

# **VALE of GLAMORGAN**

**Corporate & Customer Services**

**Service Plan**

**2013/17**



# **BRO MORGANNWG**

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# Corporate and Customer Services Plan 2013/17

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## **Corporate and Customer Services**

Corporate and Customer Services undertakes a number of key roles for the council. The directorate provides a corporate approach to policy, performance management and improvement, consultation and engagement, communications, partnership working and equalities.

Through its Customer Relations arm the directorate provides frontline access for all council services and is responsible for the development and delivery of the council's customer service strategy.

Policy and performance work and its integration with day-to-day business lies at the heart of our work. It includes:

- Developing and implementing our corporate vision (the Corporate Plan);
- Ensuring high quality, SMART joined up plans;
- Improving performance management across all council services;
- Improving internal review and the management of services;
- Proactive and effective communications internally to staff and externally to residents citizens, key partners and regulators;
- Improving our partnership framework and working collaboratively through the Local Service Board and associated mechanisms;
- Planned engagement and consultation across the Vale of Glamorgan with feedback;
- Ensuring all council services consider and address equality and sustainability issues as part of their day to day business.

Customer Relations' focus is on delivering customer service excellence and ensuring a positive experience for customers when dealing with the council:

- Working with internal and external partners to improve access to and delivery of services, ensuring they meet the needs of our customers;
- Delivering services via corporate contact centre, face to face and by electronic means;
- Delivering the Customer Service and Channel Strategies;
- Supporting vulnerable adults through Telecare Monitoring services;
- Supporting Community Safety through CCTV Monitoring services;
- Undertaking all Adult Social Service assessments;
- Delivering Blue Car Badge and Concessionary Travel Pass services;
- Meeting the Electoral Commission performance standards in running local and national elections;
- Encouraging citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan to register and vote.

## **Our Service Plan for 2013-17**

The Service Plan is a key component of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's planning framework. It supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2013-17 and ultimately the overarching Community Strategy 2011-2021 and the delivery of the day to day business activities of the Council.

The Corporate and Customer Services Plan provides a four year overview of the directorate's work and sets out how it contributes towards achieving some of the key outcomes and objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-17. It outlines what objectives the service is trying to achieve, why they are important, how they are to be achieved, how we will monitor progress and what success will look like.

The actions within the Service Plan will inform team plans and ultimately feed into personal objectives for individual members of staff via the Performance Development and Review System. The clear lines of responsibility, outcomes and targets at all levels will be monitored as part of the Council's performance monitoring arrangements.

Each year we will review the plan and update it accordingly, ensuring we demonstrate continuous service improvement.

## **Our Service Outcomes and Objectives**

The priorities and actions set out within this plan are aimed at ensuring that we improve the **performance** of the Council, through strengthened partnership working and performance management, including a strong and proactive approach to internal review and challenge to inform service development and sustainability, in line with requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2010.

Through our work we continue to set and promote a culture of high standards of performance and an outward looking approach where we challenge ourselves to achieve.

A key priority in the coming year is to improve the reach and quality of our **community engagement** activity and **partnership working**. We will continue to emphasise the widening of community engagement and participation in informing the Council's decision-making. In addition, we will continue the work with our partners in the Vale through the Local Service Board in developing a joined-up approach, ensuring effective governance arrangements through which local communities and key partners work together to make sure local services meet local needs.

Increasing **customer satisfaction** and improving how customers access services is a key priority for the Council. The work of the Customer Relations service focuses on ensuring that people have more choice in how and where they access the Council's services and in ensuring that those services are delivered efficiently and cost effectively. A key challenge for the future will in enhancing and promoting self-service opportunities for customers, in particular via the website and mobile phone applications. The delivery of an integrated, shared service delivery model with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and other partners will be critical in maintaining cost-effective and resilient customer services. Each of these challenges will require continued capital investment in technology at a time of budget constraints.

In addition, changes to the Welfare system, the reduction in scale and scope of council services due to budget cuts and a growing and ageing population are all likely to result in increased customer demand for Customer Relations services.

To underpin the **improvement agenda**, the Improvement and Development Team will continue to work with council services to deliver and monitor progress in achieving the outcomes outlined in the Corporate Plan, our Improvement and Outcome Objectives and the underpinning Service Plans. As part of our lead role in coordinating the regulatory work programme of the council, work will continue in supporting services in preparation for and following regulatory assessments, for example the upcoming Estyn review of Education Services in 2013. Also, services are being supported in a developing a corporate approach towards implementing the requirements of the Welfare Reform Act.

Through regular quarterly performance reporting, elected members are able to continuously challenge performance and drive improvements. The council's **Service Planning** process is being reviewed and overhauled, working in conjunction with the Local Data Unit and the Wales Audit Office. The duty to conduct a self-assessment in line with the Local Government (Wales) Measure is being incorporated in this new approach. This work will continue through 2013/14 with planned improvements in performance reporting, focusing more on customer outcomes.

Our **performance management software**, Ffynnon, a key tool in monitoring and reporting performance across the council, is to be replaced during 2013/14. We will need to establish appropriate contingency arrangements internally to ensure a smooth transition to the new system, including adequate resources to support the building of a new reporting framework in Ffynnon. The planned improvements in performance reporting will rely on the new framework.

The service takes a lead role in ensuring the council delivers on its **Equality** objectives as outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan. We continue to promote the principles of equality in all our work and policies, and have supported Equality Impact Assessments across council services. This ensures that the principles are embedded in the Council's financial planning and performance management framework. The Equalities team will continue to support equality training and raise awareness across the Council and through events in communities.

The Equalities Team is also responsible for the council's **Welsh language scheme** and ensures its implementation in all services. The establishment by the Welsh Government of a set of Welsh language standards applicable to a range of bodies including local authorities will require a new approach, and the Equalities Team will lead on this issue.

The forthcoming legislation introducing a **Sustainable Development** duty will impact on the work we do in embedding the principles of sustainability

council-wide. Further work will need to be undertaken to ensure the council adequately evidences how sustainability principles inform decision making.

Further service challenges arise for the service in the Welsh Government requirement to step up the **regional collaboration** agenda. There is a need to explore and promote opportunities for working collaboratively regionally in order to deliver improved services for customers and deliver savings.

The service takes a lead role in ensuring **local and national elections** run smoothly and in accordance with Electoral Commission performance standards. Increasing the number of citizens on our electoral register and encouraging citizens to vote, whilst a priority, continues to present a challenge. The Government's plans to introduce Individual Electoral Registration (IER) by the summer of 2014 will present an opportunity to increase voter numbers as each person will be required to register to vote individually, rather than by household.

Having considered the above opportunities and risks we have agreed the following service outcomes and objectives:

**Service Outcome 1:** Our customers have access to a broad range of efficient, sustainable services which meet their needs, in a way that is convenient to them.

**Objectives:**

1. To encourage our customers to use the most appropriate, lowest-cost way of dealing with the council, and ensure a positive customer service.
2. To develop more integrated service delivery.

**Service Outcome 2:** The Council has a clear strategic direction which is well communicated to residents.

**Objectives:**

3. To align the objectives and ways of working in the Council with our partners in order to meet community need.
4. To continuously improve to be a top performing Council.
5. To communicate decisions in a transparent manner to local people and our staff.

**Service Outcome 3:** Residents feel a sense of engagement and pride in their local community.

**Objectives:**

6. To encourage people to take pride and be involved in their local community.

7. To develop the methods by which we engage our residents in decision making, enabling the Council and partners to work with communities to create solutions to the problems that affect them.

## **Our contribution to corporate priorities 2013-2017**

Over the next four years Corporate and Customer Services will take an active role in driving initiatives, policies and procedures to support the Corporate Plan key priorities of:

### **Community Leadership**

**Corporate outcome:** Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently management services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.

### **Corporate objective:**

- Develop the methods by which we engage our residents in decision making enabling the council and partners to work with communities to create solutions to the problems that affect them. (2016/17)
- Increase customer satisfaction and improve how customers access services by developing more integrated service delivery with our partners and being more innovative in how public buildings are used. (2016/17)
- Develop and promote website and social media to enable the public to contact and access Council services as much as possible online. (2016/17)
- Explore opportunities for working collaboratively within the Vale and regionally which will lead to improved services for customers, support innovation and deliver savings. (2016/17)
- Work with the Local Service Board to develop a robust intelligence base to support the delivery of the Community Strategy and ensure that partnership structures support the delivery of agreed priorities. (2014/15).
- Promote sustainable development ensuring that sustainability factors are taken into account in decision making and that the council complies with forthcoming legislation on sustainable development. (2016/17).
- Deliver the Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives to improve the Council's understanding of the needs of protected groups, through improved information gathering, awareness raising and communication. (2016/17)

## **Efficiencies and Savings 2013-2017**

Corporate and Customer Services have been given a savings target of £66,000 in the coming year and a further £592,000 over the following 3 years. During 2012/13 the service achieved planned budget savings totalling £38,000.

These future savings present a major challenge, and work is ongoing to identify and manage the changes that will be necessary.

## **Workforce Planning 2013-2017**

Our workforce is our primary resource, and our objectives are only achievable through the hard work and flexibility which our staff consistently show. It is therefore vital to continue to support this through staff development and succession planning despite the pressures of budget and staffing reduction.

The detailed workforce requirements for Corporate and Customer Services are set out in its workforce plan. This addresses structural requirements, succession planning issues, the employee profile and employee development issues for the service. For the service the impact of ever dwindling resources will mean:

- We will be doing as much but with fewer staff;
- An emphasis on role flexibility with officers taking on a variety of responsibilities;
- More junior officers taking on expert roles and developing on the job, with senior staff taking on a greater supervisory role;
- A flatter structure and more part-time contracts, particularly in C1V;
- Council staff generally becoming more expert in certain areas so that there is less need for central staff;
- Collaboration with other Councils, to achieve service resilience and where services are being delivered regionally.

Key developmental themes for the service over 013-2017 will include the continued development of management and generic skills in order to improve the flexibility and resilience required to achieve this.

Overall, the Department's workforce has been getting younger over recent years as older staff have retired, and very few staff are now approaching retirement age. No recruitment problems have been encountered of late in filling posts, and the current economic recession is contributing to low staff turnover. Future skills shortages are consequently not anticipated. This applies both to policy-type posts and C1V posts.

