



The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Improvement Plan Summary

Performance Review of 2013/14



● 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. This summary shows 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 2013/14 published in June 2013. The full plan can be found on the Council's website at: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.

Improvement Objectives 2013/14	Corporate Plan Outcome Areas (2013-17)	Our Evaluation
1. To promote sustainable practices in our business with a particular focus on promoting waste reduction, reducing landfill and increasing recycling.	Environment Minimising our impact on the environment	Achieved
2. To reduce the time taken to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to children and young people and to adults to achieve the Welsh average performance of 2011/12 (326 days) as a minimum.	Housing Providing support and advice	Achieved
3. To increase the number of council foster carers.	Children and Young People Safeguarding our vulnerable children and young people	Achieved
4. To support and challenge schools in order to improve pupil attainment levels at Key Stage 3.	Learning and Skills Improving attainment and attendance in our schools and Learning Centres	Achieved
5. To implement effective and sustainable workforce planning for the Council.	Community Leadership Managing our resources	Achieved
6. To improve citizen engagement by ensuring residents' views are used to inform service development and improvement and further developing opportunities/ mechanisms for residents to influence decision making.	Community Leadership Placing customers focus at the heart of service delivery	Achieved
7. To tackle the effects of climate change with a particular focus on local flood and coastal risk management.	Environment Protecting and maintaining the environment	Achieved
8. To reduce the number of young people aged 14-19 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).	Learning and Skills Improving skills, knowledge and opportunities	Partially Achieved



King Square, Barry

Knap Lake, Barry

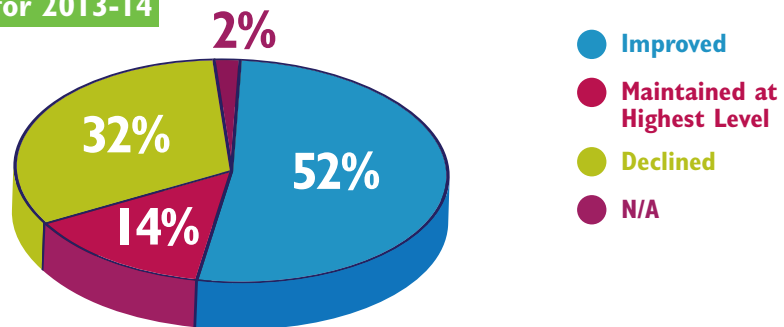
Sunset, Penarth

● Performance Overview

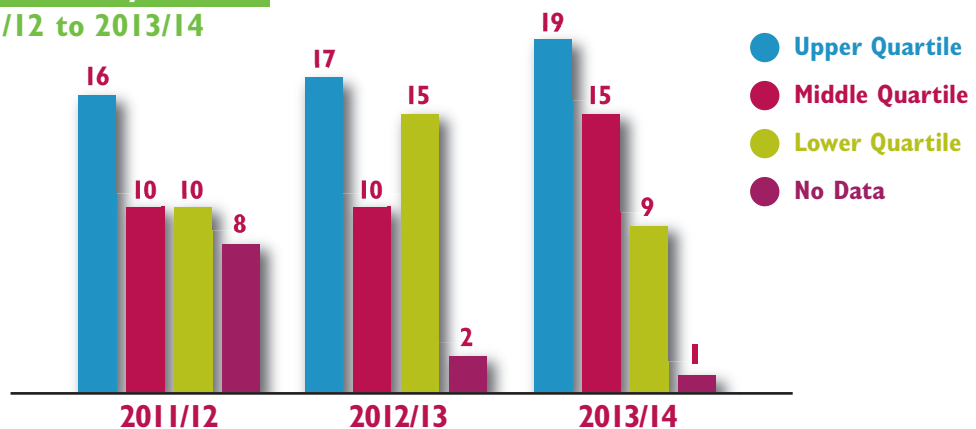
How we performed against National Performance Indicators

We collected and reported data on 44 national performance indicators in 2013/14. Of these, 43 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 2013-14



Number of Indicators by Quartile between 2011/12 to 2013/14



This data is correct as of 6 October 2014

The Vale's performance was better than Wales in 25 (58%) of the comparable indicators and similarly in 24 (56%) when compared against the South East Wales Region. The areas in which we performed best include:

- No Looked After Children left compulsory education without an approved external qualification;
- 100% of all special education needs statements were issued within 26 weeks;
- Our performance of 93.4% was amongst the top 25% of councils in Wales for pupil attendance in secondary schools;
- 100% of adult carers needs were assessed;
- 100% of all placements for Looked After Children began with a care plan in place;
- 100% of young carers known to social services were assessed;
- We've taken positive action to bring more privately owned vacant properties into use.



