



The Vale of Glamorgan Council

# Improvement Plan Summary

## Performance Review of 2014/15



## ● Introduction

Each year the Vale of Glamorgan Council produces its Improvement Plan Part 2: Annual Review of Performance which shows what the Council has achieved over the previous year, in this case 2014/15. This summary highlights the key information from the Plan and reports on our progress in achieving the eight improvement objectives we set ourselves in our forward looking Plan, Improvement Plan Part 1: Improvement Objectives 2014/15 published in April 2014. The full plan can be found on the Council's website at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk).

### How did we do against our Improvement Objectives?

Despite challenging financial times, we have concluded that we have successfully achieved the majority of our outcomes as set out in our eight improvement objectives for 2014/15. However, these improvement objectives will continue to remain long term priorities for the Council and what has been achieved in 2014/15 represents the start of what will be a long programme of initiatives to continually improve services for citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan. Our Council plans reflect this ongoing work.

Improvement Objectives (what we said we would do)	Links to the Corporate Plan (2013-17) Outcome Areas	Our Evaluation
To improve employability of local people by facilitating learning opportunities, vocational and employment skills.	Learning and Skills Improving skills, knowledge and opportunities	Achieved
To increase sustainability and stability of looked after children and young people's placements.	Children and Young People Safeguarding our vulnerable children and young people	Achieved
To support more people towards independence.	Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Supporting older people to maintain their independence	Achieved
To support and enhance the town centres of the Vale of Glamorgan for the benefit of residents, visitors and businesses.	Regeneration Sustaining vibrant communities	Achieved
To reduce the number of young people who are not in employment education or training (NEET).	Learning and Skills Improving skills, knowledge and opportunities	Achieved
To reduce the time taken to deliver disabled facilities grants to children and young people and to adults.	Housing Providing support and advice	Achieved
To support and challenge schools in order to improve pupil attainment levels at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.	Learning and Skills Improving attainment and attendance in our schools and learning centres	Achieved
To improve our responsive repairs service for tenants.	Housing Providing a quality landlord service	Achieved



The next generation

Dinas Powys Skatepark

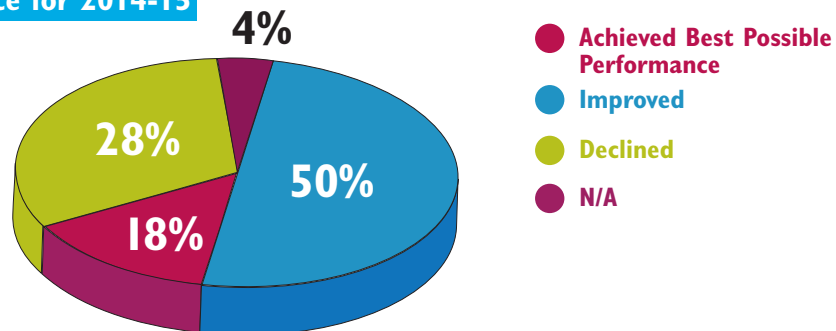
Cowbridge Food Festival

## ● Performance Overview

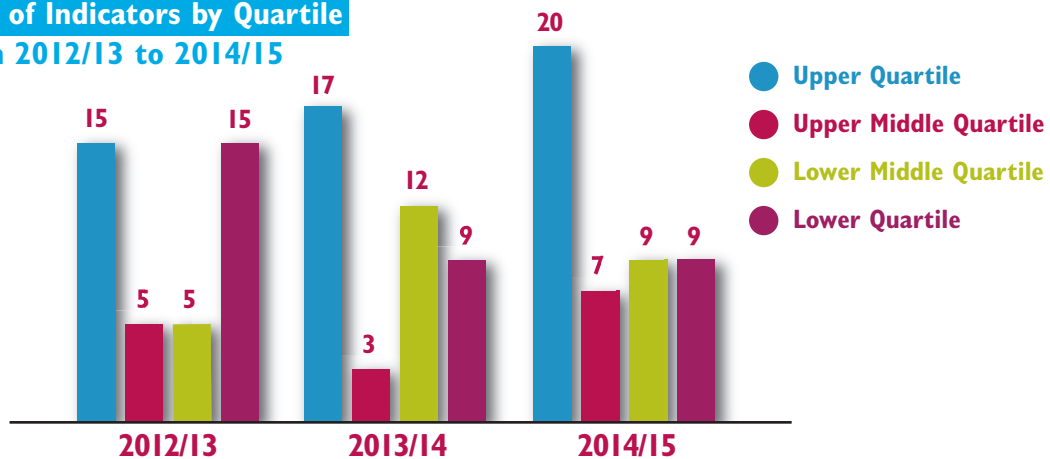
### How we performed against National Performance Indicators

We collected and reported data on 46 national performance indicators in 2014/15. Of these 44 have data that can be compared with the previous year. In the past the Vale has performed well when compared with other councils in Wales and the graphs below show that we continue to compare well.