In areas where specialist knowledge or skills are required we will continue to encourage sharing of these skills across the service in order to enable effective succession planning and business continuity.

Performance management will be encouraged through effective personal development and reviews and effective supervision of staff.

In general, levels of absence give no major cause for concern. The Chief Executive's office and Customer Relations lost 6.47 and 4.78 days respectively per full time equivalent to sickness absence in 2011/12, in comparison with the corporate performance of 8.17 days which was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Wales.



Turnover of staff for 2011/12 was 10.2%. This equated to 12 staff out approximately 117 staff. The combined figure was 7.24% council wide. In general, staff turnover in the service gives no cause for concern.

## **Our ICT Requirements 2013-2017**

Continued investment in ICT is required in order to maintain acceptable levels of service.

Within Customer Relations, the Customer Relations Management (CRM) software is the main ICT application used in handling service requests and proactive work. Ongoing support and maintenance will be required by the service to ensure systems are fit for purpose.

The replacement for Ffynnon (performance management software) is likely to require a minimum standard in terms of operating system and web browser in order to enable ease of access. A corporate technology refresh of our operating systems is planned during 2013 and this will address the issue.

In line with the Space Project, Corporate and Customer Services have adopted a more flexible approach to work where appropriate in order to maximise the use of space. More “hot desking” and working from home with appropriate equipment will be considered.

## **Equalities 2013-17**

We are committed to fairness in respect of equality and diversity and ensure that equality action planning is part of our normal day to day considerations especially when designing new services or policies.

The Council has published its Strategic Equality Plan designed to enable it to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Corporate and Customer Services has achieved level 4 of the Vale Equalities Scheme which contributes directly towards achieving objectives outlined in the Plan.

We recognise as a service that both our staff and customers come from a range of backgrounds and cultures. We also recognise that many people face different barriers to services and employment and as a service provider and employer we have a responsibility to address these barriers. Local people have a right to expect that public resources are used to deliver quality services that meet their diverse needs and that they will be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. Equality is an integral part of providing customer focused services and we are committed to promoting and valuing diversity and developing a culture where discrimination is not tolerated.

A key challenge for the service in the next few years is to work with council services to minimise the negative impact of planned service changes on customers, due to the requirement for year on year efficiency savings. Work will continue to ensure that proposals for planned changes have undergone a

rigorous equality impact assessment process in order to address inequality and mitigate the likelihood of legal and other challenges.

**Service Outcome 1:** Our customers have access to a broad range of efficient, sustainable services which meet their needs, in a way that is convenient to them.

**Objective 1:** To encourage our customers to use the most appropriate, lowest cost way of dealing with the council, and ensure a positive customer service.

**The context for this objective:**

The council has an award-winning website, which had over 27,700 unique weekly visits and 10,000 pages in 2011/12. The 2012 public opinion survey shows that 72% of residents have regular access to a PC (up from 58% in 2009), and libraries provide free use of information technology. 59% of internet users have accessed the council's website (up from 36% in 2009). By re-basing the results on all residents (including those without internet access), the proportion of Vale residents using the Council website over the past three years has doubled from 21% to 42%.

The council's channel strategy aims to shift as many customer enquiries and service requests as possible to the website, as this is the council's lowest cost communications channel. The current website was developed by the communications team and ICT in 2006 and it has been further developed to encourage channel shift, for example the introduction of the prominent 'Do it on line' facility on the homepage.

The website's Content Management System (CMS) was introduced in 2006 and is no longer supported by the supplier at the end of March 2013, requiring a new CMS to be developed. The new CMS has required the transfer of the former website pages (those considered 'customer useful' of the 10,000 plus pages). The new CMS also offers the opportunity to develop a new website that would continue to improve customer service over the coming years.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Public Sector Equality Duty places specific duties which require listed public authorities to collect, analyse and use equality information to improve services for protected groups. Risks of non-achievement of this duty include non compliance orders, damaging publicity, poor reputation amongst service users and the cost of fines for non-compliance. Opportunities include improved service delivery and better targeted services to meet known and understood customer service needs.

The council published its Strategic Equality Plan in April 2012 to assist in fulfilling its duties in respect of these duties. The council also has an approved Welsh Language Scheme, agreed in March 2011.

The Strategic Equality Plan has an associated action plan, and there are considerable workforce planning issues arising from that plan. A new training programme has been devised to enable council staff and elected members to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to provide improved and accessible services to people with protected characteristics.

The New Welsh Language Measure will present a challenge as the Council must comply with new Welsh Language Standards rather than its own scheme. The

Council will be scored against the standards, and can face considerable fines if not compliant. Although the standards have not yet been confirmed by the Welsh Language Commissioner, it is expected that the requirements will be considerably greater than the Council's existing Welsh Language Scheme. While this will promote the local equalities agenda, the workforce planning implications are significant, in that greater Welsh language skills will be needed by our staff, which will need to be provided through both increased language training and recruitment. Extra translation facilities will be needed, either through recruitment or in collaboration with our partners.

Effective consultation and engagement is the key method by which we can gain an understanding of how our residents prefer to make contact with the Council and why they are reluctant to shift towards lower cost alternatives. We must understand residents' objections to and concerns about channel shift before we can address them.

It is a priority of the Council to meet the needs and references of all its customers, in an efficient and cost effective way. Our channel strategy is focused on encouraging customers to use the lowest cost, most appropriate channel for their enquiry, which means directing them to self service options on our website.

Given current budget pressures, Customer Relations services have to be delivered with the context of:

- an ongoing requirement for the service to deliver savings and minimise cost per contact.
- a continuing demand for additional services to be delivered through the corporate contact centre.
- a requirement to reduce the established headcount from 2013-14 in line with efficiencies.
- rapid development of communications technology and customer use of social media.
- increasing complexity of customer needs and need to work in partnership to deliver positive outcomes.
- growing demand for Social Services assessments requiring increased staff resources.

The co-location of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board communications hub and the drive to integrate contact handling services presents an opportunity to further improve access to and deliver services in the area of health and social care, as well as deliver resource efficiencies in the broader area of customer contact.

### **What did we do in 2012-13?**

- Liaised with council service areas to discover what they might need from the new website to help improve customer service.
- Developed a brief for the new CMS in conjunction with ICT.
- Transferred all useful web pages from the former website.
- Ensured that website material was available in Welsh where required.

- Ran a series of focus groups with a diverse range of Vale residents to inform the development of the new Council website.
- Welsh taster sessions held to encourage more staff to learn Welsh.
- Linguistic skills database completed.
- Used feedback from engagement to include an equality objective on writing policy documents in plain English.
- New discrimination advice service launched with the Citizens Advice Bureau, extending the hours and increasing access to advice on discrimination.
- Development of the Rainbow Group, an Asian Women's Group, to increase access to council services and to promote engagement.
- Utilised the new LSB citizens' panel to survey residents on their preferred method of contacting the Council.
- Increased the number of services available via self service on the Council website
- Introduced additional administrative work.
- Implemented a pro-active messaging service for Visible Services.
- Implemented customer survey software to collect and monitor customer satisfaction data and feedback.
- Reviewed the Housing Repairs process to reduce error rates, improve handling times and reduce missed appointments
- Integrated overnight Telecare monitoring service with GP Out of Hours service.

#### **What impact have these actions had?**

- CMS support for the council's website has been secured reducing the risk of a failure in the service to customers.
- The new website offers an improved customer experience.
- The new CMS offers the ability to further develop the website for the customer.
- An increased interest in learning the Welsh language, leading to more Welsh learners attending training sessions.
- A greater awareness of Welsh speakers and the services that they require.
- A comprehensive discrimination advice service is available in the local area.
- Increased access and opportunities available for BME women.
- Positive feedback on engagement to develop equality objectives and on finalised objectives in the Strategic Equality.
- Summary of Strategic Equality Plan written in plain English.
- Developed a greater understanding of how Vale residents wish to interact with the Council.
- Increase in the number of online and telephone payments and reduction in cash and in person payments.
- Customer satisfaction with access to council service exceeds 90%.
- Call handling targets have been achieved.

#### **What do we plan to do in 2013-14?**

- The website will be further developed to enhance the customer experience and to encourage citizen engagement.
- Implement the new Welsh language standards.

- Increase the number of Welsh learners and training sessions.
- Develop the language skills of elected members.
- Encourage the Rainbow Group to become independent and engage with it.
- Monitor the efficiency of the new discrimination service.
- Implement a new equalities training programme.
- Devise evaluation tools to measure the impact of equalities training.
- Increase the number of services available via self service on the Council website.
- Develop social media as a channel for handling customer enquiries.
- Develop proactive messaging services to reduce avoidable contact.
- Expand provision of council services close to local communities using voluntary sector and community councils.
- Develop ways to measure customer satisfaction for each communication channel.
- Develop means to accurately measure cost per transaction for each communication channel.
- Expand the range of services that are available from libraries.

### **How will we know if we're achieving our objective?**

- Increase in the number of visitors to the website.
- Increase in the number of service requests made using the website.
- Increase in the number of Welsh speakers working for the council.
- More customers attending CAB for advice than attended the previous service.
- Elected member skills publicised.
- Annual equality reporting on progress achieves compliance.
- Ongoing engagement will help to evaluate progress on equalities objectives.
- We will be able to demonstrate an increasing take up of self service opportunities by customers.
- Reduced inbound telephone calls for services where self service options are available.
- We will be able to accurately measure the cost of delivering enquiries by channel and therefore the savings achieved through channel shift.
- Reduced face to face transaction services where self service options are available.
- Call handling performance targets are achieved.
- Customer satisfaction is measurable by channel and by enquiry type.

### **What do we plan to do in 2014 – 2017?**

- Increase the skills and flexibility of our staff to manage technological changes, especially in maintaining and enhancing the website and in growing use of social media.
- Develop the language skills of the council's workforce to enable the Welsh Language Standards to be implemented effectively.
- Improve the awareness of the council's workforce in cultural and disability awareness so that they are able to respond to community needs appropriately.
- Planned work on the equality objectives should be complete by 2016 and new equality objectives agreed to build upon the outcomes achieved.

## **Links to corporate outcomes**

Performing well against this objective will help us contribute towards the following corporate outcomes:

- Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently managed services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.
  - placing customer focus at the heart of service delivery
  - Providing leadership and being transparent in our decision
  - Managing our resources.

