

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 25 April, 2016

Report of the Leader

Improvement Plan Part 1: Improvement Objectives 2016/17

Purpose of the Report

1. The report seeks Cabinet endorsement of the Improvement Plan Part 1 outlining the Council's proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the recommendations from Scrutiny Committees following consultation on the proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17.
2. Note comments from key strategic partners and the public in response to consultation on the proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17.
3. Endorse the Improvement Plan Part 1 including proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17.
4. Authorise the use of article 14.14 of the Council's Constitution (urgent decision procedure) to enable the report to be presented to Council on 27th April, 2016, for approval in order to meet statutory timescales for publication.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To ensure that Improvement Objectives focus specifically on those areas where there is a need for improvement, reflecting the work being undertaken across the Council to improve the quality of life for Vale residents.
2. To ensure the Council fulfils its duty to consult on its annual Improvement Objectives.
3. To ensure the Council identifies key annual improvement priorities for 2016/17 in line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.
4. To ensure the Council meets its statutory obligation to publish its forward looking Improvement Plan at the start of the financial year outlining how it proposes to meet its Improvement Objectives for 2016/17.

Background

2. The Corporate Plan is our key means of complying with the Local Government Measure 2009, which requires the Council to set 'Improvement Objectives' annually and demonstrate continuous improvement.
3. The Corporate Plan 2016-2020 was approved by Cabinet on 22nd February 2016 and by Council on 2nd March 2016 following extensive consultation with key stakeholders and partners. The Plan sets out the Council's priorities for the next four years as well as its vision, values and Well-being Objectives. Work has been undertaken to ensure that these plans are aligned and reflect the priorities for the Vale of Glamorgan. These outcomes are also reflected in Service Plans for 2016/17.
4. The proposed Improvement Objectives and associated actions for 2016/17 reflect the four Well-being Outcomes in the Corporate Plan, ensuring that the Council is focusing on the identified areas of priority in need of the most improvement.
5. Our annual Corporate Self-Assessment reported to all Scrutiny Committees during March 2016, has also informed Improvement Objectives for the same period along with the Council's Risk Register, consultation on the Corporate Plan priorities for 2016-20, and progress with existing Improvement Objectives for 2015/16.

Relevant Issues and Options

6. Five Improvement Objectives are proposed for 2016/17 as follows:
 - 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 - 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.
7. The five objectives comprise:
 - Proposals for two new objectives which relate to Objective 1- Reducing poverty and social exclusion) and Objective 4 - Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles.
 - Two amendments to existing objectives are proposed which relate to Objective 2 (Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment) and Objective 3 (Raising overall standards of achievement). Extending the area of focus for the Council in 2016/17 brings these in line with the broader objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan 2016-20.
 - It is also proposed that one current objective be carried forward into 2016/17 to reflect the continued focus on Reshaping Services to meet future needs of all Vale citizens (Objective 5).
8. [Appendix 1](#) outlines the proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17 and provides a rationale for each objective (Pages 8-28). The intended outcomes and the measures to be undertaken to make a difference to Vale of Glamorgan citizens are identified including a sponsoring Director with responsibility for ensuring the achievement of key outcomes.

