



## **REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28TH OCTOBER 2014**

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITIES FIRST PROJECT DELIVERY 2013/14**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the Communities First (CF) projects delivered to date in each cluster, their aims, and anticipated outcomes in relation to deprivation.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report provides an update on the renewed Communities First programme; it's overall aim, associated delivery outcomes, performance indicators and monitoring framework set by the Welsh Government (WG). As well as an overview of Caerphilly's delivery for the 2013/14 year of implementation in line with Welsh Government expectations. The programme as a whole drew down £2,171,671.84 from the Welsh Government for salaries, projects and engagement.

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

#### **3.1 Welsh Government**

- Building Resilient Communities – Taking Forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan (2012-16)

#### **3.2 Caerphilly CBC**

- Caerphilly Community Strategy (CCBC 2004), as well as cross cutting themes such as 50+, Sustainable Development and the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives (2010)
- Single Integrated Plan (CCBC 2013 - 17)
- 2013/14 Improvement Objective 2: Improving Job Opportunities by Implementing the Council's Passport Programme
- Outcome Agreement 5 (2013 - 16): Tackling Worklessness and Raising Household Income
- In addition the Local Service Board has identified tackling poverty as one of its key priorities.

## 4 THE REPORT

4.1 From 1st April 2012 Communities First has been renewed as a Community Focused Tackling Poverty Programme.

4.2 The programme continues to have a geographical focus, concentrating on the most deprived communities in Wales, but there is now increased focus on ensuring the most vulnerable individuals, families and groups in those communities are supported. There is a clear expectation that the programme's resources will be devoted primarily to those most in need. In some cases this will include people living outside CF boundaries who can properly benefit from specific projects or activities supported by the programme.

The programme is based on 52 Clusters (groups of Lower Super Output Areas) across Wales, identified through the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. Within Caerphilly there are four clusters:-

- Caerphilly Basin (41 projects)
- Mid Valleys East (35 projects)
- Mid Valleys West (39 projects)
- Upper Rhymney Valley (42 projects)

4.3 In 2013 /14 each Cluster established and delivered a local Delivery Plan, identified by key priorities in terms of tackling poverty, this delivery was supported by a Delivery Team led by a Cluster Manager. As stipulated by Welsh Government, the role of the Cluster Delivery Team is to:-

- Manage the overall programme within the Cluster area and ensure effective implementation of the Delivery Plan.
- Implement and develop the Community Involvement Plan, that demonstrates how the communities will be engaged in the participation and planning of the programme
- Build links with partners in all sectors and with community organisations and local people, supporting them and adding value to their work

Welsh Government considers it essential that each cluster, and the programme as a whole, is able to demonstrate what is being achieved through the use of CF funding.

4.4 The overall aim of the programme is to tackle and reduce poverty in the most deprived communities. As such a new Outcomes Framework focused on three themes has been developed, creating Prosperous Communities, Learning Communities and Healthier Communities. This Outcomes Framework is currently being re-aligned by Welsh Government with those of the Families First and Flying Start programmes to develop a Collaborative Framework for the three key anti poverty programmes.

4.5 Within this Framework, the programme supports a wide variety of activity. The Outcomes Framework is based on Results Based Accountability (RBA). RBA uses two sets of indicators, that is, ways of measuring progress towards strategic goals. With the process focussing on three monitoring categories, namely; How much did we do / How well we did it / Is anyone better off?

- **“Population Indicators”** relate to national statistics on health, education and employment and are linked to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. However, many factors influence these so Communities first alone cannot take sole responsibility for how they change.
- **“Performance Indicators”** are about the local activity directly supported by Communities First. These measure and evaluate the activity and outcomes of each cluster. The PI's have been set by the Welsh Government and are used by all CF Clusters in Wales. It is through the measurement and monitoring of these indicators that Welsh Government can demonstrate how Communities First is contributing to tackling poverty.