**Service Outcome 1:** Our customers have access to a broad range of efficient, sustainable services which meet their needs, in a way that is convenient to them.

**Objective 2:** To develop more integrated service delivery.

**The context for this objective:**

The council has entered into an agreement with the Welsh Government (called an Outcome Agreement) based on the premise that the council and WG share common objectives and that this agreement could assist in achieving these objectives. WG pays a grant to the council to incentivise achievement of targets, to the value of £1.2 million annually. The current Outcome Agreement was signed in February 2011, for the period 2010 - 2013 and revised slightly in August 2011.

To date, the council has achieved 100% of its incentive grants annually, and the department coordinates annual reporting in order to draw down this grant. A new Outcome Agreement will be progressed for the period 2013-16, and this takes months of painstaking negotiation.

Town and Community Councils provide the third tier of government, and operate at a local level, close to their communities. In order to improve relationships and provide a more joined-up governance, a charter was developed in 2008, outlining how the unitary and town and community councils would work more closely together. An action plan was developed to facilitate the implementation of the charter.

Following local elections in 2012, the charter will be reviewed and revised and a new action plan developed. A questionnaire was circulated to Vale Council officers and to clerks of the signatory town and community councils during 2012. The general feeling is that relationships between town and community councils and the unitary council have improved in recent years; no one surveyed felt that relationships had worsened. However, it also found that there are several areas where more work is required to improve relationships further.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Public Sector Equality Duty places specific duties which require listed public authorities to collect, analyse and use equality information to improve services for protected groups. These duties can only be achieved with the entire council and its partners working to achieve our equalities objectives. With this in mind, we have been working over recent years to mainstream equalities issues, making them a responsibility of all managers and partners in setting their business and strategic plans.

The communications unit works with council directorates and partners to publicise partnership working to customers, to ensure that customers are fully aware of the services on offer and how they are provided.

Consultation and engagement are essential to gaining an understanding of our customers across the whole of the public sector. The citizens' panel Vale Viewpoint has been re-developed to enable the Local Service Board to develop a greater understanding of our citizens and to develop services that are fit for purpose and meet their needs.



The delivery of Health and Social Care services is becoming increasingly integrated. This process reflects a more general trend toward delivering multi-agency solutions to complex customer needs. This process is increasing pressure to deliver integrated access to services across a range of council and third party services.

In addition, customers are increasingly demonstrating an appetite for multi-channel contact with the council. It is increasingly important to ensure that these contacts are joined up and coordinated to ensure Customer Service Representatives are able to deal effectively with enquiries.

### **What did we do in 2012-13?**

- Produced robust equality impact assessments.
- Worked with Race Equality First and schools to produce anti-racist calendar and posters.
- A new training strategy has been developed, including e-learning module, to increase staff understanding and awareness of equalities issues.
- Engaged with groups and organisations to develop equality objectives that set the direction of the Strategic Equality Plan.
- Identified partners who may be able to help achieve equality objectives such as Safer Wales.
- Evaluated the charter with town and community councils.
- Reported on the achievement of targets in the Outcome Agreement and achieved 100% of the incentive grant.
- Worked with Bridgend Council to design a communications plan for the introduction of the joint Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) scheme.
- Worked with the UHB/British Heart Foundation to publicise the 'Heart Borough' scheme.
- Worked with Visible Services to publicise joint working with XFor.
- Worked with Neath Port Talbot Council to publicise the Police & Crime Commissioner election.
- Further integration of Health services into shared service centre at C1V.
- Integration of overnight Telecare and GP Out of Hours services.

### **What impact have these actions had?**

- Drew down £1.2 million of incentive grant to fund service delivery.
- Actions helped to inform customers and staff about the council's services and so enhanced its reputation and reduced the risk of reputational damage.
- We have helped to strengthen partnership working.
- Managers are more aware of the equality profile of their staff and customers.
- Equalities issues are considered at the outset of policy development.
- Children and young people are aware of racism and there are fewer racist incidents.
- Staff are aware of their equality responsibilities.
- The charter with Town and Community Councils has helped to improve relationships and communications.
- Developed an understanding of the areas where the revised charter with town and community councils will need to focus.

- People feel they have been involved in developing strategic direction and that our work is more likely to meet their needs.
- Delivered a more resilient Telecare Monitoring and GP out of Hours Services for customers which are less susceptible to staff shortages.

### **What do we plan to do in 2013-14?**

- Report on achievement of the final year of the current Outcome Agreement (2010-13).
- Negotiate a new Outcome Agreement with the Welsh Government.
- Further improve equalities data monitoring.
- Continue to develop and extend the reach of impact assessment.
- Continue to integrate our equality objectives into strategic plans and monitor actions in our Strategic Equalities Plan.
- Review the charter and develop a new action plan.
- Capture enquiries made at receptions on CRM
- Develop further joint services with UHB Communications Hub

### **How will we know if we're achieving our objective?**

- A comprehensive range of information is available and we have a better understanding of our customers' needs.
- Staffing reflects the composition of our residents.
- Policies and functions are positive for protected groups, and any negative impacts are reduced.
- Strategic Equalities action plan is progressed.
- Relationships with Town and Community Councils will continue to improve.
- Joint services are being delivered between UHB Communications Hub and Contact OneVale.

### **What do we plan to do in 2014 – 2017?**

- Coordinate the implementation of the town and community council charter action plan.

### **Links to corporate outcomes**

Performing well against this objective will help us contribute towards the following corporate outcomes:

- Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently managed services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.
  - placing customer focus at the heart of service delivery
  - Providing leadership and being transparent in our decision
  - Managing our resources.

**Service Outcome 2:** The Council has a clear strategic direction which is well communicated to residents.

**Objective 3:** To align the objectives and ways of working in the Council with our partners in order to meet community need.

**The context for this objective:**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council, like all other local authorities, seeks to achieve the highest possible standards of service delivery to meet the needs and aspirations of its local communities. We are therefore continually striving to improve services. The ongoing budget pressures created by the national financial settlement for local government however means that the Council has to continually rethink how it does things and work more effectively with our partners in the public, private, voluntary and community groups to enable us to continue to meet the needs of local communities.

A key priority for the council is to improve and increase partnership working, focusing on prioritising community issues, aligning our approaches and combining resources where appropriate to deliver better outcomes for our communities. The council has a duty to collaborate to deliver efficient and citizen focused outcomes for communities. A key driver for the service is the requirement to build strong collaborative links across public, private and voluntary sector organisations enabling the council to more effectively meet the needs of local communities. The local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 underpins our work in ensuring that the council works effectively with partners to deliver key outcomes for citizens and communities of the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Vale of Glamorgan Community Strategy 2011-2021 and its governing and delivery structure under the Local Service Board enables the Council and its partners to pursue agreed key outcomes for the Vale and work together in partnership to deliver against these. The Council's service planning process and resulting plans are informed by key priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan and the Vale of Community Strategy 2011-2021.

Within the partnership, partners are working towards similar outcomes in prioritising key issues and aligning their approach and combining resources where appropriate, they are better able to achieve these outcomes whilst simultaneously supporting local economies and strengthening the communities of the Vale.

The key priorities outlined in the Vale of Glamorgan Community Strategy are reflected in the Corporate Plan which identifies how the Council is going to contribute to the Community Strategy priorities. This in turn informs service plans which detail how services will contribute towards achieving corporate outcomes and consequently Community Strategy outcomes. These have been revised to become more customer and outcome focused. Quarterly monitoring of service plans are undertaken with progress reported against key service objectives and outcomes. Progress in achieving identified outcomes are scrutinised by elected members and our regulators.

The Localism Bill 2011 presents opportunities to improve partnership working to achieve community outcomes whilst delivering efficiencies. It represents a key challenge and opportunity to the service. As the corporate lead, we will be exploring opportunities to improve existing partnerships as well as creating new ones in the public, private and voluntary sector and with local community groups in order to meet community needs whilst simultaneously delivering efficiencies.

Further opportunities to increase partnership working comes in the central government's Big Society agenda which proposes the opening up of public services to private and third sector providers to increase choice. All these various improvement initiatives will need to be reflected in our corporate and service plans.

We have worked with our key partnerships to establish a performance management framework that enables us to plan and monitor the work of those partnerships. An annual report has outlined for the first time the difference that the work of the partnerships is making to improve the quality of life for local residents.

### **What did we do in 2012-13?**

- In response to Shared Purpose Shared Delivery, Welsh Government guidance on partnership working, the LSB has established a Business Intelligence Group. A work programme has been started to be drafted by the group to develop a sustainable analytical resource within the LSB.
- Spring and Autumn editions of the Partnership Newsletter have been produced.
- Three area groups have been established under the Local Service Board and partners are continuing to work together to identify and resolve local priorities.
- Established the performance management framework for all the key partnerships and produced the first annual report for the delivery of the Community Strategy.
- Revised service planning arrangements making plans more customer and outcome focused.
- Arts Connect – we developed and agreed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' between four local authority areas including the Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr and Bridgend CBC to create a single shared arts service to; improve opportunities, reduce duplication, share experiences, create stronger partnerships with other agencies, to increase opportunities for engagement in the arts to achieving a secure and focused future for local government arts provision.

### **What impact have these actions had?**

- The formation of the Business Intelligence Group has improved joint working between analysts and consultation officers amongst a number of the LSB partners. Work has started to identify opportunities for collaboration and duplication of resources.
- The Local Service Forum enabled partners to hold workshops on a range of topics and progress priorities e.g. NEETs, Alcohol Strategy, Wyn Campaign, (frail elderly), and Welfare Reform. It provided opportunities to explore how partners can work more effectively together to address barriers to effective collaboration and opportunities following new initiatives such as the new FACT team, regeneration activity, Communities First and Llandough Hospital.

- The partnership newsletter demonstrates the range of activity being undertaken in partnership across the Vale and highlights achievements and events in an accessible format. The newsletter promotes opportunity for joint working between organisations in the delivery of specific projects. For example the linkages between regeneration activity and learning and skills, how projects are working to address poverty etc.
- All partnerships have utilised performance information to inform their activities including engagement. The overall picture of performance for the Vale LSB is positive and there is clear evidence that significant achievements have been made across all priorities.
- Service plans demonstrate clear links between the Corporate Plan and customer outcomes and we can better evidence our achievement of these outcomes.
- Brought additional funding for arts to the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Broadened opportunities for participation in the arts in the Vale.

