



Improvement Plan Part I: Improvement Objectives 2016/17

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Introduction

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has a duty to pursue service excellence, improvement and efficiency in delivering outcomes for Vale residents. We must do this within our organisation and by working with other councils, Welsh Government and other public sector bodies as well as the communities making up the Vale of Glamorgan.

At the start of each financial year, we have a duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to publish our Improvement Objectives. By producing this plan residents can find out what we intend to do over the coming year and what they can expect to see if we achieve our Improvement Objectives.

Whilst this plan focuses specifically on our key Improvement Objectives, we are still seeking to bring about improvement in other areas. Planned improvements in our day to day business are set out in our Service Plans which can be accessed from our website. In a period of severe budgetary constraint, it is important that the Council has clear direction and a sense of priority as we cannot do everything. We are committed to delivering our Improvement Objectives within the context of our adopted core values of:

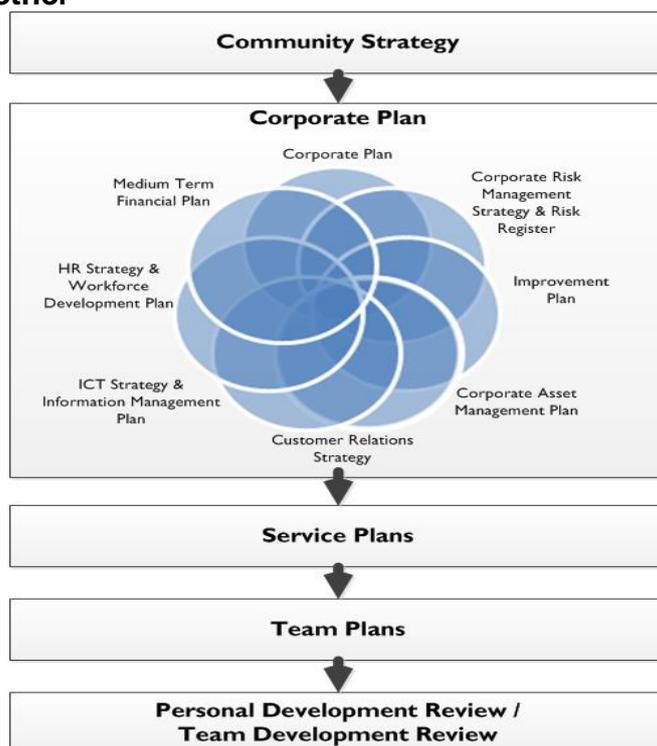
Ambitious - Forward thinking, embracing new ways of working and investing in our future.

Open - Open to different ideas and being accountable for the decisions we take.

Together - Working together as a team that engages with our customers and partners, respects diversity and is committed to quality services.

Proud - Proud of the Vale of Glamorgan: proud to serve our communities and to be part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

How it all fits together



The Vale of Glamorgan Community Strategy 2011- 2021

The Council has a duty under the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare a Community Strategy to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of its area and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

The Vale of Glamorgan Local Service Board (LSB) has prepared an integrated Community Strategy which sets out the direction of travel for the Vale over a ten year period. An overarching vision has been agreed and a series of priority outcomes have been identified. These outcomes aim to make the Vale a place:

- that is safe, clean and attractive, where individuals and communities have sustainable opportunities to improve their health, learning and skills, prosperity and well-being; and
- where there is a strong sense of community in which local groups and individuals have the capacity and incentive to make an effective contribution to the future sustainability of the area.

Our Improvement Objectives support these outcomes. The LSB is supported by five strategic partnerships working together to achieve ten priority outcomes:

1. People of all ages are actively engaged in life in the Vale and have the capacity and confidence to identify their own needs as individuals and within communities.
2. The diverse needs of local people are met through the provision of customer focused, accessible services and information.
3. Vale residents and organisations respect the local environment and work together to meet the challenge of climate change.
4. Older people are valued and empowered to remain independent, healthy and active. They have equality of opportunity and receive high quality services to meet their diverse needs.
5. Children and young people in the Vale are well informed and supported to access a broad range of quality services that enable them to take full advantage of the life opportunities available in their local communities and beyond.
6. People of all ages are able to access coordinated learning opportunities and have the necessary skills to reach their full potential, helping to remove barriers to employment.
7. The underlying causes of deprivation are tackled and the regeneration of the Vale continues, opportunities for individuals and businesses are developed and the quality of the built and natural environment is protected and enhanced.
8. The Vale maximises the potential of its position within the region working with its neighbours for the benefit of local people and businesses, attracting visitors, residents and investment.
9. Residents and visitors are safe and feel safe and the Vale is recognised as a low crime area.
10. Health inequalities are reduced and residents are able to access the necessary services, information and advice to improve their wellbeing and quality of life.

In developing our Community Strategy, extensive consultation has been undertaken to ensure that local communities and organisations have helped shape our priority outcomes. This included a Local Service Forum conference with a wide range of

stakeholders, activities with children and young people and consultation with Vale residents through our citizens' panel (Vale Viewpoint), the Older People's Strategy Forum and with an on-line questionnaire.

The five key partnerships have responsibility for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating progress and an annual review of the strategy is undertaken and reported to the LSB and key partnerships. Since 2011 the Strategy has been supported by a focused delivery plan that was initially adopted for the period 2011-2014.

In 2014, the LSB agreed a new delivery plan for the period 2014-18 with a focus on tackling poverty. This decision was informed by the findings of the 2013 unified needs assessment, existing plans and strategies, Welsh Government agendas and the work already taking place through the existing partnerships. The [Vale of Glamorgan Community Strategy](#), the [Delivery Plan 2014-18](#) and the most recent [annual report](#) is available on the Council's website.

The Corporate Plan 2016-2020

In March 2016, the Council published a revised Corporate Plan. This Plan represents the actions we will undertake above and beyond the everyday working of council services and articulates the specific priority actions for the Council in the coming years. In planning for the future we have considered the needs and views of partners and customers and our achievements to date in delivering the previous Corporate Plan. Our priorities have been set in the context of available resources and the significant challenges facing public services. However, the actions reflect our willingness to embrace innovative ideas and the new ways of working. We have also considered how the Council will contribute to the Well-being Goals published as part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We have identified four Well-being Outcomes which provide the framework for the plan together with eight well-being objectives. Underpinning these we have agreed an ambitious work programme for the next few years to achieve the Well-being Outcomes and meet our objectives. Each objective outlines the key commitments and activities that we will be working towards over the next few years which will contribute towards achieving the four well-being outcomes. Our Service Plans contain the detailed actions, resources, timescales and accountabilities for delivery. The plans also contain relevant national and local performance indicators that help us to measure and report our progress towards achieving the well-being outcomes and objectives. The Corporate Plan 2016-20 can be viewed on the Council's website.

