporate Services	£0.1m	Welfare Reform Implementation Costs

The table opposite summarises the key cost pressures and investments that were included in the 2014/15 revenue budget.

Capital Expenditure varies year-on-year and budgets are allocated from specific funding sources. The following table provides a summary of capital budgets and capital expenditure for the period 2013/14 to 2015/16: -

Capital (£m)	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16
	Budget	Spend	Budget	Spend	Budget
Education	22.51	7.05	22.44	8.61	15.28
Highways	10.96	6.54	11.05	7.50	5.94
Housing Stock (Public)	14.65	14.65	15.34	15.34	36.30
Private Housing Grants	3.85	3.73	3.66	3.05	2.90
Social Services	1.23	1.10	0.85	0.65	0.55
Community & Leisure	4.37	2.05	3.49	1.39	2.63
Other	22.94	18.02	13.95	6.61	15.22
Total (£m)	80.51	53.14	70.78	43.15	78.82

The 2014/15 capital underspend of £27.63m is mainly due to slippage (delays in progressing schemes) and this funding has been carried forward into the 2015/16 financial year to enable schemes to be completed. The most significant areas of slippage relate to Education and the 21st Century Schools Programme (£13.4m), Urban Renewal (£4m), the Engineering Division (£3.6m), Property Services (£2.4m) and Community and Leisure Services related schemes (£2.1m).

Further details of Council finances are available on our webpage: [Caerphilly Finances](#)

Listening to our Customers

Over the last 2 years the most significant growth in internet usage has been in the use of tablet devices, particularly amongst older users. Our website has now been redesigned so that it works better on tablet devices and smart phones and over half our website visits are now on tablets and mobile devices.



During 2014 there were 12 million hits on our websites including 8.6 million on the main CCBC site and 1.2 million on the Leisure Lifestyle site. Visits to our website have grown by 40% since 2011. In UK * wide benchmarking of local government websites our website has been in the top 10 for customer satisfaction for the last 5 years and was the 4th best in the UK for information and service finding. We still receive much contact by phone with over 1.9 million calls last year, 82% of which were answered within 20 seconds.

Page 92
As part of the Medium Term Financial Plan Councillors have recognised the importance of local offices where customers can deal with the council in-person. As a result they have decided to retain the Council's local presence of Customer Service Centres and Libraries. However, to reduce costs opening times will be reduced and the Blackwood Customer Service Centre will move into Blackwood Library to match the services provided in Caerphilly, Bargoed and Risca town centres.

Satisfaction with the Customer Service Centres and the Contact Centre has consistently been above 90%. The December 2014 survey showed 95% of visitors to Customer Service Centres satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided in the centre, 92% were satisfied with the overall service provided (including back office actions and service delivery) and 86% thought that the waiting time was acceptable. 92% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the Contact Centre service.

* Source SOCITM (The Society of IT Management) called Better Connected April 2015

Household Survey

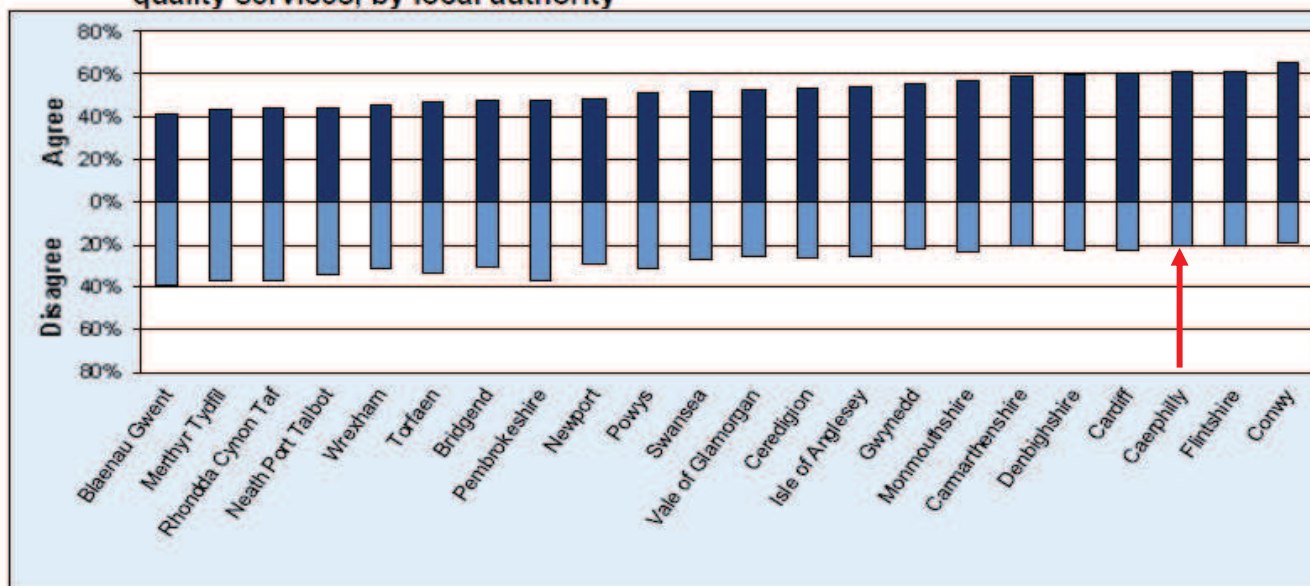
Every two years we carry out a detailed household survey. Previously we've sent a survey to every household in the borough, however this year to broaden the ways that people can reply and to save costs we advertised the survey in our Council magazine 'Newline' and made it available online, however this change has reduced the response rate slightly. Overall there was a 78% satisfaction rate with services we provide. Although this is a decline from 82% in 2013 the proportion of those who are very satisfied increased by 4%. We are still analysing the information received and the full results will be available on line in November.

National Survey for Wales

The National Survey for Wales is a face-to-face survey of people across Wales run by the Welsh Government. Each year over 14,000 people aged 16 and over are asked for their opinions on a wide range of issues affecting them and their local area. Respondents are selected at random to ensure the results are representative. The most recent survey was April 2014 – March 2015 and extracts are shown below. The full details are available from the Welsh Government website.

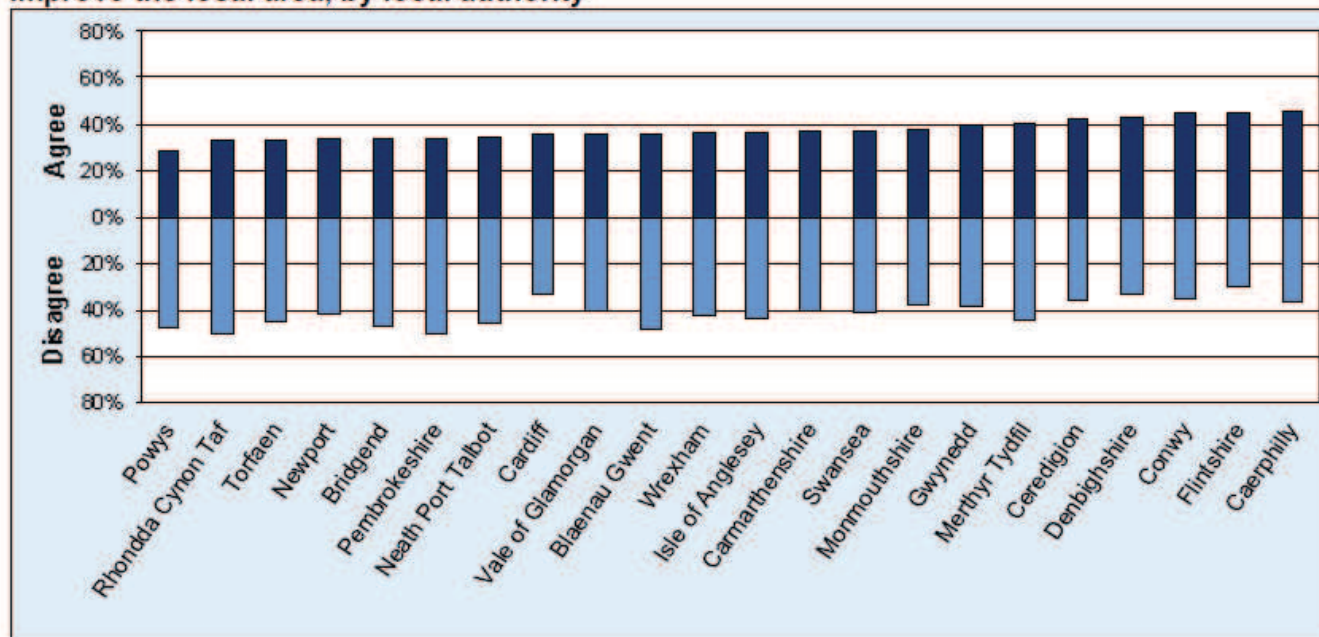
Of the whole survey 53% of respondents agreed that their council provides high quality services, a lower proportion than in 2012-13 and 2013-14 when in both years, 57% agreed with the statement across Wales, however the Caerphilly figure stayed above this year's Welsh average at 61% (although this was down on last year's figure of 66%).

Chart 4: Proportion of people who agree or disagree that their council provides high quality services, by local authority



In 2014-15, a new question was included on whether people agree or disagree that their council 'does all it can to improve my local area'. Overall, a smaller proportion of people agreed with this statement (37%) than agreed that their local council provides high quality services (53%). The proportion agreeing that their council does all it can to improve the local area varied from 29% in Powys to 45% in Caerphilly.

Chart 5: Proportion of people who agree or disagree that their council does all it can to improve the local area, by local authority



Extracts above were taken from the 'First Release' Reference **SDR 92/2015 June 2015**. The full document is available at the link below:
<http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2015/150611-national-survey-wales-2014-15-headline-results-en.pdf>

Promoting Equalities and the Welsh Language

Our goal is to continue ensuring Equalities work is mainstreamed into day-to-day practice and below we provide a summary **update** of our progress during **2014/15**. The extracts below are from our Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring and Improvement Report 2014/15. Our latest annual report not only contains the usual statistical data on staffing issues and complaints, but also has an increased focus on case study examples so it can be seen how this is put into practice. The full report can be accessed at:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/Equalities/Strategic-Equality-Plan-Annual-Report-2014-2015.aspx>

The Council has continued to work in partnership with organisations from the public, health, voluntary and private sectors and continues to be creative and innovative in delivering against its statutory duties. Caerphilly CBC now undertakes Equalities and Welsh language training, and Welsh language translation services, for 4 partner organisations under formal service level agreements. We have updated a range of guidance and are developing new guidance, below are a few examples of the kind of guidance that is available:

- 2011 Census – Local Equalities Data for Caerphilly County Borough
- Accessible Voting Guidance
- Equalities Guidance for Landlords
- Guidance on Equalities in Design and Printing

We are working to make a real change in supporting schools deal with school bullying. In all its forms it has a deeply negative effect on the pupils who are its victims, but discriminatory bullying can add an even more personal and hurtful element to the bullying that goes on, so we are working on a range of improvements such as ensuring discriminatory bullying incidents are properly recorded, or the true nature of that bullying could get overlooked. For example during the academic year 2013/14, 16 primary schools, 8 comprehensive schools and 22 youth clubs were provided with Show Racism the Red Card training. Show Racism the Red Card is an anti-racism charity, which aims to raise awareness amongst young people about racism in society. They make use of the powerful position of professional footballers and other sports stars as role models to deliver an anti-racism message. **2,629** pupils in total received this training across the county borough.

Another charity that the Council worked with during the year for the first time was the **Sophie Lancaster Foundation**. It was established and became a registered charity in 2009 with the aim of providing workshops that would challenge the prejudice and intolerance towards people from alternative subcultures. It was set up by Sylvia Lancaster, a youth worker herself, and was named after her daughter who was attacked and murdered due to her appearance and mode of dress. A session was arranged for members of staff from the Youth Service, with a view of up skilling existing staff with the knowledge to be able to deliver further sessions within youth clubs and schools across the county borough. This resource is now being actively used at sessions being held within the county borough with young people.

Gwent Police through the 5 School Community Police Officers within the County have delivered a very high number of lessons on respect, bullying and diversity issues:-

- 86 Right or Wrong Lessons
- 88 Sticks and Stones Lessons at Primary Level
- 84 Save Me lessons at Secondary Level

Support materials for all these lessons for both teachers and pupils can be found on www.schoolbeat.org.

In total, **3,517** course places were taken up across the range of Equalities and Welsh Language courses that we provide, making the year the most successful yet in delivering against the statutory duties.

The Council's Corporate Property Services Division continues to deliver improvements to make public buildings accessible for all via the DDA Work Programme. Each year a programme of work is arranged to update and improve the physical access capacity of a range of Council-owned buildings. During 2014/15, £42,000 of capital funding and £200,000 of revenue funding was used to upgrade properties across the county borough and 110 disability access audits were undertaken.

Welsh Language Scheme Annual Improvement Report 2014/15

We have 2 pieces of legislation that we work to and we have blended them both into our Single Equalities Action Plan, however we are required to report on them separately as the annual performance reports are to two different bodies, below is a brief summary of progress.

The full report can be found at:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/Equalities/Welsh-Language-Scheme-Annual-Report-2014-2015.aspx>

We hosted the Urdd Eisteddfod in May 2015 (at Llancaiach Fawr Manor) and in preparation a Mynediad 1 Welsh course was arranged for the staff there in order to assist them in dealing with the Welsh speaking visitors to the national event and to increase their skills longer term for future visitors.

Our corporate website was re-launched in November 2014 with a new design and updated content. It is now estimated that over 50% of the new site is bilingual with more sections going online each month.

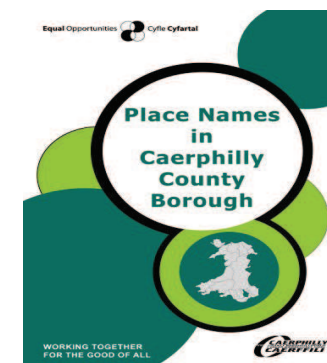
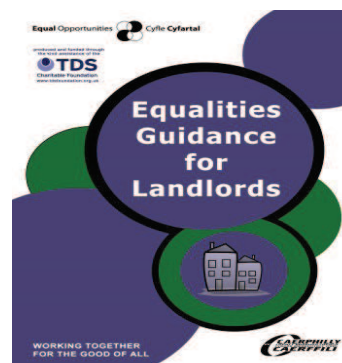
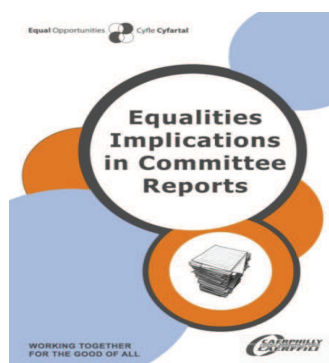
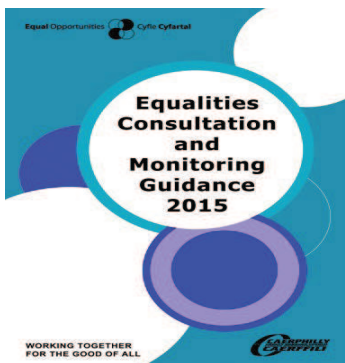
In 2014/15 we received **26** Welsh Language complaints, 22 of the 26 Welsh Language complaints can be classed as "process" issues, where Council policy has not, or allegedly had not, been followed properly in terms of providing written material, or web pages, in Welsh for example. The remaining 4 can be classed as "prevention", where an individual has alleged that the Council's failure to provide a Welsh language face-to-face or telephone service in Welsh has prevented them being able to speak Welsh with a Council employee or representative. We welcome citizen feedback and we continue to make improvements where needed.

One particular success this year is the Landlords project and guidance programme, where we secured funding from the Tenancy Dispute Service, known as the TDS Charitable Foundation. TDS is the UK's leading provider of insurance based tenancy deposit protection, and works to advance education amongst landlords and tenants about private rented housing rights and obligations. Little has been offered in the past around Equalities and Welsh Language related guidance and those aspects of the relationship between landlords, tenants and even neighbours. Training courses were provided to support the guidance with 39 people attending including 26 private landlords. There has been very positive feedback from a range of audiences including the local homelessness forum.

Welsh Language Standards

The Welsh Government has introduced a set of 176 Welsh Language standards as a 'duty' to Public Services. The aim of the standards (which will replace the previous language policies) is to improve the services Welsh-speakers can expect to receive from organisations in Welsh, increase the use people make of Welsh-language services, make it clear to organisations what they need to do in terms of the Welsh language and ensure there is an appropriate degree of consistency placed on bodies in the same sectors. To prepare for this, the Council's Strategic Equality Plan will need to be updated by 1st April 2016, including how we will meet the new duties required by the Welsh Language Standards. A draft document, together with a related action plan, will be widely circulated for consultation and comments, from the end of September 2015 to the end of November 2015. Final versions will progress early in 2016 to be in place by the April deadline date.

A great deal of the Council's Equalities related information is already published in greater detail on the Equalities pages of the Council's website, available at:- www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities.



The following sections of this Performance Report will give you an overview of the Authority and how we are performing in the following areas:

- Directors Statement of Overall Performance
- Financial Information and Analysis by Directorate
- 2014/15 Update of Improvement Objectives
- National Performance Indicators by Directorate

1
Chief
Executive

2
Corporate
Services

3
Education &
Community
Services

4
Social
Services

1

Interim Chief Executive

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2014/15



Chris Burns

Interim Chief Executive

During 2014/15 we revised some of our internal organisation structure, their lines of reporting and general management arrangements. For example, **Regeneration and Planning Services** and **Housing Services** (once part of the Directorate of the Environment) currently report directly to the Chief Executive, along with the relatively new service programme called the **Wales Housing Quality Standards (WHQS)**.

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Our financial arrangements for 2014/15 and current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) are still structured across the historical four Directorate themes (Corporate, Education, Environment, Social Services) and are further reported on throughout this annual Performance Report. More detailed information on Finances can be found under the Authority's Financial Summary within this report on page 7.

For overall performance we start with **Regeneration and Planning Services**, which has nine distinct service groups and whose progress for the year is shown below:

The **Countryside & Landscape Service** has submitted an application for a continuation of Rural Development Programme (RDP) funding for the period up to 2021. This is a Partnership proposal with Blaenau Gwent CBC and should result in some £2.6m of funding being made available. Caerphilly will act as the Administrative Body and has established a Local Action Group in preparation for the new round of RDP, which is anticipated to start during the summer of 2015. In addition to obtaining direct funding from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) for Rights of Way and land management a number of partnership projects, where CCBC are the lead body, are also being supported including the Upper Sirhowy Valley, Mynydd Maen/Twmbarlwm and tackling Invasive Plant Species. Partnership working has also been undertaken using the Welsh Government NATURE fund, where works have been undertaken to benefit our uplands and pollinators. The PLANT initiative was ongoing at Phillipstown, Abertysswg and Panside and the Landscape section designed and managed the implementation of the new Newbridge Riverside Park on behalf of Urban Renewal.

Parc Cwm Darran retained Green Flag Status and we have undertaken or supported a wide variety of some 50 events, throughout the Borough, including walking, biodiversity and seasonal events at countryside locations. The effects from the introduction of car parking charges at country parks is being monitored, however, it is providing an income stream for the Authority.

Further significant inroads have been made addressing the issue of invasive plant species with 49 hectares of land under treatment. The majority of larch trees affected by the recent outbreak of *Phytophthora Ramorum* have been felled and a study is being undertaken, to identify new opportunities of using Natural Resource Wales (NRW) owned woodlands adjacent to Parc Cwm Darran, Sirhowy Valley Country Park, and Markham.

Using previously secured Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) development funding during 2014/15, we have, with HLF support, progressed preparation of the detailed regeneration proposals for Butetown in Rhymney in readiness for a further HLF funding application in 2015/16.

Our **Strategic & Development Planning team** finalised the work necessary for the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from 1st July 2014. The introduction of CIL will enable the Council to secure funding for vital infrastructure projects across the whole of the county borough in the coming years to support planned new development. Our primary focus however has been undertaking work to update the planning policy framework for the county borough through the preparation of a Replacement Local Development Plan. The Replacement Local Development Plan when finalised, will provide the land use strategy of the Council up to 2031. Significant progress was made in 2014/15 on this key strategy with the preparation of the Draft Preferred Strategy, which was subject to a significant number of stakeholder and public engagement events across the county borough. The invaluable feedback obtained through these events will inform the way in which the county borough will be planned for the next 15 years.

The **Development Management and Building Control teams** have continued to regulate and deliver sustainable development within the borough. The two largest projects under consideration have been the Islwyn West Secondary School at Oakdale, granted permission in March, and the Nant Llesg surface mine, which at the time of the preparation of this report has been to a special Planning Committee but had not been determined. Also undecided is an application for a large industrial unit at Plateau 1 at Oakdale from a door manufacturer, which has been the subject of considerable pre-application support. The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all additional housing units provided during the year was 47% and this was an increase on last year at 42%. Although performance improved year on year we moved from 7th in Wales to 8th in Wales 14/15. The top performance in Wales was 49%.

In terms of trends, we are receiving an increasing number of applications for wind turbines and solar farms reflecting the need to move to renewable forms of energy generation. In view of the limited housing land supply, applications for housing estates on sites outside settlements have also been received, testing the Council's adopted local development plan.

Our education for **Sustainable Development** work has led to 71% of schools in the county borough (64 of 90) achieving Green Flag status under the Eco Schools scheme. Sixteen schools have achieved a Platinum Award by maintaining their Green Flag status for at least 8 years.

A partnership project to improve the River Sirhowy has resulted in the whole of the river in the county borough being navigable to salmon. A study has been undertaken to identify climate change impacts across all of the Authority's 18 Services.

During the year, the general economy has continued to improve, our **Business Enterprise Support** have noticed a definite improvement in investment and potential investment levels in the county borough. All funding for grants has been fully used during the year (Local Investment Fund, UK Steel Start Up Grant, Business Development Grant). Local Investment Fund targets for job creation, safeguarded and social enterprises created were all exceeded. However it was disappointing to note that Welsh Government refused to support an extension to the EU Funded Local Investment Fund scheme and South East Wales Community Enterprise Development projects under the new 2014-2020 ERDF West Wales and the Valleys Operational Programme.

ICT Consultations to support and assist ICT companies, stopped in October 2014 as we were no longer able to provide a service within the Business Enterprise Support Team and the Go2 project had to be closed. There is no longer a BisNet Team to offer these services.

However, the Business Support Team continues to provide mainstream business advice and assistance and works collaboratively with Business Wales and their contractors Centre for Business and Business in Focus. We are continuing to promote the availability of Broadband to businesses and play an active role in the Super Connected Cities programme that provides financial assistance for broadband connectivity to SME's the Third Sector and Sole traders.

In 2014/15 the Council continued to support Caerphilly Business Forum and forge better links where the principal aim is to increase membership and to ensure the Forum becomes a leading voice for the private sector particularly with Welsh Government initiatives and the City Region / City Deal.

Two youth employment officers were funded by **Communities First** to support young people aged 16-24 to access volunteering, training, Jobs Growth Wales (JGW) opportunities and employment. The staff are members of the youth engagement and progression framework to ensure the right support is provided at the right time. From April 2014 to March 2015, 429 young people have been supported. Of these, 101 have secured a JGW placement and 105 and have entered employment.

Through our Communities First Programme, two digital inclusion officers are employed to support people to gain essential basic IT skills. During 2014/15, 641 people were supported to get online and learn basic IT. The team have supported 257 people to gain employment related qualifications and 171 people into work.

Our Communities First team, work in partnership, on a project called StreetGames, to provide doorstep sport opportunities to young people living in disadvantaged areas. During 2014/15, 397 young people participated across the Caerphilly borough. Other projects such as, Foodwise and X-pod programmes, were delivered to community members to increase their knowledge of healthy lifestyles and support behaviour changes. From these, in 2014/15, 136 people reported eating fresh fruit and vegetables daily.

Town Centre Management continues to work across the five principal town centres (Caerphilly, Blackwood, Bargoed, Risca and Ystrad Mynach) using the Council's 'Unique Places' model. The year saw the successful launch of a new initiative to encourage shoppers and businesses to "Choose the High Street". At Christmas, a "Choose the High Street @ Christmas" voucher promotion offered all retailers the opportunity to participate and generate additional sales in a crucial trading period. April 2015 will see the launch of the "Choose the High Street' Past and Present" initiative. This campaign will seek to reconnect residents with their local town centre by encouraging them to visit libraries in each of the towns to view exhibitions of local historic photographs, maps and artwork.

During 2014/15 the **Urban Renewal** team brought forward £3 million of EU funded projects at Newbridge and Bargoed that are scheduled for completion by June 2015. These ongoing projects will enhance the existing infrastructure and Public Realm (publicly owned streets, pathways, right of ways, parks, publicly accessible open spaces and any *public* and civic building and facilities) within each town centre, create new community open spaces and will afford opportunity to work with the owners of private sector commercial buildings through provision of substantive grants to facilitate building improvement works.

There was peer recognition of the infrastructure improvements delivered by the Bargoed Regeneration Programme with the Project being shortlisted by the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) Wales and being awarded "highly commended" status within the Placemaking Awards for Wales.

The year has seen significant progress towards the completion of restoration works at the Grade II* Celynen Collieries Institute and Memorial Hall. Through partnership working with the "Memo" Trustees and the allocation of over £1.6m of EU funding this has allowed these nationally important buildings to be reinvigorated and re-established as a central hub for social, heritage and learning activities within the community.

The letting of the unit shops adjacent to Morrisons food store in Bargoed remains an ongoing issue. During 2014/15 retail tenancies were agreed with Greggs and Subway. However, whilst negotiations are ongoing with a number of national retailers confirming any private sector commitment to the unoccupied units continues to be exceedingly challenging in the current economic climate.

With regards to **Tourism**, a number of new events were delivered and existing events enhanced, which drew thousands of people together from within and outside our borough, including the Caerphilly Food Festival in May, Caerphilly 10k run (June), Blackwood Beach Party (June) Welsh Model show at Llancaiach (July) and the Big Cheese weekend (July). In August the Council opened a major new exhibition at the Winding House Museum and Heritage Centre to mark 100 years of the commencement of the First World War. 'Our Duty to Bear' was well received and continued to attract new visitors and audiences. Blackwood Miners Institute hosted a number of new and exciting performances, which saw a rise in visitor and audience numbers.

The Council's core events programme generates a gross economic impact of £2.2m for the economy of Caerphilly County Borough sustaining up to 50 jobs and are staged with the support and partnership of external organisations to generate activity and footfall in our primary town centres. The town centre events are responsible for driving a significant level of footfall in our town centres including contributing 3% of the annual footfall figures for Caerphilly town.

Tourism now brings in £113m (a 6% increase from 2013) with 1.71m visitors during the year (an increase of 2.6%). The number of visitors to Llancaiach Fawr, Winding House Museum, Cwmcarn and Visit Caerphilly was 546,622 nearly 17.5% above target.

The **Industrial Property Portfolio** continues to have high occupancy levels, particularly compared to the private sector. Overall, 93.4% of all our industrial units and offices were occupied, slightly down on target due to a drop in the occupancy of the office portfolio. However, new marketing and promotion and new offers will help address this decline. The above-mentioned additional EU funding for Newbridge and Bargoed contributed to a total amount of £40m brought into the County Borough during the 2007-14 Convergence Programme, with a total project value exceeding £70m, supported by the Specialist European Team, who worked to ensure that all projects complied with the rules and regulations.

The **Housing Service** consists of 3 main service areas: Public Sector Housing, Private Sector Housing and Housing Repairs.

Throughout 2014/15 our key highlights were:

Public Sector Housing maintained high levels of tenant satisfaction in both the Housing Management and Rents Services (see page 99) despite dealing with the impact and challenges facing some of our citizens in light of welfare reforms.

We continued to improve access to services and support for those in need, better accommodating face to face or home visit support and have been showcased as an example of best practice by the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for the support offered to our tenants in relation to welfare reform.

We successfully implemented a new service delivery model for our elderly persons within our sheltered housing schemes and by providing a floating support service to other elderly persons residing in Council housing within the communities.

We were the first local authority in Wales to use the closure order provisions of the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to remove a tenant from their home for unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour, which was to the benefit of neighbours and the local community.

Tenant participation and engagement continued to grow, as well as supporting a number of other specific working groups. Tenants also participate as Caerphilly Service Improvement Monitors, undertake mystery shopping exercises and two new groups have been established; the Housing Improvement Partnership, which has since begun to collate and evaluate evidence relating to service provision in order to provide the Council with insight into what tenants want and value from a service, and a group that has been focusing on the impact of Housing Services on those with sensory loss. The work of this latter group has resulted in the launch of a national guidance document which is supported by Welsh Government.

A repairs and improvements working group has been established to facilitate meaningful consultation with tenants.

We were successful in maintaining our policy of prevention of people who may be potential homeless households for 2 consecutive years (90%).

We maintained the level of 'Enquiry to approval times for Public Sector Housing Adaptations' for two consecutive years at 67 days

However, we faced challenges to maintain high levels of tenant satisfaction with the general condition of their properties/new homes and we experienced an increase in issues when dealing with rent arrears compared to 2013/14.

There was also an increase in properties classified as 'hard to let'.

In **Private Sector Housing** we maintained our period of waiting time from enquiry to when we approve a Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), for two consecutive years at 156 days, however the average number of calendar days taken to deliver a DFG (i.e. when the work is completed) went from 292 to 302 days and we give an explanation for this on page 29.

We maintained the level of grant recipients who were satisfied with the length of time it took to complete grant works at 96% with the conduct of builders at 98% and the quality of work at 99%.

Where Disabled Facilities Grants were not used, we improved our delivery times for low-cost adaptations, averaging 37 days.

New legislation in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, introduced in February 2015, placed a duty on all local councils in Wales to carry out accommodation assessments for Gypsies and Travellers and where identified, make provision for any unmet need.

We improved our performance by increasing the number of long term empty homes brought back into beneficial use via direct action.

The Housing (Wales) Act also introduced new legislation for homelessness with an increased focus on homeless prevention and the requirement for Local Authorities in Wales to provide support and advice to all those threatened with homelessness. We have strengthened and realigned our services to meet these new obligations.

We reduced our dependence on the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homelessness purposes by facilitating, in partnership, the development of a new 18 unit supported facility at Tredomen.

We were successful in securing £1.6m of social housing grant funding to assist with the deliver of a smaller properties scheme involving twenty two, 1 and 2 bed properties to assist those households affected by welfare reform.

Our ongoing mortgage rescue programme assisted 5 families to remain in their homes following the threat of repossession.

We assisted 250 homeowners to undertake essential repairs and improvements via the Council's grant, group repair and loan programmes.

The Housing (Wales) Act introduced legislation applicable to the Private Rented Sector, whereby landlords will now be required to register and where necessary, undertake training to ensure they are fit and proper persons to let properties and manage tenancies within Wales.

Our Local Housing Market Assessment was completed last year inline with WG requirements. This was a significant piece of research to establish housing demand and needs within our borough, including the type, size and location of properties. This information helps to inform the local development plan for the provision of new homes.

Further information regarding assistance and improvements to homes in our communities, is reported in this document under the section titled: **Corporate Priority: 7. Invest in our council homes and their communities to transform lives**

The **Housing Repairs** Team completed approximately 34,000 repairs last year to the Council's housing stock, with 96% of these being carried out by appointment at a date and time that was convenient to our tenants.

An increased number of customer satisfaction surveys were conducted which revealed that 98% of tenants were satisfied with the level of service received.

1,000 void properties were brought back into use in compliance with our re-let standard which was established in consultation with tenants.

In 2013/14 seven apprenticeship posts were established with a further five in 2014/15 to provide training opportunities for young people with the prospect of securing permanent employment. These were: 4 Plumbers, 2 Electricians, 1 Carpenter, 3 Plasterers and 2 Clerical/Administrative Office apprenticeship posts.

A new handyerson service has been introduced which is available to all tenants above the age of 60 years and to those with a disability. This service is provided by the Council's in-house maintenance team to assist tenants with DIY tasks within the home.

2014/15 Financial Information & Analysis for the Chief Executive's Departments

Regeneration and Planning Services

We reported an under-spend of £522k at the end of 2014/15, which was due to staff posts being vacant, reduced operational costs and increased income generation, particularly in relation to tourist visitor centres and industrial properties. Further analysis can be found under the Directorate of Community, Leisure and Learning.

Housing Services

The Housing General Fund had a budget of £1.43m, although £1.48m was expended during 2014/15 in the provision of housing advice, homelessness prevention and support, area renewal schemes as well as the development of housing strategy.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) had a budget of £45m (SIP) which is utilised to manage and maintain our properties and provide housing related support services. At the year-end, a balance of £6.8m was remaining which has been earmarked for reinvesting into the housing stock to support the delivery of the WHQS programme.

WHQS Programme

The WHQS programme had a Capital budget of £28.8m, we spent in the year £15.3m, leaving an underspend of £13.5m due to programme slippage. The under-spend will roll in 2015/16 to continue delivery of the WHQS programme and meeting the standards.

Improvement Objective 5

Investing in Council homes to transform lives and communities

In 2014/15 we said we would:

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 WHQS is a minimum standard for homes

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

By 2020, we want our communities to know:

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

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

For the priorities set for 2014/15, our delivery and achievements to date are deemed to be **Partially Successful**, because the original planned programme for this objective has faced major slippage resulting in revised targets to reflect the delays in contracts commencing.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

The most progress made has been on the internal works programme. The standard of workmanship is consistently very good and tenant satisfaction with the completed works remains high. The in house team commenced external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley but during the year resources were deployed to Rowan Place, Rhymney. As a result only 88 properties were completed externally. The in house team is the main contractor for the major refurbishment work at Rowan Place, Rhymney. Welsh Government has approved grant funding of £1m Vibrant and Viable Places towards Hafod Deg and environmental works at Rowan Place. The WHQS budget for Rowan Place is £4.2m. This is now a major project in its own right. Work commenced on 15th October and will be phased over 2 years. 22 properties in Rowan Place have been completed internally. The internal works contractors all commenced late in the financial year. The three contractors completed 171 properties.

What did not go well?

Due to the slippage a revised programme of 1,683 properties was agreed but the outturn is 700 (42% of the revised programme). The capital programme had a budget of £28.8m but the slippage has resulted in an under-spend of £13.5m. The main reasons for the slippage are the delays in the commencement of the internal works contracts; the decision to retender the external works contracts in the Upper Rhymney Valley; the curtailment of the small lots programme in the Eastern Valleys to a more manageable number of contracts; and surveying issues that have slowed the external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley; together with the deployment of the in house work force to Rowan Place, Rhymney. The slippage will need to be incorporated into the future years. In reality this will require an acceleration of the programme to ensure the WHQS is still achieved by the fixed deadline of March 2020. This has a number of ramifications but in particular the staff resources to manage the volume of work against the timescale.

Where do we need to do better?

The WHQS Project Board is mindful of the growing pressures on the programme. Action has been taken to strengthen the senior management. There has been a reconfiguration of the project teams with greater clarity in respect of accountabilities. Additional staff resources in all critical areas are under review but will be dependent on the ability of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to absorb the additional cost.

The forward investment plan between 2015/16 and 2019/20 has been reviewed and there are some changes to the community sequence particularly affecting the external works. To ensure the programme can be fully delivered by 2020 will require an average rate of 80 completions a week across both internal and external works. Some additional measures are also being undertaken including:-

- The external works to 200 blocks of flats in the Lower Rhymney Valley will be managed by the Private Sector Housing Team.
- The sheltered housing schemes will be outsourced to a suitable multi-disciplinary consultancy to manage the WHQS improvement works.
- The HRA garage programme has been allocated to the Council's Building Consultancy.