### **What do we plan to do in 2013-14?**

- Develop the partnership website to help stakeholders and residents' access information and promote how LSB partners are working collaboratively to delivery the community Strategy.
- Review partnership structures to ensure they support the delivery of agreed priorities.
- Explore opportunities for working collaboratively within the Vale and regionally to improve services, support innovation and deliver savings.
- Review and improve the annual service planning process in consultation with Wales Audit Office.
- Further develop the Arts Connect collaboration.

### **How will we know if we're achieving our objective?**

- Accurate self assessment is undertaken of all service areas and plans are in place to meet our statutory duty to improve.
- Increased opportunities for involvement in the arts.

### **What do we plan to do in 2014 – 2017?**

- Further extend the Arts Connect work to involve the third sector.
- Identify new collaborative working arrangements.

### **Links to corporate outcomes**

Performing well against this objective will help us contribute towards the following corporate outcomes:

- Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently managed services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.
  - placing customer focus at the heart of service delivery

- Providing leadership and being transparent in our decision
- Managing our resources.

**Service Outcome 2:** The Council has a clear strategic direction which is well communicated to residents.

**Objective 4:** To continuously improve to be a top performing Council.

**The context for this objective:**

An overarching objective of Corporate and Customer Services is to drive continuous improvement across all council services, in so doing meeting the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 in full. The Council has statutory duty to continuously improve.

Corporate and Customer Services makes a significant contribution to national and local priorities through its role in facilitating the Council's internal planning processes and via wider community planning for the Vale of Glamorgan. This includes a leadership role in embedding major cross-cutting issues such as collaboration, sustainability and equality across council services and activities.

On a day to day basis, Corporate and Customer Services also has a lead role in embedding within the Council a corporate approach to policy development, performance management and improvement, consultation and engagement, communications, partnership working, equalities, sustainability and collaboration.

In recent years, Corporate and Customer Services has experienced increased demand for our services to deliver major change in the Council. At the same time, the resources available to us are reducing consequently we increasingly have to do more with less.

In the context of the various modernisation and improvement initiatives emanating from the central and Welsh governments, Corporate and Customer Services faces a challenging few years. Efficiency and delivery of customer focussed outcomes continue to be the driving forces on the service's agenda in response to the increasing pressures on local government funding.

Of particular significance are the changes in the local partnership environment, and the welfare system. The Localism Bill 2011 also promises changes greater influence for communities in relation to services and planning decisions. The central government's Big Society agenda also proposes the opening up of public services to private and third sector providers to increase choice. All these various improvement initiatives need to be reflected in our corporate and service plans.

There is a legal basis under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, Part 1 for effective business planning arrangements to drive improvement within the council. A key challenge for Corporate and Customer Services is to ensure that year on year the council's core self assessment and business planning processes (service planning) and performance management arrangements are robust and drive continuous improvement which will stand up to scrutiny from our external regulators. Year on year reviews of our core processes ensure that improvements are made to reflect new legislative requirements and any recommendations from our regulators in their annual review of our corporate governance arrangements within the council.

The development of improvement objectives and improvement reporting (through the council's improvement plan) are a statutory duty, and require a significant staffing resources and time commitment. Performance reporting is highly regulated, and this work is coordinated through the Corporate and Customer Services department.

Service planning arrangements have been revised this year in response to last year's Annual Improvement Assessment with plans now detailing more customer focused outcomes. Training has been provided for senior managers in becoming more outcome focused, although this work will need to continue to become embedded in the working arrangements of the council. Further work is planned in the coming year to improve how we report against achievement of our outcomes.

Our corporate performance management software, Ffynnon, a key tool in monitoring and reporting performance across the council is to be replaced during 2014/15. We will need to establish appropriate contingency arrangements internally to ensure a smooth transition to the new system, including adequate resources to support the building of a new reporting framework in the replacement for Ffynnon and training of managers and councillors in its use. There is a risk that the software procured will not be suited to the requirements of the Council, particularly in light of new service planning arrangements. Our contingency arrangements will therefore need to address this possibility and this issue will be closely monitored during 2013/14 and it will be important that the Council's Ffynnon project team contributes to the WG consultation on the procurement process.

A new framework in Ffynnon is being developed to go live 1 July 2013, in line with timescales for quarter one reporting. The new framework will reflect the changes made in the recent corporate restructure and revised service planning arrangements.

A key role of the service is to routinely assess performance of all council services identifying areas for improvement and provide targeted support in addressing under performance issues before they escalate. This process also helps inform our annual improvement objectives, which we publish annually in April. These are the key areas within the council where we will target our improvements for the coming year.

Our recent annual performance assessment (2011/12 data) indicated that the council is performing well in comparison with its neighbours. Performance was above the Welsh average for 88 of the key national indicators reported on for 2011/12 and below the Welsh average for 54. Of these, 59 indicators were in the top quartile, the most of any council in Wales. Our priority for the coming year is to improve performance in the areas where the council was not meeting the Welsh average, particularly in the case of the 37 performance indicators that were in the bottom quartile nationally for 2011/12.

In response to areas identified to be under performing through our annual assessment of performance, a number of reviews were completed in 2011/12. This has included projects on ICT, disabled facilities grants and (young people not in education training or employment (NEETs)). Whilst performance for disabled facilities grants continues to improve, performance is still below the Welsh average and efforts are now being concentrated on addressing complex cases involving children



and young people which is impacting negatively on time taken to implement adaptations overall.

A complete review of the council's performance indicators has been undertaken. A number of new indicators have been added which aim to measure the impact that the delivery of a service has had on the service users. An exercise was also undertaken to identify where performance indicators were not best measuring our performance against our objectives, and a number of outdated indicators have subsequently been removed. Additionally, the council continues to collect all national performance indicators upon which we have a statutory duty to report.

The Equality Act requires councils to report on performance on an annual basis and monitoring systems do not currently record much of the data. The department is working with managers to improve the monitoring data that is collected, reported and used, as a basis for ensuring that all of members of our community receive access to essential services.

Consultation and engagement are essential to gaining an understanding of the extent to which we meet our residents needs and whether or not we do so in a way that is convenient to them. Service delivery cannot be improved without engaging service users in the process.

A key risk for the service is that due to continued budgetary cuts, limitations in terms of workforce size and restrictions on resources, the council's ability to continuously improve will be impaired. In light of this, our priority as a service will be in making focused improvements in those areas that have been identified as particularly low-performing and which will have significant impact on our customers and local communities. In some instances where performance is particularly good, it may be a significant achievement for this to be maintained despite resources being limited.

As part of our lead role in coordinating the regulatory work programme of the Council we will continue to support services in preparation for and post regulatory assessments, for example the upcoming Estyn review of Education Services in 2013. Services are being supported in developing a corporate approach towards implementing the requirements of the Welfare Reform Act. The department is coordinating a corporate approach to safeguarding children and adults.

The service takes a lead role in ensuring local and national elections run smoothly and in accordance with Electoral Commission performance standards. The council is committed to increasing the number of citizens on the Vale of Glamorgan electoral register and encouraging them to vote at elections.

Increasing customer satisfaction and improving how customers access services is a key priority for the Council. The communications team provides professional media and communications services to the council's directorates and provides a number of effective 'owned' communications channels. Past MORI research for the Local Government Association has indicated that good communication between a council and its residents is the main driver for overall satisfaction with council services. Councils who are best at informing their residents about what they do, tend to be the most popular and well-regarded, irrespective of council tax levels and actual

satisfaction with service delivery. MORI research has also found that councils that keep their staff well informed are rewarded with more motivated staff.

Overall satisfaction with the information received from the Council has remained fairly consistent over the past few years, with 76% saying they were satisfied overall compared to 77% in 2009.

Overall satisfaction with services provided amongst residents was high, with 9 in 10 (93%) stating they were satisfied ('Very' or 'Fairly'). Only 7% said they were dissatisfied overall. This compares was similar to satisfaction levels in 2009, when a slightly higher number (96%) of residents were satisfied. However, in 2012, those stating they are 'very' satisfied with the services provided is lower than in 2009, with just under a third (31%) saying this, compared to almost 4 in 10 (37%) saying they were 'very' satisfied in 2009.

Although the council has discontinued its highly regarded 'Vale Waves' quarterly newspaper, other, less expensive, means of communicating with residents have taken its place. The council's website, e-newsletter (with over 600 subscribers) and social media (Twitter with over 4,000 followers and Facebook with 400 'friends') have replaced the newspaper, but we are still building up a following.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Public Sector Equality Duty places specific duties which require listed public authorities to collect, analyse and use equality information to improve services for protected groups. Our equalities objectives are robust and set the direction for the council to become an organisation that recognises differences and serves our entire population.

### **What did we do in 2012-13?**

- Published a new Corporate Plan for 2013-17 setting out the priorities for the Council for the next four years.
- Level 3 of the Green Dragon Environmental Standard was maintained across all services in the Civic Offices.
- Implemented new service planning arrangements which detail the ways in which the Council hopes to improve outcomes for its customers through service delivery.
- Reviewed the Council's performance indicators in line with new service planning arrangements to develop an outcome focussed approach to performance management.
- Incorporated service plan actions into Ffynnon in order to monitor progress and report against achievement of objectives.
- Supported improvement work in disabled facilities grants, the Youth Offending Service, NEETs, pest control service, welfare reform system, and Social Services through delivery of the Change Plan.
- Engaged with groups and organisations to develop equality objectives relevant to their needs.
- Began working with services to advise on how to gather equality information on protected characteristics.
- Conducted a series of focus groups with staff to gain an understanding of why potential improvements to service delivery are not being effectively

communicated to senior officers (the members of staff in a position to make appropriate changes).

- Established a list of all the service user groups currently meeting in the Vale.
- Developed the council's corporate Twitter and Facebook sites.
- Developed equality objectives that will result in improvements in:
  - gathering and using employment and equality information;
  - improving accessibility to public documents;
  - raising awareness of equality duties and issues affecting protected groups amongst Council staff and residents of the Vale of Glamorgan;
  - involving people with protected characteristics in developing, reviewing or changing services and evaluating results;
  - increase use of hate crime helpline and complaints system to report harassment and discrimination of people with protected characteristics;
  - increasing awareness and confidence in use of domestic abuse support services;
  - developing a workforce plan with actions to reduce the gender pay gap.
- Published a Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives, the achievement of which will be monitored through the service planning process.

