

## Vale of Glamorgan Council Target Setting Guide

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### What is a target?

- Targets are time bound statements which define a desired level of service delivery measured via performance indicators.
- Targets identify a level of performance you want to achieve and provide a mechanism by which we can measure our performance against. Targets provide us with an indication of where we want to be and help us to distinguish between good and poor performance.
- Targets enable us to focus on continuous improvement through setting targets that are both challenging and realistic. In the current financial climate, the challenge may be not on improving performance year on year, but instead focusing on sustaining/maintaining performance to acceptable standard. In these circumstances it is important that there is a rationale in place to evidence why this is the case. For example, a service area's target may have previously been set at 100%, as this is the best possible performance. In this circumstance, there is no improvement that can be made to the target.
- Targets can be used at both the strategic planning level and at the individual level. At the strategic planning level we incorporate targets within our key planning documents such as the Corporate Plan and Service Plan, which can then be aligned to performance indicators. At the team/individual level, targets can be used within Team Plans and staff appraisal reviews (#itsaboutme).

### Why set targets?

Targets assist us in driving a culture of continuous improvement by enabling us to identify where we are, what we need to achieve and a means through which we can measure our performance against. Targets help us to:

- *Prioritise - targets give us an idea of where our priorities lie.*
- *Define an agreed direction of travel – targets show us more precisely what we are trying to achieve, so that levels of performance and expectation can be clearly communicated to Elected Members, staff, the public and our partners*
- *Focus our attention and resources - setting targets enables us to focus both our attention and resources on contributing to the achievement of the Council's strategic outcomes and priorities.*
- *Promote a sense of accountability-* setting challenging but realistic targets can be motivating and create a sense of ownership at both the strategic and individual level. At the strategic planning level, our targets are embedded within Service Plans that link to our Team Plans. Targets can be used within staff appraisal reviews (#itsaboutme) in order to drive improvement and build a sense of accountability at the individual level.

## Types of target

Target setting can be undertaken with either an internal or external focus. Where possible we try to adopt an external focus to our target setting as this enables us to set targets relative to external benchmarks, such as the performance of other local authorities. This is primarily done for national (statutory) indicator data sets where comparative data is available across Wales and for benchmarking club-based data sets such as Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) and HouseMark data sets etc.

When setting targets against external comparators, we need to be clear on what we are comparing ourselves with i.e. Welsh Average, top quartile performers. Where available we should benchmark our target setting against top quartile performance in the first instance unless there is a suitable rationale to explain why we benchmark our targets against the Welsh average.

Internal target setting focuses on analysing our performance year on year by using trend data to identify targets that are suitably challenging but realistic. Targets that are set with an internal focus tend to be for indicators where there is no comparative data available externally such as our localised performance indicators.

There are a variety of different types of target. A summary of these along with examples are outlined below:

<b>Target</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Context for use</b>
Continuous	A level of service to be expected all the time.	100% of invoices paid within 30 days.	Used for setting targets against performance indicators.
Time-bound	These define levels of service delivery within a given time-frame.	100% of council owned properties meet WHQS standards by 2017.	Used for setting time-bound based targets within strategic planning documents i.e. Corporate Plan, Service Plans etc.
Percentage achievement	Commitment to achieve stated level of service against a standard.	Raise standards in English and Maths so that 85% of 11 year olds achieved level 4 or above.	Used when setting targets against performance indicators.
Qualitative	Descriptive targets of what level of service to expect.	We will continue to adhere to the All Wales Standards and associated protocols for Social Services and all relevant staff will attend mandatory safeguarding training.	Used for setting a qualitative level of expectation/aspiration within strategic planning documents i.e. Corporate Plan, Service Plans etc.
Absolute	This is a finite figure/amount that we intend to achieve.	Reduce/ increase by 15.	These types of targets can be used for setting both targets for performance indicators as well as for strategic planning.
Relative to cost	This may be represented as a percentage or as an absolute figure that is linked to cost.	e.g. Make budget savings of 5% e.g. Make savings of £200K.	These types of targets can be used in our strategic planning documents.

## When and how to set targets

Targets are set annually in accordance with our Performance Management Framework (timetable). This takes place between January and March each year in order to align the process with service planning thus ensuring Elected Members consider proposed targets within the context of priorities and resources as outlined in the Service Plans for the upcoming financial year.

During the target setting process, the Council will also undertake a review of its performance indicator data set. This gives us an opportunity to identify whether our existing performance indicators are still appropriate and relevant in reflecting our Well-being Outcomes and Objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2016-20.

As part of the review process, Sponsoring Directors for the respective Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes are responsible for agreeing which indicators they will retain, replace, delete or add. These proposals including targets will be formally presented to Elected Members alongside Service Plans prior to commencement of the new financial year.

For 2019/20, the following types of indicator are exempt from deletion/replacement:

- Statutory Indicators relating to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- The suite of Public Accountability Measures which are currently being collected to enable the Council to benchmark its performance with other councils in line with requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

For all quarterly reported measures, we will utilise the in-year Q2, Q3 data and previous years' trend data to drive the targeting setting process. For annual measures we will utilise performance data (from the previous year) to drive the target setting process. A target setting template has been developed to assist responsible officers in formulating challenging, but realistic targets. All proposed targets must have an accompanying rationale to explain why performance will be set at this level. The template is attached at **Appendix 1**.