Improvement Objective 6

Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless

In 2014/15 we said we would:

Plan to introduce a person centred approach to the Housing Options and Homelessness Advice Service in which customers will engage with one caseworker who will assess their housing need and their ability to either maintain an existing tenancy or access alternative suitable, affordable and sustainable accommodation and wherever possible, prevent homelessness.

We assessed progress on this Improvement Objective for 2014/15 to have been **Partially Successful** because there are areas or work we need to improve on.

Page 109 What did we do well and what difference did it make?

The Housing Advice and Homelessness Teams have been re-structured and re-located to provide an holistic person centred casework service. Also, specialist support has been introduced to the team, which dealt with 128 new requests for support from households at risk of becoming homeless.

Traditionally, those approaching the Council for help and advice relating to homelessness or a potential homelessness situation have been households and individuals considered more vulnerable or with greater needs than the average household. However, due to the many and varied external pressures for example unemployment, home owners in negative equity, higher levels of household debt, ease of access to credit and high interest loans, we now find that a range of households find themselves at risk of losing their home. The stresses brought on by such external factors also have wider effects, e.g. relationship breakdown and increased levels of domestic abuse. Housing and health are intrinsically linked to the quality of housing provided, as does a household's ability to reside in a settled home. Access to good quality, affordable housing and sustainable tenancies positively impacts on a household's health and wellbeing and helps to develop a sense of community.

What did not go well and what do we need to do better?


We need to revise pre-release prison protocol to empower prisoners to plan for their accommodation needs on release from prison. This is being progressed at a national level.




We need to increase the level of affordable accommodation available through the development of social lettings agency. Welsh Government grant funding will assist to progress this, with a more cost effective option being, to use the service of an existing social lettings agency.


Chief Executive

National Performance Information

Our performance keys shows:

Current year results compared to previous year results		Better than the previous year
		Worse than the previous year
	N/A	Data not available or comparable – see individual comments for an explanation.

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
HHA013	The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	90.7%	N/A	85%	90.9%	Welsh Government have not compared this data across Wales and it has not been included in the year on year comparison for authorities.	
	Of the total 362 potentially homeless households this year 329 were prevented from homelessness and 33 (9.1%) were not in 2014/15, compared to 235 homeless preventions in 2013/14 out of a total 259 potential households, where 24 (9.3%) were not prevented. We have taken on 3 homeless prevention officers this year and are encouraging landlords & housing providers to advise the Authority when they are taking enforcement action, giving the Authority time to work with tenants to prevent homelessness. This PI has been deleted from national data sets for 2015/16 and therefore will not be reported next year.						
PSR002	The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	292	19	288	302	19	231
	A study of the case files indicates that during 2014/15 we undertook several of the more complex adaptations and also some that required more than one adaptation, to assist the client, within a single grant approval. We also completed fewer of the less complex cases that are quicker to turn around. We are, however, actively undertaking a review of our practices when processing DFG's in an effort to regain our momentum in reducing waiting times.						
PSR004	The percentage of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months at 1 April that were returned to occupation during the year through direct action by the local authority. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	3.83%	19	4%	4.51%	14	11.76%
	There has been a higher level of grant aided activity this year compared to the previous year. Of the 932 homes that had been vacant for more than 6 months, 42 were returned to occupation in 2014/15, compared to 35 of 914 in the previous year 2013/14.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
PLA06b	The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all additional housing units provided during the year. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	41.62%	7	*	47%	8	41%
	An increase in this years house building rates is partly due to improvements in economic conditions. This measure is no longer a part of the PAM set of measures, as feedback from LAs suggested the indicator is no longer robust following changes to the Welsh Government (WG) data sources. However it has stayed as an NSI. (This PI is a pre-populated by the New build data collection return & National House Building Council) *No formal target was set for this measure for 2013/14 as the Authority does not have direct control over the development of additional affordable housing						

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Directorate of Corporate Services

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2014/15



Nicole Scammell

Acting Corporate Director of Corporate Services

The Directorate of Corporate Services comprises a number of services, both frontline services to the public, such as Customer Services, Housing Benefits and support functions covering professional services such as Finance, Legal, Information Communications and Technology (ICT), Property, Performance Management, Procurement and Human Resources. We have up to 552 employees across the Directorate helping to support services and citizens in a wide range of ways.

Our Legal and Democratic Services in partnership with ICT launched webcasting of Council meetings towards the end of the financial year. Since the live launch we have had 807 view of the webcast in total.

In respect of Corporate Governance, a follow up to the Corporate Governance inspection was reported to Council by Wales Audit Office (WAO) in January 2015. This recognised the good progress made by the Authority, A small number of outstanding proposals will be closely monitored to ensure the delivery by the end of 2015. A full review of Scrutiny arrangements is being undertaken and is a key area for improvement raised by the WAO.

Our Communications Unit has worked hard to promote the work undertaken by the Authority at all levels. This work for 2014/15 included an extensive Public Engagement Strategy in respect of the Budget proposals for 2015/16. In addition, ICT working with service areas across the Authority launched a new up to date public friendly website. This, it is hoped, will make it easier (and more cost effective) for citizens to get information about the Authority's services.

A key challenge within Finance now and in subsequent years is the need to continue to provide financial information and lead as a service area in respect of the challenges to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and reduction to the Authority's Capital Programme. The period of austerity continues so further savings will be required for the next 4 to 5 years. These savings will impact on service delivery. The financial outturn position for the Authority for 2014/15 showed all Directorate areas spending within budget, in addition a balanced budget was set by Council in February for 2015/16. Hence, we have a sound basis to proceed with what will be a much more challenging period.

During 2014/15, further progress was made on the £20m St Iwan 3-18 years Welsh medium campus. This school is scheduled to open on time and within budget. There are a number of challenges moving forward as there is a need to rationalise the Authority's assets as the cost of running and maintaining these assets is not sustainable. Property Services is playing a key role in developing a programme to streamline our buildings beginning with the council decision to close our offices at Pontllanfraith House making better use of our building assets.

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Our Human Resources Service developed and implemented a range of new policies, specially key policies relating to managing the workforce down to deliver the financial savings required to balance the budget. Costs associated with redundancy and severance costs as reported by WAO were the lowest amongst Welsh Local Authorities. Moving forward, there is a significant amount of work required to continue to manage the workforce down. It is anticipated that over 230 posts will need to be saved in the next 2 years. We need to ensure that employees have the right skills and training to enable them to deal with alternative ways of working and reductions in service provision.

The Performance Management Unit has ensured that the authority has complied fully with our statutory performance requirements and the way we communicate the council's performance to residents has been recognised as best in Wales in a survey undertaken by Welsh Government.

Finally, staff from Procurement, along with staff from ICT, have worked with colleagues from Housing to support the delivery of the Authority's £200m Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme. ICT have equipped key workers in Housing with advanced mobile devices to enable them to spend more time out of the office providing customer based services. Procurement on behalf of the Housing Service has seen a significant increase in local contractors electronically tendering and successfully securing contracts. 37 local contractors were awarded contracts at an estimated value of £25m, whilst also creating social and economic benefits across the Borough. More recently Procurement have supported the development of a consortia which has seen four local small contractors working together in order to secure work.

2014/15 Financial Information & Analysis for the Directorate of Corporate Services

The Directorate of Corporate Services continues to deliver within the confines of its allocated budget on a consistent basis and has made further savings and efficiencies over the past year in order to manage cost pressures and a shortfall in external funding.

Corporate Services including Miscellaneous Finance budgets and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reported a 2014/15 underspend of £9.465m.

- Core Corporate Services budgets accounted for £0.944m of the reported underspend and this arose in the main from a number of vacant posts that were withheld as part of agreed savings in advance of the 2015/16 financial year. Additional income was also generated during the year through one-off grant funding and within the Corporate Property portfolio savings were generated through a reduction in maintenance and energy costs.
- Budgets in Miscellaneous Finance underspend by £1.707m with the most significant variations being the following:-
 - The Authority underspent by £1.715m on debt charges due in the main to a planned delay in borrowing at preferential rates.
 - Returns on investments were better than anticipated resulting in an additional £0.244m of investment income
 - A number of budget heads were identified as Medium-Term Financial Plan savings in advance contributing £0.452m to the 2014/15 underspend.
 - The reported underspends were partially offset by setting aside funding to meet a potential repayment of grant in relation to the Oakdale Land Reclamation scheme.
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) underspent by £6.814m and over half of this is attributable to unrequired revenue contributions to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Capital Programme (£3.8m). This was anticipated throughout the year as it became apparent during surveys that a high level of previously achieved works had already been carried out (36% of the Programme). There were also delays in awarding internal works contracts and issues with small lots contracts. These underspends will be carried forward into the 2015/16 financial year to support the ongoing WHQS Programme.

The Council continues to face unprecedented financial challenges during the coming years due to the extent of ongoing cuts in Welsh Government funding for Local Authorities. This funding currently accounts for 65.4% of the total resources available to the Council and there will inevitably be a significant impact on the range of services provided as measures are agreed to address the financial shortfall.

Improvement Objective 2

Improve job opportunities by implementing the Council's Passport Schemes

In 2014/15 we said we would:

- Further implement the Caerphilly Passport Programme which is aimed at helping 16-24 year olds within the Caerphilly borough into employment.
- Support young people who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in accessing work experience and training opportunities.
- Support the Council in dealing with the future challenge of its own potential skills gaps across the organisation.
- Assist Local Service Board partners and private sector partners who tell us that they have job opportunities but cannot find people with the right skills and knowledge to join their businesses.

We assessed this Improvement Objective to have been **Successful** for 2014/15 as all the objectives we set have been met.

This was one of our improvement objectives in 2013/14, and as such our action plans to set up the scheme and to work in partnership with the Job Centre Plus were completed during 2013/14. An external evaluation of progress has already taken place so our main action for 2014/15 was to maintain the programme and improve where possible, using feedback from participants, employers and partners.

We have developed relationships with partners, which have been crucial to the success of the scheme, such as our LSB partners, Job Centre Plus, Groundwork Caerphilly, Careers Wales, local training providers and built on links with our Education providers. The Passport Scheme Team have also established strong links with the Private Sector, through the Caerphilly Business Forum and our LSB partners to promote the use of traineeships not just as a vehicle for workforce planning but also as a means of delivering on the wider social responsibility agenda.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

The success of the programme can be measured by a total of 80% of young people completing their Tier 2 placement (Jobs Growth Wales paid placement) achieving a positive outcome.

As at 31 March 2015, 249 young people followed the complete model and 199 of these gained a successful outcome. 83 are working with external organisations, 112 are within Caerphilly Council and 4 have returned to education.

Also during the year we met/exceeded our targets:

- We said we would create at least 150 work experiences during the year and during 2014/15 we created 154.
- We created 25 apprenticeships opportunities
- We planned to create 40 employment opportunities and we created 51 during the year.

Overall, 100 % of participants now feel they are more work ready from being part of the Passport Programme.

What did not go well?

In December 2014 funding for the scheme from both the European Social Fund (ESF) and Jobs Growth Wales came to an end so it was not possible to offer the scheme for the final quarter of the year. However, we still met and exceeded our annual targets for 2014/15.

Where do we need to do better?


There are no areas in the sense of poor performance where we need to do better. However as noted above funding for the scheme ended in December 2014 so we need to explore the possibilities of regional opportunities for setting up and sharing the success of this programme in the future.

Corporate Services

National Performance Information

Our performance keys show:

Current year results compared to previous year results		Better than the previous year
		Worse than the previous year
		New Measure
	N/A	Data not available or comparable – see individual comments for an explanation.

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
CHR002	The number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence. (PAM) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	N/A	N/A	10.4	10.7	16	9.9%
	NEW Measure: This measure has been re-introduced into the PAM set of measures from 2014/15. The last time this measure was a part of a national set in 2011/12, the year end figure was 10.2. However this measure continued to be collected by the Council and last year's figure was 10.79. During 2014/15, 43.83% of employees did not lose any days due to sickness and a further 25.62% lost between 1 and 5 days. The Council will continue to manage sickness absence with the aim of reducing the number of days lost.						

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Directorate of Education & Community Services

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2014/15



Christina Harray

Corporate Director of Education & Community Services

The Directorate of Education and Community Services is made up of a diverse range of services, which impact upon the lives of all of our citizens, whether that be educating your children, maintaining the parks you visit or ensuring the roads you travel upon every day are kept in a safe condition. Overall the directorate has performed well with many of our services reporting overall improvements. However, areas which we need to focus upon in future years, to ensure we improve at a more rapid pace, includes: our education attainment, children under 11 swimming levels and our recycling performance.

We start our overall progress update with the Education service whose vision is to ensure: *“Every child should have the best start in life, and the opportunity to achieve success as a young person and as an adult”*

Education has 92 Schools and borough wide with an **Additional Learning Needs** and **Social Inclusion Service** to secure equality of access to statutory education for all children and young people. Our **Library Services** also provide 18 libraries throughout the borough, offering a wide range of services linked with a large network of community centres providing residents with a wide range of publicly accessible facilities and resources. **Adult Community Learning** provides quality-learning experiences across the authority, with courses and programmes of learning open to all post 16 learners. The **Youth Service** comprises of over 200 staff and provides services, which engage with young people and offer opportunities for formal and non-formal accreditation.

In July 2012 we received an Estyn's inspection of education services for children and young people and we were identified as requiring follow-up through Estyn monitoring. In January 2014, the monitoring concluded that we, the *“authority has moved swiftly to address the recommendations”*. Of the remaining actions it noted that we needed to improve the outcomes of key stage 4 learners and continue with the secondary school rationalisation programme. Progress in both of these areas are summarised in the review of performance, and will remain a priority for the coming year.

General Performance Summary

This has been a busy year for the Directorate and below we detail some of our achievements and areas we want to improve upon. The performance of pupils undertaking examinations at age 15 years continues to improve across the authority. The 3-year trend shows improvement in every indicator. However this improvement is not reflected in our position within Wales, which remains consistent. The table below provides a summary of the indicators, showing a 3-year trend and highlighting the targets set for 2015/16, which is the academic year that is completed in July 2015.

Academic Year	Key Stage 2		Key Stage 3		Key Stage 4							
	Percentage achieving Key Stage 2 – Core Subject Indicator	Rank	Percentage achieving Key Stage 3 – Core Subject Indicator	Rank	Percentage achieving the Level 1 threshold	Rank	Percentage achieving the Level 2 threshold	Rank	Percentage achieving the Level 2 threshold incl. English/Welsh and Maths	Rank	Average Capped Wider Points Score	Rank
<i>2014/15 TARGET</i>	87.2%		83.3%		96.4%		82.3%		60.4%		335	
2013/14	85.8%	15	77.6%	18	93.6	16	74.1	20	50.0	20	326.3	21
2012/13	84.2%	14	73.5%	17	92.4	17	69.1	21	46.3	19	318.5	21
2011/12	82.7%	14	68.4%	18	91.5	15	64.1	21	45.1	19	311.4	18

Attendance at school is another key factor in ensuring that children and young people reach their potential. Between 2011/12 and 2013/14 there has been an increase in attendance. In Primary Schools there is an improvement of 1.3 and Secondary Schools of 1.2 percentage points. However these improvements have only maintained our position within Wales 19th and 20th respectively.

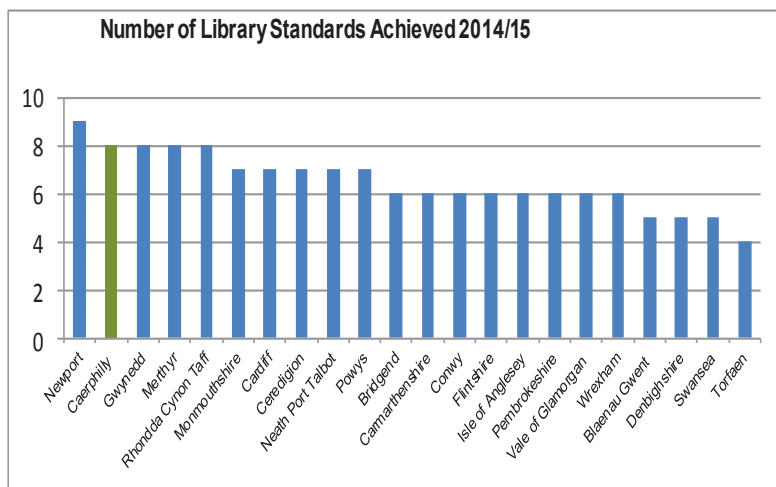
Data shows there have been no permanent exclusions in primary schools for three consecutive years, and in secondary schools the number of permanent exclusions has increased slightly from the previous year. The challenge facing these pupils is to find suitable alternative provision. In both primary and secondary schools there has been a decrease in the number of fixed term exclusions as well as a reduction in the number of days lost due to exclusions.

Estyn highlighted the need to reduce surplus places within our schools, with a particular focus on secondary schools. For the Primary Schools Sector, there has been a reduction in surplus places of 5.1 percentage points over a 3 year period from 19.02% in 2012/13 to 13.92% in 2014/15. In the Secondary School sector, surplus places remained consistent in 2012/13 and 2013/14, at 18.62%. In 2013/14 the figure increased to 22.76%, however this is due to the opening of a new Welsh Medium Secondary School site, which is undertaking a phased enrolment.

In 2014/15 Caerphilly's Library service achieved 8 of the 9 Welsh Public Library Standards, compared to 6 in March 2013. Welsh Government credited this, as commendable progress of a significant and sustained nature, achieved through careful planning and the implementation of a development plan closely allied to the requirements of the Standards Framework. For the purpose of comparing performances with that of other Welsh public library authorities, the average number of Standards being met by all authorities in 2014-15 was 6.5, the highest number achieved was 9, and the lowest 4. Caerphilly's performance is therefore above average when compared with others in Wales, being 1 of 4 authorities to achieve the second highest score of 8 standards.

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The number of learners achieving Basic Skills qualifications through Adult Community Learning has increased from 259 in 2012/13 to 344 in 2014/15. In order to support people into employment, 1919 people achieved a qualification through Working Skills for Adults (2014/15). In addition, 370 people were supported in employment by the Bridges into Work project (2014/15). These projects were both funded by the European Social Fund and are currently under revision.



The number of young people engaged in the Youth Service has fluctuated over the last 3 year period, which is reflective of the types of projects that have been delivered by the service. In 2012 -2013, participation peaked at 8376, which calculates to 42% of the 11-19 year old population engaging with the service, in 2013-14 this reduced to 34%. There has been a drive to increase the number of accredited outcomes for young people, following the Estyn inspection in 2012.

Figures have improved for both local and national accredited outcomes rising from 1089 in 2012/13 to 1871 in 2013/14 for local accredited outcomes and from 84 to 334 over the same period for national accredited outcomes. (Data Source: National Youth Service Audit)

Community & Leisure

Our **Waste Collection Services** in Caerphilly continue to deliver high levels of performance but we recognise that it will be difficult for us to maintain current service levels with reducing budgets and ever more stringent (recycling) targets to attain. In previous years Caerphilly has maintained its position in the best performing quartile for Municipal Waste reused or recycled. However, in 2014/15 whilst we exceeded our statutory targets for recycling (52%) with a performance of 54.58% this was lower than 2013/14 which was 57.61% slipping from 5th to 15th in the All Wales Averages. Fly tipping cleared within 5 working days has slipped slightly from 99% to 94% due to technical problems that have now been resolved. Positively Street Cleansing has moved up the all Wales Ranking from 10th to 9th still performing at 98%.

The National Survey for Wales is a face-to-face survey of people across Wales. Each year over 14,000 people aged 16 and over are asked for their opinions on a wide range of issues affecting them and their local area. Respondents are selected at random to ensure the results are representative. Overall, 82% of people were satisfied with the recycling collection service provided by their council. This varied from 69% in Torfaen to 88% in Caerphilly which was the highest level achieved by any Welsh local Authority.

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Performance of the **Parks & Bereavement Service** is good overall which is recognised by a number of external bodies, stakeholders and service users. Three Parks are recognised as places of excellence by Green Flag assessors and awarded Green Flag status. Five playgrounds retained RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Play Safety Awards in 2014/15. The service holds a Bronze award for its Charter for the Bereaved which is promoted by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

The **Sport & Leisure Service** is performing well against national, regional and corporate performance measures with improvements year on year. The Local Authority Services Performance 2013-14 highlights a significant challenge to impact upon the health and wellbeing of Caerphilly CBC residents. Caerphilly is in the worst performing quartile in Wales for the percentage of overweight adults and in the worst performing quartile for 'active adults' (adults taking part in activity 5 times or more a week). Making an impact on these figures will require a partnership approach across a number of service providers in Caerphilly. An extract from The Welsh Health Survey (every two years) shows: the percentage of overweight adults in Caerphilly was 64% in 2012, and 62% in 2014. The all Wales average between 2003 and 2014 has increased from 54% to 58%. Adults who reported being physically active on 5 or more days in the past week in Caerphilly: 29% (2010), 28% (2012) and 27% (2014). The all Wales average between 2003 and 2014 has increased from 28% to 30%.

The challenge for children learning to swim 25 meters by the age of 11 is that school swimming assessments are not undertaken until they are in year 6. The assessment year has not changed, however the focus now is to teach children to swim at a younger age through the intensive school swimming programme. Children are now accessing swimming from years 3 and 4, this in turn will allow them to gain the skills required by the time they are assessed in year 6.

Our **Engineering and Transport Services** have had a busy year completing the following works:

- Bargoed Town Centre Regeneration.
- Waterproofing to the Trinant Viaduct
- Relining works on Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal
- Design for two key highway improvement schemes progressed namely - A467/A472 Crumlin junction and the A468/A469 Pwll-y-pant junction in the Caerphilly Basin.
- Rhymney Park & Ride scheme expanding the existing facility by 25 spaces to a total of 50 spaces.

Continued focus during 2014/15 has been the development of our highway asset management strategies. Our highway network is the largest and most used asset that we own and is valued at around £1.75 billion. Consequently the operation and maintenance of such a large and ageing asset continues to be extremely challenging. Poor weather conditions such as flooding, freezing and snow have a significant impact on the service area. Much of our work is reactive and extremely difficult to plan. Due to budget difficulties there has been a drive to minimise the effects that limited budgets can have by utilising more preservation techniques. In 2014/15, 6.7% of the principal road network was re-surfaced. There was 98km of carriageway resurfaced in 2014/15 compared to 76km in 2013/14. There were also 7,324 potholes filled last year compared to 9,293 the previous year.

Whilst we await the outcomes of the Household Survey for 2015, results from the most recent household survey indicate an upward trend in the public's view of our highways. Considering the challenges faced it is evident that performance continues to be good in this area. There has been a significant step change in public views between 2011 and 2013 relating to winter maintenance (up 23%), condition of road surfaces (up 15%), condition of pavement surfaces (up 11%) and drainage (up 9%) along with other improvements made in signs and road markings and highway management.

Street lighting was further improved during 2014/15 when a further £74,093 Local Authority Energy Fund (LAEF) funding was obtained which enabled us to install a further 1,000 Cosmopolis energy efficient lamps adding to the 2,000 installed over previous years. Customer satisfaction levels for street lighting were recorded at an impressive 89%. Capital funding via the Local Government Borrowing Initiative of £250,000 to continue LED replacement programme was also utilised in full in 2014/15.

2014/15 saw the continuation of the Cardiff Capital Region Board and the decision by Welsh Government to lead on delivering of strategic transport improvements. However, Welsh Government intend to set up a transport company to initially take on the major delivery of rail projects as well as considering seeking powers to allow it to develop into an overall Passenger Transport authority. The interface with local government is unknown but the council is seeking to play its full part in developing and improving the transportation service for its residents.

Significant Transportation achievements include: -

- The development of the Caerphilly Basin highway obligation has been successful in attracting over £2m of additional funding since 2006 for strategic highway improvements, and schemes are being delivered/progressed.
- A major retendering for home to school/college transport contracts will result in an annual financial saving of approximately £400,000. Investment in new vehicles for Social Services transport has reduced vehicle maintenance costs in the order of £70,000.
- Patronage on the subsidised local bus network has grown consistently, in contrast with national trends, with the Sunday network in particular experiencing almost 50% growth since 2011, achieved through network review and a comprehensive marketing and publicity strategy.

Bus route changes across the county borough have been implemented following a 27% reduction in funding from Welsh Government. Despite the reductions the impact on passengers has been minimal. Wide consultation was undertaken with the community to seek views on the changes to services implemented. Should any further reductions in service be necessary, consultation will form an important part in identifying changes in order to keep the impact to a minimum.

In the context of ongoing reductions in public sector funding, it will be important that we (the Directorate of Education and Community Services) continue to explore new ways of working to ensure we continue to be as efficient and effective as we can be, whilst ensuring our performance in our key areas continues to improve.

2014/15 Financial Information & Analysis for the Directorate of Education & Community Services

Overall the Directorate (including Schools) is reporting an underspend of £1.443. This includes an underspend of £312k for Schools, which will be taken to earmarked balances, and an underspend on central Education functions of £899k. The most significant variances (over £100k) are as follows: -

	(Over)/Under £000
Home to School/College Transport	(167)
Behaviour Support	(115)
Relief/Supply Cover	109
Additional Support (Primary & Secondary)	(162)
SEN Out-of-County Recoupment	1,043
Grant Clawback (Ynys Hywel)	(104)
Community & Leisure Services	128
Engineering & Transport Services	104

The Transport budget for Education has reported an overspend of £167k, which is due to increased demand, primarily in relation to ALN (Additional Learning Needs) and SEN (Special Educational Needs) transport and a lack of capacity from taxi and minibus providers to compete for contracts. The transport protocol for Inclusion is currently being reviewed.

The overspend on the Behaviour Support budget is due in the main to a planned investment in Behaviour Support training across Primary and Secondary Schools. To date, an amount of £62k has been spent to address behavioural issues that are giving rise to increasing cost pressures across Additional Support, EOTAS (Education Other Than at Schools) and an increase in potential Tribunal cases. This one-off investment which will run into 2015/16 is essential to assist in Medium-Term Financial Plan savings targets moving forward.

The Relief/Supply Cover budget funds the school costs of sickness in the Special Resource Bases and maternity leave. The nature of this budget means that there is always a level of uncertainty year-on-year. The overspend on Additional Support (Primary & Secondary) is closely linked to an increase in Statements around ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder), which is a national trend.

The underspend on the Recoupment budget (Special Educational Needs and Looked after Children) includes a one-off saving arising from the release of £611k of Out-of-County accruals from previous financial years. The in-year underspend of £432k should be considered alongside the Additional Support budget. Whilst the Additional Support budget is overspent, this cost is significantly less than the cost of an Out-of-County placement.

During the 2014/15 financial year a payment £104k was made to the Big Lottery Fund following a breach of grant terms and conditions in relation to Ynys Hywel Outdoor Education facility. The breach related to the disposal (sale) of this asset, for which grant funding had been received dating back to project commencement in 2003 and final claim completion in 2007. Funding of £348k had been received from the Big Lottery and the asset retention period was 20 years.

During the 2014/15 financial year £150k was used to purchase IT equipment for Schools. This will be repaid by Schools over a period of 5 years and represents better value for money than using external leasing arrangements.

Welsh Government has supported a £1.5m bid for a permanent extension to Islwyn High School to accommodate 5 additional classrooms, additional toilet facilities and an extended dining hall. This approval is part of the Councils 21st Century Schools funding (Band A programme) and as such we are required to match fund with WG on a 50/50 basis. It is proposed that the 50% share (£750k) is funded from accumulated Education & Lifelong Learning service reserves.

We are currently working with Torfaen CBC (Lead Sponsor) and other Partners to secure European Social Fund (ESF) funding for the continuation of Bridges into Work (BIW) and Working Skills for Adults (WSFA). BIW (non Communities First Areas) will work with participants aged 25 years and older who have been unemployed for at least 3 years or economically inactive. The project aim is to support residents to achieve qualifications, access volunteering opportunities and gain paid employment (anticipated participants of 520 over 3 years). The WSFA project aims to upskill working people aged 16 years and over to gain accredited qualifications. These will include essential skills, ICT and relevant vocational qualifications (anticipated participants of 240 over 3 years).

The 2 projects will attract ESF funding of around £1.5m for Caerphilly CBC covering a 3 year period and the funding offers will need to be accepted in early August 2015. However, to receive this funding we have to provide total cash-backed matched funding of up to £543k over the three-year period.

Community and Leisure Services under spent by £128k. This included a £215k over spend in relation to waste and cleansing primarily due to ongoing increases in costs of dry recycling treatment and costs associated with dealing with recyclable waste at Civic Amenity Sites. There was a £406k under spend in relation to Parks, Cemeteries and Outdoor Facilities primarily relating to cemeteries where under spend is used for future investment in cemetery provision and an over spend of £63k for Leisure services primarily due to increased staffing costs.

Engineering and Transportation Services had an underspend of £104k, primarily from General Engineering and Transportation Services (mainly in vacancies savings in advance), with some additional income from Consultancy & Passenger Transport Services. These underspends also offset an overspend on Highways Operations due to ongoing pressure on our road infrastructure leading to increased road maintenance.

Two of the biggest budgets within the Environment relate to our highways assets and the management of waste. We have focused on continuing to increase the amount of waste we recycle to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. European fines for exceeding landfill directive targets are substantial and this would be a significant financial cost if not addressed. However we are performing well against the Welsh Government statutory recycling targets and those that divert waste from landfill. For 2014/15 we achieved a recycling and composting rate of 54.58% against a Welsh Government target of 52%.

Prosiect Gwyrdd is a collaboration project with four other authorities, which by April 2016 will divert waste from landfill to energy from a waste incineration plant. This will significantly reduce our residual waste disposed to landfill and also the overall cost of managing residual waste, as the cost of waste disposal through Prosiect Gwyrdd is significantly less than current landfill disposal costs. This will also remove the risk of not meeting European Landfill diversion targets. Thanks to the Prosiect Gwyrdd waste partnership we have performed favourably against our landfill allowance target, particularly in quarter 4, 2014/15. This performance will improve when the site is fully commissioned.

The highway asset is the largest authority asset valued at around £1.75 billion. With the loss of the Welsh Government's "Local Government Borrowing Initiative" and the savings required from the Medium Term Financial Plan in 2015/16, the highway asset will continue to deteriorate. Key focus will be placed on ensuring the main strategic arteries consisting of the A, B and C road network have received priority for preservation to limit any further degradation, but with this significant budget shortfall it will become increasingly challenging to achieve a steady state maintenance regime. However, Caerphilly still compares well to other authorities in Wales in relation to the condition of its highway network.

With a significant amount of the A, B and C road network having received treatment by 2013 the resurfacing resources were diverted to the unclassified network, which accounts for 65% of the overall highway within the authority. The strategy of preservation has continued for 2014-15 and it still effectively utilised as part of the available Highway Asset Management tools and techniques with 11.8% of surfacing was on A roads and 79.4% on unclassified roads.

Improvement Objective 3

Develop an effective and accessible youth service that supports the personal and social development of young people

In 2014/15 we said we would:

Undertake a comprehensive review of the Youth Service to identify areas of best practice and areas for development. Following the review appropriate recommendations would be implemented to improve the service. The review would lead to a strategy to deliver a wide range of formal and non-formal accreditation opportunities across all youth services by working collaboratively with other services delivering to this age group and improve the number of young people being engaged in learning opportunities.

Overall we have assessed this Improvement Objective and judged it to be **Successful** for the year 2014/15. All actions linked to this objective are complete and overall, our performance indicators are achieving the targets we set. The only exception relates to EDU002i, which is a national indicator measuring the pupils who leave school without an approved external qualification. The Education Achievement Service (EAS) has undertaken the role of challenging all secondary schools to improve performance, which includes this measure.

The Welsh Government demonstrated their commitment to youth work by publishing the National Youth Work Strategy in February of this year. The CCBC Youth Service will focus on delivering in response to this through the Caerphilly Youth Service Strategy and Operational Plan 2014- 2019 to ensure a consistent drive on the previous year's achievements but in a more specific and measurable way.

Effective youth work practice can build the capacity and resilience of young people. Youth Services have a strong track record in engaging young people in positive activities that are participative, empowering and encouraging. Through non-formal and informal learning, which supports personal and social development, Youth Services help young people to develop the skills and qualities they will need in adulthood.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

The improvements that have taken place between 2013 and 2015 have provided a strong foundation from which to continue developing effective youth work practices. This is an important area of work for the Authority, and a joined up approach in supporting young people to reach their potential has been recognised as an area for on going development which will be reported through the annual service plans. We increased our number of visits with younger people from 64,033 in 2013/14 to 71,541 to 2014/15, which is an increase from 8.2 average visits per registered user in 2013/14 to 11.3 in 2014/15.

The number of young people achieving formal and non- formal, national and local qualifications increased on last year. The Youth Service has a responsibility to deliver universal and targeted youth work in line with the above strategy. Selected youth work staff have contributed to both the Lead Worker role to focus on supporting young people who are the hardest to reach which requires more quality and intensive intervention.

What did not go well?

The national indicator measuring the pupils who leave school without an approved external qualification, training or work based learning increased slightly from 0.4% to 1%. This figure is calculated from 22 people who left without a qualification from a cohort of 2,152.

Where do we need to do better?

There are no particular significant areas of improvement with regard to this objective other than the work to improve the number of pupils who stay engaged in learning opportunities and although this objective has been met (the strategy has been implemented) elements of this work will also be captured as part of the new suite of improvement objectives, one of which focuses on improving outcomes for all learners, particularly those vulnerable to under achievement, this means the work will continue in other areas.

Improvement Objective 4

Improve awareness, access, variety and use of leisure, community and sporting facilities in our borough

In 2014/15 we said we would:

- The key outcome for this objective is, that people in Caerphilly lead active lifestyles. The vision is to get more people, more active, more often.
- People would be clearly aware of what leisure facilities and programmes of activity were available for them across our county borough.
- New sporting facilities would be built that cater for all sections of the community.
- All facilities would be maintained to an excellent standard and people would have a choice of good quality facilities and programmes to suit their individual needs or desires.
- The number of people visiting our sports and leisure facilities would increase.

Good progress has been made against all the actions and we assess it as **Partially Successful** against the Improvement Objective overall. Our progress during 2014/15 clearly shows that improvement has been made to our facilities and to increasing levels of participation. However, it also recognises that more is required, within current resource constraints. While service budgets are under pressure through the challenges of the Medium Term Financial Plan, significant grant aid money has been secured to help support service and community initiatives. This grant funding has resulted in enhanced facilities and improved provision for disadvantaged groups.

This year our regional collaboration as part of Active Gwent has been particularly successful in helping us to grow our 'Thriving Clubs'. This scheme provides intensive support to help grow the infrastructure, increase capacity and increase participation and membership of Community Clubs across our county borough. This has resulted in a significant increase in the number of members participating and improvements in the quality of provision at Community Clubs level. Some clubs have seen their membership triple in numbers. One example is Rhymney Valley Athletic club that was on the brink of closure with only 10 members previously to now having over 100 registered members training and competing on a weekly basis. The 'Thriving Clubs' scheme will now need to be expanded to support a wider variety of community sports clubs in the future. It is hoped this will help to contribute to improving the participation in sport clubs over the longer term. The number of customers using our Leisure Centres is at an all time high with direct debit membership of regular users at record levels. Our customer retention is at it's highest ever level and has increased from 3.2 months to 9.2 months. This compares very favourably with the industry average for the retention of its customers.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

This is as a result of a variety of initiatives introduced to improve provision, increase usage, provide flexible payment options and enhance the customer experience. We have made significant investments in improving facilities across the service. To date these include;

- A new spinning studio, an updated changing room and external re-decoration at Heolddu Leisure Centre.
- A new Fitness Suite and a Health Suite at Risca Leisure Centre.
- A new gym at Newbridge Leisure Centre.
- We have re-used other surplus gym equipment at Sue Noakes Leisure Centre to provide a fitness facility that was not available at this centre previously.