In adopting a more cross-cutting approach, expressed through Well-being Objectives that multiple service areas contribute towards, we will strengthen our ability to work as 'one Council' in delivering our priority outcomes which are:

- 1. An Inclusive and Safe Vale** - Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan have a good quality of life and feel part of the local community.
- 2. An Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous Vale** - The Vale of Glamorgan has a strong and sustainable economy and the local environment is safeguarded for present and future generations.

- 3. An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale** - All Vale of Glamorgan citizens have opportunities to achieve their full potential.
- 4. An active and Healthy Vale** - Residents of the Vale of Glamorgan lead healthy lives and vulnerable people are protected and supported.

The implementation of the Corporate Plan is monitored quarterly through a number of forums, including the Corporate Management Team, Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet, in line with the Council's performance management arrangements. These arrangements are currently being revised, taking account of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act indicators and key milestones in order to ensure they support the new ways of working we are adopting.

Our four Well-being Outcomes are carried forward into Service Plans to ensure consistency and focus. The objectives under each Well-being Outcome have been included in relevant Service Plans and provide the basis for key actions to ensure these objectives are delivered. A sponsoring Director has been allocated responsibility for each well-being outcome and will take the lead in ensuring that progress is made in achieving our intended outcomes, bringing together the relevant colleagues from across the Council.

Improvement Objectives 2016-2017

Whilst we are constantly striving to improve all our services, it is important for us to identify a small number of areas where we want to focus our attention in order to achieve significant improvements more quickly. These areas are our Improvement Objectives.

The Corporate Plan (2016-2020) represents our priority outcomes as a Council for the next four years and our Improvement Objectives reflect this. Listed below are the specific areas we have identified as Improvement Objectives for 2016-17 for the purposes of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, which have been informed by:

- the 2016-20 Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes;
- progress with current Improvement Objectives (2015-16);
- our Annual Corporate Self-Assessment;
- consultation on the Corporate Plan (2016-20) priorities and the budget for 2016-17;
- our annual service planning process; and
- what our regulators say about us.

We have invited key stakeholders, including the LSB, local businesses, Town and Community Councils and voluntary sector organisations, to comment on our proposed objectives. We have also sought public opinion on the proposed objectives, via an online survey and social media. Our Improvement Objectives have also been subject to scrutiny and challenge by elected members.

We have identified five Improvement Objectives for 2016-2017:

- 1. Reducing poverty and social exclusion.**
- 2. Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment.**
- 3. Raising overall standards of achievement.**
- 4. Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles.**
- 5. Delivering the Council's transformational change programme, Reshaping Services, to enable it to meet the future needs of citizens within the context of unprecedented financial challenges.**

Two new objectives are proposed (2 and 4) reflecting the Council's continued focus on reducing poverty and social exclusion and encouraging and promoting active and health lifestyles, both integral aspects of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.

Amendments have been made to three existing objectives from 2015-16 (2, 3 and 5), extending areas of focus for the Council in 2016-17 bringing them in line with the broader objectives outlined in our Corporate Plan 2016-20.

The five areas are described more fully on pages 8-27. For each objective we have outlined our rationale for selection, expected outcomes, the actions we are going to take to make a difference and how we will measure our progress.

To support the delivery and scrutiny of our Corporate Plan and Improvement Objectives, we have taken the opportunity to review our approach to performance management. Our reporting and scrutiny committee arrangements are being revised to enable us to better demonstrate achievement of the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and Improvement Objectives.

Our Improvement Objectives mirror a number of our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and we will monitor and report progress on a quarterly basis in line with our revised arrangements for monitoring of the Corporate Plan.

Publishing our Improvement Objectives

Our Improvement Objectives for 2016-2017 will be published on the Council's website at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk as soon as is practical after 1st April 2016 in line with statutory requirements. Members of the public will also be able to access this information at the Council's offices and libraries and can comment on our Improvement Objectives by emailing us at: improvements@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Our Service Plans will provide further details on the relevant actions and measures, resources, timescales and accountabilities for delivering our Improvement Objectives and will be available on our website from April 2016.

Reviewing and reporting on our progress

Our Improvement Objectives are a legal requirement under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. It is important to review our progress and report to elected members and the public on improvements which have been achieved and where we need to do better. Progress in our improvement areas will be scrutinised quarterly by the Council's Corporate Management Team, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees, using a wide range of evidence as well as performance reports. Our quarterly performance reports published in September (quarter 1); December (quarter 2); March (quarter 3); and July (quarter 4/ End of year) can be viewed on the Council's website.

In addition to publishing our Improvement Objectives at the start of the financial year, we also publish an annual report at the end of October which reviews our performance over the previous year, and details whether we have achieved the intended outcomes for Vale citizens. This is the Improvement Plan Part 2. We will report our performance against these (2016-2017) Improvement Objectives in October 2017.

How to get involved

There are a number of mechanisms in place for residents to influence decision making in the Council. You can get involved 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](#).

Our Scrutiny Committees are open to the public and provide an opportunity to become involved in the Council's activities. You can request a service area or matter to be considered by a Scrutiny Committee by completing a [Consideration for Review](#) form. You can also register to speak at Scrutiny Committees by following the information on the [Council's website](#).

You can also propose new Improvement Objectives, or make comments on existing ones by emailing the Council via the contact details provided below:

In order to promote sustainability and to reduce printing costs, a hard copy of the Improvement Plan Part 1 will be made available at the Council's main reception areas and libraries.

If you have any comments after reading this plan, please let us know by contacting us at:

Letters to: Performance & Development, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Civic Offices, Holton

Road, Barry, CF63 4RU

Email: improvements@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Phone: 01446 700 101

Rationale for Improvement Objectives 2016-17

Well-being Outcome 1	An Inclusive and Safe Vale
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Improvement Objective 1	Reduce poverty and social exclusion
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Well-being Goals	A Resilient Wales	A Healthier Wales	A More Equal Wales	A Wales of Cohesive Communities	A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language	A Prosperous Wales	A Globally Responsible Wales
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Lead Officer	Miles Punter
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Rationale for this objective

Across the Vale of Glamorgan there are pockets of deprivation and quality of life and opportunities can vary significantly, consequently, tackling poverty is a priority for the Council and our partners.

The poverty agenda is an integral part of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act. Poverty can be aligned to four of the seven wellbeing goals of a Healthier Wales, a More Equal Wales, a Wales of Cohesive Communities and a Prosperous Wales and as a consequence it is reflected as a key objective within our Corporate Plan 2016-20.