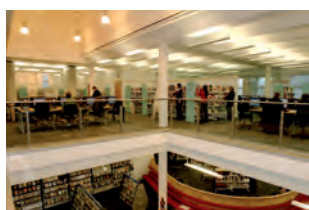
Rhose Point
St Hilary
Market, Barry

We also 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:

- Reducing delivery waiting times for our customers for disabled facilities grants;¹
- Clearing fly tipping incidents within 5 working days;
- Encouraging more people to participate in physical activity in our leisure centres;
- Increasing the number of food organisations that meet food hygiene standards.

Our Outcome Agreement (2013-2016) with Welsh Government

We have made a lot of progress towards achieving the goals set out in our Outcome Agreement (2013-2016) with Welsh Government² by meeting most of the targets we set ourselves for 2013/14. This conclusion is based on our own self-assessment 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.



County Library, Barry

Old Limeworks, Aberthaw

Skate Park, Cowbridge

Partnership Working and Collaboration

We continue to work in partnership with a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations on a local, regional and national basis to tackle some of the most complex issues facing our citizens and communities. These partnerships allow us to work more effectively and efficiently to improve services for our citizens. Our main achievements through partnership working include:

- We improved our outcomes for adult learners from a 'Poor' rating to a 'Good' rating by Estyn³ standards.
- Arrangements are well on track with Prosiect Gwyrdd, for a waste treatment facility which will reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill. In the long term this will provide a more cost effective waste removal method and reduce the chance of the Council incurring landfill fines in the future.
- Our rural regeneration partnership, Creative Rural Communities, has worked with a number of councils across Wales on joint community development projects, using Welsh Government and European funds. The 'Community Foodie', a joint project with Bridgend and Torfaen councils is helping communities to grow their own food and has been successful across the Vale in Dinas Powys, Treoes, Cowbridge, Wick and Peterston Super Ely. The 'Pub is the Hub' is a joint project across 8 counties that provides services to communities in the Vale through their pubs. These include new shops in Llancarfan, Moulton and Llanblethian.
- Through the Cyd Cymru Energy Project residents were able to collectively switch energy schemes and make energy savings. Over the year, 373 people registered with the scheme with 861 people switching through the energy helpline. The average savings for customers is £152 per year.

¹ Disabled facilities grants (DFGs) are grants provided by the Council to help meet the cost of adapting a property for the needs of a disabled person.

² 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.

³ Estyn is the Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales, inspecting quality and standards in education and training providers in Wales.

- A number of projects are being delivered across Cardiff and the Vale aimed at supporting older people to become more independent and live in their homes for longer. During 2013/14 a new assessment process was introduced for providing Supported Accommodation Day Services. By using assisted technologies, over £20,000 of savings have been made to date with further possible savings identified for the coming year. Combining social care and community health based staff within three Community Resource Teams across Cardiff and the Vale has improved access to services. We have redesigned existing sheltered accommodation in Redlands to support residents to live more independently. We are enhancing the service user experience and reducing costs by working with two voluntary organisations to provide general support such as shopping, making tea and companionship.

What our Regulators say about us

Our Annual Improvement Report from the Auditor General Wales gives a positive picture of how well we plan to improve service delivery. The report concludes that, “the Council generally has strengths in driving improvement across most services and responds positively to challenge. However, significant improvement is required in the delivery of disabled facilities grants and in managing the leisure contract.” In response the Council is developing plans to tackle the weaknesses in the services highlighted.

Our budget

In increasingly challenging financial times we need to make major savings over the next three years whilst continuing to improve our services to our customers. This can only be achieved by radically changing how we work and the way services are delivered. Working with our partners, we will need to consider alternative options for service delivery in order to maintain services to an acceptable standard.



Ogmore

St Brides Major

Pont y Werin

● Progress against our Improvement Objectives 2013/14

Based on our self-assessment, we have concluded that overall, the Council has been successful in achieving many positive outcomes for Vale citizens. We have achieved 7 out of the 8 Improvement Objectives set for the year with only one partially achieved. These objectives remain long term priorities for the Council and the success achieved in 2013/14 is just the start of a long programme of work to continuously improve services for Vale citizens. Our Council Plans reflect this ongoing work.

1. To promote sustainable practices in our business with a particular focus on promoting waste reduction, reducing landfill and increasing recycling.