The opening of the new Centre for Sporting Excellence has provided a unique opportunity to identify and support the next generation of elite sportsmen and women. Our mission is that through our programmes we want every player to have the opportunity and support to play for Wales. A range of programmes are in place to ensure we achieve this mission. These programmes are being supported by Cardiff City, the Dragons and other National Governing Bodies.

Significant grant aid has been secured to support community groups for 2015/16. However, future grant investment through Sport Wales is under review and alternative delivery methods are being considered for 2016/17 & 2017/18.

Evidence from the mentoring programme is proving how influential this scheme is by the confidence and competence of staff, coaches and volunteers. If we are to increase the number of people being physically active we also need to increase the number and quality of coaches and volunteers. This is an example of excellent practice that is now being rolled out across Wales.

We are using new social media techniques to improve our communication message to residents. We have over 1,500 followers on Twitter and 1,600 Facebook friends. Our innovative methods are being used to continually promote the benefits of an active lifestyle to our target audience.

What did not go well?

The % of children age 11 years who are able to swim 25 metres only achieved 53%, when we set ourselves a target of 63.5% for the year. This is well under the national target and less than our performance in the previous year (2013/14). We recognise that we need to make improvements to our aquatic provision and significant changes are being introduced in an effort to improve current under performance. The introduction of this new approach will ensure that in the near future every child will be able to swim when they leave primary school.

Where do we need to do better?

The main area to focus on improvement is our aquatic provision, particularly the school swimming and lesson programme. We have introduced new initiatives that will have positive results over the longer term. This year has seen the phased introduction of our new intensive lesson programme. Pupils are now swimming at years 3 and 4 to ensure they start learning at an earlier age. All lessons are being delivered by qualified swim teachers and the lesson delivery plan is also consistent across all centres, within both schools lessons and the leisure centre swimming programmes.




This programme has been very successful at 5 of our 6 pools with the average % of children 11 years of age running at 63% for these 5 pools, which shows good progress and on target for this year. Our focus will be on significant improvement, targeted support and development where required to help all 6 pools improve their performance during 2015/16.

There will be some difficult decisions required over coming years regarding leisure facility provision. The Sport & Leisure Services facilities strategy will ensure consistency and clarity of approach and provide an evidence base for robust and consistent decision making going forward.




Education and Community Services







National Performance Information





Our performance keys show:




Current year results compared to previous year results		Better than the previous year
		Worse than the previous year
		Performance maintained at the best it can be (and / or best in Wales)




Performance Year 2014/15 represents Academic Year September 2013 - July 2014

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
EDU002i	The percentage of pupils (including those in LA care) in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August who leave compulsory education, training or work base learning without an approved external qualification. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	0.39%	14	0.3%	1.0%	20	0.4%
	22 children left full time education with no qualifications in August 2014, compared to 9 in 2013, 9 in 2012 and 8 in 2011. The EAS (Educational Advisory Services) have undertaken the role of challenging all secondary schools in order to improve their performance. They have a number of school advisers who challenge our secondary schools on a number of elements including attainment and attendance. Each school is colour coded either green, amber or red depending on their performance.						
EDU002ii	The percentage of pupils in local authority care in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August who leave compulsory education, training or work base learning without an approved external qualification. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	0%	1	0%	0%	1	1.2%
	All of the 27 pupils in Local Authority Care in 2014 left with an approved qualification.						
EDU003	The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of key stage (KS) 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the core subject indicator, as determined by teacher assessment. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	84.2%	14	84%	85.8%	15	86.4%
	Of the 1,994 pupils assessed at the end of KS 2, 1,710 achieved the Core Subject Indicator as determined by teacher assessment.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
EDU004	The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of key stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the core subject indicator, as determined by teacher assessment. (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	73.5%	18	76%	77.6%	18	81.2%
	Of those 2,041 pupils assessed at the end of KS 3 in 2014 1,583 achieved the Core Subject Indicator. 1,526 out of 2,076 achieved the CSI in 2013.						
EDU006ii	The percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a teacher assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of key stage 3. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	11.4%	11	11%	11.7%	10	17.2%
	239 of the 2,041 pupils at the end of KS 3 received an assessment in Welsh in 2014, compared to 236 of the 2,076 in 2013.						
EDU011	The average point score for pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	455	20	495	467.3	22	530.4
	2,152 pupils scored 1,005,634 points						
EDU015a	The percentage of final statements of special educational needs issued within 26 weeks, including exceptions. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	90.6%	9	95%	90.1%	9	64.5%
	The % of statements issued on time, including exceptions has remained consistent. However analysis of the data shows a change in the profile of those statements issued. The number of statements being issued to pupils in Secondary schools in 2013 was 19 of the 85 (22%), which changed to 9 out of 71 (13%) in 2014						
EDU015b	The percentage of final statements of special educational needs issued in 26 weeks, excluding exceptions (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	100%	1	100%	100%	1	95.6%
	All 25 pupils had their final statements including exceptions issued on time in 2014, compare to 43 pupils in 2013. This has been reduced following improved processes within Health, and the ability to produce the appropriate documentation within the timescale, meaning that exceptions are not always required.						
EDU016a	Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	93.2%	18	94.5%	94.4%	18	94.8%
	Of the 4,645,829 sessions in Primary school, 258,371 were missed in 2014.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
EDU016b	The percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	92.0%	19	93.5%	92.9%	19	93.6%
	Of the 3,118,818 sessions in Secondary schools, 220,270 were missed in 2014.						
EDU017	The percentage of pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August in schools maintained by local authority who achieved the L2 threshold including a GCSE grade A* - C in English or Welsh first language and maths. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	46.3%	20	51.8%	50%	20	55.5%
	1,076 of the 2,152 pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August achieved the level 2 threshold including GCSE A*-C in English or Welsh and Mathematics, compared to the 1,055 pupils who achieved the level 2 threshold in the previous year 2013/14.						
LCL001b	The number of visits to public Libraries during the year, per 1,000 population. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	5,974	9	4800	6,424	4	5,526
	We had 82,102 more visits to our libraries in 2014/15, which was achieved by the relocation of Caerphilly Library to a better location in a fit for purpose site in the town centre and included Customer Services. Coupled with the relocation of Newbridge library to the Memo and the reopening of Aberbargoed. We have also seen a large increase in our number of online/web visitors due to an improved offer on the virtual domain and better recording of our unique hits.						
THS007	The percentage of adults aged 60+ who hold a concessionary bus pass. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	89.6%	4	90%	91.2%	5	85.8%
	1,326 more residents over the age of 60 have bus passes compared to 2013/14. The system is periodically cleansed of those residents that maybe deceased.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
THS012	The percentage of A, B & C roads that are in overall poor condition. (PAM) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	8.8%	10	8.3%	7.0%	8	11.9%
	Additional funding due to the Local Government Borrowing Initiative has allowed greater investment in carriageway resurfacing programmes over the last three years and has improved the overall condition of the roads. A cleansing exercise has been undertaken on our network eliminating a large number of duplicate sections, hence there has been a reduction in surveyed lengths of road.						
Additional Information only							
THS012a	The percentage of A roads that are in overall poor condition. Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	5.4%	18	4.5%	4.2%	14	4.1%
THS012b	The percentage of B roads that are in overall poor condition. Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	4.8%	4	6.0%	3.4%	3	5%
THS012c	The percentage of C roads that are in overall poor condition. Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	12.8%	10	13.0%	9.9%	8	17.2%
STS005b	The percentage of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	97.9%	10	97%	97.8%	9	96.9%
	There was a de-crease in the number of sites inspected this year 1073 compared to 1596 in the previous year, although the size of the sites inspected increased.						
STS006	The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	99.12%	3	99%	93.61%	16	93.05%
	There have been numerous problems with the Public Services Waste Management dashboards, which collates the information which has resulted in incorrect dates being issued. There have also been issues with the personal handheld devices (PDA's) working correctly.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
WMT004b	The percentage of municipal wastes sent to landfill. (NSI) <i>Improvement Direction: Lower result is better</i>	38.49%	11	41%	28.26%	10	29.38%
	This year 28.26% (27,313 tonnes) of the Authority's municipal waste was landfilled a marked improvement of 10.23% (10,168 tonnes) on the previous year, when 38.49% (37,481 tonnes) of the Authority's waste was sent to landfill . In 2013/14 the Authority collected 97,366 tonnes of municipal waste compared to an overall collection of 96,650 tonnes in 2014/15.						
WMT009b	The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated bio wastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way. (NSI) <i>Improvement Direction: Higher result is better</i>	57.61%	5	57.5%	54.58%	15	56.23%
	We have had some issues with the kerbside dry recycling MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) outlets and as a result of changes to the MRF market and coupled with some contamination issues which had an effect on the percentage of materials we've recycled. A change to the legislation regarding the classification and treatment of wood collected at the Household Waste Recycling Centres has also meant a reduction in the percentage of wood recycled. Last year In 2013/14 we recycled 57.61% (56,093 tonnes) of our municipal waste, compared to 54.58% (52,749 tonnes) this year showing depreciation of 3.03% (3,344 tonnes).						
LCS002b	The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities during the year per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity. <i>(Improvement Direction: Higher result is better)</i>	7,554	17	8,184	7,773	16	8,662
	For this particular indicator only those visitors taking part in physical activity can be included. There were 40,946 more visitors to our sporting facilities in 2014/15 taking part in physical activities.						

4

Directorate of Social Services

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2014/15



Dave Street

Corporate Director of Social Services

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Caerphilly County Borough Council's Social Services are here to help all residents who find difficulty in sustaining an acceptable quality of living due to mental and physical conditions suffered by themselves or loved-ones. We work in partnership with Health Services, the Police and many other key organisations to improve the quality of life of our citizens, whether Adults or Children. These partnerships are vital components in the provision of high quality Social Services, because they provide the secondary support and expertise that are often required by clients of Social Services. We are here to help people, keep them safe, independent and ensure that they get the best out of life.

In June 2014 the Adult Services Duty Information Team and the Children's Services Contact and Referral team merged to form the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service, which serves as the main point of contact for Social Services and streamlines contact for people who use our service in line with the new statutory regulations included in the Social Services and Well-being Act.

Children's Services provides a range of services for children, young people, and their families, in partnership with many other agencies and voluntary organisations. Our overall aim is to support and protect children within their families, wherever that is possible without risk of harm to them. Children's Services have completed a number of activities to strengthen and improve the quality and effectiveness of assessment and care planning, these include restructuring teams to minimise transfer points for families, offer flexibility so that fluctuating demands across the county borough can be managed and creation of a dedicated senior practitioner role to over see Looked After Children / Child Protection / Court proceedings and to undertake a quality assurance role in respect of this.

We have reconfigured a model called Team Around the Family (which is a group of multi agency professionals who help young people and their families) and merged this with 'Supporting Family Change' Projects. They are now both managed by a single manager and this means that support workers within the team are now able to be allocated as lead professionals and provide one to one support to families. The new team is called 'Supporting Family Change'.

In September 2014, a proposal was put forward that would see the creation of an Integrated Service for Disabled Children and Young People. Since this time, plans have been put in place to co-locate the Children with Disability Team in the Children's Centre by end of the calendar year in order to enhance access to services and the exchange of information and skills across professional boundaries. There is a need to invest in the IT infrastructure in order to support the Team's move but the long term benefits will more than outweigh the immediate costs. Building on the success of the Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN), it is proposed to develop a single point of contact/one stop shop for families, parents and carers which will have strong links to the Family Information Service, Contact and Referral Service and Families First Services. All referrals for disability services will be considered by ISCAN in order to reduce duplication and ensure effective use of resources.

Adult Services provide a wide range of specialist services to members of the community over eighteen who experience difficulties on a day-to-day basis due to problems ranging from physical or sensory disability to drug and alcohol misuse. We work in partnership with adults, carers and key organisations to organise the most appropriate care-package to enable some of the most vulnerable members of our community to live as independently as possible through provision of residential, day-care and home care services.

Within Adult Services the review of the Gwent Frailty Programme has confirmed the direction of travel and focus on prevention of admission to hospital via rapid intervention from both Health and Social Care services. As a result a pilot commenced early in 2014 regarding the development of an Elderly Frail Unit (EFU) at Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr Hospital for rapid intervention by the Community Resource Team (CRT) staff. Following a review of the pilot, an EFU was established and is running successfully.

The Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) has been used to appoint Community Connectors (One Senior Community Connector, three Community Connectors, three Community Connectors for Carers) to operate as part of the IAA service to identify and develop community based services to enable people to remain independent and meet their own needs. The Community Connectors work with people who are deemed to be socially isolated, the ethos being to respond appropriately to members of the public in the right place, at the right time, with the right service. Interventions are increasing thus reducing the need for statutory intervention. The ICF has also been used to provide step up/step down beds to enable people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible by providing accurate assessments and interventions via a small dedicated multi-professional team.

The pilot Mental Health Initiative 'Listen, Engage, Act and Participate' (LEAP) in the north of the county borough was developed to test new ways of working with people with mental health needs. A multi-agency team including a wide range of competencies has been established with a principle of working with individuals in a different way, focussing on what is important to them and setting outcomes related to this. It is now in the second phase of the pilot, the first phase was successful and an interim report produced to inform phase two. On completion of phase two, which is due to complete in June 2015, a final evaluation report will inform the future shape and delivery of Adult Mental Health. Whilst too early to tell, we believe that the LEAP initiative will help us to better understand the kind and type of service provision and competencies that will be needed to deliver future mental health services.

More information on performance indicators is shown both in this section and where we provide an update against our Council Priorities.

We started looking at new ways of working and completed initial testing in April 2014. It was then decided due to its success to extend this way of working to a larger area. We have worked with 220 individuals to fully evidence the benefits to service users of this way of working. We have reduced unnecessary duplication and bureaucracy, freeing up staff capacity and allowing more time to explore with individuals what matters most to them. In October 2014 the team commenced a learning and development programme to a wider group of staff within Adult Services as the start of expanding this way of working.

For the future we have a strategic priority for the coming years and this will be the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The Act will come into place in April 2016 and will transform the way social care services are delivered across Wales. Work has already started within the Directorate to assess our 'preparedness' for implementation, and while there are areas for development, in general the Directorate finds itself well placed to manage the changes the new Act will bring.

There is more on the Social Services (Wales) Act 2014 on page 127.

Public Protection

Our **Registration Service** continues to meet or exceed national targets with the General Registration Office congratulating the service on the performance and standards achieved during 2014/15. Customer satisfaction with the service remains extremely high with 100% of customers stating that they received a Very Good level of service and 94% stating it was Excellent. The project to digitise the indexes for Births, Deaths and Marriages from 1837 onwards continued during the year and the birth and marriage indexes are now complete and deaths as far as 1910. This reduces back office time in locating historic certificates and enables customers to search indexes via our Website.

The **Trading Standards Service**, dealt with 1,793 requests for in-depth consumer advice during 2014/15. Consumer complaints are categorised by trade sector with home improvements and second-hand cars continuing, by far, to be the main source of complaints. The total value of all goods and services complained about for the financial year was £1,769,054. Over 40 formal actions (prosecutions, Simple cautions and Fixed penalty notices) were taken last year. Targets for test purchases for underage sales of alcohol and other products were met in 2014/15. Trading Standards' teams completed 100% of high risk inspections for food standards and animal health during the year.

The **Licensing Service** receives approximately 1500 licence applications a year. During 2014/15 the service experienced an unprecedented increase in demand for Hackney Carriage licence applications from applicants outside of the County due to a recent test case. This led to some complaints about waiting times for appointments. A number of changes were introduced to application requirements, policies and procedures, to address the situation. The Service licences hackney carriage and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators to ensure provision of safe, reliable, comfortable clean public transport for the fare paying public within the County Borough. To promote the Council's objectives and obligations in respect of public safety a number of policy changes have also been introduced during the year including a Knowledge Test, revised Vehicle Standards, and updated Medical Fitness requirements.

Our **Catering Services** have remained 100% compliant with Welsh Government's Appetite for Life scheme and Regulations regarding healthy eating in schools. In the last year primary and secondary paid school meal numbers have increased slightly, however we are still working towards our free school meal uptake target. Working with Education and other partners we have implemented a campaign to promote free school meals, which has served to increase the number claiming.

Within our **Environmental Health Team** 100% of all programmed inspections of high-risk food businesses to assess food hygiene and safety and 100% of high risk health and safety inspections were completed during 2014/15. The continued implementation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) and the mandatory display of hygiene ratings has delivered further improvements in food hygiene standards with the percentage of premises being broadly compliant with food safety requirements increasing from 92% to 95%. 2014 also saw the extension of the FHRS to include business to business trade premises e.g. manufacturers. 3 prosecutions were also taken against 3 unregistered tattooists/body piercers. The Wales Audit Office report, "Delivering with less – the impact on Environmental Health Services and citizens", concluded that the Council is delivering most of its environmental health services at the highest levels but due to cuts in resources and mixed views on the quality of current services, the Council will find it difficult to take on new statutory duties that protect the public and the environment in the future.

The **Emergency Planning Team** have led and coordinated business continuity planning arrangements across the Council to ensure that the impact upon critical Council services in the event of a business disruption is minimised.

During 2014/15 the **Health Improvement Team** continued to lead the local response to Health Challenge Wales and Change 4 Life as well as delivering the Healthy Schools programme. Such work involves initiatives around the most prevalent health challenges including, smoking, obesity, physical activity, and substance misuse. We are leading the way in recruiting and training community health champions.

Enforcement Officers have been actively ensuring compliance with dog fouling, littering, and fly-tipping legislation with 44 fixed penalty notices issued for dog fouling and 268 issued for littering. There were also 10 prosecutions for dog fouling and littering and 10 prosecutions for fly-tipping offences during the year. The team have also worked with Caerphilly Junior Forum on a poster campaign to deter dog fouling.

The **Community Safety Service** is currently performing well with all community safety partners contributing to the overall Safer Caerphilly outcomes. Within the Anti Social Behaviour 4 Strike Process there was a 100% drop off rate between Strike 1 and 4 during 2014/15. This means that of the 520 individuals referred into our anti social behaviour processes all moderated their behaviour before reaching Strike 4 (ASBO). The process was revised during the year as a result of the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and this has been promoted to all agencies within the process and staff training has taken place.

More performance Information is available in our performance tables for this section and within the corporate priorities.

2014/15 Financial Information & Analysis for the Directorate of Corporate Services

Like many public bodies the financial climate for Caerphilly County Borough Council has been extremely challenging. However the Directorate has managed its budget well, with an underspend projected for the 2014/15 financial year, which places the Directorate in a relatively positive financial position. The achievement of a sound financial position is testimony to the hard work of all those working within Social Services. Unfortunately the financial picture for 2015/16 is not an improving one and will continue to test our capability and capacity to deliver quality services within the County Borough.

On 25th February 2015 a special Council meeting was held to agree the 2015/16 budget, which included a range of savings for the Directorate of Social Services. The majority of these savings will be achieved by reviewing the way we deliver our services and having in place good vacancy management practices. The savings put forward and approved by Council are as follows;

General savings that have no direct impact on service users.	£1,568,000
Reduction of 3 social workers per division with the intention to achieve by vacancy management.	£219,000
Removal of £1m of demographic growth for 2015-16.	£1,000,000
Independent Sector Domiciliary Care - Elderly - Review of shopping service.	£40,000
Meals on Wheels - An increase of 50p per meal.	£44,000
Own Day Care - Review of day centre provision.	£128,000
Home Assistance and Reablement Team - Review of domiciliary care provision.	£85,000
	£3,084,000

Continued focus on budget management has helped to ensure that the Directorate has delivered the majority of the savings targets that were agreed in the 2014/15 budget strategy and has helped to identify potential savings for inclusion in the 2015/16 budget strategy.

Improvement Objective 1

Ensure children and young people who are looked after are supported to achieve their full potential

In 2014/15 we said we would:

- Continue to recruit sufficient foster carers in order to meet the placement needs of our Looked After Children (LAC). We plan to reduce the reliance on Independent Fostering Agency placements and maintain placement stability for children, to promote more positive outcomes.
- Improve the timeliness for children who require adoptive placements to be matched with and placed with adoptive families
- Hope to increase the education attainment levels of all Looked After Children (LAC) in an education setting
- Improve the engagement of young people leaving care, in education, training and employment in order to give them the best opportunities
- Continue to improve the range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and those facing homelessness.

We assessed this Improvement Objective to have been **Successful** for 2014/15 as all the objectives we set have been met. We have made this judgement for the following reasons:

- Numbers of Looked After Children have reduced and stabilised.
- Numbers of children on the child Protection Register continue to be stable.
- Recruitment of foster carers over the period of this Improvement Objective has exceeded the target set.
- South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) has been fully operational throughout the year and through effective joint working a small number of children who had been waiting for adoptive placements, have all been successfully placed.
- 94% of LAC have a Personal Education Plan in place within 20 days of starting school – this performance has been maintained from 2013/14.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

The fostering team continues to actively recruit potential foster carers and over the three year period that we have had this has an Improvement Objective we have recruited 33 new carers which significantly exceeds the original target of 25.

SEWAS has been fully operational since April 2014 and working practices are now well embedded. We have successfully placed 12 children for adoption during 2014/15 which exceeded the original target of 3. Over a 3 year period, 53 children have been adopted. Overall academic attainment has increased with the average external qualifications points score rising from 238 in 2013/14 to 322 for the current year.

The Sixteen Plus Team, working closely with Housing and Supporting People continue to identify and develop a wide range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and homeless 16/17 year olds. Performance to date confirms that 100% of young people known to Children's Services are placed in appropriate accommodation that meets their identified needs.

Where do we need to do better?




Performance needs to be maintained in the context of potential cuts in the service.





Implementation of the revised Foster Care Recruitment Strategy will continue to be monitored closely to ensure adequate numbers of carers are approved to meet the demand.

Social Services






National Performance Information






Our performance keys show:

Current year results compared to previous year results		Better than the previous year
		Worse than the previous year
		Performance maintained at the best it can be (and / or best in Wales)

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
SCA001	The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over (NSI) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	11.99	22	8	4.54	13	4.83
	We achieved an improved result by refocusing our resources, transferring more staff to the area and holding regular meetings with the 3 hospital trusts to ensure that all were using the same processes to discharge patients. We also used additional care funding to provide extra assessment beds, which assisted in the movement of patients alongside working closely with the Caerphilly Resolutions Team to look at the prevention of admissions, meaning less people would need input of discharge.						
SCA002a	The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) supported in the community per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	120.97	3	125	109.04	3	67.3
	Although the rate of older people has reduced, this should be seen as positive from a Caerphilly perspective. Our service is focusing on the signposting of people to community based services and increasing the use of frailty services. Promoting independence with volunteers and community connectors who could improve their well-being by improving a persons emotional and physical well-being, reducing social isolation & promoting independence.						
SCA002b	The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) whom the Authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March (NSI) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	17.57	6	21	16.18	6	18.85%
	Due to the promotion of independence and the signposting of people to community based services, increased use of the frailty service, volunteers and community connectors. As a result there has been a reduction in the number of people in receipt of the services.						
SCA007	The percentage of clients with a care plan at 31 March whose care plans should have been reviewed during the year (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	92.7%	4	95%	90.2%	4	80%
	1,877 of the 2,080 clients with a care plan had them reviewed during the year.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
SCA018a	The percentage of carers of adults who were offered an assessment or review of their needs in their own right during the year (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	88.24%	15	90%	87.2%	16	88.3%
	As part of the integration with Health, new ways of working with carers have been experimented with, our careers assessment officer is now located at the front door of the information, advice and assistance service to respond quickly to any enquiries received as carers want someone who will listen to them rather than the assessments. Feedback has been very positive to our new way of working and prevents carers having to go through the system. Responding proactively rather than reactively stopping a crisis arising in the first place.						
SCA019	The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	90.59%	19	90%	86.96%	21	95.6%
	Out of a total of 276 adult protection referrals, 240 referrals were managed for risk, which equates to 87%. In the remaining number of cases (26), people failed to fully engage with the POVA (protection of vulnerable adults) team after the original referral was made, which means that in these cases risks could not be managed as the referral process could not be completed.						
SCA020	The percentage of adult clients who are supported in the community during the year (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	91.9%	1	90%	79.69%	20	85.2%
	In accordance with guidance the performance direction of this measure shows a decline as the measure only takes into account those people who are receiving a package of care provided by the Authority or has been commissioned by the Authority. However the number of people in receipt of services has decreased due to the promotion of independence; which is the signposting of people to community based services alongside an increased use of the frailty service, volunteers and community connectors.						
SCC002	The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during the period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	8.3%	2	13.7%	8.53%	5	13.5%
	There has been an increase in the number of children looked after this year. 135 compared to 92 in 2013/14.						
SCC004	The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Lower result is better	9.4%	13	10%	10.7%	16	9%
	29 of the 272 looked after children had 3 or more placements in 2014/15. Although performance has deteriorated there are particular issues regarding WG's data requirements. On the 1st April all LAC children are counted as having had 1 placement move even if they are in long term placements. A planned return home or a move to an adoptive placement is also counted despite ending the child's period of being looked after.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Result	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
SCC011a	The percentage of initial assessments that took place during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the Social Worker. (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	77.27%	15	60%	72.1%	17	78%
	Out of 1593 initial assessments that took place in the year, 1149 children were seen by a social worker. The remaining children (444) were seen by a qualified child care support worker, therefore there were no children who were not seen. This indicator only counts the number seen by social workers and not qualified child care support workers.						
SCC011b	The percentage of initial assessments that took place during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	42.7%	13	40%	38.7%	17	44.8%
	There was a reduction in the number of overall initial assessments needing to take place this year. We believe this could be attributed to more robust preventative services.						
SCC025	The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations. (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	95.54%	2	90%	91.1%	8	87.7%
	A greater number of statutory visits has been required this year.						
SCC033d	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the Authority is in contact at the age of 19. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	100%	1	100%	100%	1	93.3%
	The Authority remained in contact with all 33, 19 year olds who were formerly looked after.						
SCC033e	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the Authority is in contact, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	93.3%	9	95%	100%	1	93.1%
	All 33, 19 year olds are known to be living in suitable non-emergency accommodation.						

Ref	Description	2013/14		2014/15			
		Our Re- sult	Position in Wales	Target	Our Result	Position in Wales	All Wales Average
SCC033f	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the Authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	60%	9	50%	54.5%	16	59.5%
	Only 18 of the 33, 19 year olds are engaged in education, training or employment.						
SCC037	The average external qualifications point score for 16 year olds looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	238	15	200	322	5	276
	The number of looked after children at the age of 16 in 2014 was once again 27. This year's cohort of 27 gained better results, compared to the 27 children in 2013 they gained 8,681 points in total compared to the 6,428 points gained by those children in 2013.						
SCC041a	The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have a pathway plan in place. (NSI) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	100%	1	100%	100%	1	91.2%
	There has been a reduction in the number of young people in the cohort this year. 112 compared to 145 in 2013/14 (-33)						
SCC045	The percentage of reviews of looked after children, children on the child protection register and children in need carried out in line with the statutory timetable. (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	96.6%	3	87%	94.8%	8	88.9%
	Whilst there has been less reviews required for children Looked After, there has been an increase in the number of reviews for children on the Child Protection Register and Children in Need.						
PPN009	The percentage of food establishments, which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards. (PAM) Improvement Direction: Higher result is better	92.06%	9	80%	95.01%	8	94.19%
	Of the 1,503 food establishments trading in 2014/15, 1,428 were 'Broadly Compliant' during the year.						

2014/15 Progress update of our medium term priorities 2013-17

Directorate	Medium Term Priorities	
Social Services	1	Peoples social care needs are identified and met in a timely and appropriate way.
	2	Children and Adults are safeguarded from abuse.
Education & Community Services	3	Improve standards across all year groups particularly key stage 3 & 4.
	4	Identify vulnerable groups of learners and develop interventions to ensure needs are met.
	5	Reduce the gap in attainment between pupils in advantage and disadvantaged communities.
	6	Promote the benefits of an active and healthy lifestyle.
Chief Executive	7	Invest in our Council Homes and their communities to transform lives
Corporate Services	8	Affordability - Deliver a medium term financial plan aimed at ultimately providing a period of stability that helps the authority to have a range of services in the future that are sustainable

1 People's social care needs are identified and met in a timely and appropriate way

Making sure that people get the right support, in the right way, when they need it most are essential components of delivering a quality social care service. In the Corporate Plan for 2013-2017, Adult Services agreed that ensuring 'Peoples social care needs are identified and met in a timely and appropriate way' would be one of its corporate priorities. To help the division to monitor its progress specific 'success criteria' was established:

We said success would look like

- The timeliness of assessments would improve; all Care Plans are current and reflect the needs of our service users.
- Users of our service would receive a more-timely and appropriate response.
- The number of assessments completed within the timescale would increase and the quality of assessments completed by our Social Workers will continue to be high.
- We would speed up how long a client has to wait from the time they were assessed to the time they receive the services agreed.
- The standards of care we provide would improve the quality of life for all service users.

Summary of progress in 2014/15

A 'Delayed Transfer of Care' (DToC) is experienced by a person in a hospital, who is ready to move on to the next stage of care but is prevented from doing so for one or more reasons. Timely transfer and discharge arrangements are important, so that the person receives the right care in the right setting. The arrangements for transfer to a more appropriate care setting will vary according to the needs of the person but can be complex and sometimes lead to delays. The DToC for Social Care reasons indicator continues to be challenging, however significant improvements have been made in 2014/15. The rate of DToC for social care reasons for March 2015 was 4.54 (per 1,000) of the population. This equates to 3 people, which is a significant improvement when compared to the end of March 2014 position when the figure stood at 15 people.

Steady progress has been made over the year due to a number of improvements that have been made to the DToC process, such as more thorough validation and closer working with our Health colleagues, for example, the Joint Hospital discharge team are now responsible for contracts for long term care which speeds up the discharge process and the Intermediate Care Fund has been used to develop schemes to look at winter pressures to reduce lengths of stay in hospital and DToC. The changes have resulted in a reduction of 60% in number of DToC's for social care reasons over the year. The challenge going forward will be to maintain these high standards, greater validation and continue our good working relationship with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

The pilot Mental Health Initiative 'Listen, Engage, Act and Participate' (LEAP) in the north of the county borough was developed to test new ways of working with people with mental health needs. A multi-agency team, which includes a wide range of competencies, has been established with a principle of working with individuals in a different way, focussing on what is important to them and setting outcomes related to this. The first phase of the pilot was successful and an interim report produced to inform phase two – phase two of the pilot is now underway. On completion of phase two, a final evaluation report will inform the future shape and delivery of Adult Mental Health. Whilst too early to tell, we believe that the LEAP initiative will help us to better understand the kind and type of service provision and competencies that will be needed to deliver future mental health services.

The Carers Assessment documentation was also amended in 2014/15 to make it more user friendly, understandable for the Carer and more focused on what the Carer feels would meet their needs.

The Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) has been used to appoint Community Connectors to operate as part of the Information Advice and Assistance service, to identify and develop community based services to enable people to remain independent and meet their own needs where possible. The Community Connectors work with people who are deemed to be socially isolated, the ethos being to respond appropriately to members of the public in the right place, at the right time, with the right information. Over 2014/15 we have seen an increase in the amount of interventions undertaken by the Community Connectors, which has helped to reduce the need for statutory intervention.

The ICF has also been used to provide step up/step down beds to enable people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible by providing accurate assessments and interventions via a small dedicated multi-professional team.

Having access to good quality information is essential if people are to remain self-sufficient. With this in mind the Council has redesigned its website which now includes a Community Directory. This Directory provides a wealth of information to residents of the county borough on a number of services, organisations and groups within the area. This Community Directory will be continually updated in order to ensure that people are able to access good quality information and advice to assist them to resolve their own problems where possible. The Community Directory will also be a vital information point for professionals in an attempt to reduce dependency on statutory services.

The Authority has taken a regional approach to the development of an Integrated Assessment for Older People with Complex Needs. It was agreed that Monmouthshire county council would be the lead authority on its development and subsequent pilot of an assessment tool with health colleagues. Results from the pilot showed success in terms of use by community staff and accordingly it was agreed regionally to use the ICF to establish a post to ensure the document and training was rolled out across Gwent. By agreement this post has been extended for a further year and smaller partnerships have now been formed based around current I.T. systems in use. Caerphilly are working with Newport City Council to implement the integrated assessment.

The Systems Testing And Redesign Team (START) have been testing new ways of working with people to come up with individual outcomes in an effort to give control and choice back to people. The team is also working differently with commissioned providers and making greater use of volunteers and befrienders in an effort to reduce dependency on statutory services. The initial testing phase was completed in April 2014 and it was then decided that it was necessary to extend this way of working to a bigger area in order to fully test this new approach. The team worked with approximately 220 individuals to evidence the benefits to service users of this way of working. In October 2014 the team started the roll out of a learning and development programme to include a wider group of staff within Adult Services in order to expand this way of working.

From March to June 2014 a Review of the Gwent Frailty Programme (GFP) was undertaken by Cordis Bright. The results published in September 2014 concluded that:

People are receiving a very good service, which is timely, responsive and helps them to achieve their aspirations for remaining independent.

Overall, stakeholders think that the service has reduced pressure on acute services and is effective at both avoiding hospital admissions in the first place and reducing length of stay.

Stakeholders are overwhelmingly of the view that the direction of travel is right.

However the Review also identified that:

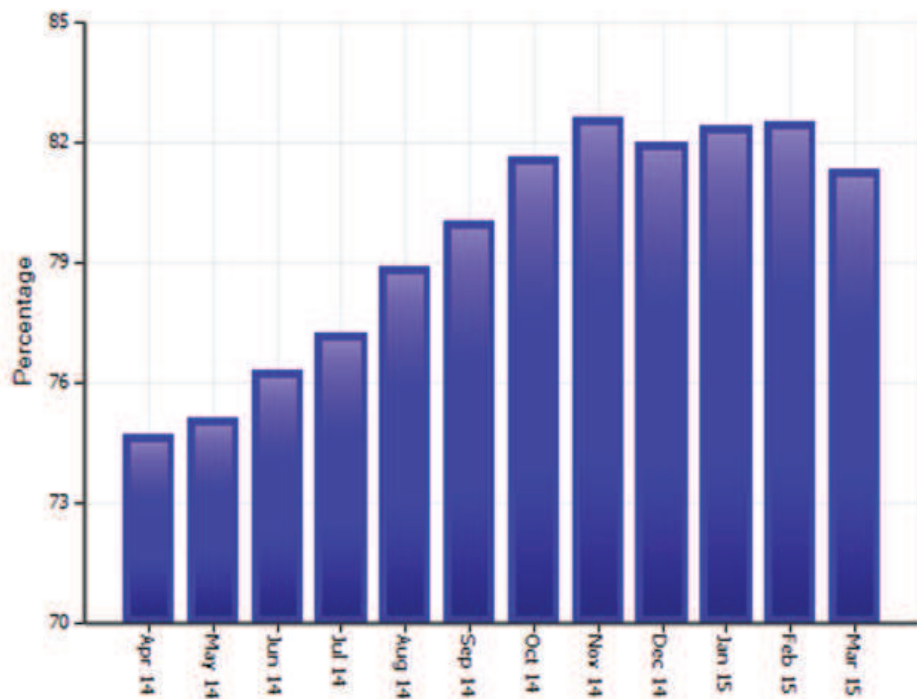
- The programme has not achieved cashable savings as envisaged management of the service is not as effective as it could be.
- The impact on hospital admissions, length of stay and DTOC, residential and nursing care admissions and intensive home care packages is not yet proven.
- There is considerable room for improvement regarding the information currently collected for evidence-led decision-making and service planning.