The 2013 Unified Needs Assessment undertaken by the Local Service Board (LSB) identified a clear picture of inequality throughout the Vale in key areas such as engagement, education, health, employment and community safety. The 2014 Tackling Poverty Analysis (Local Government Data Unit) further highlights that the Vale is one of the most diverse local authorities in Wales. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 highlights 15 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the Vale which are amongst the 30% most deprived of all LSOAs, 4 of which are in the 10% most deprived in Wales. The areas which were identified within the Needs Assessment as having disproportionate levels of poor health, poor educational attainment and higher crime and disorder are closely correlated with overall higher deprivation levels. As a consequence tackling poverty is the LSB's key strategic focus. In response the LSB has developed a four-year Delivery Plan (2014-18) that is aimed at tackling poverty that is closely aligned to the Welsh Government's Anti-Poverty Strategy and its associated action plan. Within the Delivery Plan there are three poverty-based work streams that are being progressed: preventing poverty, helping people into work and mitigating the impact of poverty all of which align to the Corporate Plan outcomes.

Figures at March 2015, showed that within the Vale, 13% of the working age population were claiming out of work benefits, a 1.5% increase from March 2013. This varies across areas within the Vale with some LSOAs experiencing benefit claimant rates of up to 40%. The percentage of working age adults claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in September 2015 was 2%, marginally below the Welsh Average of 2.1%. However when looking at data at LSOA level, there is clear disparity with 14 LSOAs having a higher percentage of JSA claimants than the Welsh Average with the highest rate observed in Butrills in Barry and the lowest of 0.2% in Cowbridge.

Like all parts of the UK, the challenges faced in overcoming financial exclusion in the Vale of Glamorgan has been deepened further by the 2012 Welfare Reform Act. Research (Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research: Sheffield Hallam University) has identified that in the Vale the impact will be in the region of £473 per working age population. This equates to an overall loss of £38 million per year from the local economy.

The Vale and its partners (LSB) are seeing the impact of these changes with an increase in demand for a range of services. For example applications for Discretionary Housing payments have significantly increased since the Act came into effect. The total WG Discretionary Assistance Fund awards made to the Vale in 2014/15 equalled £230,280.60 equating to 3.4% of total spend in Wales and higher percentage share than 12 other local authorities. This may indicate that more clients are referred to access this fund; equally it could indicate the increased need for support and the number of people in the Vale engaging with services. Early intervention and prevention has been adopted as a core principle in mitigating the impact of Welfare Reform. In relation to Council house tenants, additional resources have been put in place for money advice and support. The Vale Food Bank has also seen a significant increase in the number of people in need of an emergency food parcel. Between 2013/14 and 2014/15 there was a 24% increase in the number of people referred to the food bank due to benefit delays and a 6% increase due to low income.

Fuel poverty continues to present a challenge for the area with some residents experiencing poverty associated with the costs of heating their home. The Council has recognised this and as a consequence has supported the Cyd Cymru collective energy buying initiative. It has also been successful in appointing an Energy Advisor for the Gibbonsdown area and is in receipt of £2m of funding from Welsh Government's ARBED scheme for fuel poverty measures in that area.

In the Vale, research by PPIW into indebtedness in Wales found that 8% of the adult population relied heavily on credit use and 19.1% were in arrears feeling heavily burdened. The rural nature of large parts of the Vale also presents unique challenges, where families in rural areas are faced with higher living costs and often struggle to access services available to them.

In 2015, Wales' first Housing Act received royal assent. One of the key pillars of the Act relates to the Council's statutory duty to prevent homelessness. A divisional restructure and additional funding from Welsh Government has been used to support preventative activities.

The Vale, like all local authorities, is under significant pressure to maximise income, reduce costs and deliver efficiency savings. The Council recognises that the benefits of supporting financial inclusion far outweigh the costs of not doing so and through key actions in the recently adopted Financial Inclusion Strategy and the reshaping of its services we are working to meet the future needs of customers and Vale citizens.

The Creative Rural Communities scheme is contributing to tackling poverty through promoting economic growth by encouraging business investment, promoting tourism, especially to new markets. It is also working with local communities to identify issues such as access to services and promote resilience of communities, supporting communities to lead on delivery of some services, building capacity in communities to regenerate themselves.

The Council is also the lead body for the delivery of Communities First in the Barry Cluster and Communities 4 Work. These programmes work side by side to provide support to the unemployed through various initiatives including literacy and employment services to support employability.

In the recent Corporate Plan priorities (2016-20) and budget 2016/17 consultation, 84% of respondents agreed that this objective was a worthy one for the Council to work towards. Many respondents noted a need for more services for the socially isolated and vulnerable. Other respondents were keen to see more partnership between the Council and volunteer and community groups who provide services for the socially isolated.

Outcomes

- Increase in the number of positive resolutions which have successfully prevented homelessness.
- Reduction in evictions.
- Reduction in the level of rent arrears.
- Unemployed people gain employment.
- Increased access to ICT for Jobseekers and communities as a whole.
- ICT helps access benefits, guidance, and information.
- Increase in learners from priority groups participating in learning and gaining skills.
- Increased take up of local energy efficiency initiatives.

What actions are we taking to make a difference?

During 2016/17 we will:

- Continue to work with partners through the 'Get The Vale Online' group to improve access and digital skills for groups most likely to experience digital exclusion.
- Identify gaps or duplication in initiatives to address issues of digital exclusion and maximise use of resources available.
- Support the role of digital champions across the Vale.
- Promote online services, digital skills training and opportunities to access digital services.
- Monitor and report on the numbers and characteristics of those who attend digital training courses.
- Map services relating to fuel poverty being delivered across partners in the Vale of Glamorgan to ensure schemes are promoted widely, identify referral opportunities and reduce duplication.
- Work with partners to develop an information pack on money advice services offered, where they are located, and criteria for clients and widely publicise this.
- Provide information and support to residents affected by Welfare Reform and raise awareness of staff and partners about the impact of the changes.
- Work with Creative Rural Communities partnership to involve communities in the delivery of services with the aim of reducing rural poverty. This will include:
 - Supporting communities to engage with the Council's review of library services and develop sustainable delivery solutions.
 - Undertaking a community mapping of St. Athan and establishing a toolkit which will allow other communities to follow.
 - Encouraging and supporting communities to come forward to develop their own ideas on local service delivery.
- Undertake improvements to the physical environment, play areas and open spaces via the Vibrant and Viable Places Scheme to encourage investment and active lifestyles.
- Support volunteering services via the Vibrant and Viable Places Scheme.
- Map services provided by the Families First, Flying Start, Communities First and Supporting People programmes in terms of service type, customer group, geographical area and partners to maximise opportunities for joint working.
- Implement a more joined up approach to engagement and information provision across the Families First, Flying Start, Communities First and Supporting People programmes.
- Ensure the work of all programmes (Families First, Flying Start, Communities First and

Supporting People programmes) links closely with public health priorities for the Vale and help to address health inequalities.