Our conclusion is that we have achieved our intended goals for this year because we have met our statutory target for combined recycling a year in advance. However, our comparison with the rest of Wales shows that more work needs to be done to ensure that the Council is best placed to meet the challenging future Welsh Government landfill diversion and recycling targets.

Overall, we continue to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. 54.77% of all waste in the Vale was prepared for reuse, recycling or composting ranking us 10th out of 22 local authorities in Wales. By providing residents with more options to recycle biodegradable waste, we saw an increase in organic waste collected for recycling.

The Welsh Local Government Association Waste Benchmarking report (2012/13) showed that the Vale provided a cost effective waste management service. We had a low average expenditure of less than £3 per household per week across household waste collection services. The Vale also ranked second highest in Wales for the amount of food waste collected per household, collecting on average a huge 97kg from each household across the year, and eighth highest for dry recycling collection with just shy of 12,000 tonnes being collected across the area.

We need to increase participation levels further in our kerbside recycling, food waste and green garden waste collection schemes if we are to meet future national waste targets. We are targeting individuals and communities to encourage further participation through the 'what's in your bin' campaign, road shows, door knocking and media campaigns. By targeting certain areas, we have seen an increase in participation rates in recycling that were previously poor performing areas of the Vale.

2. To reduce the time taken to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to children and young people and to adults to achieve the Welsh average performance of 2011/12 (326 days) as a minimum

This objective has been achieved because we exceeded our target of 326 days by 42 days. However our comparison with the rest of Wales shows that more work needs to be done to ensure we reduce waiting times further.

To ensure continued improvement in the delivery of DFG's during 2014/15, we are employing additional Occupational Therapists to help reduce the time a client is waiting for assessment. We are also introducing a new contractor system which will further speed up the DFG process. There is evidence that what we have put in place is having an effect, so the focus will now be to ensure that improvements continue.

Positive outcomes were achieved for people who received DFGs in 2013/14 with 97% reporting that that the assistance had made them safer and more independent in their own homes. This is an improvement on our performance of 90% in the previous year. 100% of customers were satisfied with the DFG process, again an improvement on last year's performance of 94%. 100% of customers also said the standard of work completed at their homes was very good or good. During the year, 127 adults were helped to remain more independent living in their own homes compared to 86 in the previous year.



High Street, Cowbridge

Alexandra Park, Penarth

Llantwit Major Town Hall

3. To increase the number of council foster carers.

This objective has been achieved, although work will continue to take place to maintain the stability of vulnerable children and young people's placements in the long term.

We have come to this conclusion because we have met our target to increase the number of in-house foster carers in the Vale with an additional 8 foster carers being recruited. We have also reduced the number of externally provided foster carer placements. As a result, we reduced costs per looked after child in fostering placement.

During the year, 100% of young carers known to the Council were assessed. We completed 91% of required assessments within the recommended 35 working compared with a Welsh average of 76%. Every looked after child has an allocated Social Worker, every care placement starts with a care plan in place and 97% of all care plans are reviewed within the set timescale.

The increased number of in-house carers available has improved our ability to appropriately match children to local placements. More choice in placements has also resulted in better matching and stability of placements. Young people do not have to leave their community to be looked after.

The majority of carers were satisfied with services and access to support throughout the process. Young people were generally pleased with the information they had been given.



The Waterfront, Barry

Belle Vue, Penarth

Old Llantwit Major

4. To support and challenge schools in order to improve pupil attainment levels at key Stage 3.

Our performance for 2013/14 (academic year 2012/13) supports our conclusion that this objective has been achieved. The work to raise standards and levels of attainment will continue in the long term to secure the best possible education for pupils and levels of attainment for all key stages. We are currently in the top 4 performing authorities in Wales at Key Stage 3 which provides a good basis for further improvement.

Overall, improvement was made in all 6 measures of Key Stage 3 and the rate of improvement on all six is above that of Wales. Performance in the Core Subject Indicator (CSI)⁴ notably improved on the previous year from 13th to 4th in Wales.

Performance in writing, reading and number skills all improved on the previous year, as a result of the impact of the 'Big Writing' and 'Big Mathematics' projects in Vale schools.

Girls' and boys' performance consistently increased in all core subjects, except in Welsh where boys' performance stayed the same.

More than 50% of our schools are ranked within the top two quarters (or achieved higher to highest benchmarking positions) in Wales for English, Maths and Science. This is an improvement on the previous year's performance of 25% in Mathematics and CSI and 12.5% in English and Science.