### Summary of Performance for 2014-15



### Number of Indicators by Quartile between 2012/13 to 2014/15



This data is correct as of 28 August 2015

The Vale is ranked as the top performing Council (it has the same number of top or upper quartile indicators as one other Council) in Wales. The Council has been placed in the top group of authorities for 48% of comparable performance indicators. A total of 50% of the indicators showed an improvement on the previous year's performance.

The Vale's performance was better than the Wales average in 28 (61%) of comparable indicators and this performance is mirrored when compared against councils in the South East Wales Region. The areas which we performed best (ranked 1st in Wales) were:

- No children including looked after children left compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification;
- 100% of special education needs statements were issued within 26 weeks (including and excluding exceptions);
- 100% of adult protection referral risks were managed;



County Library, Barry  
Llanmaes  
Market, Barry

- 100% of carers needs were assessed;
- Ensured 100% of relevant children have pathway plans;
- We maintained contact with 100% of looked after children aged 19;

We also recognise that we need to improve in areas where we are not performing as well as the rest of Wales. These issues are being addressed within relevant Council plans and include:

- Supporting older people and adults in the community;
- Increasing the number of initial assessments where children are seen by a social worker;
- Improving our roads that are in poor condition;
- Increasing the number of food establishments that meet food hygiene standards;
- Increasing visits to sports and leisure centres;
- Ensuring we review adult care that were due for review during the year;
- Improving the average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children.

### Our Outcome Agreement (2013-2016) with Welsh Government<sup>1</sup>

We have made a lot of progress towards achieving the goals set out in our Outcome Agreement (2013-2016) with Welsh Government by meeting most of the targets we set ourselves for 2014/15. This conclusion is based on our own evaluation and is therefore provisional. If agreed by the Welsh Government Minister we could expect to secure £1.2 million to further improve services for Vale residents. You can find out more by viewing the Outcome Agreement 2013-2016: 2014-15 End of Year Evaluation.



Winter sunset, Penarth

Barry Market

Skate Park, Cowbridge

### Partnership Working and Collaboration

We continue to work in partnership with a range of public, private and third sector organisation on a local, regional and national basis to tackle some of the complex issues facing our citizens and communities. These partnerships allow us to work effectively and efficiently to improve services for our citizens. Our main achievements during 2014/15 include:

- A Shared Regulatory Service between the Vale, Bridgend and Cardiff councils. The new way of working has been designed around the needs of service users in terms of public protection needs and will secure a long term future for regulatory services for the benefit of Vale residents, at a time of reduced levels of funding and increased customer demands.
- Improved access to health and social care services in partnership with Cardiff and Vale Health Board. Contact One Vale, now receives joint health, social care and third sector screening/ allocation referrals. As a result of this service approach, more people have been directed to the right service. There is a more effective and co-ordinated care system in place across Community Health and Social Care. The speed of response to referrals has increased significantly with the response time for standard referrals reduced by 75% and by 50% for priority referrals.
- Increased the number of affordable housing units in the Vale through the Strategic Development Housing Forum<sup>2</sup>. During 2014/15, 148 additional affordable housing units have been developed or acquired. These include: the first extra care scheme in the Vale providing 42 homes for people aged 55+; 32 homes were

<sup>1</sup> The Outcome Agreement between the Welsh Government and the Council sets out how we will work towards improving services for citizens and communities in the Vale, within the context of the Welsh Government's national priorities. The three year Agreement is linked to a grant which is paid annually according to how successfully the Council has achieved its goals.

<sup>2</sup> Comprising officers from the Vale and development directors of the various registered social landlords that operate in the vicinity, the Strategic Development Housing Forum considers the existing affordable housing development programme and plans future development including site acquisitions, planning applications and funding streams.

provided through planning gain and consisted of both social rented homes and properties sold at 70% of market value to first time buyers through the Council's Aspire2Own Scheme<sup>3</sup>. Without this assistance, they could not have afforded to take their first step onto the home ownership ladder. 16 affordable homes were delivered through funding from the Welsh Housing Partnership and provided housing for intermediate rental; and the remaining 6 units provided 24 hour supported housing for young and vulnerable people and care leavers where they will be supported to learn new life skills in preparation for independent living.