#### **What impact have these actions had?**

- The Corporate Plan 2013-17 was developed in parallel with the budget and service plans to ensure consistency and alignment and clarity with regard to priorities.
- Increased staff awareness about the need to reduce energy, use, minimise waste and recycle. Unwanted furniture is recycled and the number of printers has been reduced.
- Service plans demonstrate clear links between the Corporate Plan and customer outcomes and we can better evidence our achievement of these outcomes.
- Our performance measures contribute towards achievement of shorter term service outcomes and medium to long term corporate outcomes for citizens of the vale of Glamorgan.
- Improvements continue to be made in council services.
- Produce guidance on using plain English to write Council documents
- Report on progress in annual equality report.
- Design a public awareness campaign to help promote understanding of protected characteristics.
- Developed a greater understanding of the needs of our residents and service users.
- Customers are informed about the council's improving and developing services
- Established corporate priorities for achieving equality improvements across service areas.
- Communicated to the public and organisations the Council's commitment to making improvements for people with protected characteristics.
- Met the legislative requirement to engage on equality objectives and publish a Strategic Equality Plan by 2 April 2012.

## **What do we plan to do in 2013-14?**

- Maintain level 3 of the Green Dragon Environmental Standard.
- Review and improve the annual service planning process in consultation with Wales Audit Office.
- Contribute to WG consultation on shaping requirements for the replacement of Ffynnon and implement adequate contingency arrangements to ensure smooth transition to the new system
- Roll out team plans which reflect new service planning arrangements and support managers through this process.
- Identify areas of under performance and target improvement work at those areas.
- Develop a system that allows us to record and respond more effectively to common complaints.
- Develop a method by which we can respond promptly to issues raised by members of Council led service user groups.
- Advertise the council's Facebook page to build up a larger following.
- Monitor the achievement of equality improvements across service areas.
- Review the use of the hate crime help line to establish current benchmark of use and identify barriers to reporting hate crimes.
- Review the hate crime reporting system and incorporate the capacity to record protected characteristics (where this can be done confidentially and sensitively) so that reports can be analysed by these characteristics.
- Develop and implement an awareness campaign to promote the hate crime help line, including guidance on what constitutes harassment and how use of advocacy services can be accommodated.
- Promote the complaints system to general public, including how complaints of discrimination are dealt with, and why protected characteristics are monitored.
- Evaluate whether the complaints system is being used more by people with protected characteristics.

## **How will we know if we're achieving our objective?**

- Greater energy efficiency in council buildings.
- Our Annual Improvement Assessment identifies good progress in our corporate arrangements for improvement.
- The Ffynnon replacement meets council requirements for monitoring and reporting performance and managers and members are able to effectively interrogate data to challenge performance and drive improvement.
- Improvements in performance of the service areas targeted.
- Increased customer satisfaction scores.
- Increased use of the council's social media.
- Annual equality reporting takes place on progress.
- Service plans reflect equalities objectives and updates are reported through Ffynnon.

## **What do we plan to do in 2014 – 2017?**

- Implement a new pan-Wales performance information collection and reporting system.

## **Links to corporate outcomes**

Performing well against this objective will help us contribute towards the following corporate outcomes:

- Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently managed services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.
  - placing customer focus at the heart of service delivery
  - Providing leadership and being transparent in our decision
  - Managing our resources.

**Service Outcome 2:** The Council has a clear strategic direction which is well communicated to residents.

**Objective 5:** To communicate decisions in a transparent manner to local people and our staff.

**The context for this objective:**

The communications team provides professional external and internal communications for all council directorates. It provides both a reactive and proactive public relations and media management service, with 721 press enquiries and 350 press releases issued in 2011/12.

Relationships with the local and national media are generally good. The communications team prepares daily media briefings for officers and elected members, so that they are aware of all stories involving local government issues. It also deals with crisis communications, handling press statements and providing expert media advice to all directorates.

The Council's website is a key medium for keeping local people informed. For example, on election night, the communications team provided updates throughout the night in both English and Welsh, keeping people informed immediately of election results. During periods of adverse weather, the website is updated from 6.00 am, keeping parents informed of school closures immediately as they happen.

The website and social media are continuing to develop, making the work of the council more efficient. However, the communications team will need to work more flexibly over the coming years to enable it to cope with its increasing workload.

The council supports Bro Radio, the local community radio station based at the HUB, which operates primarily with volunteers. As well as providing good media experience for young people hoping to work in the media field, the radio provides a valuable communication tool to get across key messages from the council and to promote events and activities.

The Communications team ensures that information reaches our Welsh speaking customers, through the provision of Welsh translation service, including the Welsh language website. It provides a publications and graphic design service, which promotes good quality documents, securing a professional reputation and high brand recognition of the council's logo. It undertakes an annual publications survey, and has been able to drive up the quality of the publications issued by the council over recent years.

For staff, It provides a daily news bulletin, monthly Core Brief, intranet and 'Staffroom' e-newsletter.

**What did we do in 2012-13?**

- Developed and implemented action plans based on the results of both the Staff Attitude Survey 2012 and the Public Opinion Survey 2012.

- Implemented a Staffroom e-newsletter.
- Developed and promoted social media communications channels.

### **What impact have these actions had?**

- Staff and members of the public are aware that the council takes their views seriously and is prepared to act on them.
- Staff are well-informed about the council's decisions and how it will affect them.
- Helped to implement effective change management.
- Offered new and exciting ways for people to find out about the decisions and work of the council.

### **What do we plan to do in 2013-14?**

- Progress the implementation of the action plans developed as a result of the Staff Survey and the Public Opinion Survey.
- Further develop the Staffroom e-newsletter.

### **How will we know if we're achieving our objective?**

- Satisfaction with the council remains high.
- Satisfaction with internal and external communications channels will remain high.
- Staff perform well and are ambassadors for the council.
- Residents understand and recognise the changes and improvements the council has made to its services.

### **What do we plan to do in 2014 – 2017?**

- Develop the use of social media across the council.

### **Links to corporate outcomes**

Performing well against this objective will help us contribute towards the following corporate outcomes:

- Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently managed services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.
  - placing customer focus at the heart of service delivery
  - Providing leadership and being transparent in our decision
  - Managing our resources.

**Service Outcome 3:** Residents feel a sense of engagement and pride in their local community.

**Objective 6:** To encourage people to take pride and be involved in their local community.

**The context for this objective:**

The communications unit uses a variety of channels to promote the county and community life. Our communications channels are also used to promote a wide variety of events.

The department provides a professional arts service to the council's directorates, local arts community, residents and professional arts organisations and individuals. The arts encompasses a wide range of activity, including the visual arts, crafts, dance, drama, music, literature, film, theatre, festivals and other events.

There are many community organisations in the Vale that foster creative talent. We provide advice and support to assist groups in developing and continuing to thrive. They include: St Donats Arts Centre; Barry Memorial Hall and Theatre; Paget Rooms, Penarth; Market Theatre, Cowbridge; the Washington Gallery, Penarth; Coed Hills Rural Art Space, St Hilary; Canonhill Arts Space, Barry; Ffotogallery at Turner House, Penarth.

Art Central gallery provides a varied monthly programme of exhibitions including local groups, individual and international artists. It is open to the community to visit, free of charge, enabling open access to the arts.

Significant Public Art opportunities throughout the Vale engage the local community in developing local, professionally designed and installed art work. Artists work with children, young people and other members of the local community to enable access to the arts.

As an audience member, participant or volunteer participation in the arts opens up new experiences for people, enabling opportunities to learn new skills, discover personal creativity and enhancing the quality of life. The development and sharing of these skills with others in their local community generates a sense of engagement and pride, playing a key role in bringing communities together.

The arts attract tourism and visitors to the area, generating a positive economic impact on the creative industries and local businesses. Research into the craft industry in rural Wales identified over 2500 craftspeople working in Wales, twice the proportion in the rest of the UK. The arts and creative industries are important employers; one in every 40 people is earning a living from the arts economy or the work it creates.

More than three quarters of adults (76%) in Wales support the view that access to arts and culture makes Wales a better place to live (Source: Arts in Wales Survey 2005). The arts have long been associated with a positive effect on both health and wellbeing. To enable access to arts opportunities we support and promote touring



arts programmes to residential homes, community centres and hospitals working with organisations such as Live Music Now! Wales, the Arts Council for Wales Night Out Theatre scheme, storytelling and other community outreach events. We encourage and support and third sector arts venues and arts organisations to engage with the community offering activities within and out side their venues.

Research has identified that singing and musical activity has a significantly positive effect on those suffering with dementia and Alzheimer's. The Chelsea and Westminster Hospital found that live music helped to diminish the levels of anxiety of patients receiving day chemotherapy; while patients exposed to visual arts and live music during the preoperative process in a day surgery unit had lower levels of anxiety and depression. (Arts Council for Wales: Arts, Health and Wellbeing Strategy).

In February 1997 the British Medical Journal reported the findings of a Swedish study of lifestyle and health. The University of Umea found that people who regularly attend cultural events live longer. They attribute this not to better health among those with higher incomes, but suggest that the arts can stimulate the immune system. (Use or Ornament, Francois Matrasso 1997.)

The Mayor is the First Citizen of the Vale of Glamorgan and a figure of authority who connects the present day with history and acts as a symbol of continuity. The Mayor's Office provides support to enable them to fulfil this role as well as act as an ambassador for the Council.

The Electoral Registration team takes a lead role in ensuring local and national elections run smoothly and in accordance with Electoral Commission performance standards. The service successfully delivered the high profile Local Government and new Police and Crime commissioner elections during 2012, meeting the Electoral Commission's performance standards.

Increasing the number of citizens on our electoral register and encouraging citizens to vote, whilst a priority, continues to present a challenge to the service. The Government's plans to introduce Individual Electoral Registration (IER) by the summer of 2014 will present an opportunity to increase voter numbers as each person will be required to register to vote individually, rather than by household. Currently 91% of Vale households are registered to vote.