The Gwent Frailty Partnership will lead on the development and implementation of an action plan that will take this work forward and address the recommendations arising from the Review.

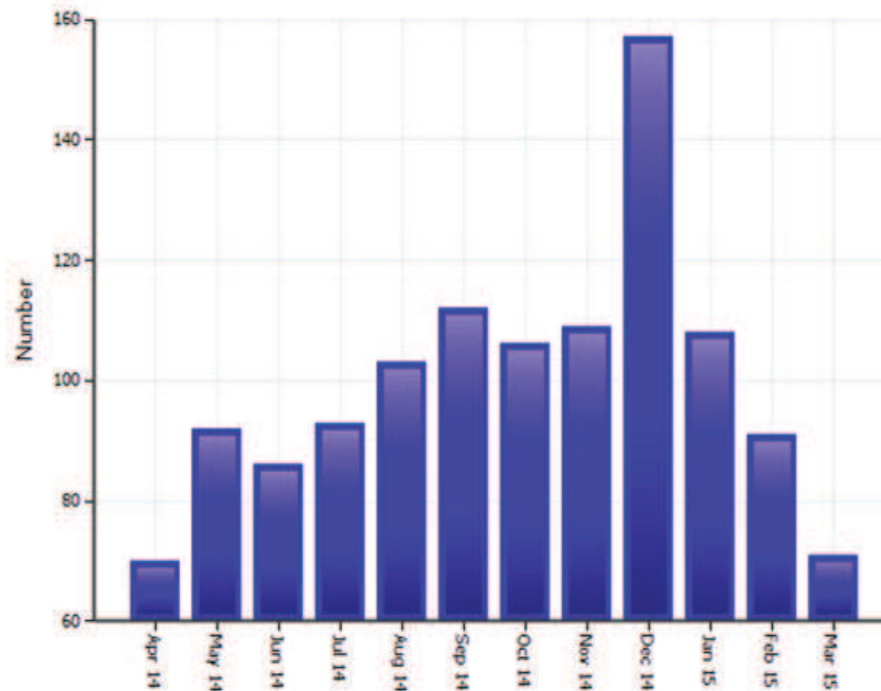
In early 2014 a pilot commenced regarding the development of an Elderly Frail Unit (EFU) at Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr Hospital for rapid intervention by the Community Resource Team (CRT) staff. Following a review of the pilot the EFU was formally established and continues to run successfully.

The Division has a wide range of performance indicators to help monitor how well we are identifying and responding to people's needs. Our performance in these areas for 2014/15 is shown below:

ASPI 03 - The % of adult services assessments started on time

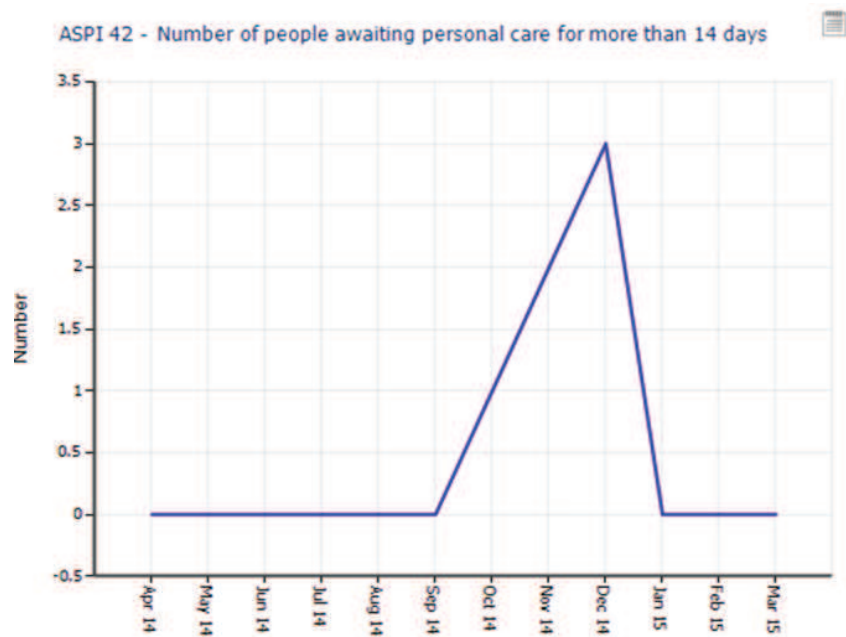


ASPI 02 - Number of adults waiting for an assessment outside of the timescale (28 days)

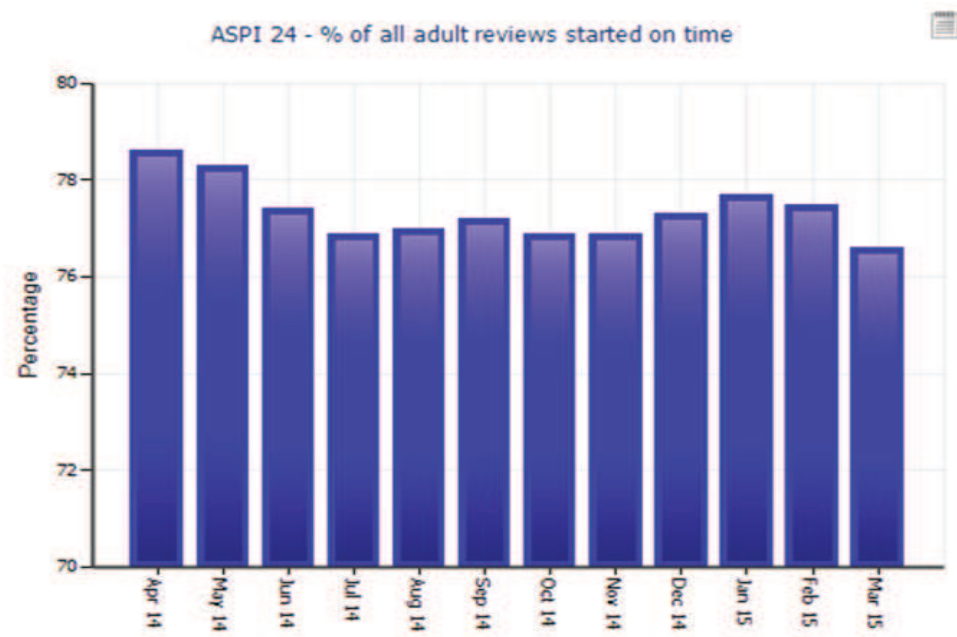


The percentage of adult assessments started on time has steadily increased over the year to a high in November 2014 of 82.6%. Performance in 2014/15 has fallen slightly below the target set for the year of 85%, however performance has remained in the 80% plus range for the previous 5 months (Nov '14 to Mar '15). This indicator has also been impacted upon by the introduction of the START initiative, whereby assessments are completed at a suitable time for the service user rather than the professional, which may mean an assessment being completed outside of the 28 day timescale.

Over the 2014/15 period the number of adults waiting for an assessment outside of the 28 day timescale increased from a low in April 2014 of 70 to a high in December 2014 of 157. At this time the highest proportion of service users (79) were waiting for an Occupational Therapy assessment due to an increase in requests for this type of specialised assessment. Since December 2014 the number has gradually fallen again to 71 as at March 2015.



During 2014/15, for 9 out of 12 months no one waited more than 14 days for personal care. October saw 1 person delayed, November 2 people delayed and December 3 people incurred a delay.



The number of reviews started on time has seen a decrease in performance from 78.6% in April 2014 to 76.6% in March 15. The target set for 2014-15 was 85% and therefore performance is lower than expected but still above the national average.

In addition to the indicators, the Division also wished to monitor the:

- Percentage of service users who stated they were happy with the service will increase
- Percentage of assessments that were service user and outcome focused will increase
- Percentage of assessments where the risks have been evaluated and managed will increase

Unfortunately, a process for gathering this information has yet to be implemented. This will be an area of work for the Division in 2015/16.

Improving the timeliness and quality of care will always be of paramount importance to the Division and the efforts made throughout 2014/15 is a reflection of its continued importance to all those who work within adult social care. Taking account of the work that has been outlined throughout 2014/15, the Division would conclude that we have been partially successful in achieving the priority set. We have come to this conclusion on the basis that significant operational changes are being made to the way in which services are delivered such as the START and LEAP initiatives. While this work is still in its early stages and the learning to be improving the percentage of reviews carried out on time, managing the demand for Occupational Therapy assessments and continue to redirect and support people to access community services where possible, thereby reducing the need for statutory interventions – a key feature of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act in April 2016.

2 Children and adults are safeguarded from abuse

We said success would look like

- Our commitment to prevent abuse to vulnerable children and adults within the community will ensure a quick and effective response to allegations of abuse when they occur and our awareness raising will help.
- Increased awareness of safeguarding responsibilities by all partners and an increased community understanding of safeguarding.
- Residents of Caerphilly feel safe in their homes and out in the community.
- Citizens are reassured that they will be listened to by community safety agencies and encouraged to report crime and disorder concerns.
- Public access to community safety agencies, their campaigns, education, training, mediation and victim support services will be secured and people who are affected by crime, disorder and environmental issues are supported and their concerns receive an efficient partnership response.

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Summary of progress in 2014/15

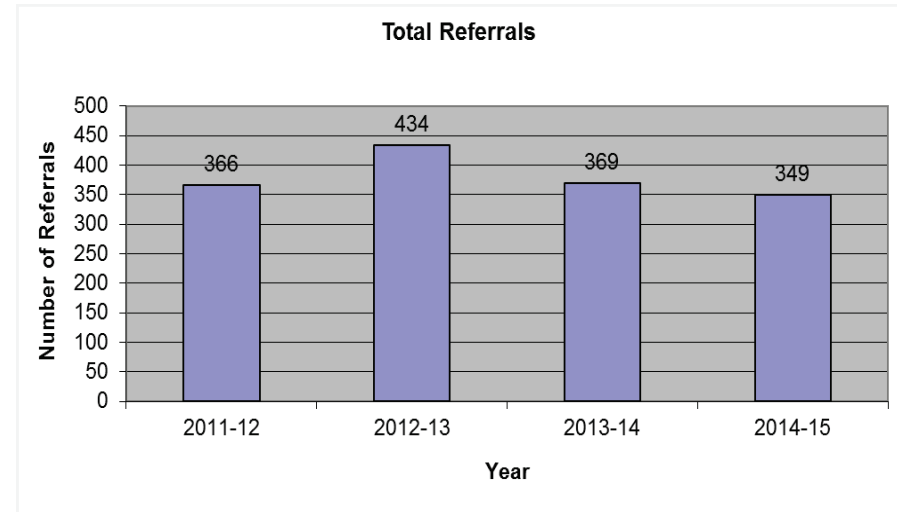
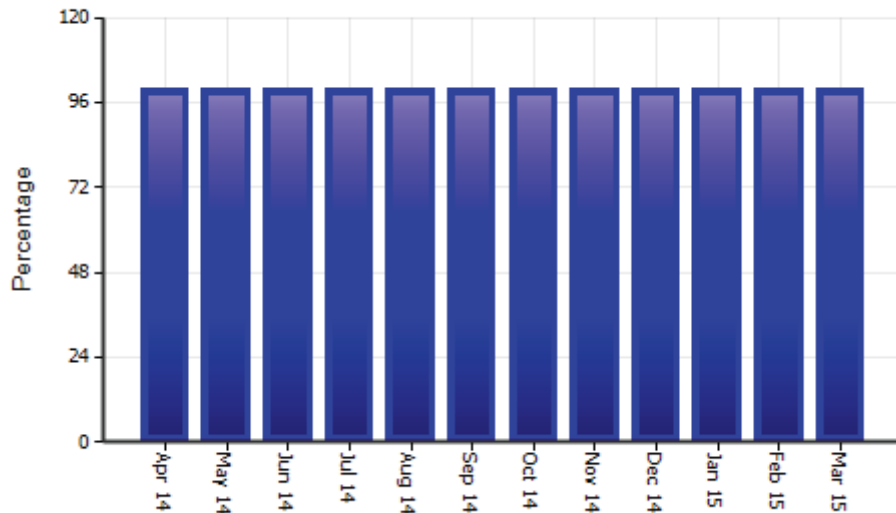
Our commitment to prevent abuse to vulnerable children and adults within the community will ensure a quick and effective response to allegations of abuse when they occur and our awareness raising will help

Response rates to safeguarding concerns for children remain the priority for the Division. 100% of decisions on referrals are made within 24 hrs in line with statutory requirements. Referral rates to Children's Services remain stable and the completion of initial assessments within prescribed timescales are maintained.

The numbers of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) rose during 2013/14 to 218, but reduced and returned to the average historical trend levels of 200 during 2014/15. A reduction in the number of children on the CPR is not necessarily positive. It is more important to consider trend data and rates per child population with comparable authorities and across Wales in order to determine the appropriate rate for Caerphilly. In terms of this data, Caerphilly compares favourably with Wales.

The tables below demonstrate Caerphilly's continued commitment to allocating all children on the Child Protection Register to qualified Social Workers placing us at number 1 across Wales;

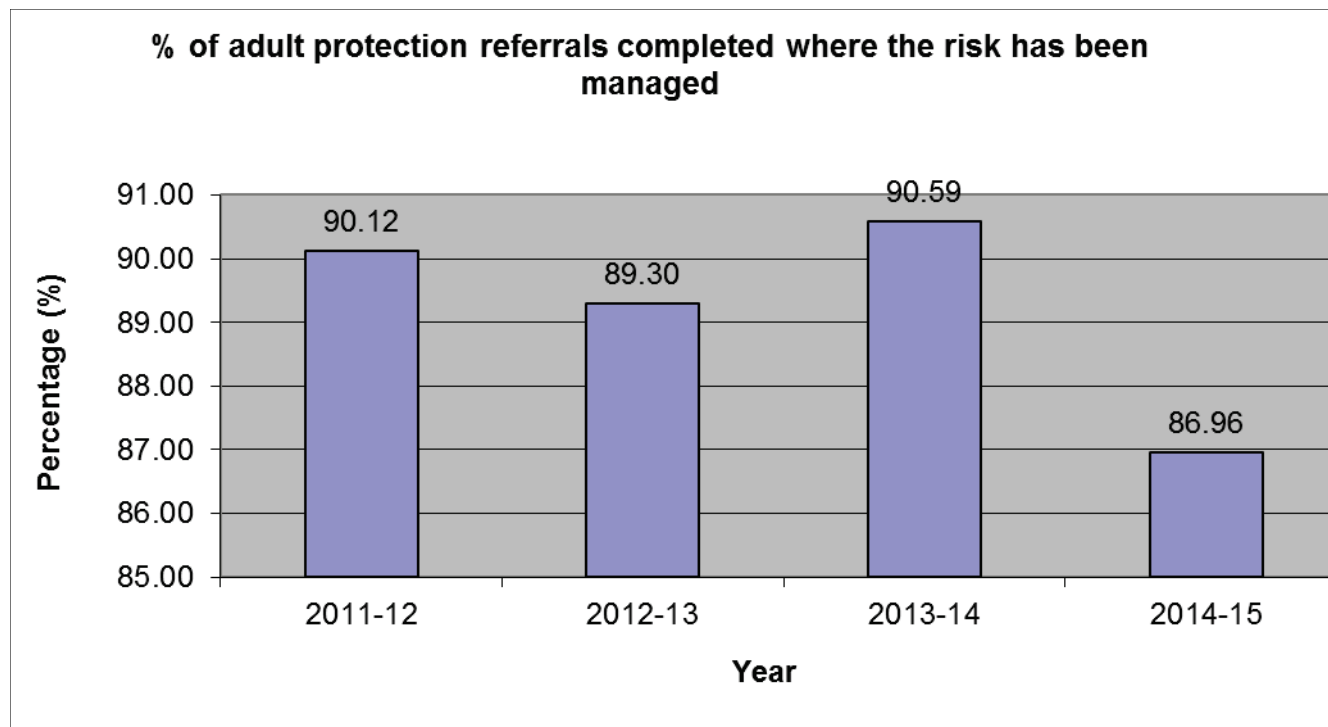
SCC/013ai % of children with an allocated social worker - Children on CPR



Ensuring a quick and effective response to concerns raised is a crucial part of the work we do. Our Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) Team aim to respond to all communications received, via phone or email within the same day. In 2014/15 the team were successful in achieving this aim. 2014/15 also saw the POVA Team undertake a review of their processes within the service in an effort to streamline practice and remove unnecessary bureaucracy and duplication. The improvements identified will help us to continue to improve the service we provide and provide a quick and effective response to concerns raised.

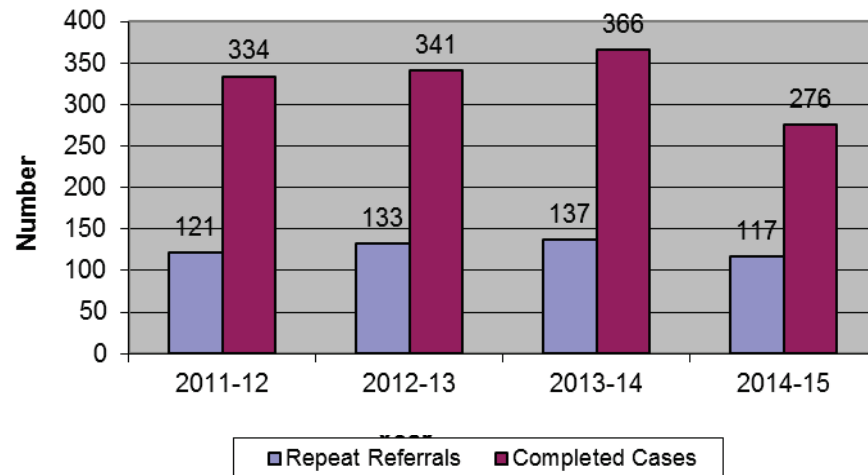
While eradicating adult abuse completely is an unlikely reality, we closely monitors the number of protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) referrals being received, where risk has been managed and the number of repeat referrals. Our performance in these areas for 2014/15 is shown below:

Over the last 3 years the number of referrals to the POVA team has seen a gradual decrease, with referrals falling from a high in 2012/13 of 434 to a low in 2014/15 of 349. This gradual decrease in referrals could indicate a reduction in abuse within the community – a positive outcome, or that abuse is still happening but is not being reported – a negative outcome. Accordingly, using referral data in isolation is unreliable and therefore the division uses additional indicators as shown below to shed light on how well vulnerable adults are being protected.

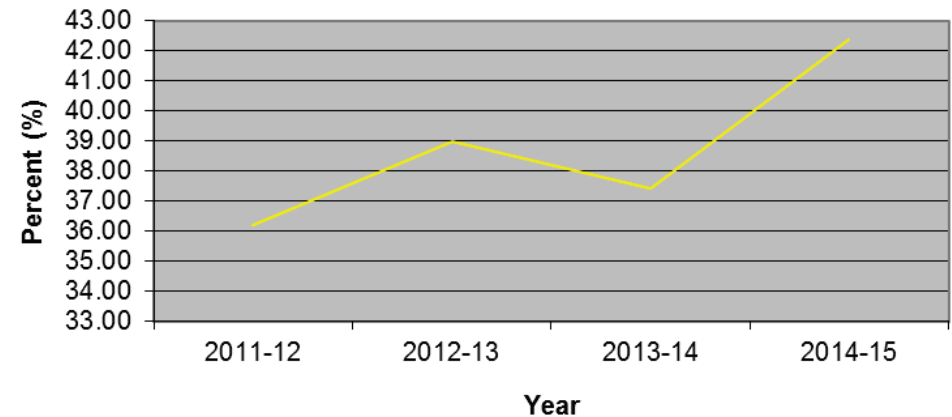


One of the most important indicators measures where risk has been managed. This indicator tells us the percentage of completed cases that had protective measures put in place to prevent abuse from reoccurring. For 2014/15, out of a total 276 completed adult protection referrals, 240 referrals were managed for risk, which equates to 87%, against an All Wales average of almost 96%. The target set for 2014/15 was 80%, therefore performance continues to be of a high level. The remaining number of cases, (13%) fail to fully engage in the POVA process after the original referral. As a service we are unable to control this part of the process.

Alleged victims who had a record of a previous referral



% of alleged victims who had a record of a previous referral



In addition to those where cases have been managed for risk, it is important that we work to prevent abuse reoccurring. Accordingly, we also measure those who have had a previous referral. Over the last 4 years while the number of completed cases and referrals have gradually fallen the overall percentage of repeat referrals has increased. This figure includes those that may have been subject to the same or different type of abuse at any time since 2008. Further investigation on repeat referrals showed the following:

Increased awareness of safeguarding responsibilities by all partners and an increased community understanding of safeguarding

Following on from the Wales Audit Office National Inspection into Safeguarding Arrangements, a Corporate Safeguarding Group was established. Key tasks include the development of a Corporate Safeguarding Policy, identification of Designated Safeguarding Officers in each Council Service area, improved governance arrangements and the development of a training programme to support staff. The final policy will be ratified politically in the first half of 2015/16.

The Regional Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards are the appropriate forums to raise awareness and facilitate improved partnership working. Both Boards are strengthened through the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales). Both Boards will be working closely to ensure consistency and equity of support going forward.

The Gwent wide Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV) Board has been established in response to the Act of the same name and to drive forward the regional work programme previously held by the Domestic Abuse, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) and Domestic Abuse Counselling Centre (DACC) Boards.

A key aspect of the success criteria focuses on raising awareness and increasing community understanding of adult abuse. In 2014/15 the POVA team working with our Development Officer for Older People undertook an exercise to see whether POVA safeguarding training could be more effectively delivered to vulnerable adult groups through 'Peer to Peer' presentations and discussion. The 'Peer to Peer' nature of this project was designed to acknowledge that people often learn better from someone they can relate to or share common ground with. The Caerphilly County Borough 50+ Forum were invited to be a key partner and three members volunteered to be 'Peer to Peer' trainers.

In addition to the training, and as a way of targeting those who could be socially isolated and vulnerable, a DVD was created called 'Keeping Safe - What is Abuse and Who Can Help'. The DVD has been well received and a fully bilingual version is currently being developed.

To date approximately 2000 DVD's have been distributed throughout the county borough to a range of partners and members of the public via the Gwent Frailty Team, Police, Social Workers, Day Centres and Residential Care Homes. Raising awareness will be an ongoing priority for the POVA team and Adult Services as a whole.

Working in Partnership is a key component of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act that will come into force on the 6th April 2016. Across the Gwent region the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB) has been in operation for a number of years and provides the forum for strategic leadership, shared learning and information sharing. Members of the GWASB include senior representatives from the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, all 5 local authorities, Probation Services, the Police force, Fire service, Housing and the Ambulance service. Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services in Caerphilly is the Chair of the Board.

In 2014/15 the pace of work has increased in order to meet the demands of the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act. This work has seen the creation of a new strategic plan for 2015-16 and the establishment of new sub groups: Quality Assurance, Training, Communication and Engagement and Adult Practice Review. The Quality Assurance sub group is responsible for identifying possible patterns and trends that may impact on the quality of care provided. The Training sub group considers the training needs across Gwent and during 2014/15 has designed a Gwent wide training package suitable for all staff who work with vulnerable adults with the aim of raising awareness, clarifying roles and responsibilities and giving advice on what to do should concerns arise. The Communication and Engagement group disseminates the work done by the Board, while the Adult Practice Review group considers serious cases (death or hospitalisation as a result of abuse) and makes recommendations to the Board on areas to be improved or developed further.

Working on a Gwent wide basis pays dividends in terms of increased awareness of safeguarding responsibilities among partners and ensures a consistent and joined up approach to safeguarding practice.

Residents of Caerphilly feel safe in their homes and out in the Community

Citizens are reassured that they will be listened to by community safety agencies and encouraged to report crime and disorder concerns

Public access to community safety agencies, their campaigns, education, training, mediation and victim support services will be secured and people who are affected by crime, disorder and environmental issues are supported and their concerns receive an efficient partnership response.

Every two years the Council carry out a resident's survey to determine levels of satisfaction with council services as well as establishing current perceptions on crime and anti-social behaviour and how the Council and Police deal with these issues across the area. The following three questions have been included to measure the perception of residents on community safety issues:

- Percentage of households who feel that the levels of anti-social behaviour have got better or stayed the same in their community in the last 2 years – The result from the 2013 survey for this question was 69%.
- Percentage of households who strongly or tend to agree that the Police and Caerphilly CBC are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in this area – The result from the 2013 survey for this question was 64%.
- Percentage of households who feel that the levels of crime have got better or stayed the same in their community in the last 2 years – The result from the 2013 survey for this question was 76%.

At the time of publication, we are still analysing the results of the 2015 Household Survey although overall 63% of respondents agreed that the Police and Council are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter, this is down 1% on the last time the question was asked in 2013.

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 came into force on the 20th of October 2014. Work throughout the year has taken place to develop the processes and documentation to support the new tools and powers within the legislation. Training was arranged in December 2014 for all members of the Four Strike Process on the new Caerphilly County Borough Council practices. The new tools and powers are now in force and the partnership was one of the first in Wales to obtain a closure order on a family for their anti-social behaviour.

The Four Strike Anti-Social Behaviour Process continues to implement early interventions to help reduce anti-social behaviour in our communities. During 2014/15 we carried out interventions at the following strike levels: Strike 1 = 520, Strike 2 = 108, Strike 3 = 38, Strike 4 = 3. We also offered support to victims suffering from anti-social behaviour, through the ASB Victim Services Manager. Throughout this period a total of 274 victims were supported.

Due to a successful recruitment period this year, a number of volunteers have joined the scheme which has enabled the service to provide outreach sessions. This will be expanded further in 2015/16. Many victims are also provided with target hardening equipment (such as personal alarms and other safety devices) to provide reassurance and secure their properties. This has been a successful addition to the anti-social behaviour process.

Requests for service made to Caerphilly County Borough Council for matters of anti-social behaviour reduced by 7.2% during 2014/15 when compared to the previous year. Gwent Police have recorded slight increases in all crime (3%) and anti-social behaviour (3.5%) for 2014/15 compared to the previous year. This should be viewed in the context of longer term reductions in both crime and ASB. The introduction of new practices has made crime recording more consistent across the Borough, which has led to more crime being recorded.

One key development this year has been the recognition gained by the local authority in achieving White Ribbon status for the organisation, which will complement the status gained by Gwent Police in 2011. The White Ribbon campaign seeks to end men's violence against women through altering social attitudes and norms. While the campaign has been supported for a number of years the recognition reflects recent work to support the Welsh Government 10,000 Safer Lives agenda and the development of a White Ribbon Action Plan to further embed work. The local authority has also developed a new workplace Domestic abuse, gender based violence and sexual violence policy. The Caerphilly Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Centre, in Ystrad Mynach, was successfully re-launched on the 25th of November, White Ribbon Day.

A new service has been commissioned to support the work of the Youth Offending Service in dealing with young people who are displaying abusive and controlling tendencies in their intimate and familial relationships. It has been identified through the multi-agency ASB processes that very often normal behavioural boundaries have broken down and the parental figure in the family, often a mother or grandmother, is in fear of the young person and therefore unable to exert any control. The current domestic abuse perpetrator programmes only work with over 18s and so a small project has been commissioned with Barnardos to work with a YOS client group. The project has been funded using Welsh Government Youth Crime Prevention Funding.

3 Improve standards across all year groups particularly key stage 3 and 4

We said success would look like

- Performance of pupils in vulnerable groups continues to improve.
- Literacy will be raised for all but specifically for year 4 pupils.
- The gap between boys and girls achievements narrows.
- There is improved level of performance across all key stage 3 and key stage 4 pupils.

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Summary of progress in 2014/15

The results highlighted within this report were achieved by pupils in July 2014, which is the most recent complete academic year.

The performance of pupils at each key stage continue to show improvement. At key stage 2, when pupils are assessed at age 11, 85.8% achieve the expected level for the core subject indicator of English/Welsh, Maths and Science. The focus on improvement in literacy resulted in 88% of pupils achieving English and 89.9% achieving Welsh, at the expected level which is an increase of 1.1 and 0.7 percentage points respectively from the previous year. At key stage 3, when pupils are assessed at age 14, there was a significant improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level for the core subject of English/Welsh, Maths and Science, increasing 4.1 percentage points from 73.5% in July 2013 to 77.6% in July 2014.

The performance of pupils undertaking examinations at age 15 years continued to improve across the Authority. The 3 year trend shows improvement in every indicator with the percentage achieving Level 1 (5 GCSE's A*-G) increasing by 2.1 percentage points between July 2012 and July 2014, and Level 2 (5 GCSE's A*-C) increasing 10 percentage points over the same period. However, the key focus has been on improving the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2+ threshold which is the achievement of 5 A*-C GCSE's which is inclusive of English/Welsh and Maths. There was an increase of 3.7 percentage points between July 2013 and July 2014, with an ambitious target of 60.4% set for July 2015.

The gap in performance between boys and girls narrowed across 2 of the 3 key stages. It is important to recognise that we must measure the performance of each cohort of pupils, as opposed to looking at the trend data for this indicator, as each year the indicator considers a different group of pupils. In the current year at:

- Key Stage 2, 83% of boys and 88.9% of girls achieved the CSI, highlighting a gap in performance of -5.9. The gender gap for this cohort was -10.4 at the end of the Foundation Phase in 2009/10.
- Key Stage 3, 72% of boys and 83.9% of girls achieved the CSI, highlighting a gap in performance of -11.9. The difference in performance for this cohort was -9.1 at the end of the Key Stage 2 in 2010/11.
- Key Stage 4, 41% of boys and 53% of girls achieved the CSI, highlighting a gap in performance of -12.0. The difference in performance for this cohort was -14.2 at the end of the Key Stage 3 in 2011/12.

We believe that this priority is making some progress, as although continuous improvement is being made, the developments are not reflected in our position within Wales, which remains consistent. We have worked with schools and the Education Advisory Service (EAS) to set ambitious targets for the academic year ending July 2015, and raising standards across all key stages remains a priority for the Directorate

4 Identify vulnerable groups of learners and develop interventions to ensure needs are met

We said success would look like

- We will have created a wide range of learning opportunities, appropriate for all, to encourage young people to engage in learning.
- We will improve prevention by increasing the number of pupils who are identified as needing appropriate support earlier and in a timely manner.
- We aim to reduce the number of young people leaving compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification.

Page 168 Summary of progress in 2014/15

The identification of learners vulnerable to underachievement has been a focus for the local authority. When Estyn undertook a monitoring visit in January 2014 they recognised that we had:

“introduced a comprehensive target setting process that links school performance targets to the progress of individual learners. Schools are required to identify potential barriers to success for individual learners in years 10 and 11. The targets produced by schools are very challenging and clearly set the ambition for improvement across the Authority. The target setting process leads to coordinated and well-resourced programmes of support for learners. There is a suitable focus on working with families of targeted learners and, where appropriate, support includes links to Communities First and Family First programme”.

In addition to this development the Authority has developed a database known as STRIVE (**S**ystem for **T**racking and **R**eporting **I**dentified **V**ulnerability in **E**ducation). This tool draws together a collection of data including attendance, exclusions, Free School Meal status, any Additional Needs and other key pieces of data to produce a vulnerability score. Pupils who achieve a high vulnerability score are further analysed by the school and support services to provide intervention and support to reduce the risk of underachievement.

The STRIVE system also has the capacity to look holistically at the pupils' engagement in registered extra curricular activity. The Youth Service has been working with the system to record pupils gaining national accreditation through youth clubs and projects. The percentage of pupils engaged by The Youth Service gaining this type of accreditation has increased from 5% to 5.9%, engaging over 350 young people each year. The range of accreditation activities has been broadened to provide young people with a curriculum that is both engaging and rewarding.

In July 2014 there was a small increase in the number of pupils leaving compulsory education, training or work based learning at age 16 without an approved external qualification. In 2013 the percentage was 0.4% which rose to 1.0% in July 2014, an increase from 9 pupils to 22 pupils. We have worked in partnership with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) who have undertaken the role of challenging all secondary schools to improve performance, which includes ensuring that all pupils leave with a approved external qualification. However, the percentage of young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) has decreased for the second consecutive year, from 5.9% in 2012, to 4.4% in 2013 and 3.5% in 2014. The introduction and implementation of the early identification tool has supported this improvement, alongside the delivery of the Welsh Government Engagement and Progression Framework.

We believe that this priority is making good progress so far, as the early identification tools we have developed allow us to work proactively with young people to ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place to support them to achieve their potential.

5 Reduce the gap in attainment between pupils in advantaged and disadvantaged communities

We said success would look like

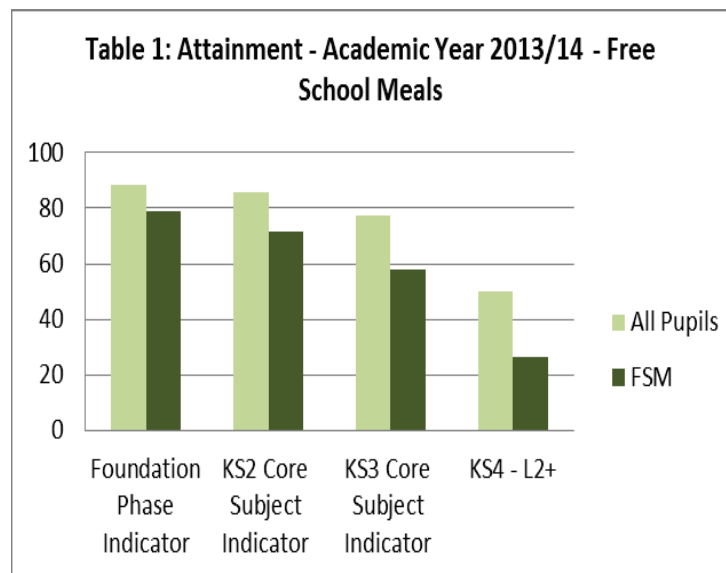
- Parents will be supported to value what our schools do and encourage positive views about learning and achievement.
- Timely support will be provided to pupils who do not attend school regularly and we will help to raise aspirations by promoting and developing a mobile outreach provision for isolated communities.
- A strategy will be developed to reduce the gap in attainment for children on Free School Meals to target resources appropriately so that ultimately regardless of the child or young persons social background they achieve their full potential.

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Summary of progress in 2014/15

In line with the Council priority that *“every child should have the best start in life, and the opportunity to achieve success as a young person and as an adult”* we are working with schools and other services that provide educational opportunity to children and young people to ensure that regardless of personal circumstances they are provided with the support and opportunity to succeed.

The identification of learners vulnerable to underachievement has been a focus for the local authority; however the factors that effect vulnerability have been evaluated in greater detail. Vulnerability in education can be determined by a number of different factors including deprivation. However, it can also be determined by whether the child or young person has additional learning needs, or is a Looked After Child (LAC). For this reason the Improvement Objective that has been selected for 2015/16 focuses on improving outcomes for all learners, particularly those vulnerable to underachievement. The plan recognises that small groups of children and young people can face more challenges than others and aims to identify groups of learners vulnerable to underachievement, and work proactively to remove the barriers to learning



The measure that is commonly used to measure deprivation is a pupil's eligibility to receive Free School Meals. The data across (Table 1) provides an insight into the performance of all pupils in comparison to the pupils in receipt of Free School Meals. This also highlights that the gap in performance increases throughout school life, and when moving from internal assessment at Foundation Phase, key stage 2 and 3, to external assessment through examination at Key Stage 4.