- Through regional funding, we have improved an existing sheltered housing scheme for older people by updating the accommodation up to 21st Century standard. By appointing a dedicated officer who now operates from local hospitals to work with health professionals in identifying what type of accommodation a patient may need on leaving hospital, for example a step up, step down facility (sheltered accommodation) we are contributing to reducing delayed transfers of care (DToC)<sup>4</sup>.
- Improvements to Occupational Therapy services have been achieved by trialling new ways of working which has helped reduce duplication of visits by Occupational Therapists (OTs) resulting in savings and improved client experience as fewer assessments are carried out by different specialists. It has also increased occupational therapy and equipment capacity, ensuring that the right equipment and re-ablement<sup>5</sup> opportunities are provided. Communication and provision of information to service users has improved, so clients are more aware of how the process works and what to expect. As a result of this approach there is also closer working with physiotherapists to support service users.

You can find out about other projects the Council is involved by viewing the full Improvement Plan Part 2: Annual Review of Performance 2014/15 on our website.

### What our regulators say about us

Our Annual Improvement Report (AIR) from the Auditor General Wales (September 2015) gives a positive picture of how well we plan to improve service delivery. The report concludes that, "the Council continues to perform well in the context of national indicators and continues to manage its finances effectively. Its forward planning arrangements and track record suggest it is well placed to secure improvement in 2015-16". In response the Council is developing plans to tackle areas for improvement in the services highlighted. You can view our Annual Improvement Report on our website or at [www.wao.gov.uk](http://www.wao.gov.uk).



Penarth
Cowbridge
Pont y Werin

<sup>3</sup> Aspire2Own is a register of people interested in low cost home ownership properties. It is managed by the Council in partnership with Registered Social Landlords. It is aimed at people who are in a financially stable position but who are unable to purchase a home without assistance.

<sup>4</sup> Delayed transfer of care (DToC), occurs when a patient is ready for transfer from a general and acute hospital bed, but is still occupying such a bed.

<sup>5</sup> Re-ablement is about helping people regain the ability to look after themselves following illness or injury.

## What our residents say about us

Encouraging our customers to share their views and experiences of our services helps us to improve our services. It also provides us with an indication of how we are performing as a Council from the public's perspective. The key findings from our most recent Public Opinion Survey (POS) undertaken during 2014/15 are outlined below. These findings have been used by Council services to inform improvements for 2015/16.

- The majority of residents (84%) said they were satisfied overall with the services provided by the Council. Although there has been a fall in positive opinion when compared to the last survey (2012/13) which stood at 93%, satisfaction levels still remain high. One in 6 (16%) residents reported that are dissatisfied with the services provided by the Council compared to 7% during the last survey. The drop in satisfaction levels could partly be due to the impact of budget cuts to services over the last few years.
- Public opinion in relation to the Vale's town centres was mixed. Cowbridge and Llantwit Major received the most positive response with over 9 in 10 visitors to these towns rating them as very or fairly good (98% and 94% respectively). This was followed by Penarth at 89%. The majority were fairly positive about Barry, but some felt that the town centre was fairly poor or very poor (38% felt this way about Holton Road and 41% for High Street/Broad Street). The main reasons for rating Barry poor was that, 'it looks run down' or poor choice of shops.' In terms of accessibility of town centres, 9 in 10 rated their town as very good or fairly good in terms of bus services and pedestrian access.
- Overall satisfaction with leisure centres was quite high with 8 in 10 of people saying they were either very or fairly satisfied (83%). Whilst the majority were satisfied, there has been a decline in satisfaction since the previous survey where 94% said they were satisfied. The percentage of leisure centre users who were dissatisfied with the service has increased from 6% in 2012/13 to 17% in 2014/15. Access to leisure centres was rated most highly with over 9 in 10 people saying they were satisfied (92%) closely followed by information on activities with 89% satisfaction. The most notable decline in satisfaction was in relation to building cleanliness (72%) and activities on offer (86%). Satisfaction with pricing (84%) and parking (79%) remained stable.
- Overall satisfaction levels with highway/road maintenance has remained high with just over three quarters (77%) stating they were fairly or very satisfied with the service. However, this satisfaction has declined compared to 2012/13 where 86% said they were satisfied. People were most satisfied with traffic and street signs (94%), road clearing following a traffic accident (92%) and street lighting (91%). Satisfaction with the gritting of roads (78%) and road maintenance (41%) has remained relatively stable compared to the 2012/13 figures. Pavement maintenance has seen the greatest decline in satisfaction from 68% in 2012 to 51% in 2014.
- Satisfaction with parks and grounds maintenance continues to remain high with over 92% of people stating they are very or fairly satisfied with the service. Nearly half of all those respondents (45%) said they were very satisfied. This has remained consistent with levels of satisfaction in 2012/13. An area that received significant recognition was the cleanliness of country parks with 96% saying they were very or fairly satisfied.
- Satisfaction with both waste management and cleanliness is relatively high with 88% satisfaction with waste management and 84% satisfaction with cleanliness. Kerbside recycling and bulky collection showed the highest levels of satisfaction with 9 in 10 residents saying they were satisfied with the services (representing 91% and 90% satisfaction). Street cleaning and public toilets continue to show lower satisfaction levels with 78% saying they were satisfied with street cleaning and 57% satisfied with public toilets.