When using the template to set targets there are a number of factors that should be considered:

- There should be an initial assessment/ evaluation of how we have performed at Q2 against target by analysing previous performance trends. This enables us to identify whether we are on track to meet our target in that year.
- For national data sets or benchmarking data sets, target setting should be done against the externally available comparators. For example for the national data sets target setting should be undertaken in line with both the Welsh average and Welsh top quartile figures of the previous year. Again if it is not possible to set targets within the top quartile range, the default position should be within the Welsh average. Where this is not possible an alternative target can be proposed, but again a robust rationale would need to be provided to explain why the target has not been set based on the benchmarking data available.
- When setting a new target, responsible officers should carefully consider whether there is the 'capacity to improve' on the previous year's performance based on available resources and if any planned changes to processes and service delivery will impact on the performance of this indicator. The default position should always be to improve on the previous year's performance.

However, in challenging financial times just sustaining a certain level of performance (either at or below previous levels) might be the only way forward. Where this is the case an appropriate rationale needs to be provided in order to explain why targets have been defined in that way. The rationale will need to evidence both the internal/external factors that have driven that decision to set the target at that level.

### **Further information**

Further information and support for target setting is available from the Improvement and Development Team.

The Improvement and Development contacts are as follows:

**Julia Archampong (Corporate Performance Manager)** - Tel: 01446 709318

**Julia Esseen (Corporate Performance Co-ordinator)** - Tel: 01446 709287

**Sian Clemett-Davies (Performance and Projects Officer)** – Tel: 01446 709391

**Joanna Beynon (Policy & Performance Trainee)** – Tel: 01446 709865

**The 2019/20 target setting process will operate as follows:**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Target setting template circulated to each Directorate's Performance indicator co-ordinator in an Excel format.	December (3 <sup>th</sup> December 2018)
Each Performance indicator (PI) co-ordinator will be responsible for liaising with the relevant Performance Indicator owners (Heads of Service/Operational Managers) for the return of information needed in the template.	December- February (3 <sup>rd</sup> December – 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2019)
PI Coordinators to liaise with relevant owners to review existing measures (deletions & additions)	December- February (3 <sup>rd</sup> December – 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2019)
Performance indicator co-ordinators will be responsible for signing off the target setting template with relevant Director.	December- February (3 <sup>rd</sup> December – 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2019)
Completed signed off target setting template to be submitted to the Improvement and Development team.	February (1 <sup>st</sup> February 2019)
Sponsoring Director/ final consideration of PIs	February (4 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2019)
All targets will then be reported via Scrutiny Committees for consideration and challenge. (As part of Service Plan consideration)	March (5 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2019)
A report will be presented to Cabinet for final consideration and challenge, so that these targets can then be formally adopted.	April 2019



## Example: For Benchmarked Indicators (based on 2017/18)

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

### Direction of Travel Key:

↑ - arrow indicates the target has been set to improve on the 2016/17 performance

↔ - arrow indicates target has remained the same as the 2016/17 performance

↓ - arrow shows the target has been set at a reduced level compared to the 2016/17 performance

Well-being Outcome 2: An Environmentally Responsible & Prosperous Vale

Objective 4: Promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment

PI Ref	PI description	Local/ National	PI Owner	Directorate	Performance Trends				National benchmarking		Other considerations	Target setting		
					2015/16	2016/17	Target 2017/18	2017/18 (Q2)	Wales top quartile 2016/17	Wales average 2016/17	National minimum standards/ statutory targets	Target 2018/19	Direction of travel (Proposed target compared to 2016-17 performance)	Rationale for target
CPM/015 (PAM/011)	Percentage of all fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days.	National	Colin Smith	Environment and Housing	97.90%	97.42%	98%	100%	98.22%	95.37%	N/A	100%	↑	The target of 100% has been set for 2018/19 which is an improvement on 2016/17 performance and aims to maintain our current performance at quarter 2 and top quartile performance in Wales.

## Example: For Non Benchmarked Indicators (based on 2017/18)

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

### Direction of Travel Key;

↑ - arrow indicates the target has been set to improve on the 2016/17 performance

↔ - arrow indicates target has remained the same as the 2016/17 performance

↓ - arrow shows the target has been set at a reduced level compared to the 2016/17 performance

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					2015/16	2016/17	Target 2017/18	2017/18 (Q2)	Wales top quartile 2016/17	Wales average 2016/17	National minimum standards/ statutory targets	Target 2018/19	Direction of travel (Proposed target compared to 2016-17 performance)	Rationale for target
CPM/145	Number of visitors to Barry Island weekender events.	Local	Marcus Goldsworthy	Managing Director/ Resources	New PI for 16/17	28,000	37,000	Annual measure	N/A	N/A	N/A	50,000	↑	The proposed increase in target is to support the very successful weekender programme and looking to increase numbers.