The development of STRIVE (**S**ystem for **T**racking and **R**eporting Identified **V**ulnerability in **E**ducation), which considers Free School Meal status as a contributing factor to vulnerability allows both schools and support services to identify pupils and ensure they are provided with the appropriate interventions, including family support, to allow them to achieve success.

We believe that although we are continuing to focus on the achievement of vulnerable learners we must continue to raise the achievement levels of all learners within the Authority in order to ensure that every child and young person is given the opportunity to succeed. We are continuing to work in partnership with the EAS to ensure that schools are setting ambitious targets and aspiring for the best outcomes for all pupils.

6 Promote the benefits of an active and healthy lifestyle

We said success would look like

- Reduce the harm caused by alcohol.
- Increase physical activity.
- Reduce the prevalence of smoking.
- Promote healthy eating.
- Support intergenerational schemes that promote community cohesion.
- Carry out a consistent needs based approach across the Authority for the use of intergenerational facilities.
- Work in partnership with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to make sure that the services provided at the new hospital at Ystrad Fawr are meeting local needs.

Summary of progress in 2014/15

We are actively promoting our Community Health Champions programme, which provide an effective way of raising awareness and gaining support for changing health behaviours. 2014/15 saw an increase in the number of Champions we had across the borough to 141.

In 2014/15, 95% of our schools have completed Phase 3 of the Healthy Schools Scheme, and 62% have completed Phase 5, with 5 schools now having achieved the National Quality Award. 48 childcare settings are currently undertaking the Caerphilly Healthy Early Years Scheme, which has been mapped to the Welsh Government's Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Scheme. Settings are undertaking Phase 1, 2 or 3, with a further 2 settings completing all three phases of the scheme.

Reduce the harm caused by alcohol

Caerphilly Council continues to support the work of the Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board in tackling substance misuse issues that affect communities.

The Safer Caerphilly After Dark initiative has been developed to address night-time economy issues and was launched in December 2013.

Gwent Police licensing officers and the Night Time Economy Officer monitor calls and investigate any matter relating to licensed premises.

Our Trading Standard Officers undertake Test Purchase exercises, where there is intelligence to suggest that under age sales are taking place. All intelligence is acted upon. During 2014/15 there were 3 sales from 8 attempts on licensed premises, 37.5% positive sales; 5 sales from 34 attempts off licences, 14.7% positive sales.

Our Community Safety Wardens confiscated 181 items of alcohol during 2014/15 in connection with drinking in public places.

Increase physical activity

We are implementing our Creating an Active Caerphilly (2011-14) Plan. This plan identifies actions to encourage residents to be more physically active and as a result improve the health and well-being of all children and young people.

As part of our Play Sufficiency Action Plan we are working in partnership to deliver:

Adventure Play sessions (funded through Families First and Communities First) are staffed and provision delivered by trained play workers, who work outdoors in areas throughout the county borough.

- Tri County play workers (funded through the Big Lottery until October 2014) provided outdoor play opportunities for children and young people in the following areas:- Newbridge, Pentwynmawr, Springfield, Tir- y-berth, Bargoed and Aberbargoed.
- Inclusive Play who support disabled children to access play provisions in areas suitable and accessible to them.
- GAVO's Creative Play and Homestart teams run "Pop in and Play" groups (funded through Families First and Flying Start) for children aged 0-3 years and their families.

The School Swimming programme is working towards the national target of 90% of children to be able to swim 25 metres by the time they are aged 11, targeting years 3-4 which will then have a knock on effect on older year groups.

Communities First deliver a variety of physical activity projects across the borough aimed at parents and children and community members to break down the barriers to physical activity and utilise our outdoor spaces. In 2014/15, 584 people reported an increase in physical activity following involvement in projects such as disability horse riding, walking groups and exercise classes.

As part of these projects, a boxing club was developed and is now run as a social enterprise. It is now a registered club competing in Welsh Amateur Boxing Association (WABA) and meets each month. This club attracted the most number of individuals to the physical activity classes with over 50 people each week. 2 volunteers were also identified and introduced into supporting the boxing club and now are working at the new gym each week.

Other physical activity classes, such as dance classes, were productive and well attended.

StreetGames projects, delivered by Communities First, have proved popular with children and young people. There are 14 sites providing doorstep sport opportunities to young people across the borough. In 2014/15, 457 sessions were delivered and 503 young people reported an increase in physical activity. This was supported through a partnership with Police, Youth Service, Community Safety and Sports Development, with Communities First leading on coordination but working in partnership to share objectives, resources and outcomes.

A number of young people from the borough took part in the Caerphilly StreetGames sensation event in January, which attracted over 350 young people and was shown live on ITV news with good press coverage for CCBC. We have also taken young volunteers on the national volunteer residential and a couple have even been identified to attend the national volunteers evening in England.

The results from the most recent 'Active Adults' survey showed that 38% of adults in Caerphilly County Borough are 'Hooked on Sport'. 63% of the adults who took part in the survey also suggested that their health was 'good' or 'very good'. Finally, 38% of respondents also encourage their family to take part in sport and physical activity. The results from the survey are promising, with adults in Caerphilly having a clear understanding of the importance that sport and physical activity has on their health.

Sport and physical activity not only contributes to a healthy lifestyle but also a change in behaviour. The Positive Futures programme in Caerphilly has recently launched, providing young people who are disengaged opportunities to take part in sport. In Caerphilly town centre, the start of evening sports engagement sessions between December 2014 and March 2015 has coincided with a reduction in the local crime rate of 36%. There has also been a 50% reduction in anti-social behaviour calls within the area.

We are actively promoting walking or cycling to school. We have 17 "Walking Buses" which equates to hundreds of the borough's children walking to school. Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Caerffili celebrated 10 years of their "Walking Bus" during 2014/15. Ysgol Y Lawnt, Rhymney is the largest "Walking Bus" with 350 participants walking. We have implemented the National Standards Cycling in Schools through providing intensive training at a number of borough schools.

With around 80% identified as countryside, the county borough is blessed with some of the most attractive landscapes and valuable environment in Wales. We have worked with our partners and the community to maximise the use of the environment for health benefits for residents of the county borough. Using our natural resources we are delivering the following programmes:

Come Outside! The Natural Resources Wales co-ordinated ‘Come Outside!’ programme inspires and enables community, youth and health officers to support less active people to become regularly involved in outdoor activity to enjoy the outdoors, and to experience the benefits, and value and care for the natural environment. The programme supported over 1,300 people to develop a more physically active lifestyle. In July 2014 the Come Outside! Summer Celebration was hosted at Parc Penallta to celebrate the achievements of the programme.

Caerphilly Lets Walk Cymru In partnership with the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), the Lets Walk Cymru project promotes healthy walking and supports local healthy walking groups. There are now 14 led walking groups that meet regularly in Caerphilly County Borough with 2,846 registered walkers. In 2014/15 there were 671 led walks in the county borough.

Self-Led Walk Guides There are now 19 guides for walkers to take 30 – 90 minute walks in the county borough. There are a further 12 trail guides for walks up to 8 hours.

Walk Event In 2014 the Caerphilly Challenge Series continued with “The Wild Boar Walk” on the 10th May. It was organised by Caerphilly’s walking steering group, which is made up of 13 partner organisations. 505 entrants took part in the 9, 14 and 22 mile walks. A further 50 entrants took part in the 1-5 mile Lets Walk Cymru led walk.

ELF Walk On Saturday 13th December 2014 residents and visitors of Caerphilly County Borough were encouraged to put their best foot forward to take part in a festive charity Elf and Well-being Walk in the lead up to Christmas. In total 105 people, with age ranges of between 2 and 83, took part in the 5K walk in Penallta Park that raised money for the Mayor’s charities – Caerphilly Home Start and the Royal British Legion.

Community Pedometer Challenge. Building on the success of the Council and Health Board run pedometer challenges, a Community Pedometer Challenge has been established with partnership work between CCBC, ABUHB, Let’s Walk Cymru and local walking groups.

Reduce the prevalence of smoking

22% of adults smoke in our borough, which is the same as the Welsh average (Welsh Health Survey 2013 & 14), however Welsh Government have set a target to reduce smoking levels in Wales to 16% by 2020. We are working with our partners to increase referrals to Stop Smoking Wales. Stop Smoking Wales have taken steps to increase accessibility and a number of pharmacists in the county have been trained and accredited to enable them to run a full behavioural support service for smoking cessation.

The 2014 Stoptober campaign has been supported by CCBC and promoted throughout the County Borough. CCBC staff and community members were encouraged to sign up to Stoptober. A member of CCBC staff was the Stoptober Local Hero posting weekly blogs on progress.

We have banned smoking in enclosed children's play areas in our parks and in multi use games areas. All 77 primary schools in the borough are now displaying the 'Young Lungs at Play' signs. 41 Pre school settings are now part of the Smoke Free zone initiative and display 'Young Lungs at Play' signs.

We also launched an Illegal Tobacco campaign in March 2015 to coincide with No Smoking Day 2015. This is a 12 month campaign supported by Stop Smoking Wales including use of posters, postcards, business cards, social media, shop adverts, plasma screens, local publications, newspapers, websites, and an Urdd Eisteddfod event with Tobacco Detection Dogs.

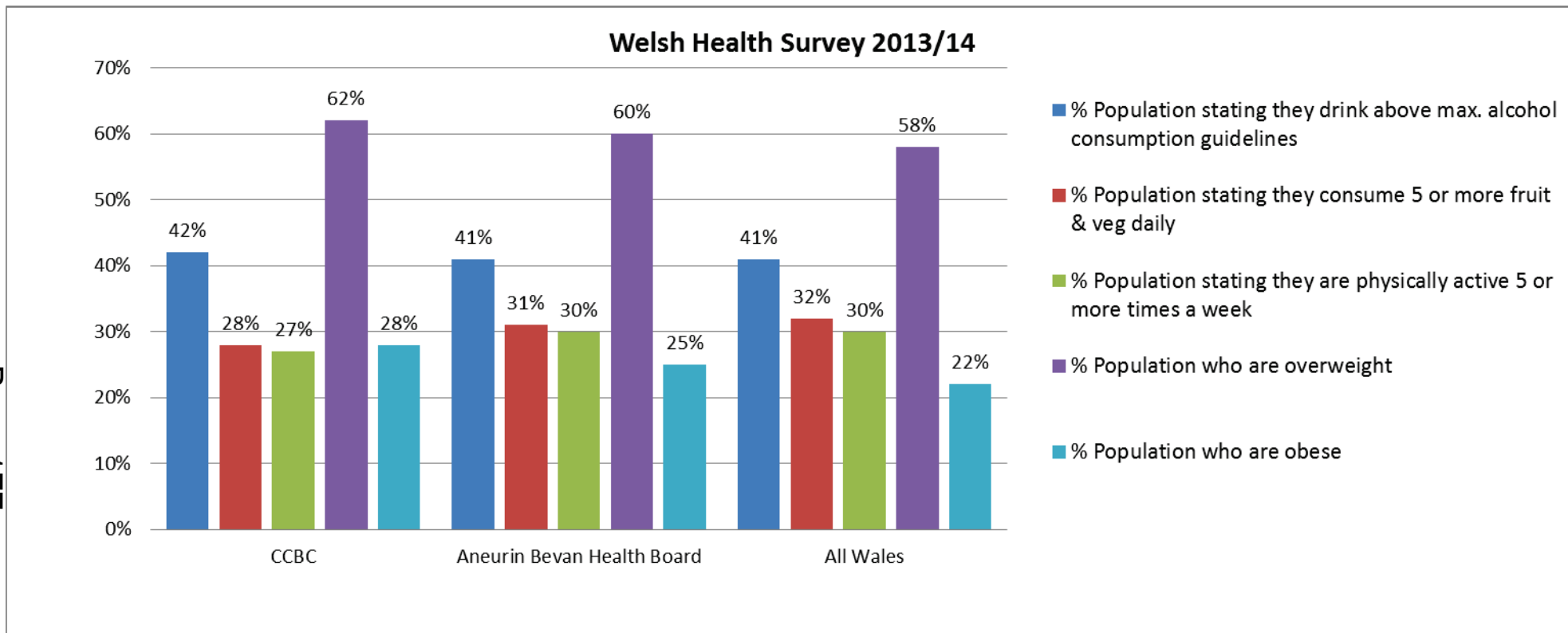
Promote healthy eating

We serve 15,000 school meals daily in the county borough. All county borough schools are 'Appetite for Life' compliant and CCBC was the first local authority in Wales to secure this compliance. The Caerphilly Healthy Schools Scheme (CHSS) works closely with every school to promote "Healthy Lunchboxes". WG information leaflets are distributed to all new intake parents and CHSS work closely with School Councils to ensure that Healthy Lunchboxes are high on their agenda. All schools have previously received training and development to write and implement a School Food & Fitness Policy. 'Skill Up – Start Cooking' was rolled out in 2014/15 to include training for teachers who will in turn train parents and children with special toolkit /packs

Communities First, Flying Start and Families First work collaboratively with parents, families and young people, to deliver healthy cooking skills sessions and courses. In 2014/15 over 150 community cooking sessions were delivered as well as 21 Foodwise courses. Community Allotment sessions were also delivered in Senghenydd on growing and cooking with fresh produce.

In 2014/15, 187 people have reported eating fresh fruit and vegetables daily following Communities First support. Communities First Health and Well Being Officers have been trained to deliver X-Pod and Healthy Hearts, providing targeted programmes to individuals at risk of diabetes or heart disease. These courses will be delivered in 2015/16.

The results of the most recent Welsh Health Survey below shows how we compare in key areas with the rest of the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and Wales as a whole.



Support intergenerational schemes that promote community cohesion

We are placing a great emphasis on continuing to integrate schools into the community. One example of this is the creation of Intergen clubs on school sites. These are formed to provide mutual activities, interests, understanding and tolerance between pupils and older persons. There are currently ten clubs in the borough and we are planning to open more clubs during 2015/16.

Carry out a consistent needs based approach across the Authority for the use of intergenerational facilities

Intergen clubs in schools are always a welcome addition for a Headteacher as schools derive great benefit from their presence. A club will be formed at a school based on the availability of existing older persons groups within the locality that can use the school facilities. We also consider the accessibility of the school site and the mobility of the older persons using it. Efforts are always made to break down these barriers and we work in partnership with housing and social services to help deliver these schemes.

Work in partnership with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABHUB) to make sure that the services provided at the new hospital at Ystrad Fawr are meeting local needs.

We continue to work with our partners as appropriate regarding the delivery of healthcare services. In particular we are working with ABUHB to protect and improve the wellbeing of our communities and the Chief Executive of ABUHB is a key member of the Caerphilly Local Service Board.

7 Invest in our Council Homes and their communities to transform lives

We said success would look like

- The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) grant will run to provide energy saving improvements to properties. These will help Council homes be more efficient which will help reduce fuel poverty. This is one of our contributions towards tackling poverty so that fewer residents will be living in fuel poverty.
- Bid for grant funding to qualifying areas within the new ECO Public and Private Sector grant.
- Raise the awareness of residents in the borough to the Green Deal and ECO grant.
- Our homes will ultimately meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standards and will become more energy efficient with the installation of improvements such as new boilers and loft insulation.
- Tenants will be happy with their homes.
- Tenancy Support Officers provide advice to households to help them reduce their expenditure, this will include assessments and help with utilities such as water savings.
- Increase awareness of the Welsh Government Fuel Poverty Scheme to obtain greater take-up within CCBC.

Summary of progress in 2014/15

Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The first ECO phase that was completed in 2013/14 funded energy efficiency works to 334 flats in Gelligaer. Whilst no actual works were carried out with ECO in 2014/15 a procurement process was undertaken to set up a framework to carry out ECO works. This framework agreement is now in place to undertake external wall insulation and loft insulation within specific lower super output areas, although CCBC will contribute funding to the scheme, the cost of the works will be subsidised via the carbon savings generated. This framework has 2 energy suppliers Eon (rank 1) and SSE (rank 2). This agreement is in place until end of March 2017.

Proposed works for 2015/16 is for 191 properties to receive external wall insulation. Properties with less than 200mm loft insulation will receive loft insulation upgrades. Further investigations will be undertaken to evaluate if properties at Lansbury Park and Trecenydd Caerphilly would qualify for ECO funding and be programmed for 2015 /16 – 2017.

Other schemes:

Arbed Scheme at Phillipstown

The Arbed scheme is a strategic energy performance investment programme. *Arbed* (meaning 'to save' in Welsh) is a Welsh Government project which aims to reduce the amount of energy we use in our homes, to reduce energy bills and to make homes warmer and more comfortable.

This is the third Arbed project that Caerphilly has been successful with. Currently, works are on site undertaking external wall insulation and voltage optimisers to approximately 400 properties at Phillipstown with an estimated cost around £2.5 million. The project has recently been extended to undertake external wall insulation works at Jones Street, Phillipstown and it is anticipated that all works will be complete by end of October 2015.

Welsh Government Warm Homes Project

A bid was submitted to the Welsh Government Warm Homes project to improve 178 (primarily private sector) homes within several Lower Super Output Area's (LSOAs) across Caerphilly that have not benefitted from previous schemes. Unfortunately, this bid was unsuccessful.

Our homes will ultimately meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) and will become more energy efficient with the installation of improvements such as new boilers and loft insulation.

The original planned programme for this objective has faced major slippage resulting in revised targets to reflect the delays in contracts commencing. Although it has only been possible to complete improvements to a smaller number of homes, tenant satisfaction remains high at 90% (well above the target of 80%) and service standards have achieved 93% again above target.

The in house team is the main contractor for major refurbishment work at Rowan Place, Rhymney. This is more extensive work than originally planned and with deployment of a significant part of the work force to this scheme. This is one of the contributory reasons for less progress elsewhere. Welsh Government has approved grant funding of £1m (VVP) towards Hafod Deg and environmental works at Rowan Place. The WHQS budget for Rowan Place is £4.2m.

The slippage will need to be incorporated into the future year's programme. In reality this will require an acceleration of the programme to ensure the WHQS is still achieved by the fixed deadline of March 2020. The staff resources have been strengthened to manage the larger volume of work against the timescale. The forward investment plan between 2015/16 and 2019/20 has been reviewed and there are some changes to the community sequence particularly affecting the external works. To ensure the programme can be fully delivered by 2020 will require an average rate of 80 completions a week across both internal and external works. A further review of the programme will be undertaken during the course of 2015/16.

Further information on this can be read on pages 17 and 25 (Chief Executive Statement and Improvement Objective: IO5).

Tenants will be happy with their homes

In 2014/15:

- The percentage of tenants whose homes have been improved internally through the WHQS programme who were satisfied with the completed works was 90%.
- The percentage of tenants satisfied with the Housing Allocations and Letting Service was 90.16%.
- The tenant satisfaction with overall Rent Services (rating good/very good) was 89.89%.
- The level of tenant satisfaction with general condition of the property was 75.66%.
- The level of tenant satisfaction with their new home was 73.12%.

Tenancy Support Officers provide advice to households to help them reduce their expenditure; this will include assessments and help with utilities such as water savings

In 2014/15:

- The number of council tenants affected by welfare reforms that were visited in their own homes and provided with advice and support to minimise the impact of the changes was 2,309.
- The number of council tenants referred for money and debt advice as a direct result of face to face support on the impact of welfare reforms was 187.
- The value of financial savings generated for tenants as a direct result of face to face support on the affect of welfare reforms was £283,152.

The tenancy support officers received additional training in December 2015 to enable them to provide energy efficiency advice to tenants, which has been very popular with our tenants. We have noticed an increase in the number of tenants requesting visits and have received excellent feedback. The following quotes are examples of the feedback being received:

“She has been marvellous, I can not fault the service that tenancy support has provided and the help they have given me”

“She was very helpful and helped me save money. She has helped to make my life a lot better and it has helped take the pressure off. It is nice to know that there is someone out there to help. The help has been tremendous”

“I was in such a bad place at the time. I didn’t know there was any help. I could not see any light at the end of the tunnel. From a very negative frame of mind you have helped me become more positive, good support”

Increase awareness of the Welsh Government Fuel Poverty Scheme to obtain greater take-up within CCBC

In addition to the support already offered to our tenants and the other programmes the Authority has reported above, the Welsh Government fuel poverty scheme known as Nest, which started in April 2011, offers further information and advice on the Free phone number **0808 808 2244** or you can visit the [Nest Website](#)

The Welsh Government has identified; a household is in fuel poverty if they spend 10% or more of their income on energy costs, including Housing Benefit, Income Support or Mortgage Interest or Council Tax benefits on energy costs and they are in severe fuel poverty if they have to spend 20% or more.

The purpose of this scheme is to help low income and vulnerable households to reduce their energy bills and heat their homes more affordably through the Nest scheme. The Nest scheme is managed by British Gas and no cold calling is done by the scheme. The scheme expects to help households with energy advice and support on:

- ways to save energy and make your home more energy efficient
- energy tariffs and to ensure you are on the most appropriate tariff for your situation
- benefit entitlement checks.

Nest will also improve the energy efficiency of privately owned and privately rented properties for those who meet the eligibility criteria and packages could include:

- loft or cavity wall insulation
- solid wall insulation
- new boiler
- central heating
- renewable technologies

A large contributing factor for encouraging energy efficiency improvements in social housing is currently through our **Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)** programme and the Nest programme is complemented by our area-based scheme, **Arbed**. Both schemes enable us to support households in fuel poverty whereby WHQS/Nest provides support for households whereas Arbed helps to provide targeted improvements for communities in the most deprived area in Wales.

Cyd Cymru

This is a scheme to help save money on your energy bills. Worried about switching supplier? Cyd Cymru / Wales Together could be the answer. Cyd Cymru is a collective energy switching scheme created 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 Government’s “Regional Collaboration Fund”, which started in the Autumn of 2013. Caerphilly CBC signed up to the programme in January 2015 to actively promote the scheme just before Cyd Cymru commenced with its 3rd phase of switching energy supplies for those that registered. Following the successful completion of the 3rd switch, Cyd Cymru has reported that over 5,600 households registered for the scheme, with just over 2,000 households switching (36% conversion rate) energy supplier and the average savings per household was just over £250 per annum, resulting in savings across Wales of over £525,000.

Further information about this scheme can be obtained by contacting CCBC Housing Services or through the [Cyd Cymru](#) website.



Affordability - Deliver a Medium Term Financial Plan aimed at ultimately providing a period of stability that helps the Authority to have a range of services in the future that are sustainable.

We said success would look like

- The implementation of savings proposals at Council each year when the budget is set in late February, will ensure that at the start of each financial year, a balanced budget is achievable
- Over a 2-3 year period, a reduction in expenditure that allows the services still retained by the Authority to have sufficient budgets to allow for service improvement

Summary of progress in 2014/15

The Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges due to cuts in funding from the Welsh Government and savings of £14.7m were required as part of the 2014/15 budget approved by Council in February 2014. This package of savings was successfully delivered and actual expenditure for the 2014/15 financial year was within the approved budgets for all Departments.

For the 2015/16 financial year the funding that Caerphilly CBC receives from the Welsh Government has been cut by 3.3%, resulting in a cash reduction of £8.89m. In light of this the Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan has been reviewed on the assumption that similar cash reductions will be experienced in 2016/17 and 2017/18. This review has also considered cost pressures that will need to be met as we move forward and it is anticipated that the Authority will need to find savings of around £39m for the three-year period 2015/16 to 2017/18.

At its meeting on the 25th February 2015 Council agreed a budget for the 2015/16 financial year, which included savings totalling £11.96m. Prior to this, proposed savings for 2015/16 had been subject to an extensive consultation process that consisted of two public surveys, 'drop-in' sessions for members of the public to attend and separate consultation events with the Youth Forum, the Viewpoint Panel, the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee and the 50+ Forum. In addition, Town and Community Councils were also invited to comment upon the proposed savings. This thorough consultation process was invaluable in helping firm savings proposals to be put to Council for approval in February 2015.

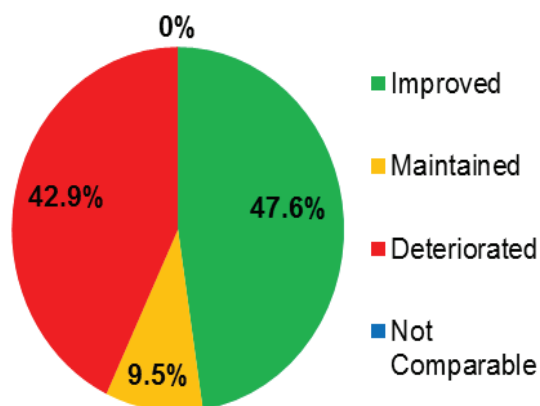
The agreed savings for 2015/16 have had limited impact on front-line services and wherever possible Council priorities have been protected from cuts. Looking ahead the Authority still has to find anticipated savings of circa £26m for 2016/17 and 2017/18 and this position may worsen. This will prove to be extremely challenging and as part of the process for identifying the savings required Council has agreed the following principles: -

- Protecting front-line services where we can and reducing expenditure on management and administrative costs.
- Increasing fees and charges where appropriate.
- Reducing, rather than removing services where possible.
- Focussing on priorities.
- Looking at alternative ways of delivering services (collaboration, partnerships, community trusts, etc.).

Detailed work is underway to meet the financial challenges that lie ahead and savings proposals for the 2016/17 financial year will be subject to a further period of extensive consultation between October 2015 and January 2016 prior to proposals being presented to Council in February 2016.

Overall Statutory Performance for 2014/15

Summary of 2014/15 CCBC Performance



It is important for the Welsh Government to understand how well local authorities are performing. In order to do this they use 2 sets of National Performance Measures; the National Strategic Indicators (NSI) and the Public Accountability Measures (PAM). The 43 measures cover the main areas of Government Policy, Social Services, Education and the Environment. The chart shows how we performed against 42 of those measures in 2014/15, where performance improved, fell or stayed the same when compared to the previous year. The percentage of sickness days lost per FTE (CHR002) is not included in the CCBC summary of 2014/15 performance because it was new to the PAM set for 2014/15.

Because the percentage of all potentially homeless households prevented for at least six months (HHA013) is not being calculated the same across Wales, it cannot be compared across the 22 Welsh Authorities and is not included in the 4 quarters.

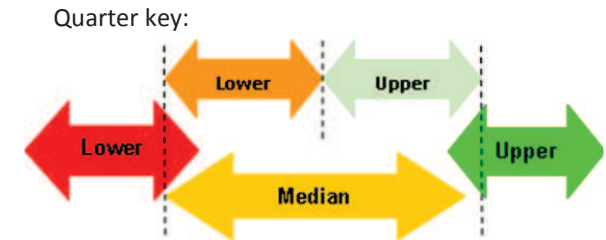
Source: Data Unit Wales 'How did we do..' data comparison sheet 2015 v5

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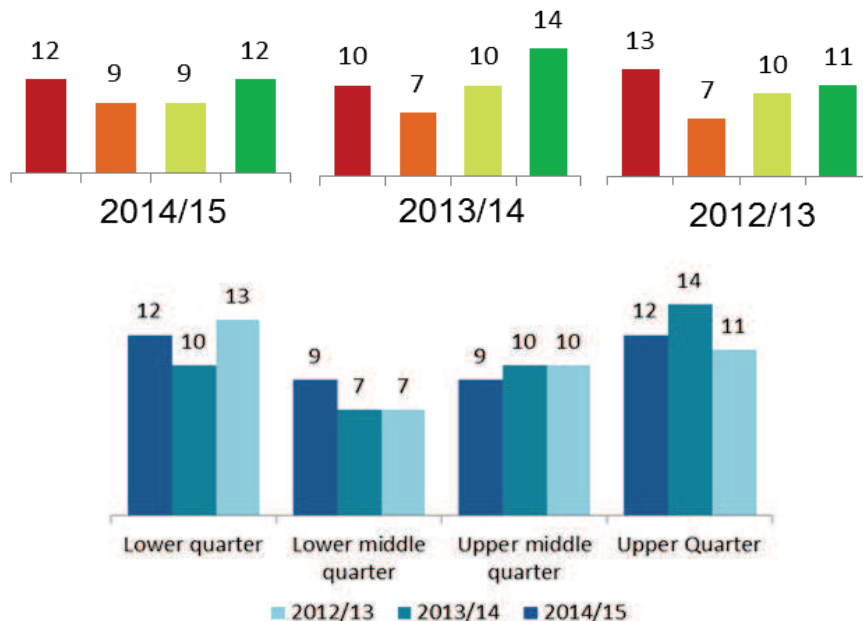
	How did we perform when comparing 2014/15 to 2013/14?			How did we perform compared to Wales in the 4 quarters?				How did we perform against our Targets?		
	Improved	Deteriorated	Maintained	Upper	Upper Middle	Lower Middle	Lower	Met Target	Missed Target	No target set
Chief Executive	3	1			1	1	1	2	1	1
Corporate Services							1		1	
Education & Community Services	12	5	2	4	5	4	6	10	9	
Social Services	5	12	2	8	3	4	4	12	7	
Source: Data Unit Wales – How did we do..' data comparisons sheet 2015								Source: Internal		

Our position compared across Wales

When the Welsh Government and Data Unit Wales analyse, report and rank performance data for the 22 local authorities in Wales, they often compare them against each other using quarters. This means that the data for each of the 22 local authorities has simply been split into 4 quarters to show where each local authority sits compared to the rest of Wales. Quoting who is in the upper quarter, upper middle quarter, lower middle quarter and lower quarter. Sometimes the upper middle and lower middle quarters are combined to show the median. Where this happens authorities are compared using 3 quartiles, Lower, Median and Upper.



3yr trend for the number of measures in the 4 quarters



5 of our national measures, have moved up 1 position, 3 from the lower quarter in Wales up to the lower middle quarter (PSR004, SCA001, LCS002b) and 2 (SCC033e, LCL001b) have moved from the upper middle to the upper quarter. SCC037 has moved up 2 quarter positions from lower middle quarter to the upper quarter. The majority of our national measures (25) have maintained their quarter positioning over the last year, with 9 of those remaining in the top quarter in Wales, although 1 fell from the top quarter to the bottom quarter (SCA020), and 2 fell from the top quarter to the lower middle quarter (STS006, WMT009b). The remaining 6 (SCC011a, SCC011b, SCC025, SCC033f, SCC045 and EDU002i) have dropped down one quarter position in Wales.

All the National Performance Measures referenced within the paragraph above, can be found with their full descriptions in the performance tables in the Directorate sections of this Report.

Many of our measures have moved in 2014/15 when we compare our performance to that of the rest of Wales. The biggest movers are highlighted below:

Delayed Transfers of Care (DTCOC) - We knew from last years figure (rate of) 11.99 that we needed to improve in this area. We did this by refocusing our resources, transferring more staff to the area and holding regular meetings with the 3 hospital trusts to ensure that all were using the same processes to discharge patients. We also used additional care funding to provide extra assessment beds, to assist in the movement of patients and we worked alongside the Caerphilly Resolutions Team to look at preventing hospital admissions. This work has brought our DTCOC rate down to 4.54 this year, bringing us closer to the All Wales average of 4.83 and moving us from 22nd in Wales to 13th (SCA001a).

Library visits - We had 82,102 more visits to our libraries in 2014/15, compared to 2013/14. This was achieved by the relocation of Caerphilly Library to a better location in a fit for purpose site in the town centre including our Customer Services. Coupled with the relocation of Newbridge Library to the Memo and the reopening of Aberbargoed. We have also seen a large increase in our number of online/web visitors due to an improved offer on the virtual domain and better recording of our unique hits. Caerphilly is now in the top quarter and 4th in Wales (LCL001b).

Average external points score for all looked after children - Compared to last year the average external qualification points score for all those children we look after has risen by 84 points, from 238 average points in 2013/14 to 322 this year with the same number of children taking part, moving Caerphilly from 15th in Wales to 5th. (SCC037).

Maintaining contact with formerly looked after children - Once again in 2014/15 we stayed in contact with all formerly looked after 19 year olds, maintaining at 100% and 1st in Wales. We also made sure all 33 formerly looked after children (100%) were in suitable non-emergency accommodation, compared to 2013/14 when 2 of the 30 formerly looked after children (93.3%), we were in contact with were not in suitable accommodation. This measure has moved from 9th in Wales in 2013/14 to 1st in 2014/15. (SCC033e).

Percentage of adult clients aged 18+ supported in the community - We have seen a decrease from 91.9% in 2013/14 to 79.69% in 2014/15, moving Caerphilly from 1st in Wales (2013/14) to 20th (2014/15) against an All Wales average of 85.2%. We know that the number of people receiving this service has decreased because there has been an increase in the use of frailty services, which promote independence. The promotion of independence is signposting people to community based services, volunteers and community connectors. These improve a person's well-being and reduces their social isolation which help them to live more independent lives (SCA020).

Percentage of household waste recycled - We recycled less, in terms of overall percentage recycled in 2014/15 at 54.58% when compared to 2013/14 when we recycled 57.61%. This was due to changes in the market for recycled products and issues with contamination in the recycling process that resulted in lower amounts of dry kerbside recycling. A change to the legislation regarding the classification and treatment of wood collected at Household Recycling Centres, also affected the percentage of wood we recycled in 2014/15. This resulted in moving us from 5th in Wales to 15th and from the top quarter to the lower middle quarter between the 2 years (WMT009b).

Percentage of fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days - We saw a 5.5% dip in our performance of fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days during 2014/15. This is due to numerous technical problems with our Public Services Waste Management system and our personal handheld devices (PDA's) (STS006).

Percentage of initial assessments completed on time - Because we now have a more robust preventative service our percentage of initial assessments that we completed during the year, where there was evidence that a child was seen alone by a social worker fell by 4% to 38.7% from 42.7% in 2013/14, taking us from 13th in Wales to 17th and 6% lower than the All Wales average of 44.8% (SCC011b).

Percentage of formerly looked after children who are known to be in education, training or employment - Although the total number of formerly looked after children that we have remained in contact with at the age of 19 has increased from 28 in 2012/13 to 33 in 2014/15, the number of those who are in education, training or employment has remained at 18 for the past 3 years, which has seen our performance move from the top quarter performers in Wales to the lower middle (SCC033f).

Percentage of children leaving compulsory education with no approved qualification - The Educational Advisory Service (EAS) has undertaken the roll of challenging all secondary schools to improve their performance. They have a number of school advisers who challenge our secondary schools on a number of elements including attainment and attendance and use a colour coding method of green, amber or red to classify the schools performance. The number of children leaving compulsory education at 15 with no approved qualification has increased to 22 (1.02%) in 2014 compared to 9 (0.39%) in 2013 and 9 (0.42%) in 2012, taking Caerphilly from 14th to 20th in Wales against an All Wales average of 0.36% for 2015. (EDU002i)

Percentage of final statements of special educational need (SEN) issued - This has remained at 100% and 1st in Wales over the past 3 years. (EDU015b)

Percentage of children who require a pathway plan - For 2 years 100% of our eligible, relevant and former relevant children who required a pathway plan have had one in place (SCC041a)

Percentage of children in care leaving education without an approved qualification - Over the last 2 years there has not been any children who were in care of Caerphilly and who left compulsory education without an approved qualification keeping Caerphilly in the top quartile and 1st in Wales. (EDU002ii)

Outcome Agreements 2013 - 16 (2014/15 Update)

We hold a 3-year agreement with the Welsh Government (WG) that started in 2013. Our agreement is to improve in the five key areas listed below, as chosen from a list of WG national priorities. Summary details of the agreements and our progress since they started are set out below. The WG monitors and reviews our annual progress and if they agree with our assessment, this will lead to the payment of an annual grant funding, if positive progress has been achieved over the period of the agreement. We received £1.91m for 2013/14 and anticipate £1.89m for 2014/15 if WG agree with our assessment.

