

## **Vale of Glamorgan Council Improvement Objectives 2013/14 Consultation Report**

### **Background**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council Improvement Objectives for 2013/14 are the product of the ongoing public and stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Council and are informed by the Corporate Plan, the annual service planning process and by the findings of various regulators' assessments. This ensures that the objectives reflect those areas which are considered to be the most important to improve upon in order that we continue to be a successful organisation. However, as well as requiring the Council to report performance against these objectives annually the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires the Council to consult on and publish its improvement objectives on an annual basis. To fulfil this requirement a public consultation is required.

### **Methodology**

The consultation of the draft improvement objectives was open to all Vale residents and relevant stakeholders. The consultation period ran from 02 April 2013 to 10 May 2013.

To enable residents and stakeholders to make informed comments on the draft improvement objectives details of how these were developed along with the full objectives themselves and the rationale underpinning each was made available online via the Vale of Glamorgan Council website. Paper copies of the same information were made available by request. Responses could be made to the consultation either online via email or in writing.

The consultation was widely promoted to the public. A press release promoting the consultation was featured in a number of local newspapers and the consultation featured on the front page of the council website for the duration of the consultation period. The consultation was also promoted via social media.

A list of relevant stakeholders was compiled. This included town and community councils, the council's strategic and LSB partners and a range of voluntary organisations operating in the Vale. Representatives of all of these organisations were contacted directly to inform them of the consultation process.

### **Results**

Despite the extensive promotion of the consultation only four responses were received during the consultation period. One was from a member of the public and the others were from town and community councils in the Vale. Penarth Town Council, Cowbridge Town Council and Dinas Powys Community Council made formal responses to the consultation.

This response rate is not wholly unexpected as a recent piece of research undertaken by the council highlighted that there is very limited public interest in policy consultations such as this.

The only response from a member of the public suggested that more needed to be done to advance progress towards objective 6 which addresses public engagement. The response did not raise any objections to any of the improvement objectives.

The response from Penarth Town Council was broadly supportive of all of the improvement objectives and stated that the town council “strongly supported objective No 2”. However, the response did also express “disappointment” that there was no mention of a desire for closer working arrangements with town and community councils in the Vale.

The response from Cowbridge Town Council was supportive of all of the draft objectives and offered specific comments in support of objectives 2, 3, 4 and 7. The response did raise a concern about the impact of objective 1 - specifically that of increased food waste recycling - on Cowbridge. With reference to Objective 6 the Town Council felt that the Vale of Glamorgan Council needed to do more to improve consultation with both citizens and town and community councils.

Dinas Powys Community Council made the following comments on the draft Improvement Objectives.

*"Dinas Powys Community Council takes on board the eight Improvement Objectives for 2013/2014 - several of which are not relevant to the Community Council.*

*Council felt that there are missing key issues: there are more important priorities such as traffic congestion throughout the Vale and maintaining Social Services and Education Budgets in light of continuing pressure for more efficiency savings and increasing demand".*

### **Consultation with Elected Members**

In addition to the public consultation the draft improvement objectives were discussed at meetings of all five of the Vale of Glamorgan Council scrutiny committees. Following these discussions the following recommendations and comments were made.

**Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health)** endorsed the proposed improvement objective for 2013/14 “To increase the number of Council Foster Carers”.

**Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)** endorsed the improvement objectives for 2013/14 that fell within its remit subject to the word “not” being inserted in the last line of the penultimate paragraph under the rationale for objective 1.

**Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection)** endorsed the proposed improvement objectives with no recommendations to cabinet.

**Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning)** recommended that cabinet be requested to consider increasing the targets identified for 2013/14 under objective 4 by more than 1% as this was not felt to be sufficiently challenging. The committee also requested that consideration be given to introducing measures for the early identification of NEETS at the end of Year 9.

**Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources)** recommended that cabinet approve the draft improvement objectives but made a number of additional comments that they wished to be taken into consideration. However, these comments addressed issues of service delivery rather than the objectives themselves. The committee also requested that the word “tool” contained within the 2<sup>nd</sup> action shown in relation to objective 6 be amended to “mechanism”.

### **Amendments Following Consultation**

Following consideration by Cabinet, relevant amendments will be made to the report prior to being considered by Council on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2013.