### **What did we do in 2012-13?**

- Worked with the newly appointed Community Cohesion Officer to develop local engagement projects that will empower hard to reach communities in the Vale.
- Successfully promoted the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod and other key events in the county.
- Developed arts and cultural events for the National Eisteddfod of Wales 2012.
- Selected and commissioned a locally based craft artist to design and create the 2012 Eisteddfod Crown.
- Secured a project grant of £5,000 from the Arts Council of Wales for the Barry Summer School project, to research and develop a reminiscent exhibition and arts workshops highlighting this unique summer school from the 1960's and

1970's. The original school attracted world renowned artists and international students to Barry.

- Collaborated with Literature Wales and eleven other local authorities to access Arts Council of Wales funding of £50,000 for a three year project to develop participatory community literature projects in the area.
- Hosted receptions to reward and honour local, national and voluntary organisations, such as Best Kept Village Competition; Vale Volunteer Bureau Awards.
- Showed appreciation and recognition to Council staff, through long service awards and for staff who contributed to the success of the 2012 Eisteddfod.
- Celebrated special events and launched Council and community projects such as the Penarth WRVS Jubilee Tea Party; Cardiff & Vale Scouts and Guides AGM; the launch of "How Green was my Vale" DVD; British Heart Foundation Campaign; Friends & Neighbours Senior Citizen Group; Launch of Schools against Racism Calendar.
- Supported Vale schools, such as the Cowbridge Comprehensive School Art Exhibition; Vale Open Learning Centre Jubilee Writing Competition; Llantwit Major School production of "Guys & Dolls".
- Received members of the Royal Family and visitors to the Vale of Glamorgan, such as the Fecamp Scout Group; Study Group from Lithuania; visit by a choir from Russia.
- Supported local and national sports organisations, such as Llantwit Major Junior Football Club Annual Awards; Veterans Football Association.
- Organised and been involved in ceremonial events, such as re-dedication of the Merchant Seamen memorial; dedication ceremony to commemorate American servicemen in Barry during WWII; Armistice Day wreath laying.
- Supported local charities by holding fundraising events such as Coffee Mornings; Night at the Races; Charity Ball.
- Successful National Eisteddfod with more than 30 volunteers involved.
- Extended the number of workshops provided by Show Racism the Red Card, to work with young people and teachers to reduce the incidence of racism and homophobic bullying.
- Successfully delivered the Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner elections.
- Met the Electoral Commission's performance standards for running an election.
- Increased the number of Vale household registered to vote to 91%.

### **What impact have these actions had?**

- Satisfaction levels with communications is high.
- The council's communications contributed to the high attendance at the Eisteddfod
- Raised the profile of the arts in the Vale through local and national events, engaging the community and increasing cultural visitor opportunities in the Vale.
- Creating a feeling of self worth for individuals being recognised.
- Linking the Council with the residents and improving communication and understanding.
- Linking one group or organisation with another and improving communication and understanding.

- Charity fundraising to benefit local people and raise the profile of the charitable work in our area.
- Raising the profile of the council and local events.
- Actively reducing discrimination through schools and youth services and facilities.
- Less than 1% of the electorate complained about the election process for both elections. The majority of these related to the new arrangements for the PCC elections and this has been fed back to the Electoral Commission.
- Both elections were delivered without challenge.
- Whilst more households registered to vote, election turnout did not increase overall. Individual Electoral Registration will provide an opportunity to improve elector registration and turnout.

### **What do we plan to do in 2013-14?**

- Work with the newly appointed Community Cohesion Officer to develop local engagement projects that will empower hard to reach communities in the Vale.
- Develop new strategic regional Arts Connect initiatives to engage the local community and link strategically the regional communities in arts participation and attendance.
- Review Arts Connect in 2014 with a view to renewing the 'Memorandum of Understanding' for a further time scale.
- Lead the Arts Connect dance initiative in creating stepping stones to enable local involvement in national events.
- Engage the community in developing new public art initiatives.
- Map existing Public Art sites.
- Participate in the development of a regional Arts Strategy.
- Develop the Arts Council for Wales collector plan initiative at Art Central Gallery.
- Increase schools activity and attendance at Art Central Gallery.
- Develop relationships with Cardiff and the Vale Health service and arts partners to develop arts and health opportunities locally and regionally.
- Freedom Ceremony for the Royal Welsh to exercise their right to march through the County, probably taking place in Penarth.
- Start preparatory work for the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) in the Vale.

### **How will we know if we're achieving our objective?**

- Increased community cohesion.
- Increased number and variety of arts activities available to residents and visitors.
- Increased use of the arts website.
- Increased marketing through social networking and other marketing streams.
- Development of new partners and new initiatives.
- Increased visitor attendance at Art Central, with positive feedback through the visitor's book.
- Increased percentage of the population saying that they had attended/participated in art activities in the Vale during the previous year (measured via the biennial public opinion survey).
- Events are well publicised leading to good attendance.

- Smooth transition to IER increases voter registration.

### **What do we plan to do in 2014 – 2017?**

- Introduce Individual Electoral Registration covering all eligible electors in the Vale.

### **Links to corporate objectives**

Performing well against this objective will help us contribute towards the following corporate outcomes:

- Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently managed services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.
  - placing customer focus at the heart of service delivery
  - Providing leadership and being transparent in our decision
  - Managing our resources.

**Service Outcome 3:** Residents feel a sense of engagement and pride in their local community.

**Objective 7:** To develop the methods by which we engage our residents in decision making enabling the Council and partners to work with communities to create solutions to the problems that affect them.

**The context for this objective:**

The Council is constantly working to improve the methods by which we engage our communities in decision making. Effective consultation and engagement will be vital tools in helping the council meet the challenges that we will face in the future and in gaining an improved understanding of our residents' needs will allow us to rationalise the services that we provide effectively.

In addition to the increased demand for effective consultation there is currently significant pressure both internally and externally to improve the way in which we engage our residents:

- Engagement is one of the Core Values set out in the revised Corporate Plan. The plan gives a commitment that “before making significant decisions we will engage with the individuals, groups and communities who are affected by them”.
- The Council’s Cabinet has stated its intention to better engage residents and service users in decision making and improving the way in which the Council undertakes consultation projects.
- The Local Government Measure 2011 stresses the importance of engaging service users in improving services and also obliges Councils to “measure improvement from the service user’s perspective”.
- In May 2012 the Wales Audit Office published a report, 'Public Engagement in Local Government'. The report concluded that “public engagement activity frequently lacks strategic direction and co-ordination; feedback is rarely provided to the public; and monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the public engagement are weak”.
- Engagement is becoming an issue of ever greater importance for Welsh Government and this is reflected in the guidance it issues to local authorities.

These factors provide us with an opportunity and an impetus to significantly develop the way in which we work.

Communicating with residents effectively helps to maintain the council’s reputation and increases satisfaction with council services. The communications team has developed the council’s Twitter account as a useful feedback tool. There are now over 4,000 followers, many of whom are delighted by explanations and answers to questions raised in ‘tweets’. Because it is a two-way communication, it also allows us to follow key issues for members of the public and put forward their suggestions to service areas.

There is also a feedback service on the website, asking whether users found pages useful. Where suggestions are made, we actively implement them to make it more user-friendly and relevant.

As a corporate communications team, we actively promote ways that residents can get involved in decision-making, through consultations and events.

The Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Public Sector Equality Duty places specific duties which require listed public authorities to collect, analyse and use equality information to improve services for protected groups. Our Strategic Equalities Plan commits the council to improving communication with protected groups, so that services are more fit for purpose and meet the needs of the whole of the community.

### **What did we do in 2012-13?**

- Established Vale Viewpoint, the LSB Citizens Panel which has representation both from an equalities and spatial aspect to support area working
- Developed a combined LSB Information and Engagement strategy.
- Held the Local Service Forum which is the Annual Stakeholder event for all partnerships.
- Developed plans to improve services following the feedback gained from the 2012 Public Opinion Survey.
- Developed the framework for a youth cabinet and a youth mayor following a series of engagement events with young people during Local Democracy Week 2012.
- Developed a bespoke training course with Participation Cymru to educate staff of the benefits of effective engagement.
- Established a new corporate standard for consultation and engagement within the Council.
- Established a database of equalities groups and voluntary organisations operating in the Vale that are willing to engage with the Council.
- Raised awareness of the importance of engagement as part of the equality impact assessment process.
- Undertaken engagement on equality objectives for Strategic Equality Plan.
- Provided training to Councillors on their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, public sector equality duties and equality impact assessments.
- Trialled the use of social media tools to engage young people in the Vale.
- Developed and implemented publicity to attract good sized audiences to the 'Community Cabinet' meetings in Barry, Llantwit Major, Penarth and Cowbridge.
- Publicised a number of consultations and their outcomes – including Cemetery Approach, St Cyres Dinas Powys site and St Paul's.
- Introduced a feedback mechanism on the council website.
- Undertaken engagement to develop equality objectives.
- Raised the importance of engagement as part of equality impact assessment with service managers and Councillors.

### **What impact have these actions had?**

- Partners are working together to engage and consult with local stakeholders and residents which is a more cost effective use of resources and will ensure consultation and engagement is more meaningful and adhering to the highest consultation standards.
- The Central and Western Group have used information gained through engagement events to explore how access to services can be improved for young people. A Greenlinks service has been established for a trial period to help young people overcome barriers to accessing services. An event to improve take up of flu immunisation was held in Penarth and the Barry Group have supported a smoke free playground established in Iolo park.
- Increased the opportunities available to Vale residents to influence the decisions that affect them.
- Provided effective guidance in engagement to all service areas.
- Increased the Council's capacity to undertake consultation and engagement projects.
- Increased the quality of the consultation and engagement work being undertaken across the council.
- Enhanced the Council's ability to engage with hard to reach groups.
- Improved the quality of equality impact assessments.
- Adopted well-informed equality objectives as a result of engagement.
- Improved understanding of Councillors about the importance of engagement and assessing the impact of Council decisions, policy and practice.
- The community Cabinet meetings have enhanced the reputation of the council and encouraged resident engagement.
- Participation in consultation projects has been maximised, encouraging engagement of residents and informing the Cabinet's decision making process. The reporting of outcomes has helped to inform residents, so enhancing the reputation of the council.
- The website feedback mechanism has helped to improve the council's website and engage with customers.
- Social media has promoted engagement with customers and provided feedback to directorates.
- Increased awareness amongst Councillors about the importance of involving residents in decision making through equality impact assessment training.
- More accessible documents are beginning to be developed.