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Strategic Theme (Set by Welsh Government)	Broad Outcome (Area of focus)	Main Projects/ Programmes (Specifically what we will do)	Service Self-assessment for 2013/14 (How we performed)	Service Self-assessment for 2014/15 (How we performed)
1. Growth and sustainable jobs	Supporting the economy and business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regenerate Bargoed town centre. Re-development and improved landscape works in Newbridge and in the local environment and its infrastructure. Run a digital inclusion programme to help business online. 	<p>Successful 18 of the 20 agreed targets were met or exceeded. Further evidence shows that we have helped to increase the vitality and viability of 2 town centres.</p>	<p>Partially Successful Only 5 out of 15 agreed targets were met or exceeded, 7 just missed and 3 were considerably missed</p> <p>Investments continued in Newbridge and Bargoed towns. We helped support local business, which created and safeguarded jobs. We ran a 'Choose the High Street Campaign'. Unfortunately, certain grant/funding streams have changed and impacted on our ability to continue high levels of local business support.</p>

Strategic Theme (Set by Welsh Government)	Broad Outcome (Area of focus)	Main Projects/ Programmes (Specifically what we will do)	Service Self-assessment for 2013/14 (How we performed)	Service Self-assessment for 2014/15 (How we performed)
2. Education	Improving early years experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of the Flying Start programme 	<p>Successful</p> <p>Of the 45 pieces of evidence we met or exceeded 34 of our targets. Under the 'what difference have we made' section of the agreement we met 19 of the 21 targets. The Flying Start programme is on track and now being fully delivered in 18 areas across the borough</p>	<p>Successful</p> <p>We met or exceeded 14 out of our 18 key targets (what difference have we made). Flying Start is now being delivered in 19 areas, with a substantial increase in numbers accessing, engaging and completing key parts of the programme and our schools are reporting better transition of children.</p>
3. Welsh homes / supporting people	Welsh homes – improving quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) 	<p>Partially Successful</p> <p>We have not met 6 of our 9 key targets for 13/14. The number of homes complaint with the WHQS did not reach its target by some way due to programme slippage</p>	<p>Partially Successful</p> <p>We have met 4 of our 9 key targets. Due to major programme slippage, our original targets for both internal and external works have not been met. However, the focus this year was to establish and implement a revised investment strategy to secure future programme development.</p>

Strategic Theme (Set by Welsh Government)	Broad Outcome (Area of focus)	Main Projects/ Programmes (Specifically what we will do)	Service Self-assessment for 2013/14 (How we performed)	Service Self-assessment for 2014/15 (How we performed)
4. Safer communities for all	Improving safety in communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour and reduce the fear of becoming a victim of anti-social behaviour for residents • Reduce crime and the fear of crime for the residents of the county borough • Reduce the harm caused to communities through substance misuse 	<p>Partially Successful</p> <p>We have met 7 out of 11 of key targets for 2013/14. Early interventions for anti-social behaviour continues to show positive results and we supported 332 victims of crime and anti-social behaviour during the year. We raised the profile/use of support available for domestic abuse/violence.</p>	<p>Successful</p> <p>We have met 6 out of 10 of key targets. Early interventions for anti-social behaviour continues to show positive effects. White Ribbon Status was achieved (violence against women programme). A new service was commissioned (to deal with Youth offending). Our 'town-safe' operations continues to show positive improvements in our communities.</p>
5. Tackling poverty	Tackling worklessness and raising household income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Passport Programme • Implement the Tackling Poverty action plan • Implement the Get Caerphilly Online programme • Implement scheme to help tenants with financial, job and energy saving advice • Supporting people to implement a new scheme to help vulnerable people with claimant appeals 	<p>Successful</p> <p>We exceeded or achieved 8 out of 10 of our key targets. Our main success criteria was met with more people in employment via the Passport Scheme, 533 young people referred to the programme up to March 2014.</p>	<p>Successful</p> <p>We exceeded or achieved 12 out of 18 of our key targets. We continue to show positive progress and support with: Welfare Reform Issues. Getting people into work experience. apprenticeship/employment opportunities. Money and debt advice. Assisting those in need with basic IT literacy skills and confidence. Appeals on DLA and ESA claims. Targeted recruitment and training opportunities in new public sector contracts.</p>

Working in Partnership

Local government faces increasingly demanding and complex community needs and expectations, and with limited resources effective collaborations and partnerships are some of the ways that councils can respond to these challenges. Partnership and collaborative working can bring real benefits in achieving more with better use of resources than organisations can deliver alone. The power of partnerships in achieving community benefits is recognised by both the Welsh Government, and the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery. The Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015 also places emphasis on public bodies developing *collaborative solutions* through forming well-being plans for their localities¹. However, it is also acknowledged by the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery that the current system of collaborative working is complex, burdensome and is in need of an overhaul to ensure purposeful and effective partnerships with clear remits for delivery.²



Caerphilly County Borough Council is proactively responding to the challenge to ensure its partnerships and collaborations are fit for purpose. We have introduced a new 'Protocol', which sets a partnerships and collaborations framework to ensure there is a clear structure for partnership work, and provides a twelve-month action plan for ensuring a robust structure for partnership working.

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Identifying Partnerships and Collaborations

Our Policy Unit undertook a comprehensive review of Caerphilly County Borough Council's partnerships and collaborative working and at that time the total number of significant partner organisations for CCBC is 146, with 35 formal partnerships, 25 collaborations, and CCBC lead in 8 of the collaborative arrangements. 25 of the partnerships/collaborations are either statutory or deemed as good practice or in receipt of Welsh Government collaboration funding. We have a strong base of working in partnership in a Gwent wide/ South Wales / South East Wales footprint.

The Framework for effective Partnership working will be implemented through our twelve month action plan and regular review and monitoring of progress will be undertaken by the Corporate Governance Review Panel and the Improving Governance Programme Board and an annual summary report will be made on CCBC's partnership work to the Council's Audit Committee.

This Partnership Governance Toolkit is designed to ensure that Caerphilly County Borough Council has purposeful and effective partnerships with clear remits for delivery. The toolkit provides guidance for building and maintaining effective partnership governance arrangements, and in achieving a high level of partnership performance.

Partnership and collaborations will continue to evolve as a result of the new Future Generations Act 2015, which will be come into force in April 2016, you can read more about this on the following pages.

1. Welsh Government (July 2014) Well-being of future Generations (Wales) Bill Explanatory Memorandum Incorporating the Regulatory Impact Assessment and Explanatory Notes
2. Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery (January 2014) Crown Copyright

'Caerphilly Delivers' - the Local Service Board Single Integrated Plan

Implemented from April, 2013, '**Caerphilly Delivers**' is a high level partnership strategy which builds on the proven record of successful partnership working between all sectors involved in delivery of services to our communities. '**Caerphilly Delivers**' outlines a determined commitment by all involved to accelerate change, strengthen partnership working, collaborate between different agencies and be accountable for its delivery. The Plan is premised on the Local Service Board's (LSBs) primary objective of "Tackling the Impact of Poverty" and in doing so acknowledges the connections, inter-relationships and complexities of tackling the "causes and symptoms" of poverty.

In order to realise its "vision", the LSB has identified the following Outcomes:

Prosperous Caerphilly

Safer Caerphilly

Healthier Caerphilly

Learning Caerphilly

Greener Caerphilly

The LSB is committed to achieving these Outcomes by the delivery of a number of priorities and supporting action plans, established under each Outcome. The Lead Officer (from a partner organisation) for each Outcome, working with their Delivery Officers, have established priorities to be delivered to achieve their respective Outcomes identifying *"where we are now; what we have done so far; what we are going to do; and how we will know we are making a difference"*.

During 2014/15 the '**Caerphilly Delivers**' Performance Framework has reinforced delivery, with all being held to account by the LSB for the delivery of action plans to achieve each priority, and it's identified outcome. Outcome scorecards and Highlight/Exception Reports have been used to monitor progress, reporting from the Delivery Group, to the Leads Group, onwards to the LSB, who in turn are scrutinised by CCBC's Scrutiny Work Programme, by the CCBC Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee and also by the Caerphilly LSB Standing Conference (a stakeholder network).

For further information and access to all the documentation which supports the above and the implementation of '**CAERPHELLY DELIVERS**' – *the Caerphilly LSB Single Integrated Plan*, please visit the Caerphilly Local Service Board website at: <http://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/communityplanning/content/caerphilly-local-service-board>

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

A new Act has been introduced by the Welsh Government, which will change some aspects of how we work. The general purpose of the Act is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account. The Act is designed to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of Wales in accordance with the sustainable development principles

Well-being Goals

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about encouraging public bodies to think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place **seven** well-being goals, which are noted below.



Well-Being Goals description

A prosperous Wales

An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognizes the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

A resilient Wales

A nation, which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

A healthier Wales

A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

A more equal Wales

A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).

A Wales of cohesive communities

Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation

A globally responsible Wales

A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

The definition of Sustainable Development

The Act starts by giving a **definition** of what is meant by sustainable development:

In this Act “sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

The Act places a duty that the public bodies will be expected to carry out. A duty means that we have to do this by law.

The well-being duty states: **“Each public body must carry out sustainable development.** The action a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development must include:

- Setting and publishing objectives (“well-being objectives”) that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving each of the well-being goals, and
- Taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives.

What do we have to do to comply with the Future Generations Act?

We will need to carry out an assessment with our partners to know what the main needs for our citizens are within the borough. We do this already, however we may consider how this could be done at a regional level and we are currently discussing this now. When we have carried out a needs assessment we will need to develop and write a ‘well-being’ plan to address these needs for our borough and this will involve working together across the public sector. In this plan we must publish a statement when setting well-being objectives explaining why we believe the objective will help us achieve the overall goals (detailed previously on page 115) and how we have applied the sustainable development principles. This process must also involve people interested in achieving the goals and that those people reflect the diversity of their area.

We will also be set performance measures to know if we are achieving our goals and publish an annual report showing the progress we are making. The annual report will be subject to audit by our external auditors.

How is Caerphilly County Council getting ready to implement the Act?

We have a strong background in Sustainable Development principles and working with partner organisations. Our single plan was based on a needs assessment and is currently monitored by our Local Service Board (who will become a statutory public sector board as part of this Act). We have already set partnership goals, performance measures and monitor our performance so we are well placed to refine our current work to help meet the Future Generations Act. We are preparing now, attending a range of seminars and reviewing our processes. The Act comes into being on April 2016 and we are waiting for guidance to be published (due in September) by Welsh Government and this will give advice and support on how to implement the Act and carry out the statutory duty. For more information see this link:

[The Wales we want / Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)

Reviewing our Services

The Council has a wide range of ways to assess its performance, below are some of the ways in which we do this.

This year we have been further developing a 'self-evaluation model' that asks questions like are we any good? And how do we know? (What is the evidence behind that judgment?)

The process starts with each service carrying out a '**self-evaluation**' process to determine how they are currently performing and identifying where they could do better in a range of areas from Financial Management to Customer Care. These judgments are then subject to a peer group challenge. Following the challenge areas for improvement are identified and they will form the basis of a high-level action plan. We are still in the process of finishing our challenge sessions at the time of writing this report but we will provide further updates in our future performance reporting.

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Once the self evaluation is finished each service writes a detailed plan called a 'Service Plan' this identifies the improvements the service wants to make that year, based on areas their self-evaluation identified for improvement and in line with the available budget. Each service has **Performance Scorecards**, these are electronic places that captures and displays key performance data for the service. This is analysed and reviewed regularly at different levels throughout the organisation. Our risk registers; complaints and consultations also form part of our self-assessment.

The Council also sets a series of **Improvement Objectives** each year. These are chosen from where our data shows us that we need to improve, or based on what the public have told us is important to them. Each objective has an action plan that we use to monitor how we are performing. At the back of this document (Appendix A) shows an example of this.

Our Councillors scrutinise the services we provide and our performance. These are called "**Scrutiny**" meetings and there is one for each Directorate; Education for Life, Health, Social Care and Well-being, Living Environment and Policy and Resources. In addition our Audit Committee oversees finance and performance matters such as complaints and reports from our regulators.

We have a range of methods to find out how our customers think we are doing and some of these are noted on page 10-11. These range from a formal **consultation** in our Household Survey to smaller more instant feedback routes, such as asking customers about their experience in our contact centres. We also conduct exit polls from our contact centre and we analyse our complaints data to identify if any trends are emerging. Complaints numbers are reported to our Audit Committee twice a year for monitoring.

Other types of Assessment

Using our **Risk Management processes** each Service identifies a range of risks that may affect their business. Any risks that maybe significant are captured at a Directorate level. If the risk is more extreme or could affect areas of business it is captured in our highest-level risk register and monitored on a monthly basis. Updates of our high-level risk register are updated on the CCBC intranet routinely throughout the year.

Different Directorates have different types of inspectorate bodies; our Education Directorate is inspected by **ESTYN** although we have received no inspections this year to inform you of. Our last formal inspection was in 2012 and we received subsequent follow up visits but there have been no further outcomes.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (**CSSIW**) regulates Social Service performance. As part of the regulation the Director of Social Services produces a report, which shows whether progress has been made over the past year and highlights strengths and areas we want to improve upon for 2015/16.

The full report is available and can be found here: [Annual Directors Report 2014/15](#)

What our Regulators told us about our services in 2014/15

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) carry out an annual review called the 'Annual Improvement Report' more commonly known as the AIR. We received our last AIR in August 2015, which gives a view of how we have performed based on a range of regulatory work for 2014/15. The WAO judgement on our services and their reasons for those conclusions are listed below:

Based on the work of the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General considers that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure during 2015-16: The Auditor General has reached this conclusion because:

The Council has responded swiftly and effectively to address most of the recommendations made in our Special Inspection Report issued in January 2014. Improvements have been made to the Council's governance arrangements.

The Council has good financial management arrangements in place with a prudent approach that has delivered a surplus on its budget each year. The financial outlook for the Council is challenging but it is addressing areas for improvement to help deliver its future savings plans.

- The Council has an interim chief executive in post who is clear of his objectives and priorities for the Council. The interim responsibilities of members of the Corporate Management Team have been reviewed and changed, and are considered by the Council to be more logical and manageable.
- Social Services has built on its previous good performance and explored opportunities to further develop services to reflect local need and respond to national legislative change.
- Estyn has not identified any significant concerns about the Council over the past 12 months and continues to work closely with the Council to monitor and challenge the performance of all education services for children and young people in the area.
- The Council complied with its improvement planning and reporting duties under the Measure.
- The Appointed Auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's accounting statements stating that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions.



However, we have identified some key areas where further improvement is needed. This includes the need to address: the effectiveness of scrutiny, internal audit, and the more strategic aspects of Human Resources (HR) and workforce planning; and to develop the Council's self-evaluation arrangements.

Court proceedings and disciplinary investigations are continuing in relation to the issues about senior pay identified in the Report in the Public Interest issued in March 2013. Consequently, a degree of uncertainty remains at the Council until these proceedings are concluded.

That said, over the past two years the Council has demonstrated that despite this uncertainty it has continued to deal with normal business, and responded to increasing financial challenges. However, we are aware that the Council is now facing challenges in relation to the delivery of its leisure and waste services. We will assess the progress made by both services as part of our 2015-16 performance audit work at the Council.

The full report can be accessed from: www.audit.wales or from the contact details on page 125.

The Wales Audit Office undertook improvement assessment work under three themes: use of resources; governance; and performance in 2014. The work carried out since the last time we reported on this is set out below and also includes other relevant regulator reviews and reports:

Project name	Brief description	Dates when the work was undertaken
Delivering with Less – Environmental Services	Review of the impact of cuts in resources on environmental services.	November 2013 to January 2014
Welfare Reform	Review of arrangements to manage the impact of welfare reform.	December 2013 to March 2014
CSSIW National Inspection: Safeguarding and Care Planning of looked after children and care leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours	Assessment of the quality of Safeguarding and Care Planning.	January to May 2014, published in August 2014
Arrangements to support safeguarding of children	Review of the Council's governance and management arrangements to provide assurance that children are safeguarded and that any concerns can be highlighted effectively and efficiently.	March to May 2014, published in October 2014
Wales Audit Office Annual 'Improvement Plan' Audit	Review of the Council's published plans for delivering on improvement objectives.	June 2014
Wales Audit Office Financial Position Assessment	Review of the Council's financial position and how it is budgeting and delivering on required savings.	July to September 2014
Audit of the Council's Accounts	Audit to ensure that the Council's accounts are prepared in accordance with the appropriate guidance and present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions for the year ending March 2014.	July to September 2014
Wales Audit Office Annual 'Assessment of Performance' Audit	Review of the Council's published performance assessment, including testing and validation of performance information.	October 2014
Data Quality Review	Review of the Council's data quality arrangements.	October 2014

Project name	Brief description	Dates when the work was undertaken
CSSIW Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2013-14	An evaluation of the key areas of progress and areas for improvement in the Council's Social Services for the year 2013-14.	October 2014
Corporate Governance Inspection follow-up	Review of the Council's progress in addressing the recommendations made in the Corporate Governance Inspection published in January 2014 and the two Reports in the Public Interest published in March and September 2013.	October to December 2014
Sustainability of Social Services	Gwent-wide review, undertaken with CSSIW, of the sustainability of Social Services considering performance, management, and revenue expenditure over multiple years.	April 2014 to January 2015
Welsh Language Commissioner	Response to the Council's 2013/14 Annual Monitoring Report on its Welsh Language Scheme.	February 2015

Headlines – a summary of the key findings for 2014/15

The table below summarises the key findings of reports issued since the last AIR by the Wales Audit Office, the CSSIW, and the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Audit of accounts	The Appointed Auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the Council’s financial statements on 30 September 2014, stating that they presented a true and fair view of the Council’s financial position and transactions – September 2014.
Improvement planning and reporting audits	We issued audit certificates stating that the Council had discharged its duties under the Local Government Measure.
Use of resources	<p>The Council had good financial management arrangements in place and recognised that it needed to address some areas for improvement to help deliver its future savings plans.</p> <p>The Council had a good track record of operating within its budget and had developed a framework to monitor the delivery of its proposed savings in 2014-15.</p> <p>The Council’s future plans and arrangements to deliver savings were adequate and improvements were being implemented. Wales Audit Office – May 2015.</p>
Governance	<p>The Council had made good progress in addressing most of the recommendations from the Special Inspection Report and Public Interest Reports but still needs to further improve other aspects of its governance arrangements. Wales Audit Office – January 2015 full report available at www.audit.wales</p> <p>The Wales Audit Office reported on the Council’s arrangements to support safeguarding of children in October 2014. The governance, accountability and management arrangements for overseeing whether the Council is meeting its safeguarding responsibilities to children had some weaknesses, which the Council is addressing.</p> <p>The Council’s arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its safeguarding responsibilities to children had some weaknesses, which the Council must address.</p> <p>The Council’s approach to identifying and acting on improvements in its safeguarding arrangements had some weaknesses, which the Council was addressing in October 2014.</p>

Performance

Most of the Council's environmental health services were performing well but due to cuts in resources the Council will find it difficult to fulfil new statutory duties to protect the public and the environment in the future – December 2014.

The Council had committed most of its Discretionary Housing Payments allocation but because of weaknesses in its management and monitoring of funds, it was not clear if those in the greatest need are receiving help. January 2015.

The Council had further improved its data quality arrangements - October 2014.

Caerphilly Social Services built on its previous good performance and explored opportunities to further develop services to reflect local need and respond to national legislative change.

CSSIW Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2013-14 – October 2014. The full report is available at www.cssiw.org.uk for both this and the one noted below on the safeguarding of care leavers.

CSSIW also undertook a National Inspection of safeguarding and care planning for looked after children and care leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviour in August 2014.

The Council was considering how to use financial and performance data from our Social Services Sustainability work across the five Gwent councils to plan for future social services provision. February 2015.

The Welsh Language Commissioner commented in February 2015 that the Council had taken steps to improve the use of Welsh in the workplace but had made slow progress to increase the bilingual content of their website.

www.comisiynyddygybraeg.org

Estyn did not undertake any specific reviews at the Council this year, but continues to monitor and challenge the Council's education services.

From the Annual Improvement Report 2014/15 one recommendation was made by the WAO and that was:

The Council should take a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances. This recommendation was made in January 2015 and has now been addressed. The AIR states " *A lawful decision on the buy-out of the essential car user and annual leave allowances was taken by the Council on 27 January 2015*".

Wales Audit Office is the overseeing regulator for the whole Authority. Reports from the relevant inspectorates can be accessed from the websites listed below: www.wao.gov.uk. Wales Audit Office can be contacted by e-mail audit.wales/contact-us or writing to WAO 24 Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF11 9LJ

CSSIW (Care and Social Services Inspectorate in Wales) recommended the following improvements for 2014/15:

R1 Develop the commissioning strategy for older people.
R2 Interrogate the reasons for delayed discharge and put in place strategies to monitor and improve the progress of this.
R3 Continue to develop methods for supporting and developing skills of foster carers.
R4 Examine factors contributing to the rise in children placed on the child protection register.
R5 Continue to develop outcome measures for new services.
R6 Continue to develop method/frameworks for quality review.
R7 Continue to develop mechanisms to improve corporate oversight.
<i>Action plans have been put together and this work has either been completed or is in the process of being completed</i>

The Council established an **Improving Governance Programme Board** and implemented the majority of actions that were identified to improve governance based on the recommendations made in the Special Inspection Report and Public Interest Reports – follow up January 2015. The Governance Board continues to action plan and monitor a range of additional areas we want to improve upon in our governance processes. We report our progress to CCBC Audit Committee and our updates can be found on the Council’s website.

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Local / National Reports 2014

The WAO carries out a range of reviews at a national level although some of the casework is carried out locally to build a national picture, such as those noted earlier. Below are the links to the full reports. The proposals for improvement are made based upon findings at a national level so we may act on some but not others either because we already work this way or because we have different working practices that make the suggestion less relevant. Those reports can be accessed at the WAO links below.

[Good Scrutiny? Good Question!](#)

[Delivering with less – the Impact on environmental health services and citizens](#)

[Managing the Impact of Welfare Reform Changes on Social Housing Tenants in Wales](#)

[Young People Not in Education, Employment or training](#)

Future Developments

Welsh Government produces a range of legislation in which we as an Authority have a duty to implement. Below we list some of the legislation and our own strategies that we will have to plan for and in some cases change working practises in the coming year.

Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014

The new Act provides a statutory framework to deliver the Welsh Government's commitment to integrate social services to support people of all ages, and support people as part of families and communities. The intention of the Act is to:

- Transform the way social services are delivered, primarily through promoting people's independence to give them a stronger voice and control.
- Integration and simplification of the law to provide greater consistency and clarity for people who use social services, their carers, local authority staff and their partner organisations, the courts and the judiciary.
- Promote equality, improve the quality of services and the provision of information people receive, as well as ensuring the right incentives for commissioners to achieve a shared focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Integrate and align arrangements so that there is a common set of processes, *for people*.

There is a clear emphasis on wellbeing and a requirement for Local Authorities to gain a better understanding of who needs care and support in their community and a recognition that improving wellbeing is a combined effort.

As such there is a joint duty on the 5 Local Authorities across the region and the Health board to produce a Populations Needs Assessment report on *the extent to which there are people who need care and support and carers who need support* and a single partnership arrangement must be established. Each local authority area will be required to undertake a population needs assessment before informing a regional report. There are potential synergies with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, which also requires Authorities to produce an assessment of the state of economic, social and environmental wellbeing.

There are several different parts to the Act some of which include new duties on local authorities to promote the development of new ways of working such as through social enterprises, co-operatives and voluntary sector services. This could include the local authority assisting in the setting up of a new business which can be classed as a social enterprise or supporting people who use our service in setting up a co-operative arrangement for helping each other with low level day-to-day needs. We are also required to promote the availability of preventative services from the third sector in the arrangements it makes for providing care and support, and informing people what services are available.

Environmental and Planning Bill 2015

The Purpose of the Environmental Bill (which is due to receive Royal Assent in May 2016) are to put in place legislation that will enable Wales' resources to be managed in a more proactive, sustainable and joined-up way and to establish the legislative framework necessary to tackle climate change. It is broken down into 7 parts as noted below:

- Part 1: Sustainable management of natural resources – provides a modern legislation for managing Wales' natural resources that helps to tackle the challenges we face and is focused on the opportunities our resources provide.
- Part 2: Climate change- provides the Welsh Ministers with powers to put in place statutory emission reduction targets and carbon budgeting to support their delivery.
- Part 3: Charges for carrier bags – provides the Welsh Ministers with the necessary powers to address issues in implementing the successful carrier bag charge.
- Part 4: Collection and disposal of waste – improves waste management processes by helping us achieve higher levels of business waste recycling, better food waste treatment and increased energy recovery.
- Parts 5 & 6: Fisheries for shellfish and marine licensing – clarifies the law in relation to shellfisheries management and marine licensing.
- Part 7: Flood & Coastal Erosion Committee and land drainage – clarifies the law for other environmental regulatory regimes including flood risk management and land drainage.

National Resources Wales (NRW) may carry out Area statements and it is hoped this will provide *local authorities with a clear and consistent evidence base, which they can take into consideration when carrying out their activities and can clearly identify the opportunities, risks and constraints presented by natural resources in their area.

The Bill suggests that *Area statements will be an important evidence base for the local development plans, and will contribute to and inform delivery of the Well-being objectives and Well-being plans. Local authorities will also be required to meet the new biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty.*

Other duties will involve a requirement to report on our biodiversity activities and outcomes. Some of the Parts above will affect how we do things as a local authority more than others such as part 4 and part 2

* extracts from the: [Environmental \(Wales\) Bill Factsheet](#)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

We have talked about the Future Generation Act (FGA) earlier and the mechanisms of setting objectives and writing plans, however the FGA requires us to look at our decision making in the long term, to consider how the decisions we make today will impact future generations in 20 years or longer. The governance aspect of this requires considerable thought in terms of evidencing how we do this, particularly when outside processes such as budget settlements have a short term time period against long term impacts of decisions. The Future Generations Act also requires us to carry out a 'needs assessment' of our area to establish priorities for improvement for the area.

There is overlap between the Future Generations Act, the Environmental Bill, the Planning Bill in the way they contribute to the goals of the FGA and with the Social Services Act, as they all require an assessment of either place or people or broader data. Further information on the connections of the first 3 legislations is available from the link above at the Wales Government website.

Welsh Language Standards

176 Welsh language standards have been introduced (to replace previous Welsh Language Schemes) and are underpinned by two key principles:

1. In Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language
2. Persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.

The standards cover the areas of Service delivery, • Policy making, • Operational areas, • Promotion, • Record keeping.

Public organisations, some private companies and third sector organisations must comply with these standards and the Welsh Language Commissioner has the power to launch an investigation if members of the public feel that there has been interference with their freedom to use the language whilst dealing with these bodies. There is more information about the standards in our equalities section.

Caerphilly Councils Anti - Poverty strategy

Following public consultation we launched our Anti-poverty strategy this year to show our commitment to tackling poverty. Our plan explains how important it is we all tackle poverty as it harms people's prospects and damages their long-term future and this can place a burden on public resources and services. Our strategy is largely about joining up the many varied and existing work, which you can read more about at <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/My-Council/Strategies,-plans-and-policies/Anti-poverty-strategy>

How to contact us

Your views and opinions on the content of our performance reports and the priorities that we set each year are important to us. We welcome your input so that we can continue to provide meaningful information that helps inform you of the service focus, ensuring that we are working on the things that are important to making a difference to you, our citizens and our communities.

Please contact us by: Email: PMU@caerphilly.gov.uk OR by Web link: [Council Performance](#) and follow the instructions on screen:

Alternatively, please contact:

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The screenshot shows the Caerphilly Council website's Performance Management Unit contact page. The header includes the council logo, 'STAY CONNECTED' with a red envelope icon, and a search bar. A navigation menu lists 'Popular tasks', 'Resident', 'Business', 'Things to do', 'The council', and 'Get involved'. The breadcrumb trail reads 'Contact Us > Council departments > Performance Management Unit'. The main heading is 'Performance Management Unit'. Below it, a text box asks for comments on the performance report or suggestions for improvement. To the right, a green box titled 'Are you looking for' lists 'Corporate Plan', 'Improvement Objectives', and 'Performance Report'. The 'Your contact details' section contains input fields for Name, Email, Phone No., and Message, followed by a 'Submit' button. At the bottom, contact information is provided: Telephone (01443 864382) and Address (Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, CF82 7PG).

This document is also available in different languages and formats upon request. Further information can also be found on our website: www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Appendix

2014/15 Improvement Objectives

Improvement Objective 1

Ensure children and young people who are looked after are supported to achieve their full potential

In 2014/15 we wanted to:

- Continue to recruit sufficient foster carers in order to meet the placement needs of our Looked After Children (LAC). We plan to reduce the reliance on Independent Fostering Agency placements and maintain Placement Stability for children, to promote more positive outcomes.
- We want to improve the timeliness for children who require adoptive placements to be matched with and placed with adoptive families.
- We hope to increase the education attainment levels of all Looked after children (LAC) in an education setting.
- We want to improve the engagement of young people leaving care, in education, training and employment in order to give them the best opportunities.
- Continue to improve the range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and those facing homelessness.

Our priority actions, progress and achievements were:

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status
06. Continue to recruit sufficient foster carers in order to meet the placement demands of Looked After Children (LAC) to reduce reliance on Independent Fostering Agency placements and maintain Placement Stability levels below the Welsh Average of 10%	<p>The Fostering Team continues to actively recruit potential foster carers and over the three year span of this Improvement Objective have recruited 33 new carers, significantly exceeding the original target of 25.</p> <p>Placement stability has increased by one percentage point from 9.4% in 2013/14 to 10.4 for 2014/15. Whilst this is disappointing, it still places us at the Welsh average.</p>	🟢	Complete
08. Ensure that children requiring adoptive placements are suitably matched and placed with adoptive families in a timely manner	<p>South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) has been fully operational since April 2014 and working practice is now well embedded. We have successfully placed 12 children for Adoption this year significantly exceeding the original target of 3. Over the three year period, 54 children have been adopted.</p>	🟢	Complete
09. Improve the educational attainment levels of Looked After Children.	<p>A key success indicator for ensuring children's educational needs are being met in school is the completion of the Personal Education Plan and performance has been maintained this year at 94.10%.</p> <p>School attendance levels for LAC have also been maintained at 95.5% in Primary Schools and 91.7% in Secondary Schools</p> <p>Overall academic attainment has increased with the average external qualifications points score rising from 238 in 2013/14 to 322 for the current year. It is important to note that the number of children included in this cohort is small and small variations in ability will have significant impact on the scores.</p>	🟢	Complete
10. Improve the engagement of young people leaving care in education, training and employment.	<p>The number of young people in this cohort is relatively small (8 young people out of a possible 33). The young people not engaged include young people with significant and complex disability, young parents, young people in prison or remand, all of whom are unable to engage in education, training or employment but have to be reported in this data set. 100% of Care Leavers have Pathway Plans in place and are in contact with the Local Authority.</p>	🟢	Complete
11. Continue to improve the range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and those facing homelessness.	<p>The Sixteen Plus Team, working closely with Housing and Supporting People teams, continue to identify and develop a wide range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and homeless 16/17 yr olds. Performance to date confirms that 100% of young people known to Children's Services are placed in appropriate accommodation that meets their identified needs.</p>	🟢	Complete

The following tables show what has changed as a result of our actions during 2014/15:

How much did we do?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
% Of Children placed with Caerphilly Foster Carers.	135/272	49.63	45.00	–	47
% of LAC that began with a care plan in place	Final - 135/135	100.00	100.00	–	100
% of LAC with a plan for permanence at due date	Final - 76/76	100.00	100.00	–	100
The % of pupils in local authority care aged 15, who leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification	This is FINAL data and refers to the Academic Year 2013/14.	0.00	0.00	–	
The Number of Foster Carers recruited.	Local Indicator (quarterly)	33.00	25.00	–	23

How well we are doing?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
% of LAC with one or more changes of school	Final - 18/211	8.50	13.70	–	8.3
% of LAC reviews carried out within statutory timescales.	Final - 539/566	95.20	90.00	+	97.5
% of LAC achieving the Core Subject Indicator at KS2	Final - 7/11	63.64	78.57	+	71.4
% of LAC achieving the Core Subject Indicator at KS3	Final - 8/23	34.78	41.66	+	42.9
Average external qualifications points score for LAC	Final - 8861/27	322.00	200.00	–	238.1

Is anyone better off?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
% of eligible children that have pathway plans	Final - 112/112	100.00	100.00	–	100
% Of Children placed with adoptive families during the financial year.	Final - 12/272	4.41	3.00	–	4.70
% of eligible children with a personal advisor	Final - 149/149	100.00	100.00	–	100
% of former LAC in educ/training/employment at 19	Final - 18/33	54.50	50.00	+	60
% of LAC who have had more than 3 placements during the year	Final - 29/272	10.60	10.00	+	9.5
% of former LAC in contact at age of 19	Final - 33/33	100.00	100.00	–	100
% of former LAC in suitable accommodation at 19	Final - 33/33	100.00	95.00	+	93.3
% of LAC receiving a PEP within 20 school days	Final - 48/51	94.10	85.00	+	95.2

Improvement Objective 2


Improve job opportunities so people can live better lives by implementing the Council's Passport Scheme

In 2014/15 we wanted to:

Further implement the 'Caerphilly Passport Programme' which is aimed at helping 16-24 year olds within the Caerphilly Borough into employment, and to:

- Support young people who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in accessing work experience and training opportunities.
- Support the Council in dealing with the future challenge of its own potential skills gaps across the organization.
- Assist Local Service Board partners and private sector partners who tell us that they have job opportunities but cannot find people with the right skills and knowledge to join their businesses.

Our priority actions, progress and achievements were:

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status
Blank			
<p>We will maintain and improve where possible on the mechanics of the passport scheme using the feedback participants, employers and partners give us.</p>	<p>As this was one of our objectives last year, our action plans to set up the scheme and work in partnership with the Job Centre, were established in 2013/14. An external evaluation of progress has already taken place so our actions now are to maintain and to improve where possible on the mechanics of the scheme using the feedback participants, employers and partners give us.</p> <p>We have developed relationships with partners, which have been critical to the success of the scheme so far, such as LSB partners, Job Centre Plus, Groundwork Caerphilly, Careers Wales, local training providers and built on links with Education providers. The passport team have also established strong links with the Private Sector (through the Caerphilly Business Forum) and our LSB partners to promote the use of traineeships not just as a vehicle for workforce planning but also as a means of delivering on the wider Social Responsibility agenda. This is now day to day business.</p>		Complete

The following tables show what has changed as a result of our actions during 2014/15:

How much did we do and how well did we do it?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
Create at least 150 work experiences opportunities each year	As the ESF funding for this project ended in December 14, the Passport Programme were unable to take additional work placements through the Passport model in Q4. Targets for the year however, were met.	154.00	150.00	↑	178
Create at least 25 apprenticeship opportunities	These are Jobs Growth Wales formal targets. Although we have exceeded our formal target requirements the Jobs Growth Wales funding element ends in DEC 14 so we have not set further local targets as this will impact what we can deliver.	25.00	25.00	↑	25
Create at least 40 employment opportunities		51.00	40.00	↓	68

Is anyone better off?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
% of positive outcomes achieved	Positive outcomes are: participants who have gained employment or gone onto further Education following successful completion of the Passport Programme. This is an annual PI and was 80% at the end of the project who gained a successful outcome following their completion of the programme.	80.00	77.00	↓	77
% of participants that now feel they are more 'work ready' from being on the Passport Programme	Annual PI and target met.	100.00	80.00	↓	100

Improvement Objective 3

Develop an effective and accessible Youth Service that supports the personal and social development of young people

In 2014/15 we wanted to:

The Welsh Government demonstrated their commitment to youth work by publishing the National Youth Work Strategy in February of this year. The CCBC Youth Service will focus on delivering in response to this through the Caerphilly Youth Service Strategy and Operational Plan 2014- 2019 to ensure a consistent drive on the previous year's achievements but in a more specific and measurable way.