How will we measure progress?¹				
Indicator	2014/15 Performance	2015/16 Performance	2014/15 Welsh Average	2016/17 Target
Percentage of working age people who are not economically active.	21.9	National data Not yet available	24.9	Not set
Vale Households in relative income poverty, measured for children, working age and those of pension age.			²	Establish baseline ³
Percentage of Flying Start children reaching developmental milestones at age 3.	48	53	52	53
Number of Communities First clients entering employment	90	102		67
Number of Communities First clients who report feeling more confident about seeking employment.	317	329		216 ⁴
No of areas improved in Barry under the Vibrant and Viable Places / renewal area.				Establish baseline
The percentage of customers who are satisfied with access to Council services across the channels.	98.7	98.8		99
The percentage of customer enquiries to C1V resolved at first contact.	64.09	65.1		70
Number of Discretionary Housing Payments made.	479	458		400

¹ Working Group established to develop a suite of appropriate measures to demonstrate progress against our Well-being Outcomes and Objectives.

² Local measure, Welsh Average data is not available.

³ New measure proposed for 2016/17. Baseline data will be established during 2016/17.

⁴ Proposed target is lower as number of unemployed people has reduced significantly resulting in a decrease in the client base.

Well-being Outcome 2	An Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous Vale
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Improvement Objective 2	Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment
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Well-being Goals	A Resilient Wales	A Healthier Wales	A More Equal Wales	A Wales of Cohesive Communities	A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language	A Prosperous Wales	A Globally Responsible Wales
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Lead Officer	Rob Thomas
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Rationale for this objective

Helping people into work is a priority and there is a strong track record of successful regeneration projects in the Vale. We are working with partners to further invest in our local communities and to maximise our location within the South East Wales region.

As local government funding shrinks and demand for the most pressing Council services, such as adult care and children’s safeguarding rises, our role in promoting growth and regenerating our communities is coming increasingly under threat. Our achievements to date, nevertheless demonstrates our ongoing commitment to building a strong and sustainable economy, alongside promoting the regeneration of our communities across the Vale of Glamorgan. Such an approach is a priority in the Corporate Plan.

In the recent Corporate Plan priorities (2016-20) and budget 2016/17 consultation, 87% of respondents agreed that the objective was a worthy one for the Council to work towards. Majority of respondents suggested that the Council should focus on attracting more businesses to Barry by reducing business rates as an action to achieve this objective. Other common suggestions were to improve transport services, road maintenance, and encourage tourism in the Vale.

The Vale of Glamorgan exhibits considerable socio-economic and environmental diversity. The area’s disparity in affluence is reflected in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 which highlights 15 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the Vale of Glamorgan which are amongst the 30% most deprived of all LSOAs, 4 of which are in the 10% most deprived in Wales.

Figures at March 2015, showed that within the Vale, 13% of the working age population were claiming out of work benefits, a 1.5% increase from March 2013. This varies across areas within the Vale of Glamorgan with some LSOAs experiencing benefit claimant rates of up to 40%. The percentage of working age adults claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in September 2015 was 2%, marginally below the Welsh Average of 2.2% according to Welsh Government statistics. However when looking at data at LSOA level, there is clear disparity with 14 LSOAs having a higher percentage of JSA claimants than the Welsh Average with the highest rate observed in Buttrills in Barry and the lowest of 0.2% in Cowbridge.

A well skilled and healthy workforce is essential to achieving sustainable economic growth. In its Corporate Plan, the Council recognises that increasing the opportunities for individuals to develop

and use their skills effectively is not just a strategy for improved economic performance; it is also an effective way of improving the satisfaction and security of work; and promoting the health and wellbeing of individuals which contributes towards building sustainable communities. By developing policies to ensure that local people can access employment opportunities including apprenticeships created from inward investment, new developments and the management of the Council's assets, we are increasing the skills base across all levels and sectors in the Vale of Glamorgan.

It is also important to improve access to employment for communities experiencing high levels of deprivation. Improving skills and removing the barriers to employment, which exist in a number of areas, will ensure that all local residents can share in future successes. The Council is a direct provider of a number of national programmes for example Communities 4 work which is commencing in April 2016 and is also a sub-contractor delivering the Work Programme locally. It is also the lead body for the delivery of Communities First (CF) in the Barry Cluster and the Leader programme of the Wales Rural Development Plan locally. The CF programme works with all unemployed to provide support employability through various initiatives across the Vale of Glamorgan. Through the Leader/RDP, the Council is encouraging a community led approach to social and economic regeneration, which emphasises innovation, collaboration, bottom up regeneration, building the capacity of local communities, whilst reducing local barriers to growth.

Working with local people, especially in more deprived communities, the Council continues to seek to ensure maximum local benefit from regeneration opportunities such as the Barry Waterfront development and the Cardiff Airport and St. Athan Enterprise Zone.

At the regional level, we recognise the significant opportunities that a City Deal based on the Cardiff Capital Region could bring in terms of potential increase in economic growth, investment and job creation within the region. A City Deal would enable us to draw in financial investment that in turn will enable us to further our economic regeneration priorities as outlined in our Corporate Plan and secure greater economic outputs. It would also enable us to further strengthen and improve our transport infrastructure which in turn could have a further positive effect on the economy through benefiting local businesses and tourism.

Our main town centres have not been immune to the impact of the economic downturn or out of town retail developments in our own area and further afield and the growth in internet shopping. Whilst some of our aspirations for regeneration, outlined in our previous Corporate Plan 2013-17, have been constrained by the economic climate, the Council remains committed to bringing forward improvements to its main town centres as the economy improves. During 2014, we asked Vale residents their opinion of the town centres that they have visited. Overall 76% of respondents considered the Vale's main town centres to be attractive places to visit.

The Vale of Glamorgan received just over 3.6 million visits during 2014/15, which is approximately 3% of all visits to Wales. However, 97% of all trips to the Vale are by domestic day visitors. When they do visit, evidence shows that only 18% stay for longer than 6 hours, lower than the rest of Wales. Not only do fewer people stay overnight, they tend to spend less in the Vale when compared with the rest of Wales. Relatively, tourism in the Vale of Glamorgan has suffered much more than Wales as a whole. The need to market the area, support local businesses and increase visitors to the area is recognised in the Corporate Plan and is being addressed through the implementation of the Vale of Glamorgan Destination Management Plan and an annual programme of events and festivals.

Excellent transport infrastructure and services are key to ensuring the safe movement of both people and goods as well as providing the opportunity for further developments to be delivered. Both the Council's Local Development Plan and Local Transport Plan seek to enable the delivery of a number of road, junction and transport interchange schemes as well as a number of walking, cycling, rail and bus schemes.

Outcomes

- Improved image of town centres.
- Increased vitality and viability of town centres.
- Reduced vacancies in commercial units.
- Increased investment in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Profile and reputation of the Vale of Glamorgan is raised.
- The built environment is improved.
- Reduction in levels of unemployment.
- Those not in work obtain access to work, and those in work obtain access to better work and prospects.
- People are helped to improve their skills to obtain better job opportunities.
- Reduction in young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
- Increase in business support take up.
- Increased tourism visits to the Vale.
- Successful events programme.
- Improvements to transport services.

What actions are we taking to make a difference?