- 4.6 As Population Indicators measure the overall programme it is not possible to demonstrate impact in relation to deprivation in a year. However, the Welsh Government has imposed over 100 Performance Indicators with comprehensive, detailed Fynnon scorecards to measure the programme's project delivery locally. With a total of 157 projects, each being measured by a number of PI's the approx size of each PI dashboard is 130 pages. Therefore only a sample of Outcome Dashboards are included in appendices 2,3,4 and 5.
- 4.7 It is also worth noting that the Welsh Government has undertaken a number of changes to both the Outcomes Framework and the Performance Indicators throughout the delivery period 2013/2014, and continue to do so. Making any consistent monitoring of the programme problematic as well as time consuming for staff, who have had to constantly re-align projects in line with these changes.
- 4.8 Progress for this first year of delivery in Caerphilly has, on the whole, been positive, with many important lessons learnt that would further optimise delivery and outcomes within future years. Cluster staff have worked hard, in terms of planning, implementation and monitoring, to adapt to the new format of CF. This has included ensuring that projects are developed with consideration given to improved and appropriate targeting of customers who are most in need, that delivery has been carried out with greater attention to quality, that links have been made with the correct partners and that monitoring has been conducted in a robust way to reflect accurate results and to highlight areas that may have been less successful.
- 4.9 Throughout the year a huge range of projects have been developed and carried out across the Communities First themes of Prosperous, Learning and Healthier Communities. The link with Job Centre Plus (JCP) and other employment services is now excellent, the programme receives a large number of referrals from JCP, and is engaging with residents who'd never previously engaged with Communities First employment or training projects. There are now noticeably higher attendance rates on all CF training projects/courses than under the previous programme. In total the programme engaged with 3,143 individuals over the reporting period.
- 4.10 A full range of projects can be found in Appendix 1. Particularly successful projects have included Work Clubs, Foodwise, Cancer Survivors project, Young People's Sexual Health project, Children's University, Digital Employment Skills project, and the Rhymney Comprehensive 'No One Left Behind' project, amongst many others. These projects have seen real achievements in terms of reduced BMIs, increased levels of physical activity, increased awareness of risks, qualifications obtained, Jobs Growth Wales placements and digital skills gained.
- 4.11 CF also provides front line support for the Caerphilly Passport Programme, resulting in over 50% of participants from CF areas. It was through this support that it became apparent that many young people are simply not equipped for the world of work, with the team securing DWP Flexible Support Fund for a pre-passport scheme in the Upper Rhymney Valley, in partnership with the White Rose Information and Resource Centre.
- 4.12 In contrast, specific projects trailed through the year did not achieve their full potential, in these cases project evaluation was used to assess their feasibility for the current year, leading to some significant changes being made to project plans, or in some cases, resulting in projects being removed.
- 4.13 It has been recognised that in previous phases of the programme, projects would often be accessed by the "usual suspects" of community members who were heavily involved in community partnerships, rather than engaging those hard to reach community members who might be most at need. The more focused approach of this new phase of the programme has led to a complete transformation in terms of the ways that participants have been recruited for projects. To ensure that projects are engaging target customer groups (i.e. those most at need), staff have worked hard to promote opportunities more appropriately and innovatively, most significantly through forming closer links with partner agencies that already work directly with target customers. In particular strong working relationships have been further developed

between Families First, Flying Start and Communities First, this has resulted in streamlining services and more targeted support.

- 4.14 This improved partnership working has ensured that community members are able to access a more comprehensive and holistic range of support to address their needs, with agencies working together to support them rather than in isolation. As a result, CF projects have seen improved outcomes whereby appropriate targeting has maximised the potential for customers to benefit from interventions.
- 4.15 Due to the number of projects delivered through the programme it is not possible to provide a detailed overview of them all or their performance against the Welsh Government's Outcomes Framework within the main body of the report. Therefore, attached in appendix 3,4,5 and 6, is a sample Performance Report for each Cluster demonstrating some successful and less successful projects.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No impact assessment has been undertaken on this report, however many individuals and groups who fall under the protected characteristics and wider issues covered by the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, are often affected to a greater extent by poverty and the related causes; therefore, Communities First will have positive impact on those individuals and groups.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Communities First staff salaries and associated delivery budgets are provided by the Welsh Government. In 2013 /14 the total amount claimed was £2,171,671.84. The programme is currently funded until 31st March 2015, with a commitment from Welsh Government to extend until 31st March 2016. There is limited cost to CCBC in drawing down the funding, with three staff directly funded within Finance to manage the grant and 10% of total grant eligible in management costs.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The report has been sent to the consultees listed below and all comments received are contained in the body of the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members note the progress made in delivering the first year of the Communities First programme 2013/14 in line with Welsh Government outcomes.

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

- 10.1 To ensure members are kept up-to-date on Communities First project delivery, its aims and outcomes in relation to deprivation.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

### 11.1 Local Government Measure 2009

Author: Tina McMahon, Community Regeneration Manager  
Consultees: Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive  
Councillor Ken James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration  
Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration and Planning  
Dave Roberts, Finance Manager  
Mary Spillar, Communities First Finance Officer  
Ian Raymond, Performance Management Officer  
Sean Rees, Cluster Manager  
Lauren Hughes, Cluster Manager  
Emma Saunders, Cluster Manager  
Damian Owen, Cluster Manager

#### Background Papers:

Tackling Poverty Action Plan 2012 - 2016  
Building Resilient Communities - Taking Forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan  
Communities First Delivery Plans 2013 /14  
Caerphilly Delivers - The Single Integrated Plan  
Community Strategy 2004  
Caerphilly Council's Improvement Objectives 2013 / 14

#### Appendices:

Appendix 1 List of Communities First Projects  
Appendix 2 Performance Dashboard Report Caerphilly Basin  
Appendix 3 Performance Dashboard Report Mid Valleys East  
Appendix 4 Performance Dashboard Report Mid Valleys West  
Appendix 5 Performance Dashboard Report Upper Rhymney Valley