Effective youth work practice can build the capacity and resilience of young people. Youth Services have a strong track record in engaging young people in positive activities that are participative, empowering and encouraging. Through non-formal and informal learning, which supports personal and social development, Youth Services help young people to develop the skills and qualities they will need in adulthood.

The improvements that have taken place between 2013 and 2015 have provided a strong foundation from which to continue developing effective youth work practices. This is an important area of work for the authority, and a joined up approach in supporting young people to reach their potential has been recognised as area for on going development which will be reported through the annual service plans. Elements of this work will also be captured as part of the new suite of improvement objectives, one of which focuses on improving outcomes for all learners, particularly those vulnerable to under achievement.

Our priority actions, progress and achievements were:

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status
A1 Consult, publish and implement the Youth Service Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following consultation and refinement, publication was made in January 2015, with implementation of associated operational plan following. - Officers have prepared an annual progress report on the outcomes and impact on the objectives and tasks in the operational plan. 	🟢	Complete
A2 Increase the numbers of young people engaged by the Youth Service in comparison to the youth population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of contacts (visits) has increased from 64,033 in 2013/14 to 71,541 to 2014/15, which is an increase from 8.2 average visits per registered user in 2013/14 to 11.3 in 2014/15. - The Youth Service has a responsibility to deliver universal and targeted youth work in line with the above strategy. Lead workers have focused on supporting young people who are the hardest to reach which requires more quality and intensive intervention. - The Youth Service is currently identifying savings in line with MTFP. Officers are attempting to reduce expenditure which has a minimum impact on front line delivery but there is a risk that significant reductions will prevent us from increasing our engagement in the future. 	🟢	Complete
A3 Introduce a "Youth Work in Schools" project to engage young people experiencing poverty and deprivation, to improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Work in Schools had been introduced into 4 (Lewis School, Pengam, Pontllanfraith, Rhymney and St Martin's) schools as a pilot project and this has secured additional funding for 2015/16: This will be delivered via a refined management structure. - The outcomes and impact of the project will not be fully realised until the end of the academic year but has nevertheless achieved all Welsh Government targets to date. 	🟢	Complete
A4 Increase the numbers of young people securing non-formal learning qualifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A number of young people at any given time are enrolled on national accreditations and are undertaking modules and credits, working towards final accreditation. - Alongside more standard forms of accreditation such as Agored, Asdan and Duke of Edinburgh, the Youth Service offers children and young people the opportunity to engage in a number of achievement-related activities that enrich their lives and reduce barriers to learning. An example of this is the Junior Youth Leadership programme, delivered from July 2014-January 2015 with 11 young people gaining accreditation. Further delivery is scheduled for Autumn 2015. - A young person has been employed initially through the Passport Programme as an apprentice youth worker. This young person is currently undergoing a work based learning placement within the Youth Service. He has secured a contract for a year experience, the opportunity to secure qualifications and potential career advancement within this field of work. 	🟢	Complete
A5 Improve equality of access to Youth Service provision, by widening delivery of Youth Work. Expand youth work methodology and settings in order to meet the needs of young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnership established with schools and Communities First to deliver Youth (and Family) Workers in Schools Programme, as referenced in A3. - Delivery has been extended to include Caerphilly town centre, and current discussions in relation to a partial service restructure includes the widening of delivery options, to include more flexible, outreach methods. 	🟢	Complete
A6 Refining methods of data collection, embracing current technology and aligning with other educational data, to better track the engagement and progression of young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Officers have developed a MIS structure that is compatible with Educational, National and Regional youth Service data collection methods. This has reached the point of operational use. - Additionally, an electronic identification system has been introduced to aid schools and key officers to target appropriate intervention and support NEETs or potential NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training). - A Caerphilly Information Sharing Protocol has been written and ratified by the endorsing body (WASPI). This will enable offices to share information and assist young people to secure destinations and realise their potential. 	🟢	Complete

How much did we do?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
Number of young people achieving local accreditation (non-formal and formal) - Yrly	Whilst we have not achieved in numbers expected this year we wanted to achieve at least 30% of young people engaged achieving a local accreditation (2400/8000). We exceeded this target achieving 35% (2224/6347).	2224.00	2400.00	+	
Number of Young People engaged by Youth Services	The performance of last year (2013-14) is inclusive of circa 1900 young people who were engaged by the youth service, and are now engaged by other grant youth projects. In addition to this indicator the number of contacts (visits) has increased from 64,033 in 2013/14 to 71,541 to 2014/15, which is an increase from 8.2 average visits per registered user in 2013/14 to 11.3 in 2014/15. This identifies that young people are using the service more frequently.	6347.00	6100.00	↑	7848
Number of young people achieving national accreditation (non-formal and formal) - Yrly	Again, whilst we did not hit our numbers we set ourselves a target to achieve 5.5% of young people engaged achieving a national accreditation (440/8000), however we have exceeded this target achieving 5.9% (377/6347).	377.00	440.00	+	

How well did we do it?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
% local inspections of selected youth service projects and clubs graded as adequate or above (wording revised 13-14)	This PI changed its name in 2014/15 from "% of peer observations judged as good or above all youth service provision based on a planned observation cycle per year."	100.00	100.00	↑	75
Customer Satisfaction - Youth Services - % Young People rating the quality of service to be good or above (Annual)	93% of young people said they were Very Happy or Happy with the Service, 6% of young people marked it as "OK" and 1% marked Unhappy.	93.00	90.00	↑	90.00
Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools (EDU016b)	The provisional data indicates the attendance is 92.9%. This will be confirmed via the publication of WG National PAM data.	92.94	93.50	+	92.02

Is anyone better off?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
The percentage of pupils (including those in local authority care) in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August who leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification (04a EDU002i)	This figures is calculated from 22 people who left without a qualification from a cohort of 2152.	1.00	0.30	+	0.4
% of 16 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) in October (Yr 11)	This is a reduction of 0.9% on the previous year (4.4%), and is the 3rd successive year of improvement. The Wales average for 2014/15 was 3.1%.	3.50	4.00	↑	4.4

Improvement Objective 4

Improve awareness, access, variety and use of leisure, community and sporting facilities in our borough

In 2014/15 we wanted to:

- Ensure that people in Caerphilly lead active lifestyles. The vision is to get more people, more active, more often.
- People would be clearly aware of what leisure facilities and programmes of activity were available for them across our county borough.
- New sporting facilities would be built that cater for all sections of the community.
- All facilities would be maintained to an excellent standard and people would have a choice of good quality facilities and programmes to suit their individual needs or desires.
- The number of people visiting our sports and leisure facilities would increase.

Our priority actions, progress and achievements were:

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status
01. We will ensure all activities are in a fun and safe environment	We take the safety of our customers seriously, accident trends are recorded and actioned as appropriate. All our activities are risk assessed and reviewed through the Health & Safety Group. Safeguarding update training was delivered for all staff December 2014.		Complete
02. We will source additional investment	Significant grant aid has been secured to support community groups for 15/16. However, future grant investment through Sport Wales is under review and alternative delivery methods are being considered for 16/17 & 17/18		Complete
03. Develop a Leisure Facilities Strategy (to inform priority investment in sports and leisure facilities)	The Leisure Facilities Strategy has been shared with CMT and Members and the period of public consultation has come to an end. Approval for the formal adoption of the strategy is being sought at present.		In Progress
04. Engage with schools and parents to ensure children are provided the opportunity to learn to swim by the age of 11 years (through the delivery of the Learn 2 Swim scheme)	A draft Aquatics action plan has been developed to support the improvements we need to make to achieve our aim of 'more swimmers, better swimmers'.		In Progress
05. We will retain users by fully implementing a scheme that rewards customer loyalty and improves communication with customers	Our customer retention has improved with our best retention in recent years, up from 3.2 months to 9.2 months. This year we purchased the retention package software called 'Communicate'. All staff members are now using analysis from Communicate to further enhance our engagement with our customers.		In Progress
06. We will grow a skilled and enthusiastic workforce (includes coaches, tutors and volunteers) and increase the number of volunteers	We are continuing to deliver both formal and informal CPD training for staff through a number of different channels. We have implemented a Performance Wheel across the service and quarterly 1-1's and annual PDR's are completed with all staff. We have also rolled out a mentoring scheme this year and we are using specialist software to capture and report training and CPD activity and maintain staff profiles.		In Progress
07. Introduce a programme to identify and support those who are more able and talented in sport	More Able and Talented programmes have been implemented. For example; Cardiff City Football Club is now using the Centre for Sporting Excellence in Ystrad Mynach as an Advanced Coaching Centre and an Advanced Development Centre. This programme provides a pathway for the More and Able and Talented in Football across Caerphilly		In Progress
08. Promote the well-being benefits of being physically active	We are using social media to communicate with our users and we have over 1,500 followers through Twitter and 1,590 Facebook friends.		In Progress
09. We will improve pathways to reduce drop off, improve community links and a wider choice of activities	This year we introduced the LOL (Love Our Lives) programme to help reduce drop off in participation amongst women and girls. We are also working in partnership with Street Games so that over the next 12 months we can deliver the best opportunities for residents of Caerphilly. Also, along with the Police and Education, we launched the Positive Futures scheme which is a referral programme to engage disaffected youth in sport and active recreation.		In Progress
10. We will support sustainable community clubs through 'Thriving Clubs' scheme	Our outreach work continues to develop formal links to National Governing Bodies for additional funding streams to support Community Clubs. We have also targeted working with 'Thriving clubs', community clubs that can grow and support participation. This is now being implemented across the Active Gwent region.		In Progress
11. We will invest in improving facilities for customers	We have made significant investments in improving facilities across the service. To date these include; - A new spinning studio, an updated changing room and external re-decoration at Heolddu Leisure Centre - A new Fitness Suite and a Health Suite at Risca Leisure Centre - A new gym at Newbridge Leisure Centre and we have re-used other surplus gym equipment at Sue Noakes Leisure Centre to provide a gym facility that was not available at this centre previously.		In Progress

The following tables show what has changed as a result of our actions during 2014/15:

How much did we do?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
Number of free swim sessions - children aged 16 yrs and under	There was a reduction in the number of 'free swims' during the Summer holiday period. This is due in the main to the new Learn to Swim programme running 50 weeks of the year at Newbridge this August and has resulted in a 50% lower programme offered to public swimming at the site and therefore less free public swims. Even with this reduction in the amount of free public swimming at Newbridge the leisure centre and all other pools are offering at least the minimum requirement of 'free' pool time as per WG guidelines. Risca Leisure Centre also ran a week long Aquacise course which again reduced the available public swimming times compared to the previous year	25210.00	28522.00	-	24710
Number of free swim sessions - adults aged 60 yrs and above	Continued to perform above last years actual Following customer feedback at Caerphilly and Cefn Fforest we have amended our early morning opening times. This has resulted in a noticeable increase in 60+ swims at these centres. Newbridge is currently undergoing a customer engagement process to establish if there is demand for a similar change to opening times.	45213.00	46320.00	+	42544

How well did we do it?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
02. LCS002b - Number of visits to indoor & outdoor sport facilities per 1,000 population	This is an improvement on 2013/14 performance. The service did not meet the anticipated target due to a decrease in users to Outdoor Facilities and a further change to WG NSI guidance. 2015/16 target will need to be reviewed due to the changes to NSI guidance.	7773	8184	-	7553.67
Number of Visitors to Sport Caerphilly Activities	Sport Development have exceeded the 2014 - 2015 annual cumulative target by over 9%, which is an exceptional achievement for the department. Performance is also up on 2013-2014 figures with nearly 4000 extra participants (4.6%) attending sporting opportunities in CCBC.	90598	83000	-	86629
Number Smartcard Holders	The introduction of a 'Smart Rewards' scheme and the launch of the new Caerphilly Library have increased awareness of SmartCard customer benefits which has resulted in current high performance.	123709	122000	+	112797

Is anyone better off?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
% Children age 11 yrs able to swim 25 meters	The 53% achieved this year is well under the national target and has decreased from last year. This year has seen the phased introduction of our new intensive lesson programme. This programme has been very successful at 5 of our 6 pools with the average % of children 11yrs of age running at 83% for these 5 pools, which shows good progress and on target for this year. Our focus will be on significant improvement, support and development where required to help all 6 pools improve their performance during 2015/16. Target of 91% to be achieved by 2020.	53.00	83.50	⬇️	58
% Pupils achieving level 5 in KS3 PE assessments		88.30	84.50	⬆️	82.30
% Pupils in school years 3-6 who report participation in a Sports Club	It is evident that while there appears to be a high number of pupils engaged in clubs outside of school, we have not achieved the overly ambitious target and there needs to be a focus on increasing community engagement. Results are from 2013/14 biennial School Sport Survey.	78.90	88.00	⬇️	78.90
% Pupils in school years 7-11 who report participation in a Sports Club	It is evident that while there appears to be a high number of pupils engaged in clubs outside of school, we have not achieved the overly ambitious target and there needs to be a focus on increasing community engagement. Results are from 2013/14 biennial School Sport Survey.	69.50	73.00	⬇️	69.5
% School years 3 - 6 participating in sport 3 times per week	Results are from 2013/14 biennial School Sport Survey.	41.00	30.00	⬆️	41
% School years 7 - 11 participating in sport 3 times per week	Results are from 2013/14 biennial School Sport Survey.	38.00	35.00	⬆️	38
% Young People attending 30 or more sessions in an academic year		11.94	10.00	⬆️	7.98
Number of people participating in the health referral scheme	An increase of 323 at end of year in Exercise Referral is due to a programme and activity review in October 2014. New class timetable has enabled the service to support more participants.	1163.00	840.00	⬆️	910

Improvement Objective 5

WHQS Investment will transform Council homes and act as a catalyst to also transform lives and communities throughout the county borough

In 2014/15 we wanted to:

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 WHQS is a minimum standard for homes. The core elements are that homes are:

- 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)
- Located in attractive and safe environments
- As far as possible suit the specific requirements of the household, for example, catering for specific disabilities.







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

By 2020, we want our communities to know:

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

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

Our priority actions, progress and achievements were:

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status
Achieve high levels of tenant satisfaction with the work undertaken to their homes	Overall satisfaction rates remain high and above target.		Complete
Adhere to the standards set out in the Charter for Trust. This applies to both the in house workforce and contractors	Compliance levels remain high and above target.		Complete
Carry out adaptations to meet specific needs of individual households	233 properties have had adaptations incorporated where this has been identified as a requirement for the tenants. Action on-going in response to need.		Complete
Delivery of the 2014/15 capital investment programme in respect of internal and external repairs and improvements	Significant underspend on planned programme due to slippage.		Not Met
Promote the Community Improvement Fund to benefit projects within the communities across the county borough	Only 2 projects supported during the year.		Not Met
Pursue external funding opportunities to support energy improvement measures under the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO), Arbed or similar Government initiatives).	Successful Arbed bid for Phillipstown. Scheme extended to June 2015. The scheme covers 317 properties of which 92 are Council properties. The funding of £2.7m will meet the cost of external wall insulation and replacement of inefficient boilers.		Partially Met

The following tables show what has changed as a result of our actions during 2014/15:

How much did we do and how well did we do it?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
Charter for Trust Standards - The Charter for Trust developed in consultation with tenants and staff sets out the standards that tenants can expect when work is being undertaken in their homes, which will be assessed by specific questions on the customer satisfaction survey	This measure is reported annually.	93.00	90.00	-	85.00
Number of homes brought to WHQS as recorded on annual return to Welsh Government (The number of houses that have achieved WHQS standard in the year)	This measure is reported annually in August.	123.00	80.00	-	108
Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their external elements	The published target for 2014/15 was 2381 properties. One contract relating to non traditional properties was delayed and there was a need to retender. As a result, this will cause slippage in the programme and will have an impact on the original target. We have therefore set a new target of 1531 for 2014/15, which is still much higher than the 2013/14 target of 38 properties. The review of the investment strategy led to a further downward revision to 834.	103.00	1531.00	+	23.00
Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their internal elements	Internal works contracts all started late in the financial year. 471 figure recorded within Keystone but due to valuation issues there are properties which have not been recorded as completed within the system. From other data sources total completions are 599.	471.00	1332.00	+	657

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Is anyone better off?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
% of tenants whose homes have been improved internally through the WHQS programme are satisfied with the completed works (The percentage of tenants who's house meets the WHQS standard that are satisfied)	This measure is reported annually. In 2013/14 the overall satisfaction rate was 92%.	90.00	80.00	-	92.00
Number of organisations making successful applications to the Community Improvement Fund (Number of local residents who use the Community Improvement Fund which will make environmental improvements to their external surroundings)	Four new applications under the Community Improvement Fund have been received. Two of the applications were the subject of consultation with Caerphilly Home Task Group on 30th October 2014. Given the low numbers of applications for CIF this may be discontinued as a measure.	2.00	10.00	+	3.00

Improvement Objective 6




Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless



In 2014/15 we wanted to:

Traditionally, those approaching the council for help and advice relating to a homelessness or a potential homelessness situation have been households and individuals considered more vulnerable or with greater needs than the average household. However, due to the many and varied external pressures for example unemployment, home owners in negative equity, higher levels of household debt, ease of access to credit and high interest loans, we now find that a range of households find themselves at risk of losing their home. The stresses brought on by such external factors also have wider effects, e.g. relationship breakdown and increased levels of domestic abuse. Housing and health are intrinsically linked to the quality of housing provided, as does a household's ability to reside in a settled home. Access to good quality, affordable housing and sustainable tenancies positively impacts on a household's health and well-being and helps to develop a sense of community.

We plan to introduce a person centred approach to the Housing Options and Homelessness Advice service in which customers will engage with one caseworker who will assess the their housing needs and their ability to either maintain an existing tenancy or access alternative suitable, affordable and sustainable accommodation and wherever possible, prevent homelessness.

Our priority actions, progress and achievements were:

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status
1. Restructure the Housing Options and Homelessness Advice team functions to offer a person centred casework service	This action was completed on time and within budget. This included the relocation of several officers to form a Homelessness Prevention team, located at Ty Gilfach. As a result of the reorganization, the service is better equipped to deal with the challenges presented by the recent change in homelessness legislation. We plan to undertake a second phase of restructuring during 2015/16 using Welsh Government transitional homelessness funding.		Complete
2. Provide mediation/early intervention support to households at risk of becoming homeless to remain in their homes	Staff have worked proactively throughout the year with tenants and landlords to assist people to maintain their tenancies. We have noted that this approach has resulted in increased confidence for landlords to work closely with the council to prevent instances of homelessness from occurring. In relation to the both actions numbered 2 and 3, during the year, we received 128 new requests for support.		Complete
3. Provide support to households to sustain new tenancies accessed through the Housing Allocations and Advice Centre	We appointed two specialist officers in quarter 1, to assist people sustain new tenancies. In relation to the both actions numbered 2 and 3, during the year, we received 128 new requests for support.		Complete
4. Work with private sector landlords to increase the level of affordable accommodation available through the development of a social lettings agency, accessible to any household regardless of benefit dependency.	Even though preparatory work was undertaken in the first quarter of the year with the drafting of business case to P&R Scrutiny, we deferred this action for 12 months pending the availability of transitional homelessness funding from Welsh Government in April 2015. We are now considering outsourcing the running of the social lettings agency to Cartrefi Hafod because of the experience they have in running a social lettings agency.		Partially Completed
5. Review and, where necessary, revise the existing pre-release prison protocol to empower prisoners to plan for their accommodation needs on release	Initially this task was going to be undertaken on a local level but, because of the complexity of the task, a decision was taken by the homelessness network to escalate this to a national issue. Although the action was consequently closed down as an Improvement Objective action, the council continues to play an active role in the completion of this task. The council has subsequently participated in an all-Wales review of homelessness prison leavers and an assessment of the impact of the removal of the priority need status due to be removed from legislation in 2015. Welsh Government commissioned research, undertaken by the WLGA is currently being considered and an all-Wales prison leaver pathway document will be published this autumn. In addition, local authorities in Gwent, the Police and National Probation Service have drafted a protocol to ensure we respond to the release of prolific offenders to our area and Welsh Government have made some funding available to meet short term accommodation needs and support.		Partially Completed
6. Produce guidance for all landlords (public and private) on the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 to promote non-discriminatory practice by all housing providers	This action was completed within time and on budget. The guidance has been published and circulated, and training for landlords has been completed.		Complete

Title	Comment	RAG	Overall Status
8. Improve both the working relations with prison accommodation services to prepare prisoners for their release and the level of assistance provided to prison leavers by support agencies on their release	This is linked to item 5 above. Due to the complexity at the national level, Welsh Government took over the planning of prisoner release arrangements and reconfigured the resettlement process by employing a new Community Rehabilitation Company which is now in place.		Partially Completed
7. Host a specialist domestic abuse support worker to provide early intervention support, target hardening services and person centred support to prevent homelessness in relation to domestic abuse victims and their families.	Hosting commenced in Q4 and is now fully operational. This is a 2-year arrangement with Llamau Women's Service, with an option to extend for a further 12 months. It is now providing much needed support to those people who may be homeless or threatened with homeless due to domestic abuse.		Complete

The following tables show what has changed as a result of our actions during 2014/15:

How much did we do and how well did we do it?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
1. Increase the number of PRS accommodation units accessed by our service users through our social lettings agency which will be introduced within the current year	SLA will now not be introduced until 2015 when transitional funding will be available. Therefore, the number of PRS accommodation units accessed by our service users through our social lettings agency during 2014/15 will be nil.	0.00	30.00	-	N/A
2. Produce and publicise guidance on Equalities Act 2010 in housing	The Equalities guidance was produced and publicised in Q3, with training provided to Landlords.	1.00	1.00	-	N/A
3. Number of credit union rent accounts opened with Smart Money credit union which promotes access to the PRS by service users in receipt of benefits	Q1=54, Q2=3, Q3=2 and Q4=10 It should be noted that CCBC does not have total control and influence over this activity as far as take-up is concerned. However, we are in a position to 'promote' and 'encourage' the use of this facility. Even though we did not reach the target, any increase in numbers is a benefit to our citizens, by enabling them to better manage their finances.	69.00	100.00	-	N/A
4. Reduction in the number of repeat homeless presentations	We introduced performance indicators 4-7 in advance of the new duties brought about by the change in homelessness legislations (Housing (Wales) Act 2104 – to take all reasonable steps to prevent homelessness). We restructured the service and introduced a tenancy sustainment service in preparation for the introduction of the new duties. Officers regard the outcomes as a positive step towards the acceptance of people remaining in their private rented sector accommodation or accepting an offer of accommodation in this sector with tenancy support, as an alternative to social housing which is in very high demand. Ambitious targets for the year were set not really knowing the extent of demand on the homeless services as a result of the change in legislation. This creates the impression that we have underperformed, which in each of the 4 indicators is not the case. Changes to the way we provide the homelessness prevention service means that we are in a good position to meet the new duties going forward. The success of this, is measured on the number of tenancies sustained for at least 6 months.	12.00	15.00	-	N/A

Is anyone better off?

Title	Comment	Actual	Target	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago
5. % of cases who have had their risk of homelessness prevented by assistance to remain in their existing accommodation	Total cases 1,093 of which 401 cases prevented. Refer also, to the first paragraph reported in Q4 of 2014/15 against the measure: Reduction in the number of repeat homeless presentations.	36.68	50.00	🟡	N/A
6. % of cases who have had their risk of homelessness prevented by accessing alternative accommodation available to them for a min of 6 months	Total cases 1,093 of which 412 cases were prevented by providing alternative forms of accommodation. Refer also, to the first paragraph reported in Q4 of 2014/15 against the measure: Reduction in the number of repeat homeless presentations.	37.69	50.00	🟡	N/A
7. % of non-priority, intentionally homeless cases not owed any duty, where they have become homeless and we have relieved this homelessness by securing accommodation for a minimum of 6 months	Total cases 35 of which 13 cases secured accommodation. Refer also, to the first paragraph reported in Q4 of 2014/15 against the measure: Reduction in the number of repeat homeless presentations.	37.14	50.00	🟡	N/A



COUNCIL – 6TH OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: SCRUTINY REVIEW 2015

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

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- 1.1 The attached report outlined the findings and recommendations identified from the view of scrutiny arrangements. The review was carried out to identify improvement to the operation of scrutiny following recommendations from the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015. The Scrutiny Review report was considered by Democratic Services Committee on 16th September 2015.
- 1.2 The report identifies the issues for improvement both contained the WAO report and identified by workshop groups attended by Members and Officers. The outcome of the workshops highlighted issues in relation to agendas, forward work programmes and witnesses, information and reports, task and finish groups, scrutiny support, the role of Cabinet and scrutiny members at committee, meeting organisation and chairing skills, and finally the external scrutiny role of local authorities.
- 1.3 Members were advised that the Project Group has developed its recommendations based on the issues raised by both Members and Officers and considers that these recommendations will address the issues raised by Wales Audit Office. Following discussion on the content of the report, it was moved and seconded that subject to an amendment to recommendation (iv), to allow Scrutiny Chairs to accept urgent items to be added to scrutiny committee agenda, the recommendations in the report be approved. By show of hands this was unanimously agreed. The Democratic Services Committee recommended to Council that for the reasons contained in the report:-
- (i) A limit of no more than 4 items be placed on scrutiny committee agendas.
 - (ii) There be a limit placed on the number of special scrutiny meetings held per scrutiny committee, of two additional meetings per annum, with priority for MTFP.
 - (iii) Cabinet and scrutiny committee forward work programmes include a brief narrative on key issues to be covered in the reports.
 - (iv) Scrutiny committees discuss their forward work programmes at each meeting and confirm the 4 items to be discussed at the following meeting. The Chair of the relevant committee will decide whether any additional items are to be added to the agenda if presented urgently before the next meeting, subject to the limit of 4 items per agenda and acknowledging a special meeting can be arranged if necessary.
 - (v) Scrutiny Leadership Group recommend whether referrals of individual Ombudsman reports from Standards Committee should be referred to scrutiny committee (and if so which committee) or Audit Committee.

- (vi) The positions of non - statutory co-opted members (without voting rights) of Health Social Care and Wellbeing and Education for Life Scrutiny Committees be removed and a list of stakeholders and external witnesses be developed for each scrutiny committee (maintained and agreed by Scrutiny Leadership Group). These can be called upon for specific agenda items to give evidence.
- (vii) An expert witness protocol be developed to ensure that witnesses are fully briefed and, in accordance with good practice, to ensure that evidence provided to the scrutiny committee is balanced and fair.
- (viii) Information items be removed from scrutiny committee agendas and instead be placed on the Members Portal in consultation with Democratic Services Committee.
- (ix) A prioritisation matrix be developed for requests for reports from Members and the public.
- (x) Comments from the workshops about report content be fed back to the relevant Directors. The quality of reports will be reviewed and monitored by Scrutiny Leadership Group for 6 months from the implementation of the new arrangements.
- (xi) A protocol be developed for task and finish groups and agreed by Democratic Services Committee, with a limit of two task and finish groups to run at a time, to ensure that the burden on limited resources is managed appropriately.
- (xii) The members training programme be further developed to incorporate relevant comments from the workshops including developing cabinet members role and be monitored by the Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet Member with responsibility for HR, Governance and Business.
- (xiii) That guidance on the format and content of the Cabinet Members written statement be developed. A new protocol will be developed to provide that the statement is shared ahead of the relevant meeting with scrutiny committee members and placed on the Members Portal, in advance of the scrutiny meeting. The protocol will give advice on the type of information to be included in the statement.
- (xiv) Good practice for pre-meetings be shared amongst Scrutiny Leadership Group including peer observations.
- (xv) The possibility of joint scrutiny committees be explored and the minutes of joint committees and other information about relevant outside bodies be published on the Members Portal.
- (xvi) A dedicated performance management meeting be held for each scrutiny committee once per annum.
- (xvii) The protocol for External Audit, Inspection and Regulatory Bodies interface with scrutiny be presented to Council for consideration and adoption once it is completed.
- (xxiii) The terms of reference and membership of the Scrutiny Leadership Group be reviewed to take into account any changes required as a result of the scrutiny review.
- (xix) A self-evaluation of scrutiny arrangements be carried out within 12 months of changes being agreed.
- (xx) The Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend the constitution in line with the above recommendations.

1.4 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Democratic Services Committee on 16th September 2015 – Agenda item

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DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 16TH SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: SCRUTINY REVIEW 2015

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline the findings and recommendations identified from a review of scrutiny arrangements that was carried out to identify improvement to the operation of scrutiny. This was following the findings of the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report identifies the issues for improvement contained the WAO report identified by the workshop groups in relation to agendas, forward work programmes and witnesses, information and reports, task and finish groups, scrutiny support, the role of Cabinet and scrutiny members at committee and meeting organisation and chairing skills, and finally the external scrutiny role of local authorities.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

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

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Improving Governance Programme Board (IGPB) are responsible for overseeing the improvements to scrutiny recommended by the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', and are asked to consider the findings and recommendations identified during the review.
- 4.2 The Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015 has identified further improvements to scrutiny. The report recognised the work carried out under the scrutiny improvement action plan and the structural arrangements put in place. However, the report identified that the next stage is to develop the effectiveness of scrutiny and clarify its role.
- 4.3 The WAO's main findings can be summarised as:
- The Chairs and Vice Chairs of scrutiny committees have mixed views on the benefits of pre-meetings.
 - Effectiveness of scrutiny's challenge role is limited.
 - The role of scrutiny is confused.

- Meetings are long and agendas lack focus.
- 'For Information' agenda items could be handled more efficiently outside of the formal scrutiny process.
- The Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference are very wide which restricts the time available to discuss subjects in depth.
- Agenda items need to be prioritised and focused on the Council's priorities.
- Information provided to scrutiny is good, however, Chairs and Vice Chairs would like more use of qualitative, historical and comparative information.
- Task and Finish Groups should be used more frequently to review specific issues in more depth.
- Members want to continue to improve their scrutiny role.

4.4 In order to identify how improvements can be made a project group was set up to oversee the improvement programme, the members of the project group were:

- Gail Williams Interim Monitoring Officer & Head of Legal Services.
- Angharad Price Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- Councillor Hefin David Chair Scrutiny Leadership Group.
- Councillor Colin Mann Chair Democratic Services Committee .
- Councillor Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member HR, Governance and Business.

4.5 The aim of the improvement programme was to identify possible changes to improve the operation of scrutiny. In order to ensure that all interested parties were involved in discussing possible changes to scrutiny, four workshops were held over a two-week period and attended by 64 people. Each workshop consisted of mixed groups of Members and Officers made up of the Leader and Deputy Leaders, Scrutiny Leadership Group, Democratic Services Committee, Scrutiny Committee Members and Co-opted Members, CMT, Heads of Services and Third Tier Officers.

4.6 The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the WAO findings and to find a 'long list' of options to action those findings. The workshop groups were asked to consider the following statements:

- The Wales Audit Office stated that the effectiveness of scrutiny's challenge role is limited.
- The Wales Audit Office stated that the effectiveness and role of scrutiny is confused.
- The Wales Audit Office stated that agenda items need to be prioritised and focused on the Council's priorities.

Participants were then asked to consider the following questions:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- How can we do it?
- What are the benefits/constraints?

4.7 The feedback from the workshops has been grouped into subject headings, which is supplemented with background information and conclusions of the project group.

4.8 The workshops groups also identified some general scrutiny suggestions, as follows:

- Review terms of reference for all scrutiny committees.
- Review number of scrutiny committees.
- Review how & when scrutiny committees will be involved during policy development – develop guidance for officers.

4.8.1 The terms of reference for Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee have been considerably wider than the other scrutiny committees. The terms of reference for Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee was recently addressed by the Interim Chief Executive, albeit on a temporary basis, when

Public Protection was transferred to Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. This has reduced the burden on the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee and there is an argument for continuing this approach on a permanent basis, as the services provided by Public Protection have a close affiliation with the health agenda.

- 4.8.2 The workload of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee may be addressed through reviewing forward work programmes and how information is provided to Members. If these were implemented there would be no reason to change the terms of reference or increase the number of scrutiny committees in order to reduce the workload of the scrutiny committee.
- 4.8.3 The use of special scrutiny committee meetings has also been suggested in order to address the workload of some scrutiny committees. During 2013/14 additional MTFP scrutiny committees were held which increased the workload of both Officers and Members. The next few years may see the need to hold more special scrutiny meeting for the MTFP, therefore some control over the number of additional meetings needs to be considered, perhaps a limit of two per scrutiny committee per annum. This will ensure the workload upon Officers and Members is kept under control and special meetings are used more effectively. The effective management of forward work programmes should also assist in managing agenda sizes.

Agendas

- 4.9 The workshops groups suggested that we develop options for revised arrangements for scrutiny agendas, to include:
- Maximum number of items for discussion.
 - Prioritise agendas to focus on strategic issues (risks, corporate priorities, external Audit, Inspection & Regulation reports, performance, finance) – link to Forward Work Programme.
 - Revise arrangements for report requests – set up procedure to determine priorities (matrix) that can be determined by scrutiny committee.
 - Consider other means to provide information to Members e.g. seminars.
 - Scrutiny Committee to decide which pre-decision reports are added to agenda – from the Cabinet work programme.
- 4.9.1 The general consensus across all of the workshops agreed that scrutiny committee agendas are overloaded, particularly Regeneration & Environment and Policy & Resources. This has been alleviated in the short term by the change to the terms of reference of Regeneration & Environment by moving Public Protection to Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.9.2 However a long term solution is needed to ensure that scrutiny committees use their valuable time more effectively, by prioritising items to be included on agendas but also ensuring flexibility so that issues raised by Members, stakeholders and the public are considered for inclusion. A maximum limit on the number of items for inclusion on the agenda would help scrutiny committees to ensure that they have the time to consider all items effectively.

Forward Work Programmes (FWP) and Witnesses

- 4.10 The workshops groups suggested that:
- Scrutiny involved and engaged in developing work programmes - annual meeting to discuss year ahead to prioritise items for work programme.
 - Scrutiny Committee to discuss FWP at each meeting and agree items to be added – including Member requests – need to reach consensus prioritising on key strategic issues vs. individual Member ward issues.
 - Work programmes – to be balanced between interests of committee and the core function of scrutiny to hold executive to account.
 - All FWPs to contain an overview of report and explain reason/outcome/objectives for scrutiny.

- Members decide if they want a Cabinet report to come to scrutiny – therefore Cabinet work programme needs to be available well in advance so that scrutiny can choose and contain narrative of the purpose and key issues.
- Use expert witnesses more – develop list of key organisations.
- Develop information and guidance on key witnesses further.
- Public/ Key Stakeholder engagement – develop strategy to manage, improve and support – linked to Welsh Government White Paper on work programming.
- Non-statutory co-optees have not been reviewed. Review what is their role, and appointment system.