### **What do we plan to do in 2013-14?**

- Develop an Information and Engagement Strategy for the LSB to improve engagement with local residents. This includes: improved capacity for a sustainable business intelligence function to be available to the LSB.
- Review area working arrangements under the LSB to ensure cost effective and efficient arrangements are in place to support the delivery of objectives.
- Develop an improved and more effective public opinion survey that allows us to gather data to inform future decisions as well as providing feedback on Council services.
- Develop an improved staff survey that allows us to effectively monitor levels of employee engagement.
- Train managers to engage effectively with stakeholders.

- Further increase the number of methods by which all partners can engage Vale residents in making the decisions that affect them.
- Develop the new website to encourage further engagement with customers.
- Develop the use of social media, increasing the number of followers.
- Produce guidance on producing accessible Council documents written in plain English so that there is a corporate approach to publishing accessible documents.
- Produce guidance on engaging and consulting with protected groups.
- Evaluate and report on whether guidance has resulted in people with protected characteristics being more involved in decisions about services.
- Evaluate progress on achieving equality objectives.

### **How will we know if we're achieving our objective?**

- An increased positive response to the question, *To what extent do you agree with the statement 'I am able to influence the decisions that affect me'* asked as part of the public opinion survey.
- The number of residents using the website to communicate with the council increases.
- The number of residents using the council's social media channels to engage with the council increases.
- Continuing engagement to evaluate the progress in the achievement of equalities objectives.
- Protected groups report that council documents are becoming more accessible.

### **What do we plan to do in 2014 – 2017?**

- Move from 'consultation' with stakeholders to more active forms of engagement.

### **Links to corporate objectives**

Performing well against this objective will help us contribute towards the following corporate outcomes:

- Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan can easily access efficiently managed services that are focused around their needs, have confidence in how decisions are made and are proud to live in the Vale.
  - placing customer focus at the heart of service delivery
  - Providing leadership and being transparent in our decision
  - Managing our resources



### Corporate and Customer Services Action Plan 2013/17

<b>Outcome 1:</b>	Our customers have access to a broad range of efficient, sustainable services which meet their needs, in a way that is convenient to them.
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<b>Objective 1:</b>		To encourage our customers to use the most appropriate, lowest-cost way of dealing with the council, and ensure a positive customer service					
Ref.	During 2013-14 we plan to:	Outcomes we'll achieve from this action	High , medium or low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start Date	Finish Date	How will the work be resourced?:
CC01/A001 CSCF/A6	Improve the Vale website to enhance customer experience and encourage citizen engagement.	<p>Citizens use the website as a first point of call for accessing Council services.</p> <p>The website is a popular pathway through which residents engage with the Council.</p>	High	Alison Cummins	1/4/13	31/12/13	A member of staff from the Communications Team has been seconded to work on this project for 6 months, and agency staff are covering her post. Development of a new CMS has been funded from reserves.

CC01/A 002	Implement the new Welsh language standards.	An increased number of communications with the public are conducted in Welsh.	Medium	Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/12 15	The Equalities Team will be implementing the standards. Awaiting final agreement of the standards to identify how the remainder will be funded.
CC01/A 003	Increase the number of Welsh learners and training opportunities.	Opportunities to learn Welsh are frequent and accessible.  Improved Welsh language skills allow staff to offer a better level of customer services to Welsh speakers.	Medium	Nicola Hinton	1/4/13	31/3/14	Training courses are mainly funded from individual service budgets. Taster sessions are funded from the Equalities budget.
CC01/A 004	Monitor the efficiency of the new discrimination service.		High	Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/12/13	Monitoring will be undertaken by the Equalities Team. If the service is unable to meet targets, the contract will be withdrawn.

CC01/A 005	Implement a new equalities training programme council wide.	Staff are compliant with the Council's equalities policies.	Medium	Nicola Hinton	1/4/13	31/3/14	Training courses are mainly funded from individual service budgets. Taster sessions are funded from the Equalities budget.
CC01/A 006  CL3	Increase the number of services available via self service on the Council website and promote.	Citizens use the website as a first point of call when accessing Council services.	High	Tony Curliss/ Alison Cummins	01/4/13	31/3/14	Development of services will be resourced through Customer Relations with technical work being undertaken by the web development team and external supplier resources. Funding to be secured on an individual business case basis
CC01/A 007 CP	Develop and promote social media as a channel for handling customer enquiries and accessing council	The Council uses modern technology and communication methods, allowing	High	Alison Cummins/ Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Social media will receive automatic updates when changes are made

	services.	residents to contact the Council using their preferred method.					on the web site and when information is distributed via the council's new customer messaging service. Manual updates and responses will be made by existing CSR resources with the activity blended with existing work. Cost of Solution £10K per annum
CC01/A008	Develop proactive messaging services to reduce avoidable contact.	Communication is streamlined and the most cost efficient methods are used.	High	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Project implementation will be delivered through the Channel Strategy Task Group. Capital Cost of £5K followed by subscription of £10K per annum
CC01/A009	Expand provision of council services close to local	Residents of the Vale have greater access to	Medium	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	The project management will

	communities using voluntary sector and community councils.	more convenient council services.  Residents engage more with Council services.					be undertaken by the Customer Relations Service Support Officer and OM Customer Relations.
CC01/A010	Develop ways to measure customer satisfaction for each communication channel.	Customer satisfaction data informs work to improve customer relations within the Council.	High	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Implementation work will be undertaken by the Channel Strategy Task Group. Ongoing reporting will be requirements will be met by the Customer Relations Business Support Manager.
CC01/A011	Develop means to accurately measure cost per transaction for each communication channel.	The most cost effective pathways of communication are used.	High	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Work to define measurement and means of capturing data will be undertaken by the Channel Strategy Task Group. Ongoing reporting will be requirements will

							be met by the Customer Relations Business Support Manager.
CC01/A012 CSCF /A8	Expand the range of services that are available from libraries.	Residents of the Vale have greater access to more convenient council services.  Residents engage more with Council services.	Medium	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Project management by Operational Manager Customer Relations and Chief Librarian. Implementation of new services through the Channel Strategy Task Group
CC01/A013 CSCF /A2	Develop a customer service strategy that reflects a shared vision of customer service and best practice.	High levels of customer satisfaction across all access points and low transaction costs.	High	Tony Curliss	1/4/13	30/6/14	Operational Manager Customer Relations in conjunction with the Channel Strategy Task Group.
CC01/A014 CSCF	Develop a customer contact strategy for enquiries across all communication	Engagement of relevant sector/ department to help	High	Tony Curliss	1/4/13	30/6/14	Operational Manager Customer Relations in

/A4	channels.	shape service delivery.					conjunction with the Channel Strategy Task Group.
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<b>Objective 2:</b>		To develop more integrated service delivery					
<b>Ref.</b>	<b>During 2013-14 we plan to:</b>	<b>Outcomes we'll achieve from this action</b>	<b>High , medium or low priority</b>	<b>Officer responsible for achieving this action</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>How will the work be resourced?:</b>
CC02/A015 CL7	Review the charter with Town and Community Councils and develop a new action plan.	Good relationships with the signatory town and community councils allow for effective and joined up governance.	Medium	Bev Noon	1/4/13	31/3/14	This action is about changing how we work and will not require additional funding. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC02/A016	Negotiate a new 'Outcome Agreement' with the Welsh Government.	Mutually beneficial targets are agreed and the maximum amount of funding from the Welsh Government is secured.	High	Bev Noon	1/4/13	31/3/14	This action is about changing how we work and will not require additional funding. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC02/A017	Improve equalities data monitoring council wide.	Robust and reliable data informs the Vale's equalities policy.	High	Nicola Hinton/ Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/3/14	This action is about changing how we work and will not require



							additional funding. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC02/A018	Extend the use of and ensure consistency in impact assessments undertaken across council services.	Implications of service impact assessments are addressed.	High	Nicola Hinton	1/4/13	31/3/14	This action is about changing how we work and will not require additional funding. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC02/A019	Integrate corporate equality objectives into strategic plans and monitor actions in the Strategic Equalities Plan.	Commitment to equal opportunities is embedded in the Council's daily business.	Medium	Sarah Jeffery	1/4/13	31/3/14	This action is about changing how we work and will not require additional funding. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC02/A020	Capture enquiries made at receptions on Customer Relations Management (CRM).	We have a better understanding of the services that residents seek. Appropriate channels in place to meet the needs of	Medium	Tony Curliss	1/4/13	31/3/14	Project Management by Service Support Officer

		residents.					
CC02/A0 21  CL2	Increase customer satisfaction and improve how customers access services by developing more integrated service delivery with our partners and being more innovative in how public buildings are used.	Customers can access a broad range of services in a way most convenient to them.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/14	Operational Manager Customer Relations/ Channel Strategy Task Group/ Corporate Asset Management Group
CC02/A0 22 CSCF /A6	Develop and extend joint services with the University Health Board Communications Hub	Partnership working allows consistently high quality customer service to be delivered efficiently and effectively.	High	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Operational Manager Customer Relations and a dedicated project manager (subject to approval) for 2 years. Total salary cost circa £40K

<b>Outcome 2:</b>	The Council has a clear strategic direction which is well communicated to residents.
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<b>Objective 3:</b>	To align the objectives and ways of working in the Council with our partners in order to meet community need.
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<b>Ref.</b>	<b>During 2013-14 we plan to:</b>	<b>Outcomes we'll achieve from this action</b>	<b>High , medium or low priority</b>	<b>Officer responsible for achieving this action</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>How will the work be resourced?:</b>
CC03/A023 CSCF/ A9	Develop the partnership website to help stakeholders and residents' access information and promote how Local Service Board (LSB) partners are working collaboratively to delivery the community Strategy.	Residents and stakeholders understand the structure and purpose of the LSB.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/12/13	Corporate Partnership Team staff
CC03/A024	Review partnership structures to ensure they support the delivery of agreed priorities.	The effectiveness of the partnership working structure is increased.	Medium	Huw Isaac	1/9/13	31/12/13	Corporate Partnership Team staff
CC03/A025 CL4	Explore opportunities for working collaboratively within the Vale and regionally to improve services, support innovation and deliver savings.	Financial savings are made and work is improved through the sharing of resources.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/14	Corporate Partnership Team staff, BPR team staff

CC03/A0 26  CL5	Work with the Local Service Board to develop a robust intelligence base to support the delivery of the Community Strategy.	Greater efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public, private and voluntary resources in the Vale to address community needs.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/15	Corporate Partnership Team staff
CC03/A0 27	Develop the Arts Connect collaboration.	One shared arts service is fully established in South East Wales.  Participation in the arts increases.		Bev Noon	1/4/13	31/3/14	Potential development of pooled budgets and staffing.