During 2016/17 we will:

- Maximise economic growth, inward investment and employment opportunities through the City Deal, Cardiff Airport and St. Athan Enterprise Zone.
- Develop opportunities for employment and training through new development, regeneration schemes and the management of the Council's assets.
- Implement a comprehensive programme of regeneration across the Vale including:
 - Rural Local Development Strategy
 - Town Centres Framework
 - Penarth Esplanade
 - Barry Waterfront including Barry Island Link Road and to establish linkages from the Island and Waterfront through to the Town centre.
 - Links between Penarth Haven and the Town Centre.
- Complete the Port Road Metro bus and walking/cycling scheme.
- Produce an Active Travel Network Map for the Vale.
- Encourage developers to provide adequate sustainable transport facilities as part of their developments as well as producing travel plans.
- Support local businesses to create an environment for investment and build the capacity of communities to support their own regeneration.
- Increase the number of visitors to the Vale of Glamorgan through the implementation of the Destination Management Plan.

How will we measure progress?				
Indicator	2014/15 Performance	2015/16 Performance	2014/15 Welsh Average	2016/17 Target
Rate of new active businesses per 10,000 working age population.	70	National data not yet available	National data not yet available	Not set
Percentage of working population with no qualifications.	6.8	National data not yet available	10	Not set
Number of local individuals gaining training and employment through targeted recruitment and training in Council construction projects.	46	Data not yet available		Not set
The percentage of surveyed residents who consider our town centres to be attractive places to visit and shop.	76	76		78
Visitors to the Vale of Glamorgan for Tourism purposes (as measured by STEAM survey).	3663000	National data not yet available	Welsh Average not applicable for this measure	Not set
Community groups supported to grow capacity.				Establish baseline
Average vacancy rate in the Vale's five main town centres.	7.4	6.4		6.2
Percentage local labour employed within 25 miles of Barry as a result of WHQS investment.	42	Data not yet available		Not set

Well-being Outcome 3	An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale
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Improvement Objective 3	Raising overall standards of achievement
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Well-being Goals	A Resilient Wales	A Healthier Wales	A More Equal Wales	A Wales of Cohesive Communities	A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language	A Prosperous Wales	A Globally Responsible Wales
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Lead Officer	Jennifer Hill
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Rationale for this objective

Our ambition is that education outcomes are the best in Wales and match those of the most successful authorities in England with similar socio-economic profiles.

Improving standards at all phases remains a key priority for the Council, as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2016-20. During the last two years, no children and young people including looked after children, left compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification. Overall, standards have improved across the board over the last three years, with improved outcomes against all key performance indicators, in all phases, at the expected and above expected levels. In nearly all cases the rate of improvement has been greater in the Vale than in the Wales average.

Within the Vale the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 13.5% compared to the Wales Average of 18.8%. This level of eligibility ranks us 5th in Wales out of the 22 local authorities in 2015 and provides important context for evaluating the outcomes for learners.

At Key Stage 2, there has been a marked improvement since 2013 with the majority of schools now in the higher 50%, when compared to similar schools on the Welsh Government's free school meal benchmarks. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 at the end of KS2 in schools in the authority has improved at a stronger rate than the Wales Average. Performance at the higher-than-expected level (level 5+) is consistently strong.

Overall, performance at Key Stage 3 shows significant improvement over the last three years. The percentage of pupils achieving the KS3 core subject indicator has improved at a faster rate than the Wales Average. In 2012, three-quarters of secondary schools performed significantly below average in KS3. In 2015, the performance of the majority of secondary schools is now above average when compared to similar schools, with half of the secondary schools in the top 25%.

There have been improvements in most of the Key Stage 4 indicators. For example, the percentage of pupils achieving the KS4 core subject indicator has improved consistently, and is the highest in Wales in 2015. The percentage of pupils in the authority achieving the Level 2+ threshold which includes Mathematics and English or Welsh first language, has improved at a faster rate than the Wales Average since the last inspection and was the second highest in Wales in 2015. However, despite these overall improvements, the performance of three of the eight secondary schools is below average in 2015 when compared to similar schools. For the last three years, the Vale of Glamorgan has met or exceeded almost all of the Welsh Government's Key Stage 3 and 4

benchmarks for performance based on free-school-meal entitlement.

In all the main performance indicators across all phases, the performance of pupils entitled to free school meals has improved since 2012, albeit not always at the same rate as their peers. Since 2012, in the Foundation Phase and at KS3, the performance of pupils entitled to free school meals has improved at a greater rate than that of their peers. This has narrowed the difference in performance between pupils entitled to free school meals when compared with their peers. However, over the same period in KS2 and KS4 the improvement trend for this group of pupils is less consistent than for their peers. The performance gap between boys and girls has also varied since 2012. In Key Stage 3 and 4, boys' performance has improved at a much faster rate than girls. Boys' performance at both Foundation Phase and KS2 has generally improved faster than girls since 2012. The gender gap for the Foundation Phase Indicator has narrowed from 9.4% in 2012 to 6.8% in 2015. The gender gap has also narrowed for KS2 Core Subject Indicator from 10% in 2012 to 5.6% in 2015. The gender gap at all Key Stages is generally less than the Welsh Average and seems to be narrowing.

In partnership, we have continued to develop provision and strategies aimed at the prevention of NEETs particularly at year's 11, 12 and 1. Our co-ordinated approach has enabled information to be shared by partners resulting in more effective tracking of NEETs and improved targeting of resources. This has contributed positively in reducing the number of students leaving years 11, 12 and 13 who are NEET. NEET levels in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14 reduced at year's 11 and 12 from 2.76% to 1.68% and 1.78% to 1.5% respectively. NEET levels at Year 13 (18 year olds) also reduced from 4.07% to 2.94%.

There is a need to progress and develop provision for 18-24 year olds. The implementation of the youth guarantee should help improve the engagement of 18 year olds into education, employment and training. The new European Social Fund (ESF) projects with Communities First and Job Centre Plus (JCP) advisors will also assist in increasing entrants into employment or training for 18-24 year old NEETs. The Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) is being further developed to provide guidance on tackling the 19-24 cohort of young people. The completion of the Vulnerability Assessment profiles by schools with sixth forms followed by brokerage and provision of additional support to those at risk of dropping out will further strengthen our approach in prevention of NEETs. Information sharing with Job Centre Plus in relation to 19-24 year olds will enable better targeted provision.