- 4.10.1 To enable scrutiny committees to effectively manage their work programmes, each scrutiny committee could discuss their forward work programme at each meeting. This could be debated alongside the Cabinet forward work programme and requests for reports from Members, stakeholders and the public.
- 4.10.2 In order to allow the scrutiny committee to consider if a report on the Cabinet forward work programme should be added to the scrutiny committee forward work programme, a narrative would need to be included against each Cabinet report listed to identify key issues.
- 4.10.3 The previous Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan included a recommendation that Ombudsman reports should be referred to an appropriate scrutiny committee where the Report identified a serious failure in service delivery that would benefit from further consideration by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. Since that time the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously agreed that this should be amended so that Standards Committee could in appropriate circumstances refer such reports to Audit Committee instead of the relevant Scrutiny Committee. The Standards Committee has no objection to this proposal. A mechanism for referral needs to be agreed. It is therefore suggested that following a decision to refer on by the Standards Committee that the Scrutiny Leadership Group is consulted on whether the referral should be to the relevant Scrutiny committee or Audit committee .
- 4.10.4 Scrutiny can invite any external witness in order to provide an additional perspective to an issue or report that is to be debated. This practice varies across the scrutiny committees, with Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee for example inviting Trade Union representatives to speak on personnel policies and Caerphilly Homes Task Group, tenant representatives, invited to speak on WHQS matters.
- 4.10.5 Following the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Welsh Government issued guidance to local authorities on involving the public and stakeholders in scrutiny. The guidance advised councils to develop protocols on its engagement procedures particularly around forward work programmes. Following this a guide to scrutiny was published on the council website and a protocol to explain how requests to speak would be dealt with. The forward work programmes are published on the website every quarter and circulated to key stakeholders. The aim is to highlight topics and identifying potential witnesses, however to date there has been limited interest from the public to participate in scrutiny but it has raised awareness among some stakeholders of topics that are due to come forward.
- 4.10.6 The Welsh Government White Paper Devolution, Democracy and Delivery proposes that Local Authorities strengthens ‘Scrutiny Committees’ forward planning further by requiring them to make reference to ‘key decisions’ and corporate plans, as well as setting out what they intend to scrutinise and who they will engage with in doing so.’
- 4.10.7 Therefore it may be appropriate to pre-empt this proposal and make changes to our work programmes by developing both Cabinet and Scrutiny forward work programmes to highlight key issues and for scrutiny committees to identify potential external witnesses.
- 4.10.8 The role and appointment of co-opted members was discussed at the workshops. At present there are non-statutory co-opted members sitting on Education for Life Scrutiny Committee and Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. All non-statutory Co-opted members do not have voting rights. Cabinet agreed the appointment of Education for Life

Scrutiny Committee Co-opted Members in January 2000. Council agreed the appointment of Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Co-opted Members in 2001. These co-optees have not been reviewed since they were appointed.

- 4.10.9 There are four non-statutory co-opted members on Education for Life Scrutiny Committee; these co-opted members are representatives of the following organisations:
- Caerphilly Governors Association
 - National Union Teachers (NUT)
 - National Association Head Teachers (NAHT)
 - National Association of School Masters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
- 4.10.10 It should be noted that there are no other trade union representatives sitting on other scrutiny committees and not all teaching trade unions are represented.
- 4.10.11 There are four non-statutory co-opted members representing the Users and Carers Forum who sit on the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, however this forum no longer exists, so there is no formal role in respect of reflecting views of a recognised group and no group for them to feed back to. These members have provided a helpful dimension to meetings and broadened debate for the committee, however this is limited to their specific areas of expertise.
- 4.10.12 There has also been a representative from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board on Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee since 2001. This has proved useful in terms of creating a link with the health board and the scrutiny committee. The co-opted member has facilitated requests for information and is able to provide a helpful perspective at meetings.
- 4.10.13 However a more flexible and practical arrangement would be, to develop a list of expert witnesses both individuals and organisations that each scrutiny committee could call upon to give evidence on individual topics. This would give scrutiny committees and wider range of opinion and expertise and ensure that evidence provided at scrutiny is specific to the topic under debate.

Information

- 4.11 The workshops groups suggested that:
- Review how information is made available to members.
 - Information reports – use other methods to inform members such as seminars, email, intranet, website or Members' portal – video/podcasts.
 - Officers to make themselves available for a surgery 1 hour before Council & Scrutiny for Members to drop in with concerns etc.
- 4.11.1 The feedback from the workshops indicated a general agreement that there needed to be an effective solution(s) to providing information to Members. It was felt that the burden on scrutiny agendas could be alleviated through reducing the number of report requests that were sometimes parochial ward issues or had no specific purpose or outcome.
- 4.11.2 Consideration could be given to developing and improving information for Members by developing some of the ideas suggested by the workshops. Further development of the Members' portal to include organisation charts and contact details for officers and investigate using Video/Pod casts to explain complex issues or to give an overview of a service. Continue to use Seminars and provide training on accessing information on services on the website. Consider holding individual service drop in sessions prior to council meetings where members can speak directly to Officers – this could be focussed on a different service area before each meeting.

Reports

4.12 The workshops groups suggested that:

- Scrutiny Committees to do less things but well, Members requests to be considered against a prioritisation matrix.
- Using a matrix should prevent 'for information reports' and ensure forward work programmes become more focused and strategic.
- Use checklist of other methods to resolve issues (see Crime & Disorder CCfA) as evidence that request is last resort.
- The matrix for reports written for Officers as well as Members.
- Remind Members of other means to resolve issues for example by contacting officers directly or via email – need to develop contact lists for issues/services on Members' portal or intranet.
- Minutes for all committees highlight action points when referring items to scrutiny.
- Review report structure:
 - Include key points to focus on in the report.
 - Develop summary section of report further.
 - Recommendations on front page.
 - Covering reports, short and snappy with key points.
- Review timescale for receipt of reports before meetings, can they be circulated earlier to Members – particularly large reports with detailed appendices, to allow members time to digest.
- Use exception reports for performance management.

4.12.1 It was highlighted during the workshops (as mentioned under forward work programmes) that there needs to be a manageable process to consider requests for reports. To allow the scrutiny committee to balance requests against the demands upon the work programme and allow time to focus on less issues and in more depth.

4.12.2 A prioritisation matrix can help scrutiny committees decide which requests should be added to the work programme. This method is already used by some local authorities across Wales and can help to determine which are the most important issues. The process involves the Member defining what the issue is, what action has been taken already, and the reason for the request. The request should also include what expectation there is upon scrutiny.

4.12.3 The request is then scored against a matrix of key issues, such as risk, performance, budget, corporate priority, previous reports, strategic, public interest etc. The scrutiny committee would then decide if the request should be added to the work programme when judged against other priorities.

4.12.4 When the scrutiny committee is considering requests from Members, the public and stakeholders, the request should include details of the request, reasons and what action has been taken to date. The scrutiny committee would then consider if it is appropriate to add the item to the work programme and what impact and outcome could be achieved. This would need to be considered alongside competing priorities to ensure agendas are not overloaded.

4.12.5 There should be provision that if a request is not added to the work programme that the issue is dealt with through other means and the scrutiny committee should seek satisfaction that an officer will contact the Member.

4.12.6 The minutes of committees, such as Audit and Standards committee should highlight as an action point when reports have been referred to scrutiny for consideration.

4.12.7 The format and content of reports to scrutiny committee was a common theme across all workshop groups, with a number of suggestions for improvement. The main areas for improvement could be managed with the existing report structure, such as highlighting the main issues in the summary section and focussing performance on an exception-reporting basis.

- 4.12.8 Other changes would require changes to the current format, such as moving the recommendations to the front page, this would not impact on officer time and could be achieved relatively easily. However introducing a short summary report would involve additional workload for officers and would need to be investigated further to determine if the resources are available to produce these reports.
- 4.12.9 The final suggestion was to circulate larger detailed reports earlier, or make them available earlier. This would depend on the nature of the report and at what point the report is available prior to the meeting.

Task and Finish Groups and Scrutiny Support

- 4.13 The workshops groups suggested the following:
- Develop strategy for managing and supporting task and finish groups – maximum numbers, resources etc.
 - Agree support arrangements for scrutiny going forward.
- 4.13.1 The general consensus amongst all workshop participants was that task and finish group work is an effective means of scrutinising topics in depth and developing Members understanding of issues. There was some concern that any reduction in resources for scrutiny will impact upon the support for task and finish group work and for developing the use of external witnesses at scrutiny committee meetings.
- 4.13.2 In order to ensure that task and finish groups can continue it is proposed that a limit is set on the number that will be established per scrutiny committee and a maximum of two that can run at the same time. In addition a protocol is developed on how they will be managed and supported in future.

Cabinet Members & Scrutiny Members Role & Skills

- 4.14 The workshops groups suggested:
- Training for Cabinet Members on their role and interaction with scrutiny.
 - Questioning skills – mandatory training for scrutiny skills.
 - Each scrutiny committee to have training delivered together and include Cabinet members, Directors and Heads of services.
 - Carry out a Members' skills and interests audit following local government election, and appoint to scrutiny according to interest and skills.
 - Carry out peer review after scrutiny review changes have settled in.
- 4.14.1 Cabinet Members attend and contribute to scrutiny by giving a verbal statement at scrutiny meetings outlining their recent activities and the strategic direction of their portfolio, which are then open to questions. The feedback from the workshops suggested that Cabinet Members needed to play a more active role at scrutiny committee meetings and be more accountable for policy direction. Members asked that the Cabinet Member(s) written statement is sent in advance of the meeting to all scrutiny committee members with copies available at the meeting.
- 4.14.2 There are options available to increase Cabinet Members participation, through specific scrutiny training courses or Cabinet Members may find peer observation useful by visiting other local authorities to observe Cabinet Members at scrutiny committees. The Senior Councillor Development Programme commenced on 15th July 2015 for those Members who hold or aspire to Senior Office and wish to develop their leadership practice.
- 4.14.3 The workshops identified a number of issues in respect of Scrutiny Members role and skills and there has already been significant investment in developing scrutiny skills and knowledge. The Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan resulted in training for a large proportion of scrutiny

members in questioning & listening skills, chairing skills and the purpose of pre-meetings. This could be built upon further by offering training to the scrutiny committee as a whole, and include Officer and Cabinet Members, to focus on the role and purpose of scrutiny. Once the training has been carried out an internal peer observation and self-evaluation could be carried out between scrutiny committees to give feedback on the impact of the training.

Meeting Organisation & Scrutiny Chairs

4.15 The workshops groups suggested that:

- Pre-meetings review, days and times – consider if each scrutiny committee should determine its own arrangements for pre-meetings.
- Further training on making the most out of pre-meetings.
- Challenge Members who are late for pre-meetings or do not attend – through political groups.
- Training Chairs and review periodically their performance to ensure consistency.
- Training to improve chairing skills and better pre-meeting organisation.
- Chair to monitor and challenge attendance of scrutiny committee members.
- Appointment of Chairs – review current procedure.

4.15.1 The majority of Members who took part in the workshops expressed satisfaction that scrutiny committee pre-meetings were working well, helping to organise questions and providing a challenge. However a minority did not feel they were working effectively and there was some dissatisfaction that some Members were not attending pre-meetings.

4.15.2 There is a need to develop further training on the purpose of pre-meetings particularly on how to get the best out of them. When pre-meetings were originally introduced, Council decided that they would all be held at 5pm followed by the scrutiny meeting at 5:30pm. Some Members have commented that this has resulted in meetings finishing later, although analysis of meetings held during 2015 showed that meetings averaged 2 hours in length. The following table outlines the average number of meetings and duration during 2014:

Scrutiny Committee	Number of meetings	Average Time per meeting
Crime and Disorder	2	1.45
Education for Life	9	2.20
Health Social Care & Wellbeing	9	1.15
Policy and Resources	13	2:15
Regeneration & Environment	13	2.10

4.15.3 There is an argument for allowing each scrutiny committee to determine its own arrangements for a pre-meeting within certain parameters. This would give some flexibility to the individual scrutiny committees' circumstances and membership.

4.15.4 This could be decided at the first scrutiny meeting following the Annual General Meeting, the scrutiny committee could decide what time and day it wishes to hold its pre-meeting and for how long (with a set minimum time). This could be decided by a majority vote and then would apply until the first meeting following the next AGM. Then if the majority decide to hold the pre-meeting at 4:30pm, the formal meeting time could return to 5pm. There may be some scrutiny committees that decide they want to hold their pre-meetings on a different day, thereby giving them more time to prepare for the meeting.

4.15.5 Democratic Services Committee have asked that staff trial monitoring members attendance at pre-meeting, not for publication but to give the Chair information to challenge members should their attendance be poor.

- 4.15.6 There was some feedback which suggested that Chairs needed to ensure they were consistent in their management of pre - meetings and formal meetings, challenging Members performance and attendance. Training has been suggested for the whole scrutiny committee and the role of the chair could form part of this training. As stated above a Senior Councillor Development Programme has already started for those Members who hold or aspire to Senior Office and wish to develop their leadership practice.
- 4.15.7 There were some minority comments regarding the appointment of chairs in one workshop group, but this was not reflected across any other groups. Therefore it is not proposed to suggest any changes to the present system.

External scrutiny

4.16 The workshops groups suggested:

- Explore possibility to set up Joint Scrutiny Committees for strategic overview of public sector organisations.

4.16.1 Local authorities have the power under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 to set up joint scrutiny committees with other local authorities. The Welsh Government (WG) White Paper, Devolution, Democracy and Delivery – Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People commented on the limited uptake of the power to set up joint scrutiny committees where regional services have been commissioned.

4.16.2 Public sector bodies such as Health Boards are expected to consult with local authorities, which can be burdensome to organisations such as Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. For example ABUHB are co-terminus with 5 local authorities so can attend 5 meetings to present the same information, such as their Annual Performance Evaluation.

Scrutiny Leadership Group

4.17 Scrutiny Leadership Group was set up as part of the changes made under the Scrutiny Improvements Action Plan and the terms of reference and membership of this group were agreed by Council in October 2008. It is suggested that it may be appropriate to review the terms of reference and membership of SLG to take into account any changes to scrutiny that are agreed in this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's committee report template includes Section 5: Equalities Implications as a standard heading in order to allow Councillors the opportunity to see relevant Equalities related information as part of their scrutiny and decision-making roles.
- 5.2 The Council, through the Equalities and Welsh language team, also provides support on these issues to elected members through briefing papers, annual reports and member awareness sessions.
- 5.3 The Council also ensures that all Councillors are fully consulted about changes so that any individual requirements can be met wherever possible. The Council has also been working with the Diversity in Democracy Group which is chaired by the WLGA.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications not contained in the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications not contained in the report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses not contained in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The Project Group has developed its recommendations based on the issues raised by both Members and Officers and considers that these recommendations will address the issues raised by Wales Audit Office. The recommendations to Council are as follows:

9.2. That a limit of no more than 4 items is placed scrutiny agendas.

9.3 That there is a limit placed on the number of special scrutiny meetings held per scrutiny committee, of two additional meetings per annum, with priority for MTFP.

9.4 Cabinet and scrutiny forward work programmes to include brief narrative on key issues to be covered in the Reports.

9.5 Scrutiny committees will discuss their forward work programmes at each meeting.

9.6 Scrutiny Leadership Group will recommend whether referrals of individual Ombudsman reports from Standards Committee should be referred to Scrutiny Committee (and if so which Committee) or Audit Committee or whether they will be kept as information for all Members.

9.7 The positions of non- statutory co-opted members (without voting rights) of Health Social Care and Wellbeing & Education for Life Scrutiny Committees are removed and a list of stakeholders and external witnesses is developed for each scrutiny committee and maintained and agreed by Scrutiny Leadership Group. These can be called upon for specific agenda items to give evidence.

9.8 An expert witness protocol to be developed to ensure that witnesses are fully briefed and in accordance with good practice to ensure that evidence provided to the scrutiny committee is balanced and fair.

9.9 Information items are removed from scrutiny agendas and instead are placed on the Members' portal in consultation with Democratic Services Committee.

9.10 A prioritisation matrix is developed for requests for reports from Members and the public.

9.11 Comments from the workshops about report content and responses to services requests or requests for information are fed back to the relevant Directors. The quality of Reports will be reviewed and monitored by Scrutiny Leadership Group for 6 months from implementation of the new arrangements.

9.12 A protocol is developed for task and finish groups and agreed by Democratic Services Committee with a limit of two task and finish groups to run at a time, to ensure that the burden on limited resources is managed appropriately.

9.13 The Members' training programme is further developed to incorporate relevant comments from the workshops including developing Cabinet members' role to be monitored by Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet Member with responsibility for HR, Governance and Business.

- 9.14 That guidance on the format and content of the Cabinet Members' written statement is developed. A new protocol developed to provide that the statement is in writing and is shared ahead of the relevant meeting with Scrutiny committee Members and placed on the Members' portal, in advance of the scrutiny meeting. The protocol will give advice on the type of information to be included in the statement.
- 9.15 Good practice for pre-meetings is shared amongst Scrutiny Leadership Group including peer observations.
- 9.16 Minutes of joint committees and other information about relevant outside bodies will be placed on the Members' portal.
- 9.17 Hold a dedicated performance management meeting for each scrutiny committee once per annum.
- 9.18 The protocol for External Audit, Inspection & Regulatory Bodies interface with scrutiny to be presented to Council to consider for adoption once it is completed.
- 9.19 Review the terms of reference and membership of Scrutiny Leadership Group to take into account any changes required as a result of the scrutiny review.
- 9.20 Carry out a self-evaluation of scrutiny arrangements within 12 months of changes being agreed.
- 9.21 Allow the Monitoring Officer to amend the constitution in line with the above recommendations.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 In order to respond to the recommendations in the follow up of the special inspection and reports in the public interest.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 11.2 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

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 Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
 Christina HARRY Corporate Director Education and Community Services
 Nicole Scammell Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
 Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services
 Gail Williams Interim Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services
 Angharad Price Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
 Councillor Christine Forehead Cabinet Member HR, Governance and Business
 Councillor Colin Mann Chair of Democratic Services Committee
 Councillor Hefin David Chair of Scrutiny Leadership Group

Background Papers:

- Democratic Services Committee 17th March 2015 – Scrutiny Developments
- Wales Audit Office Report – Follow up Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest January 2015
- Scrutiny Leadership Group 29th October 2014 – Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan Update

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COUNCIL - 6TH OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON DRAFT DIRECTIONS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the proposals contained in the Welsh Government Draft Directions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (LGBC) consultation report (attached at appendix 1) and seek Members views to enable the Council to respond to the consultation exercise. The report proposes changes to the total number of councillors to be elected to each county and county borough councils at future elections.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The LGBC has a statutory duty to carry out periodic reviews of the electoral arrangements for each county and county borough council in Wales. The way the LGBC conducts an electoral review is defined by legislation and Directions issued by Welsh Ministers.
- 2.2 On 17 June 2015, the Welsh Minister for Public Services published a map of proposed new local authority areas based on the Welsh Government's preferred configuration for the future of local authorities in Wales, including the two options for North Wales. The map forms the basis of the Draft Directions to the Commission. Welsh Government are not seeking views about the map in this consultation; that opportunity will arise during a consultation on a Draft Local Government Bill planned for the autumn.
- 2.3 The Local Government (Wales) Bill 2015 is currently being considered by the National Assembly for Wales. The provisions of the Bill allow for preparatory work to enable a programme of local government mergers and reform. This includes giving the Welsh Ministers powers to direct LGBC to conduct initial reviews of the electoral arrangements for the proposed new local authority areas. This will allow the LGBC as much time as possible to complete its reviews and for electoral arrangements to be made for the elections to Shadow Authorities in 2019.
- 2.3 Welsh Government is proposing to remove the cap on the maximum number of councillors per authority in recognition of the larger populations and geographical areas which the new councils will cover. There is no proposal to specify a minimum or maximum number of councillors per local authority. Instead, the Draft Directions specify that the number of councillors should be no smaller than the number produced by a councillor to elector ratio of one councillor to every 4,000 electors.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The electoral arrangements determined by the Welsh Government will directly affect the number of Members elected to the Council.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The directions begin with the LGBC for Wales conducting an initial review during which they must have regard to the following;
- 4.1.1 The particular characteristics of an area and the extent to which those characteristics should influence the size of the ward and the number of electors within it;
- 4.1.2 The following principles—
- (i) existing electoral wards should be grouped together in groups of two or more to create proposed electoral wards;
 - (ii) a Welsh language name for each electoral ward should be recommended and, where there is not a generally accepted Welsh language name for an electoral ward, an English language equivalent should be recommended;
 - (iii) the number of councillors for a proposed principal area should be no smaller than the number produced by a councillor to elector ratio of 1:4000; and
 - (iv) the number of councillors for a particular proposed principal area should be no smaller than the number of councillors for another proposed principal area which has a smaller electorate.
- 4.2 The WLGA are currently preparing a response to the consultation. They have confirmed that early feedback suggests that in addition to the issues of the potential size of some new wards and the number of councillors in some councils, there is a particular concern about the implication of the Direction stating that new wards should be based on a grouping of 2 or more existing wards.
- 4.3 The grouping of 2 or more existing wards presents a number of challenges. Some existing wards may already have the appropriate 1:4,000 ratio, but the direction appears to preclude them from continuing in their current form. Merging 2 or more existing wards will mean it will be difficult for LGBC to achieve its main statutory aim (as per the current Local Government Bill) of achieving consistency/parity of councillor: elector ratios across a new principal council area. Merging 2 or more existing wards in an arbitrary approach may run counter to the main direction that LGBC should follow which is to take into account the 'particular characteristics of an area' when creating new wards.
- 4.4 The proposal would give the current Caerphilly County Borough Council area approximately 32 Councillors for 132,157 electors. This is a substantial reduction from the current 73 Councillors and some of the challenges set out in paragraph 4.3 above would apply in this area.
- 4.5 The WLGA have provided the information in the table below to show the current and proposed Councillor numbers.

Merging Authorities	Total electors (2015 local government electorate figures)	Total Electors for Proposed new Council	Minimum Number of Councillors for Proposed new Council (based on ration of 1:4,000)	Current Councillor Numbers
Blaenau Gwent	51,987			
Caerphilly	132,157			
Torfaen	70,073			
Newport	107,135			
Monmouthshire	73,180	434,532	109	250
Blaenau Gwent	51,987			
Wales	2,311,451		616	1248
Average Size Council			77	

- 4.6 The timescale for the mergers and initial reviews are challenging and are set out below based on the latest available information.

9th November 2015	Consultation closes on draft Directions to Boundary Commission regarding Initial Reviews
November 2015	Local Government (Wales) Bill receives Royal Assent
November 2015	Further brief consultation on final draft Directions to Boundary Commission regarding Initial Reviews
January/February 2016	Directions to the Boundary Commission are formally 'made' (within 2 months of the Directions being made)
March/April 2016	Boundary Commission publishes a timetable for the programme of initial reviews
Spring 2016	Boundary Commission develops and consults on its 'Policy and Practice' (as per S19(2) of the Local Government (Wales) Bill 2015)
Early Summer 2016	Boundary Commission publishes its final 'Policy and Practice' and begins initial reviews, probably on a phased approach (with North Wales likely to be later in the timetable until WG confirms whether there will be 2 or 3 councils in North Wales)
By 31st July 2018	Boundary Commission submits reports to Ministers on initial reviews

- 4.7 The Welsh Government consultation report makes proposals which are subject to consultation until 9th November 2015. Following consideration of any consultation responses, the Welsh Government will issue the directions. Members can also submit individual response to the consultation.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses which have not been incorporated into the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the ongoing consultation.

- 9.2 Whilst noting that Members can submit individual responses to Welsh Government, that the Chief Executive formally consult with the Leaders of the Political groupings within the Council and prepare and submit a response to Welsh Government on behalf of the Council by the 9th November 2015.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To provide a response on behalf of the Council to Welsh Government.

11. STATUTORY POWERS

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972.

Author: Angharad Price, Interim Head of Democratic Services
Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Service/Monitoring Officer
Dave Beecham, Electoral Services Manager

Background papers:
Report to Council on 21 April 2015 Welsh Government White Paper, Reforming Local Government, Power to Local People

Appendices:
Welsh Government Consultation document



Welsh Government

Consultation Document

Draft Directions to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales

Date of issue: 17 August 2015

Action required: Responses by 9 November 2015

Overview

We are seeking your views on the Draft Directions to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission Wales.

As part of its programme of local government reform, the Welsh Government will require the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission Wales to conduct reviews of electoral arrangements for proposed new local authority areas.

This consultation seeks your views on the detail of the Draft Directions, including thoughts on council size and the ratio of electors for each elected member.

How to respond

Please respond using the form at the end of the document and either send in hard copy to the address below or by email to: RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

If you are sending your response by email, please mark the subject of your e-mail: Directions to the LDBCW Consultation

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

Contact details

For further information:

Reforming Local Government Programme
Welsh Government
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

email: RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk

telephone: 029 2082 6202

Data protection

How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full.

Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

Introduction

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the Draft Directions to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (“the Commission”).

The Local Government (Wales) Bill 2015 is currently being considered by the National Assembly for Wales. The provisions of the Bill allow for preparatory work to enable a programme of local government mergers and reform. This includes giving the Welsh Ministers powers to direct the Commission to conduct initial reviews of the electoral arrangements for the proposed new local authority areas.

The map of proposed new local authority areas, including the two options for North Wales, was published by the Minister for Public Services on 17 June and it forms the basis of the Draft Directions to the Commission. We are not, in this consultation, seeking views about the map. That opportunity will arise during a consultation on a Draft Local Government Bill planned for the autumn.

Directions to the Commission

Following this period of consultation and the enactment of the Bill, the Minister for Public Services will issue a further draft of the Directions for a short formal consultation. Once final Directions are issued, the Commission will be able to start work to identify the most appropriate electoral arrangements for the proposed new local authorities in Wales.

As outlined in section 18 of the Bill, the Commission “must seek to ensure effective and convenient local government in Wales”. It must propose wards that are coherent and strike a balance between building an effective and capable body of elected members while maintaining a close connection between local communities and those who represent them.

The Welsh Government recognises the specialised nature of the Commission’s work and its expertise in conducting electoral reviews. The Commission will need to use its own judgement to take account of the particular characteristics of an area and the impact these may have on the elected member for each ward. There is also no intention to specify to the Commission the order in which it should conduct its reviews, although the deadline for making the last report will be 31 July 2018.

Powys

Powys is not included in the programme of electoral reviews because the Welsh Government’s proposals do not envisage it merging with another local authority - it is proposed that it will remain as a “continuing authority”.

The electoral arrangements in Powys were most recently reviewed in 2011; however, the recommendations from that review have not yet been

implemented. The Welsh Government, therefore, intends to implement the recommended arrangements in time for the local elections in 2017.

These Draft Directions allow the Commission to recommend a lesser number of elected members for a new local authority area than there will be in Powys in 2017 following the recommendations of the Commission's review in 2011. Following the programme of local government reform, the Commission will recommence its routine of 10 year cycles of electoral reviews for local authorities and will begin this new round with Powys.

Directions

We would welcome views from a wide range of our stakeholders on the Draft Directions and, in particular, on the following issues.

Note: The General Directions include provisions to which the Commission must have regard. They are not to be interpreted as rules and should be read in conjunction with sections 16 to 18 of the Local Government (Wales) Bill 2015.

Number of elected members per local authority area

In recognising the increase in size of local authorities when merged together, the Minister for Public Services has announced that the cap of the maximum number of 75 elected members per local authority will be removed. The Directions do not specify a maximum or minimum number of elected members but they specify that the number of councillors for a local authority should be no smaller than the number produced by a councillor to elector ratio of one councillor to every 4,000 electors.

- **Question 1: Do you think the suggested ratio provides for effective and convenient local government?**
- **Question 2: Do you think there is a minimum number of councillors required to ensure the effective and democratic working of a local authority? If so, what is it and why?**
- **Question 3: Do you think a minimum number of elected members per local authority should be specified in the Draft Directions?**
- **Question 4: Do you think that there should be a cap on the maximum number of elected members per local authority? If so, what do you think the maximum number should be and why?**
- **Question 5: Do you agree that each ward within a local authority area should have roughly the same number of electors per elected member?**

Particular characteristics of a ward

The Draft Directions specify that the Commission must consider the particular characteristics of a proposed local authority area when reviewing the warding arrangements. Particular characteristics may include density of population in an area, the mixture of Welsh and English speaking communities and the geography of an area or issues such as poverty.

- **Question 6: What effect should the particular characteristics of an area have on the number of councillors needed to represent the population?**

Naming of wards

The Commission is tasked with proposing names for each ward. It is expected that commonly used and locally accepted Welsh language names will be used. Where there is no commonly used Welsh language name for a ward, the Commission must also propose an English language equivalent.

- **Question 7: Do you agree that commonly used Welsh language names for wards do not also need an English language equivalent? If not, do you think that each ward should have an English and Welsh name?**

Consultation Response Form

Name:

Email:

Telephone:

Address:

Postcode:

Organisation
(if applicable)

Returning this form

The closing date for replies is **9 November 2015**

Please send this completed form to us by email to:

RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Or by post to:

Reforming Local Government Programme
Welsh Government
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

If you are sending your response by email, please mark the subject of your e-mail: **Directions to the LDBCW Consultation**

Question 1. Do you think the suggested ratio provides for effective and convenient local government?

Yes
No

If no, please explain:

Question 2. Do you think there is a minimum number of councillors required to ensure the effective and democratic working of a local authority?

Yes
No

If yes, what is it and why?

Question 3. Do you think a minimum number of elected members per local authority should be specified in the Draft Directions?

Yes
No

Give reasons for your response:

Question 4. Do you think that there should be a cap on the maximum number of elected members per local authority?

Yes
No

If yes, what do you think the maximum number should be and why?

Question 5. Do you agree that each ward within a local authority area should have roughly the same number of electors per elected member?

Yes
No

Give reasons for your response:

Question 6. What effect should the particular characteristics of an area have on the number of councillors needed to represent the population?

Question 7. Do you agree that commonly used Welsh language names for wards do not also need an English language equivalent?

Yes
No

If no, do you think that each ward should have an English and Welsh name?

Yes
No

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here:



COUNCIL - 6TH OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: CITY DEAL – CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the latest developments in the emerging “City Deal” for the Cardiff Capital Region and the 10 local authorities in the south east Wales region.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Members may recall a presentation made at Full Council in March of this year by David Waite from the School of Planning and Geography at Cardiff University, regarding the Cardiff Capital Region. It is anticipated that the future shape of this project, and the Board which oversees the project, will be the subject of a Ministerial announcement in the near future. This was a project initiated by the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport, Mrs Edwina Hart, to develop plans for a City Region approach to economic development and regeneration in South East Wales. A similar plan is underway in the Swansea City Region, with similar approaches also being adopted in North Wales.
- 2.2 More recently, plans have been under development for a ‘City Deal’ covering the 10 local authorities in the South East Wales region. Though separate to the Capital Region Board project, this is a related initiative as a means to give effect to and implement some of the vision developed by the Board. It will be important that the two operate in tandem.
- 2.3 All 10 authorities have been participating in the development of this City Deal which promises to be an exciting opportunity to drive development, economic growth and job creation at a faster pace than we have seen for a long time.
- 2.4 There have been a number of similar ‘City Deal’ initiatives in England and one to date in Scotland. It would be a tripartite agreement between the 10 local authorities, UK Government and Welsh Government to collaborate on investment in infrastructure, business development skills, training and related areas over a 10 – 15 year period.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Economic development and job creation has long been a high priority of the council. It is a major part of national policy for the UK and Wales and features prominently in the multi-agency Single Integrated Plan for Caerphilly County Borough. The ‘City Deal’ offers the prospect of attracting significant infrastructure improvements, new business growth and investments in skills and training. These would support the policy and priority areas.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 A City Deal is an agreement where the national government provides money for cities or city regions to invest in return for a guarantee of economic growth. The aim is to support growth in employment and economic output. So far there have been around 30 City Deals across the UK, ranging in size from tens of millions of pounds to larger deals worth more than £2.5bn. The aim of the deal is to support the local economy, which in turn supports the national economy through bigger tax returns and lower costs in terms of supporting those out of work.
- 4.2 In March the Chancellor for the Exchequer announced that a City Deal for South East Wales was in development. Following that announcement the Leaders of the ten local authorities in South East Wales met and commenced work on putting together a structure and a vision for what that a City Deal could mean for our region.
- 4.3 On the 17th June Cabinet agreed to support the development of a plan for the City Deal, with all ten local authorities contributing towards the cost of research and financial planning. This council contributed £59,989 towards a £1/2 million fund for this purpose. To date some of these funds have been used to employ specialist advisors who have worked on City Deals in other parts of the UK, and they are now working with the local authorities to develop an outline plan and methodologies for selecting projects. This appointment was made by the lead authority, Cardiff, following an extensive interview process.
- 4.4 In initial meetings with UK Government officials in August it became clear that an initial outline of the basis of a Cardiff City Region City Deal would need to be presented to the government by the beginning of September so that it could be included in assessments around the Spending Review which is currently being undertaken.
- 4.5 On 4th September the requested position statement to UK Government was delivered in order to commence negotiations for a City Deal for the region.
- 4.6 This submission signifies the beginning of the process. It suggests that significant investment could be built around the following themes:
- Tackling worklessness which currently costs UK Govt £4bn in welfare payments in the region.
 - Improving productivity and economic performance – a 5% increase in GVA (Gross Value added) – the accepted measure of economic growth would deliver around £1bn extra per annum to UK economy.
 - Building on the foundations of innovation we have across the region in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, software development, bioscience which will bring higher quality jobs to the region.
 - Working with other partners to invest in the necessary physical and digital infrastructure, such as the Metro, to make it easier to move people and goods across the region and provide better connectivity to other parts of the UK.
 - Providing effective support for businesses to grow.
 - Ensuring the economic benefit of the necessary investment is felt across all parts of the region.
- 4.7 The scale of the City Deal, in financial terms, is not yet clear and will be subject to ongoing discussion between the UK, Welsh and local government. Some estimates have suggested that the investment will be in the region of £1billion, but there are, as yet, no firm indications.
- 4.8 It will be important to engage partners in this project. Initial discussions have already been held with the Caerphilly Business Forum who have already organised a first meeting of some of their members to discuss how they can contribute, and there seems real enthusiasm from the business community in Caerphilly County Borough. We will also need to work closely with education partners – in schools, Further and Higher Education – as raising skills will be an important aspect of the initiative.

- 4.9 One of the investments receiving considerable attention is that of the 'Metro' project. This is an investment in public transport – bus and rail – intended to assist people to travel more easily, especially to jobs which are created in the region. The City Region plan will need to tie in with and build upon this exciting proposal.
- 4.10 A key challenge for the authority will be to identify suitable projects within the county borough that may form part of the City Deal. An initial meeting of relevant officers has already taken place and ideas are currently being worked up for consideration. They would, eventually, need to be assessed by the City Deal Board and would need to demonstrate that they deliver the objectives of the City Deal. These are likely to include job creation, stimulating new and expanding businesses, raising skill levels and helping people in jobs. There is also likely to be scope for necessary infrastructure – improving communications, developing necessary sites and premises and the like. However, the precise nature of qualifying projects will not become clear until the discussions over priorities and funding between UK, Welsh and local government develop and mature later this year and into 2016.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 No equality impact assessment has been undertaken on this report as it has no implications on service delivery at this time.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 To date the council has contributed towards the initial planning and preparation of the emerging City Deal proposal. No other formal commitment of funds is required at this time.
- 6.2 As the plan emerges the contribution required from the three partners – UK Government, Welsh Government and the ten local authorities – will become clearer. Any further financial contribution from the authority will be the subject of further reports before any firm commitment is made.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None at this time, other than officer time in working with the City Deal Board and project group.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Any consultation responses have been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Council is requested to:
- (i) Note the progress to date and future plans for developing the City Deal;
 - (ii) Confirm the council's willingness to continue to develop this concept, but subject to further reports at an appropriate time as to any additional funding implications and the type of investment likely to be generated.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To enable the authority to participate in and benefit from this exciting opportunity.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Not applicable.

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