High Street, Cowbridge  
Alexandra Park, Penarth  
Llantwit Major Town Hall

## Our budget

In increasingly challenging financial times we need to make major savings over the next three years (£24.7 million) whilst continuing to improve our services to our customers. We made good progress in achieving £6.7 million in savings during 2014/15 and have to make a further £6.8 million in savings in 2015/16. We recognise that this can only be achieved by considerably changing how we work and the way in which services are delivered. In response to the challenge we are working with key partners including the public to consider alternative options for service delivery because only in this way can we hope to maintain a broad range of services to an acceptable standard.

In setting our budget for 2014/15 we consulted with residents and other interested parties on the Council's priorities. This provided us with evidence that all of the services provided by the Council are valued by significant numbers of Vale residents.

Learning and Skills was felt to be a high priority by the greatest number of people (59%) and a low priority by the fewest at 7%. The corporate priority to receive the strongest level of support was Environment with 57% stating that this should be a high priority for the Council in the near future. 54% felt that Community Leadership<sup>6</sup> should be a high priority and only 8% felt it to be a low priority. 55% felt the work associated with children and young people to be of high priority while 13% felt it should be a low priority. Community and Public Safety, was also broadly seen as being of high priority by 47% of people; only 15% felt it should be classed as a low priority. 48% of people felt that Housing should be a high priority for the future, while 35% felt it should be a medium priority and 18% felt it should be a low priority for the Council in the near future. Even the corporate priority which received the least positive response, Health Social Care and Wellbeing, was still viewed as a low priority by only 23% of people who responded.

The results also suggest there is a lack of understanding among Vale residents about which services fall within the remit of the Council and because of this there is concern among some residents that the Council is funding services that are not its responsibility.

In 2014/15 we spent 48% of our budget of £214.331 million on Education Services and libraries, 25% on Social Services, 10% on Building and Visible Services, 8% on Public Protection and Policy, 6% on other housing, benefits and Council tax relief, 3% on Planning, Transport, Economic Development & Leisure. We also spent £58 million on capital projects which was financed by a combination of borrowing, grants, capital receipts and revenue contributions. You can find out more about the Council's budget in the Council's full Statement of Accounts for 2014/15.



Ogmore  
St Brides Major  
The Star, Llantwit Major

## ● Summary of progress against our Improvement Objectives 2014/15

### I. To improve employability of local people by facilitating learning opportunities, vocational and employment skills.

Our conclusion is that we have achieved what we said we would do in 2014/15. We know this because:

- Through our work with key partners, investors and regeneration projects we have successfully targeted support at maximising opportunities for training and employment, by focusing on removing barriers to learning and employment and improving skills. This has resulted in an increase in confidence and the take up of training and employment opportunities overall leading to more clients securing employment.

<sup>6</sup> Community leadership means defining a vision for the community and working in partnership with a range of public, voluntary, community and private sector partners to fulfil that vision. The Vale of Glamorgan Council has a mandate (via the Local Government Act 2000) to represent and act on behalf of the whole community to meet the needs and aspirations of its communities.

## 2. To increase sustainability and stability of looked after children and young people's placements.

Our conclusion is that we have achieved our intended goals for the year. We know this because:

- We met our target to increase in-house foster carers and returned nine children formerly placed out of area to live in the Vale.
- Whilst we did not reduce expenditure per looked after child overall, this was due to an increase by 10 in the numbers of children in fostering placements. However, the placements made with families are stable and local, which are key priorities for the Council. Expenditure on the more costly out of area residential placements has been reduced.
- The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) inspection of the Council's Fostering service in 2014 reported very positive educational outcomes for children and young people. This remains a key Council priority and work will continue in the long term to increase sustainability and stability of vulnerable children and young people's placements.