Outcomes

- Improved attainment in GCSE English and Mathematics.
- The current KS4 Level 2+ FSM gap is 37.1% for the LA and 32.4% for Wales. The gap between FSM and Non FSM pupils is narrowed for the KS4 5 A*-C including English/Welsh and Maths from 37.1% in the 2014-15 academic year, to 30% in the 2015-16 academic year.
- The attainment and achievement gap for FSM pupils is narrowed for all phases.
- The gap between FSM and Non FSM pupils is narrowed for the Foundation Phase Indicator from 12.1% in the 2014-15 academic year, to 10% in the 2015-16 academic year.
- The gap between FSM and Non FSM pupils is narrowed for the KS2 Core Subject Indicator from 17.3% in the 2014-15 academic year, to 12% in the 2015-16 academic year.
- 100% of pupil interventions are tracked, monitored and effectiveness of impact analysed.
- Further reduce the levels of NEETs leaving year 13 to 2.5%.
- Young people at risk of becoming NEET are identified early and provided with targeted support through transitional periods, such as progressing to post 16 education, employment or training.

What actions are we taking to make a difference?

During 2016/17 we will:

- Continue to improve standards of achievement for pupils through sharing excellence between schools and the targeting of resources.
- Secure improved outcomes for learners entitled to free school meals.
- Review the provision for those pupils taught outside of a school setting.
- Reduce the number of young people leaving school in year 13 who are NEET.
- Improve outcomes for post 16 learners through greater cooperation between schools, training providers and businesses.
- Consider the implications of the Additional Learning Needs Bill and ensure compliance and secure aspirational outcomes for learners with additional needs.
- Progress the school modernisation programme by completing the new school building for Ysgol Y Ddraig as part of the Llantwit Major Learning Community and continuing work to provide a new building for Llantwit Comprehensive School which will open in 2017.
- Commence development a new school modernisation programme in readiness for the next band of 21st century schools funding due to commence in 2019/20.

How will we measure progress?

Indicator	Performance 2013/14 Academic Yr	Performance 2014/15 Academic Yr	Welsh Average 2013/14 Academic Yr	Target 2015/16 Academic Yr
Percentage of 15/16 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C or the vocational equivalent for a) FSM and b) Non-FSM.	72.28 91.23	76.19 92.35	65.34 87.40	77 93
Percentage of Year 11 pupils that continue in full-time education.	94.8	National data not yet available	93.5	Not set
Percentage of pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31st August, in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved the level 2 threshold including GCSE grades A*-C in English, Welsh First Language and Mathematics for a) FSM and b) Non-FSM.	30.69 68.31	32.74 69.83	27.76 61.55	44 74
Percentage of all pupils (including those in LAC) in any LA maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31st August who leave compulsory education, training or work-based learning without an approved external qualification.	0	0	1.06	0
Percentage of pupils in local authority care in any LA maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31st August who leave compulsory education, training or work-based learning without an approved external qualification.	0	0	Welsh Average not available for this measure	0
Core Subject Indicator (CSI) Key Stage 2 (KS2): All The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment.	90.48	92.12	86.13	94

CSI KS 2: FSM The percentage of FSM pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment	77.55	77.13	71.91	82
CSI KS 2: Non-FSM The percentage of Non FSM pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment.	92.43	94.39	89.65	95
Core Subject Indicator (CSI) Key Stage 3 (KS3): All The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment.	83.96	87.38	81.02	92
CSI KS3: FSM The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment.	65.87	74.5	61.28	74
CSI KS3: Non-FSM The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment.	87.46	90.18	85.57	93
Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator (FPOI) Foundation Phase (FP): All The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Foundation Phase, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator as determined by Teacher Assessment	89.48	91.51	85.15	92
FPOI FSM The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Foundation Phase, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator as determined by Teacher	78.67	81.06	72.36	83
FPOI Non-FSM The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Foundation Phase, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator as determined by Teacher	91.21	93.17	88.61	94

Indicator	2014/15 Performance	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 Performance	2016/17 Target
Percentage of Young people leaving Year 11 who are not in education employment and training	2.76	3.07	1.68	1.6
Percentage of Young people leaving Year 12 who are not in education employment or training	1.78	1.91	1.5	1.4
Percentage of Young people leaving year 13 who are not in education, employment or training	4.07	4.9	2.9	2.5

Well-being Outcome 4	An Active and Healthy Vale
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Improvement Objective 4	Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles
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Well-being Goals	A Resilient Wales	A Healthier Wales	A More Equal Wales	A Wales of Cohesive Communities	A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language	A Prosperous Wales	A Globally Responsible Wales
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Lead Officer	Phil Evans
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Rationale for this objective

We recognise the importance of prevention and early intervention to improve and maintain well-being and to promote healthy living.

A key corporate outcome is that, 'Residents of the Vale of Glamorgan lead healthy lives and vulnerable people are protected and supported.' The Council recognises that it has a key role to play in supporting the health of residents through providing sport and recreation facilities and other initiatives and this is reflected in key actions within the Corporate Plan 2016-20 and the Community Strategy 2011 – 2021.

Participating in sport and physical activity are recognised as having wide reaching benefits and are essential to a healthy lifestyle which can improve an individual's quality of life. It addresses a wide range of social issues such as social inclusion and community cohesion; education; skill development and lifelong learning; crime reduction and community safety; and health improvement. It can also make improvements to the environment, assist with regeneration, and can benefit the local economy through the hosting of events.

In the recent Corporate Plan (2016-20) and budget 2016/17 consultation, 87% of respondents agreed that these objectives are worthy objectives for the Council to work towards. Many respondents believed that leisure facilities and community spaces need to be improved and made more accessible by a reduction in price. Another common suggestion was to keep and encourage the use of outdoor spaces in the Vale for allotments and outdoor activity. Respondents claimed that this would encourage lifestyle changes and improve the health of the population in the Vale.

The WG Climbing Higher strategy has set a 20 year goal of increasing adult physical activity levels in Wales by 1% per annum over the period, with emphasis on targeting the 40% adult population in Wales who lead sedentary lifestyles.

Through the Local Authority Partnership Agreement with Sports Wales (LAPA) the Council has continued to provide many opportunities for residents' to participate in physical activity and we have successfully secured funding to continue this work in 2016. This work includes the 5x60 and Dragon Sport programmes which have significant positive impacts on the participation rates of children and young people both within schools and their communities. Work is ongoing with partners such as local sports clubs and organisations such as Communities First to develop

strong, sustainable community based sporting opportunities.

Significant work is also being undertaken with community centres to provide a wide range of social and leisure activities for their local communities, demonstrating the Council's commitment to increasing participation and improving residents' health and wellbeing.

Overall, participation in leisure is an improving picture (as indicated in the Active Adults survey report 2014 by Sport Wales). However, our performance in relation to participation levels in the Vale's leisure centres (LCS/002b) has remained in the bottom quartile over the past 3 years and is currently ranked 21st in Wales. It must be noted that our performance does not include data for participation on some significant leisure facilities on school sites (notably artificial turf pitches and sports halls) used by the public as they are operated by the schools.

According to the Vale Sport (LAPA) review for 2014/15, 48% of young people aged 12-16 years accrued 44,546 participations in the 5x60 scheme. The Vale ranked third across Wales for 'Hooked on Sport' target. This indicated that 52% of children and young people aged 12-16 participate in activity at least three times a week, compared to Welsh average of 48%. 62% were members of a sports club, 81% of pupils were confident trying new activities and 73% of pupils enjoyed sport outside of school 'a lot'.