9. A number of performance measures identified in the Plan currently do not have data reported for the 2015/16 period nor targets established for 2016/17. In line with existing performance management arrangements, all Council services are currently undertaking an End of Year data collection and verification exercise which will be concluded at the end of April to tie in with data submissions to Welsh Government and the Local Government Data Unit. In addition, some nationally produced data such as tourism and economic activity data is not available until later in the year and the Improvement Plan will be updated to reflect this new data once published. Similarly All Wales benchmarking data is published in September of each year.
10. Where data is available challenging targets have been set against our proposed measures for improvement, reflecting the Council's commitment to continuously improve the services it provides to citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan, and a desire to aspire to top quartile performance where appropriate. At the same time, the Council is also mindful of significant financial and service demand pressures over the coming year and key targets and milestones for proposed Improvement Objectives have been set within this context. This means that in some areas for example it will be an achievement to maintain existing levels of service performance whilst absorbing reductions in funding, managing increasing service demand or both. Such issues will need to be taken into account during internal challenge of proposed Improvement Objectives and targets.
11. Mirroring our approach in previous years, end of year performance and proposed targets will be reported to all Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet during July as part of End of Year performance reporting. Elected Members will therefore have the opportunity to further challenge proposed targets set for all Improvement Objectives as part of this process.
12. As part of the review of the Council's performance management arrangements, we will also be reviewing the timetable for performance reporting and target setting in order to identify opportunities to better dovetail our internal reporting arrangements with that of other Council statutory plans and reporting and will keep members involved in this process through the recently established Working Group.
13. In line with the requirement to consult on our Improvement Objectives, all Scrutiny Committees have been consulted on the proposed Improvement Objectives during April 2016. The consultation period concluded on 19th of April with consideration by Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee.
14. In order to meet the statutory timescales to publish our Improvement Objectives at the start of the financial year, the views from three Scrutiny Committees in relation to the proposed Improvement Objectives have been incorporated within this report with the exception of the Lifelong Learning and Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committees which is being tabled with this report (via an urgent reference from the respective Scrutiny Committees).
15. [Appendix 2](#) provides a summary of the views and comments from the consultation including the views of three Scrutiny Committees. In summary:
 - Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health) did not endorse the proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17 due to concerns about the proposed performance indicators for use in measuring how progress to achieve Objective 4 will be monitored.
 - Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) recommended to Cabinet that the Improvement Objectives for 2016/17 be endorsed.

- Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection) recommended to Cabinet that the Improvement Objectives for 2016/17 be endorsed. Furthermore that Cabinet is informed of the view of the Committee that each Improvement Objective should be linked to its outcomes and actions.
16. In response to the consultation with Scrutiny Committees, it is proposed that following Cabinet's consideration of the Council's end of year performance and target setting, the Improvement Plan is revised to reflect revisions to end of year performance and improvement targets for 2016/17 in accordance with Cabinet's decision(s).
 17. It is also proposed that the Improvement Plan is revised to reflect Cabinet's decision following consideration of the views of members from the Lifelong Learning and Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committees.
 18. The views of key stakeholders including the Local Service Board, Town and Community Councils, local businesses, voluntary sector organisations and the public were also sought over a period of 4 weeks (14th March to 8th April 2016). The consultation was promoted via an online survey, local media releases and a combination of social media (over 16,000 followers).
 19. Despite extensive promotion of the consultation, only ten stakeholders took the opportunity to have their say on the Vale of Glamorgan's proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17. Respondents included five residents, a Colleague from the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Welsh St. Donats Community Council, Cardiff & Vale Credit Union, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board (UHB) and the Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS).
 20. On the whole, of the ten responses received, there have been no formal objections to the proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17. Responses have been positive and supportive with some suggested additions to the narrative in the rationale for some objectives. The Cardiff & Vale University Health Board stated that:

'The UHB is supportive of the work that has been undertaken to ensure alignment of the Vale Corporate Plan and Improvement Objectives to the Well-being Goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.'
 21. Outlined below is a summary of the comments and suggestions from respondents to the consultation with residents, local businesses, Town and Community Councils, third sector organisations and key strategic partners:

Objective 1: Reduce poverty and social exclusion

22. In the responses received there were seven specific references to this objective or subject matters that would fall under this objective. No objections were made to the Council focussing on this priority as an Improvement Objective for 2016/17.
23. Cardiff & Vale UHB, GVS, Cardiff & Vale Credit Union and four local residents shared their views on this objective with the Council's aim of reducing poverty and social exclusion welcomed by all respondents.
 - Cardiff & Vale Credit Union stated that they would:

'Welcome the opportunity to work directly with Vale of Glamorgan Council to agree a detailed plan to ensure that we can meaningfully contribute to financial inclusion in the Vale in the long term.'
 - Similarly Cardiff & Vale University Health board wish to continue to work closely with the Council, stating that:

'The UHB is working closely with the Council and other LSB partners on this objective which is helpfully reflected in the Rationale Document and it is pleasing to see the intention for all programmes of work to be closely linked to public health priorities to help address health inequalities.' A suggestion was made for the Council to consider adopting the population health indicators outlined in the Public Health Outcomes Framework for Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

- One resident, however, stated that whilst they welcomed the objective, they felt that aspects of the Council's Local Development Plan were likely to increase social exclusion in the Vale of Glamorgan. Despite this opinion the majority of respondents were supportive of this objective.