## 3. To support more people towards independence.

Our conclusion is that we have achieved what we said we would do in 2014/15. We know this because:

- The introduction of the new joined up locality structure at a time of increasing service demand is starting to have a positive impact in improving access to health and social care services for older people in the Vale overall.
- We are seeing less duplication of effort with people getting the support they need at the right time resulting in positive outcomes. However, this remains a long term priority for the Council going forward.

## 4. To support and enhance the town centres of the Vale of Glamorgan for the benefit of residents, visitors and businesses.

Our conclusion is that we have achieved our intended goals for the year. We know this because:

- During 2014/15 we successfully worked with the Vale's town centres and businesses to promote investment and improve the built environment contributing to their vitality and attractiveness.
- Overall 76% of respondents to the Public Opinion Survey (2014) considered the Vale's main town centres to be attractive places to visit. Improving the vitality and attractiveness of our town centres remains a key part of the regeneration vision for the Council and work to date represents the start of what will be a long programme of initiatives to improve and sustain their vibrancy in the long term.



The Waterfront, Barry

Belle Vue, Penarth

Old Llantwit Major

## 5. To reduce the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).

Our conclusion is that we have achieved our intended goals for the year. We know this because:

- A lot of work has been undertaken via a joined up approach with key partners, which has resulted in a reduction in NEET levels from 3.8% to 2.75 at year 11 and from 2.02% to 1.78% at year 12.
- Our performance also improved with respect to reducing NEET levels at year 13 (4.8% to 4.08%). In addition, more young people, post 18 have been supported into employment.



## 6. To reduce the time taken to deliver disabled facilities grants to children and young people and to adults.

Our conclusion is that we have achieved our intended goals for 2014/15. We know this because:

- We have successfully reduced delivery times for service users by a third from the previous year. Our performance when compared with other Welsh councils is an improving one, currently placed 8th in Wales from 16th last year.
- We continue to work with customers to ensure their experience throughout the grant process is a positive one which leads to increased independence. The majority of customers using the service during the year stated that they were satisfied with the service received and reported that the assistance had made them safer and more independent in their own homes.

## 7. To support and challenge schools in order to improve pupil attainment levels at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.

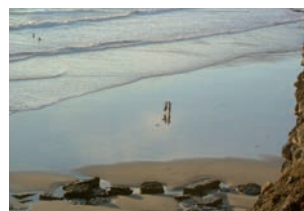
Our conclusion is that on balance we have achieved our intended goals for the 2014/15. We know this because:

- Pupil performance for the academic year 2013/14 shows continued improvement across all phases. There has been significant improvement in the number of young people achieving the level 2+ indicator that is, 5 A\* - C grades including English/Welsh and mathematics which has increased from 55.4% last year to 62.2% in 2014. We have worked with schools to ensure all 14-19 year group students' needs are met contributing to zero students leaving compulsory education without an approved qualification.
- The gap between the performance of children entitled to free school meals and that of their peers has narrowed at the Foundation Phase, Key Stages 2 and 3 but widened at Key Stage 4. Work is ongoing in order to secure further improvements at all key stages. As a key priority for the Council, the work to raise standards and levels of attainment will continue in the long term in order to secure the best possible education for pupils and levels of attainment for all key stages.

## 8. To improve our responsive repairs service for tenants.

Our conclusion is that we have achieved our intended goals for the year. We know this because:

- The transfer to a new more efficient mobile solution has enabled us to achieve service efficiencies, increase productivity and this has reduced service costs overall. Tenants have seen significant improvement in the repairs reporting process, our response times and the quality of repairs.
- During the year, 93% of respondents said they were satisfied with our repairs reporting process and 92% said they were satisfied with the quality of the work received. Work will continue in the long term in order to deliver further improvements for council tenants.



Breakwater, Barry Harbour

Cosmeston Medieval Village

Heritage Coast

View the full Improvement Plan Part 2: Annual Review of Performance 2014/15 for more information on each of the above improvement objectives.



Ysgol Bro Morgannwg

Victoria Park, Barry

The YMCA Hub, Barry

## ● Finding out more

If you have any comments after reading this summary, or want to find out more please let us know by contacting us at:

**In writing:** Performance & Development, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU

**By email:** [improvements@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:improvements@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

**By phone:** 01446 700111

You can get involved in the Council's consultation and engagement activities including suggesting improvement objectives for future years by joining Vale Viewpoint our citizens' panel and participate in consultations being conducted by, or on behalf of, the Council and its partners, the Local Service Board. Simply complete the brief online form.