The Active Adult survey highlighted that this trend continued into adulthood with 48% of adults meeting the "Hooked on Sport" criteria, which is the highest across Wales.

According to the Welsh Health Survey 2013/14, 33% of Vale adults reported eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day. 35% of Vale adults reported being physically active on no days in the past week compared to the average for Wales (34%). 18% of Vale adults are obese compared to the Welsh Average of 22%. 18% of Vale adults reported being a current smoker compared to the Welsh Average of 21%. 43% of Vale adults reported drinking above the recommended alcohol limits at least once in the previous week compared to the Welsh Average of 41%. 24% of Vale adults report binge drinking on at least one day in the past week compared to the Welsh Average of 25%.

The Council's Leisure contractor, Parkwood (now Legacy Leisure) Annual Report for 2014/15 highlights overall improvements in participation levels across all leisure centres by 13.05%. Usage figures increased from 653,942 to 739,305 during 2014/15. A customer satisfaction rating of 72.4% was reported in 2014/2015 compared to 90% for 2013/14. Of 1002 GP referrals, 313 are now paying for a monthly gym membership with Legacy Leisure. We continue to work in partnership with our contractor and other key stakeholders to improve participation levels and customer experience of using our leisure centres.

The Council has strengthened its performance monitoring arrangements with Legacy Leisure in response to a Wales Office Audit review in order to ensure it is delivering key leisure and sporting outcomes for Vale residents.

Overall satisfaction with Leisure Services provided by the Council (Public Opinion Survey 2014) remains relatively high with over 8 in 10 respondents 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied (83%) although this has fallen from 94% in 2012. 17% of leisure centre users were dissatisfied with the service compared with only 6% in 2012.

The Council is committed to giving children a sound footing for learning and in partnership with parents, voluntary, community and private sectors offers a diverse range of services for all under-fives and their families, including children in need and children with special education needs. As part of the recently completed Play Sufficiency Assessment process, we have identified further opportunities to work with partners by pooling our resources to deliver a range of inclusive play opportunities for all children regardless of their social and economic circumstances, thereby maximising the limited resources available. An action plan is in place to deliver these priorities.

The Council has a duty to make sure there is enough childcare provision for working and studying parents, as far as is reasonably practicable. Through initiatives such as the Family Information Service, Flying Start, Families First and the Integrated Family Support Service, we are ensuring that children benefit from safe, stimulating, caring experiences.

Data from the Family Information Service shows that overall, service enquiries have continued to increase over the past three years although more people now access information online. As a consequence there has been a 32% decrease in direct enquiries to the service and a 63% increase to the online database. In addition, more targeted outreach work aimed at new and expectant parents, lone parents seeking work and parents/carers on low income has also been undertaken providing information and advice to enable them to access childcare, play, learning opportunities, leisure activities and health services.

In the National Survey for Wales, 74% of Vale parents reported being satisfied with places for their child to play in the Vale, 18% reported being dissatisfied and 8% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

In line with Welsh Government's 'Working Together to Reduce Harm', the Vale and its partners via the Safer Vale partnership continue to work together in tackling and reducing the harms associated with substance misuse. Service developments implemented as part of the revised Substance Misuse Commissioning strategy have delivered continued improvement in waiting times, an increased menu of treatment options available, reduced substance misuse and improved quality of life for Vale service users. Going forward, further work needs to be undertaken in identifying opportunities to plan, commission and deliver cost effective services and provide a better platform for engagement with service users.

- Improvement in waiting times: This is now 79.7% (2014/15) compared to 77.3% in the previous year. The national target for waiting times is for at least 80% of service users to access treatment from referral in 20 working days.
- Improvement in attendance at appointments: This is now 18% (2014/15) compared to 25.9% in 2013/14 with further improvement anticipated for 2015/16 with the latest cumulative figures reported at 12.8%. In comparison the national target for did not attend (DNA) rates (post assessment) is $\leq 20\%$.
- Treatment outcome profile (TOP) compliance: More Vale service users reporting reduced substance misuse. The national benchmark for number of clients reporting reduced substance use during their TOP review is 67%. This was 75.7% in 2014/15 compared to 66.4% in the previous year. Further improvement is anticipated for 2015/16 with cumulative figures currently at 77.7%.
- Improved quality of life: This is now 77.9% for Vale service users compared to 49.1% in the previous year. This figure has significantly improved as a result of the increased menu of treatment options available to clients. The national benchmark for clients reporting Improved

Quality of Life (TOP) is 56%.

Outcomes

- Increased participation by children and young people and adults in leisure and sporting activities.
- Increased user satisfaction with leisure and sporting opportunities.
- Improved access to information on childcare and early years services to support families.
- Increased participation in the community based, targeted healthy eating interventions facilitated by Communities First and Flying Start.
- Improved treatment outcomes and quality of life for service users.

What actions are we taking to make a difference?

During 2016/17 we will:

- Work in partnership to deliver a range of activities through our leisure and community facilities and parks to increase levels of participation and physical activity.
- Work with partners to deliver the Cardiff and Vale Substance Misuse Commissioning Strategy 2013-2018, providing support, information and effective interventions.
- Work in partnership to deliver a comprehensive play programme that improves the well-being of children and their families.
- Implement the projects in the Vale Sport Plan for 2016.
- Transfer the Family Information Service database to a national IT platform, Dewis Cymru.
- Work with the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Health and Well-being Board to undertake a range of actions to prevent and tackle obesity and encourage healthy eating and healthier lifestyles in the Vale including:
 - The development of a network to support health and wellbeing in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan;
 - Implementing Phase 2 of the Cardiff and the Vale Healthy Weight Framework;
 - Implementing the Cardiff and Vale Eating Well Action Plan and the Cardiff and Vale Physical Activity Action Plan.
 - Continuing our work with all Vale schools to ensure compliance with the Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) regulations;
 - Contributing to the wider partnership Cardiff and Vale Tobacco Control Action Plan which includes actions relating to environmental tobacco work such as 'Smoke Free Beaches', 'Smoke Free Parks' and Smoke Free Homes and support to national campaigns such as Stoptober (October) and No Smoking Day (March);
 - Delivering under age sales test purchases, including test purchases to assess compliance of retailers with own "Think 21 & 25" policies.
- Achieve Green Flag status for 7 parks as a mark of excellence, demonstrating good amenities and community involvement in the parks.