Through detailed analysis of school performance data we are supporting and challenging schools to improve. This is enabling us to effectively target support where it is needed to secure improvements and ensure they continue.

⁴ Core Subject Indicator (CSI) is defined as achieving the expected level in both Maths and Science and either English or Welsh first language.

5. To implement effective and sustainable workforce planning for the Council.

Whilst we achieved our intended targets for the year, this objective remains a long term goal of the Council and work will continue to ensure we are best placed to tackle the challenges facing local government and the public sector in the near future.

In bringing together our financial, service and human resource planning processes the Council is better able to identify the level of people, resources, skills and experience needed to deliver services to meet the needs of our citizens in the future. We are currently implementing a four year human resources and training strategy which is helping us to identify, plan and meet our future workforce needs.



Breakwater, Barry Harbour

Cosmeston Medieval Village

Heritage Coast

6. To improve citizen engagement by ensuring residents' views are used to inform service development and improvement and further developing opportunities/ mechanisms for residents to influence decision making.

Whilst we have achieved our intended targets for the year, this objective remains a long term goal of the Council and work to date represents the start of what will be a long running programme of work to improve citizen engagement within the Vale.

We have come to this conclusion because during the past year we have increased opportunities for residents to interact with the Council through a wide range of projects, including very high profile consultations on the merger of two comprehensive schools and on the future of the library service in the Vale.

To ensure a more coordinated approach to consultation and engagement activity across the Council we have produced a Public Engagement Framework which sets out the case for improving how we interact with Vale citizens and how this can be achieved.

We have undertaken a programme of training within the Council over the past year to help achieve our aims. Actively promoting high profile public engagement projects have proved to be very effective in making residents aware of how they can interact with the Council and influence decisions that affect them. As a result we have successfully increased number of responses to public consultations and in the quality of these responses.

7. To tackle the effects of climate change with a particular focus on local flood and coastal risk management.

This objective has been achieved although further work will continue in the long term to manage the risks related with local sources of flooding. We have put in place a range of actions to address flood risk resulting from increasing rainfall, flash flooding, coastal and river flooding and so reducing the Vale's risk of flooding.

We have updated our website with information relating to flood and coastal matters. The Council has established a consistent approach to investigating flooding and drainage events. New software is in place that has enabled better use of data when commenting on new development and monitoring waterways.

We have undertaken works at several key locations in the Vale to help reduce the risk of flooding and the related social, economic and environmental costs. Two significant coastal events were experienced in January and February 2014 and repairs were carried out at various locations, including Whitmore Bay and Harbour Road, Barry. Flood prevention works were completed in Llancadle to protect multiple properties which had experienced flooding in recent years. The Coldbrook Catchment Flood Alleviation Scheme has been redesigned to improve sustainability of the scheme and is now set to start in October 2014. A similar process is taking place with the Llanmaes Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Our Flood Plan and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy clearly identifies residents and businesses in high risk flood areas and the flood prevention measures which will help ensure current and future developments in the Vale are not put at a higher risk of flood or coastal erosion.



Ysgol Bro Morgannwg

Victoria Park, Barry

The Hub, Barry

8. To reduce the number of young people aged 14-19 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).

This objective has been partially achieved and work will continue in the long term to improve through the Welsh Government Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF). We have come to this conclusion because despite a lot of work being undertaken to improve, we did not achieve all the targets we set ourselves to reduce NEET levels.

Overall, young people at risk of becoming NEET are being identified earlier and provided with relevant support. With our partners, we have developed and piloted a system which will help us to identify earlier those at risk of becoming NEET to help us track their progress. This system is being adopted by all schools.

Mobile youth support services have been developed and these have targeted the areas in the Vale with the most NEET young people. We have worked closely with Job Centre Plus to develop and extend job surgeries and increased our use of social media and 1 to 1 support in schools in order to better attract young people.

We have increased the number of alternative education programmes in our secondary and special schools. Working with partners, we have introduced taster vocational courses along with flexible start dates which have increased the number of young NEET people entering. We have also introduced a NEET directory of provision.

We have identified that further work needs to be done to engage young people who were formerly looked after by the Council in order to reduce the number who are NEET and this is a priority for the Council.

Through various development schemes, the Council has increased apprenticeship and training opportunities for NEET young people. Since April 2013 the Council's own Work Programme has received 32 NEET referrals, of which 29 started in a job. Since 2011 the programme has seen 160 NEET young people referred, 60 of these have entered employment.

● 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

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.

Vale Viewpoint



Vale of Glamorgan
Local Service Board
Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Lleol
Bro Morgannwg