<b>Objective 4:</b>		To continuously improve to be a top performing Council.					
<b>Ref.</b>	<b>During 2013-14 we plan to:</b>	<b>Outcomes we'll achieve from this action</b>	<b>High , medium or low priority</b>	<b>Officer responsible for achieving this action</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>How will the work be resourced?:</b>
CC04/A028	Maintain level 3 of the Green Dragon Environmental Standard.	Staff actively engage in energy saving and environmentally friendly initiatives.	Medium	Bev Noon/ Helen Moses	1/4/13	31/3/14	Potential for cost savings. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC04/A029	Review and improve the annual service planning process in consultation with Wales Audit Office.	The service planning process is streamlined.  Service plans provide good planning tools for services and are informative for Councillors and residents.	High	Julia Archampong	1/8/13	30/9/13	This action is about changing how we work and will not require additional funding. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC04/A030	Contribute to WG consultation on shaping requirements for the replacement of Ffynnon and implement adequate contingency	Pan Wales is a useful tool for the Council, enabling effective performance management.	High	Bev Noon	1/4/13	30/6/14	Pan will replace Ffynnon, and therefore one piece of work will be substituted for another.

	arrangements to ensure smooth transition to the new system.						
CC04/A031	Roll out team plans, which reflect new service planning arrangements, and support managers through this process.	Team plans are consistent with service plans.  Each team has a team plan in place.	High	Julia Archampong	1/4/13	31/7/13	This action is about changing how we work and will not require additional funding. Additional work will be undertaken by members of the team.
CC04/A032	Identify areas of under performance council wide and target improvement work at those areas.	Measurable improvements are made in areas that were previously under-performing.	High	Sarah Jeffery	1/4/13	31/3/14	The previous work programme will be replaced by a new work programme.
CC04/A033 CSCF /A13	Develop a system that allows us to record and respond more effectively to common complaints.	We have a better understanding of service users' opinions and can use these to inform improvement work.	Medium	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Customer Complaints Officer and Operational Manager for Customer relations to define strategy and process. CRM Systems Administrator and Business Support

							Manager to support data capture and reporting.
CC04/A034	Develop a method by which we can respond promptly to issues raised by members of Council led service user groups.	Good communication allows for better relationships with service user groups.	Medium	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	As above
CC04/A035	Advertise the Council's Facebook page to build up a larger following.	Residents frequently interact with the Facebook page.	Medium	Alison Cummins	1/4/13	31/3/14	The previous work programme will be replaced by a new work programme.
CC04/A036 SEP CP	Increase use of hate crime helpline and complaints system.	Residents feel comfortable using the hate crime help line as a confidential way to report instances of discrimination.	High	Nicola Hinton/ Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/3/14	Advertising costs £1K
CC04/A037 SEP CP	Publish data to show how services across the Council are being used by people from protected groups.	Improvement to service use and access are implemented in response to this data.	Medium	Nicola Hinton/ Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/12/13 (Evaluate April 2015)	Information will be published via the website and therefore there is no cost to the publishing.
CC04/A038 SEP	Raise awareness council wide of public sector equality duties and of	Principles of equality are embedded in daily business.	High	Nicola Hinton/ Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/3/14	Existing channels of communication will be utilised.

CP	issues affecting people with protected characteristics.						
CC04/A0 39 SEP CL9	Evaluate the effectiveness of engagement and consultation guidance for involving people with protected characteristics.	People with protected characteristics successfully engage in Council consultations.	Medium	Nicola Hinton/ Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/7/15	Staffing time: 15 days
CC04/A0 40 SEP CL9	Increase awareness and confidence in use of domestic abuse support services.	Residents of the Vale who are either victims of domestic abuse or commit acts of domestic abuse access services which provide them with the help they need.	Medium	Nicola Hinton/ Linda Brown	1/4/13	31/3/16	Staffing time: 15 days
CC04/A0 41 CL8	Promote sustainable development ensuring that sustainability factors are taken into account in decision making and that the Council complies with forthcoming legislation on sustainable development.	There is a consistent and integrated approach to sustainable development. Sustainability implications are considered as standard in all Council decisions.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	41/3/17	Partnership Team



<b>Objective 5:</b>	To communicate decisions in a transparent manner to local people and our staff.
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<b>Ref.</b>	<b>During 2013-14 we plan to:</b>	<b>Outcomes we'll achieve from this action</b>	<b>High , medium or low priority</b>	<b>Officer responsible for achieving this action</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>How will the work be resourced?:</b>
CC05/A042	Implement the actions arising out of the Staff Survey and the Public Opinion Survey.	Staff feel that they can influence decision making and policy.  Residents express higher rates of satisfaction with previously poorly rated services.	Medium	Bev Noon	1/4/13	31/3/14	Staffing time: 15 days
CC05/A043	Improve the Staffroom e-newsletter.	Staff are informed, engaged and valued.	Medium	Alison Cummins	1/4/13	30/9/13	Staffing time: 15 days

<b>Outcome 3:</b>	Residents feel a sense of engagement and pride in their local community.
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<b>Objective 6:</b>	To encourage people to take pride and be involved in their local community.
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<b>Ref.</b>	<b>During 2013-14 we plan to:</b>	<b>Outcomes we'll achieve from this action</b>	<b>High , medium or low priority</b>	<b>Officer responsible for achieving this action</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>How will the work be resourced?:</b>
CC06/A044	Introduce Individual Electoral Registration covering all eligible electors in the Vale.	All eligible voters are able to participate in local democracy.	High	Tony Curliss	01/4/13	31/3/14	Within existing Electoral Registration resources.
CC06/A045 CSOP /A10	Develop and support the role of the Older People's Champion.	Older people in the Vale have a strong voice and their needs and vies are valued and respected.	Medium	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/ 14	Corporate Partnership Team staff

<b>Objective 7:</b>		To develop the methods by which we engage our residents in decision making enabling the Council and partners to work with communities to create solutions to the problems that affect them.					
<b>Ref.</b>	<b>During 2013-14 we plan to:</b>	<b>Outcomes we'll achieve from this action</b>	<b>High , medium or low priority</b>	<b>Officer responsible for achieving this action</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Finish Date</b>	<b>How will the work be resourced?:</b>
CC07/A046 CSCE/A1 CL1 IO	Utilise the full range of mechanisms established to engage with local communities and identify new methods of engagement building on best practice and new technology.	Local people are active in the local community and understand how they can get involved.	High	Sarah Jeffery	1/4/13	31/3/14	Consultation Officer time input over the full year
CC07/A047 CSCE/A2 CL1	Maximise the opportunities to coordinate consultation across partners and ensure there is appropriate feedback following consultation.	The views of local people inform service delivery.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/14	Consultation Officer
CC07/A048 CSCE/A3 CL1	Explore new methods of consultation and engagement to obtain the views of 'hard to reach' groups and the disengaged.	More representative views inform service improvements and developments.	High	Sarah Jeffery	1/4/13	31/3/14	Consultation Officer time: 20 days
CC07/A	Develop a training	More coordinated and	High	Sarah Jeffery	1/4/13	31/3/14	

049 IO	programme for both senior officers and engagement practitioners within the council.	strategic approach to consultation and engagement activities across the council. Greater internal capacity to undertake meaningful consultation projects and an improved internal understanding of the rationale and benefits of meaningful engagement.					
CC07/A 050	Develop a tool to allow colleagues to share information on engagement projects being planned in the Vale.	More coordinated and strategic approach to consultation and engagement activities across the council. Greater internal capacity to undertake meaningful consultation projects and an improved internal understanding of the rationale and benefits of meaningful engagement.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/14	
CC07/A 051	Develop a shared LSB Information and	More coordinated and strategic approach to	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/14	

IO	Engagement Strategy that outlines how local partners can work together to develop engagement in the Vale.	consultation and engagement activities across the Vale. Greater capacity to undertake meaningful consultation projects and an improved understanding of the rationale and benefits of meaningful engagement. Increased opportunities for residents to engage meaningfully in decision making.					
CC07/A 052  IO	Refine the Vale Public Opinion Survey to develop a tool that allows individual service areas to gather evidence on which they can take future decisions.	Increased opportunities for residents to engage meaningfully in decision making.	High	Huw Isaac	1/4/13	31/3/14	

### Corporate and Customer Service Workforce Plan

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Resources</b>
1.	Examine the departmental structure to ensure it is fit for purpose.	A revised structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement budget reductions annually</li> <li>● Redistribute workloads to ensure minimal impact on organisation and residents</li> </ul>	March 2013	Huw Isaac	Officer time.
2.	Extend expertise in certain areas (e.g. consultation/ engagement) to other parts of the Council.	The Council is able to discharge all functions effectively with minimal additional cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training for Heads of Service and Operational Managers</li> <li>● Training for officers involved in consultation</li> </ul>	March 2014	Huw Isaac	Consultation Officer's time, augmented by external support.
3.	Review approaches to increasing role flexibility.	Staff are able to cover several disciplines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review job description and person specifications</li> <li>● Purchase equipment where necessary</li> <li>● Provide training where necessary</li> </ul>	September 2013	Huw Isaac	Training costs as Appropriate.
4.	Explore collaboration opportunities	Better resilience and efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct review of Cardiff and Vale LSBs</li> <li>● Continue collaboration projects with Bridgend Council</li> </ul>	March 2014	Huw Isaac	Officer time.
5.	Strengthen and extend shared working between C1V and the Health Authority.	A more integrated service for the public, better resilience, cost savings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Appointment of Project Manager for integration of additional Health services</li> <li>● Implementation of a daytime shared service</li> </ul>	May 2013  December 2013	Tony Curliss  Tony Curliss	Officer time.