How will we measure progress?				
Indicator	2014/15 Performance	2015/16 Performance	2014/15 Welsh Average	2016/17 Target
Number of children attending play schemes.	814	928		700
Number of visits to local authority sport and leisure centres during the year where the visitor will be participating in physical activity per 1,000 population.	6256	Data not yet available	8662	6400
Percentage overall satisfaction with leisure services.	83	83 (bi-ennial survey)		85
Percentage of people who have completed the exercise referral scheme who feel that completion of the programme has improved their health and well-being.	100	98		99
Number of FIS enquiries for childcare information.	883 direct 2,540 online childcare searches	656 direct (as at 10 March 16) 1,797 online searches (stats for 7 months)		600 direct 2700 online searches
Number of enquiries to FIS for health, wellbeing and leisure information.	234	273		270
Number of participants enrolled on Communities First and Flying Start healthy eating programme/initiatives.	309	253		320
Percentage of children and young people taking part in the 5x60 scheme.	48	47 (Academic year 2014 – 2015)		Not set Definition change – Sport Wales reviewing PI.

Integrated Planning

Improvement Objective 5

Deliver the Council's transformational programme, 'Reshaping Services' to meet the future needs of citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan, within the context of unprecedented financial challenges

Our ways of working

Long term

Integrated

Involving

Collaborative

Preventing

Lead Officer

Rob Thomas

Rationale for this objective

The Council's traditionally low funding base (20th out of 22 local authorities in terms of funding per head of the population) means the authority is well-versed in working together to find savings and has a long-established track record of achievement in this respect. However, the scale of the challenge that now faces the Authority means that a "business as usual" approach, however well managed will not be enough. A strategy that consists solely of incremental cuts to budgets will simply lead to a steady decline in the quality and availability of public services, dissatisfaction among those who use the service and poor staff morale. The challenge is therefore to consider alternative delivery models for services across the Council. This is essential to mitigate the impact of cuts and assist in continuing to provide priority services.

The Reshaping Services Change Programme is the Vale of Glamorgan Council's proactive response to central government's austerity drive that has created a period of unprecedented financial pressures in the public sector. The aim of the programme is to reshape the Council to enable it to meet the future needs of citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan within the context of unprecedented financial challenges.

The Council's budget has been under pressure for a number of years and £35million in savings have been delivered between 2010/11 and 2015/16 with further savings identified as being required in future years. In this context the Reshaping Services programme is a key driving force in supporting us in meeting these future financial challenges whilst mitigating the impact on service users.

The Council's ability to maintain services to an acceptable standard in light of reduced funding levels is recognised in the corporate risk register and attributed a medium high rating. Effectively managing the collaboration agenda is also recognised as a corporate risk and attributed a medium rating.

A Reshaping Services strategy has been developed which considers how the Council can fundamentally change the way in which it operates, considering alternative ways of delivering services, the relationship with residents, service users and partner organisations as well as investigating income generation opportunities and more innovative ways of managing demand. The programme delivery plan outlines key stages of the project with implementation of the first tranche of projects to be completed from March 2016. This will be followed by further tranches of projects as part of a rolling programme.

In terms of programme governance, a Cabinet Working Group has been set up to oversee the programme. The Cabinet Working Group known as the “Challenge Group” is responsible for the on-going review of all service areas during the programme and comprises the Leader, Deputy Leader and the relevant portfolio holder of the service area. The Challenge Group is supported by the Managing Director, Head of Finance, Head of Human Resources and Head of Performance Development as well as the relevant service Director(s).

A Programme Board has been established comprising Corporate Management Team, the Leader of the Council, a representative from the Town and Community Councils and the Chief Executive of the Glamorgan Voluntary Services. The programme board is responsible for managing the overall programme in all its aspects with the Managing Director as programme sponsor. Individual Directors will undertake the role of project sponsor for individual service reviews/projects. Corporate Resources Scrutiny committee has been identified as lead committee for Reshaping Services, with proposals for individual reshaping work also being subject to scrutiny by the relevant scrutiny committee(s) throughout the duration of the programme.

Progress has been made in undertaking the service specific work streams in the form of in-depth assessments of projects identified in the first tranche of the programme with approval and scrutiny of proposals as required. To date significant work has been undertaken for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Inclusion, Catering, Library Services, Transportation, Highways and Engineering, Planning, Regulatory Services, ICT, Property projects, Social Services Budget and collaborative working programmes.

In the recent Corporate Plan (2016-20) and budget 2016/17 consultation, it was made clear to participants that achieving the Corporate Plan objectives and meeting the required savings for the next four years would require significant changes to the way services are run and presented them with possible options. 57% of respondents agreed that they would be happy to pay to preserve services. 66% of respondents said ‘yes’ to the Council working with community groups to enable them to take over running non-statutory services, demonstrating that there is support for community run services as an alternative to the service not being delivered at all. The third option presented was for the Council to obtain further funding for services by increasing fines for non-compliance and anti-social behaviour such as littering, illegal parking or failing to follow recycling rules. 81% of respondents said they would support this option.

When asked if the Council provides enough information about the budget, 39% of respondents said yes. Although it is difficult to give a clear picture of the budget setting process the Council should do more to inform residents of its financial situation more frequently throughout the year in order for residents to have a better understanding when responding to questions around the budget at the end of each financial year.

Outcomes

- The Council’s Reshaping Strategy is embedded within its corporate, service commissioning and delivery plans.
- Increased internal capacity and capability to design, source and manage public services, including in partnership with alternative providers.
- Increased partnership working and innovative approaches to commissioning and delivering priority Council services.
- Cost and efficiency savings realised from better work and management practices and from

enhanced performance measurement. Savings resulting from tranche two projects are realised from the 2017/18 year onwards.

- Better outcomes for users of public services.
- Increased opportunities for service users to be involved in the design and delivery of services.

What actions are we taking to make a difference?

During 2016/17 we will:

- Complete the implementation of approved tranche one projects.
- Commence the review of service areas contained in tranche two of the programme by documenting proposals and business cases to consider the full range of opportunities presented by each area.
- Progress our work on the corporate projects work-stream ensuring a corporate response to demand management, effectiveness of spend, working with Town and Community Councils and income generation.
- Continue to undertake organisational development activities to support the programme and its projects.
- Implement a corporate approach to contract management and deliver briefings to staff and members to support its adoption.
- Deliver refresher training for council staff on project management.

How will we measure progress?

Key actions/ project milestones ⁵	2015/16 ⁶ Performance	2014/15 Welsh Average	2016/17 Target completion date
Consideration of tranche 1 proposals by programme board	On track		31/3/17
Cabinet and scrutiny consideration of tranche 1 proposals and business cases (as required)	On track		31/3/17
Implementation of approved projects (where appropriate)	On track		31/3/17
Consideration of tranche 2 proposals by programme board			31/3/17
Cabinet and scrutiny consideration of tranche 2 proposals and business cases (as required)			31/3/17
Implementation of approved projects (where appropriate)			31/3/18

⁵ The key actions and milestones identified under this Improvement Objective relate to the Council's Reshaping Service Programme which is local to the Vale of Glamorgan. No Welsh benchmarking data is available in relation to this programme.

⁶ 'On track' relates to current progress in relation to key project milestones within the programme.