Objective 2: Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment

24. Cardiff & Vale UHB and the Council's Sports and Development Manager were the only two respondents to make a specific reference to this objective, with the UHB stating:

'We welcome the inclusion of walking and cycling and improved active travel in this section.'

The Council's Sports and Development manager outlined how the work of Council projects such as Coaches of the Future, through provision of recognised coaching qualifications and practical coaching experience and generic training such as safeguarding and first aid have enabled young people to progress to paid employment within the Council as casual sports coaches thus contributing to achieving this objective.

25. No objections were made to the Council focusing on this priority as an Improvement Objective for 2016/17.

Objective 3: Raising overall standards of achievement

26. Two of the ten respondents made specific references to this objective, either directly or by referring to the subject matter. Their comments highlighted factors that would contribute to achieving this objective and there were no objections expressed in relation to the Council working towards this objective.
- The Council's Sports and Play Development Manager explained how the Leadership pathway helps young people achieve coaching qualifications leading to employment opportunities. This is a positive contribution to achieving this objective and should be noted.
 - Another respondent, who explains that he is a school governor at a local primary school, refers to school funding and the disparity that some schools are facing. This could then have an impact on the school's ability to raise the standards of achievement. The respondent suggests re-examining the difference between the top-funded and lowest funded schools in the area with a view to adequately supporting all schools.

Objective 4: Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles

27. Three of the ten respondents made specific references to this objective. No objections were made to the Council focusing on this as an Improvement Objective for 2016/17, although some additions were suggested to the narrative of rationale.
- Cardiff & Vale UHB stated that they would welcome a broader emphasis on physical activity with reference to the environment as well as the specific services offered. The following additions were suggested:

- Development of a network to support health and well-being in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Implementing Phase 2 of the Cardiff and Vale Healthy Weight Framework.
- Implementing the Cardiff and Vale Eating Well Action Plan and the Cardiff and Vale Physical Activity Action Plan.

As outlined in Objective 1, a further suggestion was also made for the Council to consider adopting the population health indicators outlined in the Public Health Outcomes Framework for Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

- The Council's Sports and Play Development Manager highlighted a number of areas where her team's work would contribute to achieving this objective, amongst others. For example, The Vale Sport Plan and the Doorstep Sports project. Two additions were suggested to the rationale for the objective:
 - Implement the projects in the Vale Sport Plan for 2016.
 - Reference within the rationale of the objective, the recent Play Sufficiency Assessment which has informed for the Play action plan to be delivered during 2016/17.
- A local resident expressed his concern over the safety and quality of the play area and play equipment in St Athan. He stated that residents would like to see the play areas expanded and improved in order to contribute to a reduction in crime amongst teenagers and to provide social and health benefits for younger children.

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 the unprecedented financial challenges.

28. Three of the 10 respondents that made specific references to this objective had no objection to the Council focusing on this this priority as an Improvement Objective for 2016/17.

- Cardiff and Vale Credit Union feel that they could have an impact on helping the Council to achieve this objective and would welcome the opportunity to work more closely with the Council by providing joint services and strengthening the partnership between the two organisations.
- Cardiff & Vale UHB stated that they wished to continue to work closely with the Council and would like to be kept informed of streamlining work which could have an impact on the shared population of vulnerable children and adults or where decisions could affect partner delivery and agreed integrated service models.
- A resident who is also a member of a local Town and Community Council took the opportunity to state that Town and Community Councils should be included at all stages of engagement and discussions regarding reshaping services. He also added that:

'TCCs will need to take on many services that can no longer be supported by the lead authorities but they need time and support in making themselves resilient enough in order to take on these new responsibilities.'

29. In response to findings from the consultation undertaken with the public, local businesses and key strategic partners the following amendments to the Improvement Plan are proposed:

Objective 1: Reduce poverty and social exclusion

30. No amendment to the Improvement Plan is proposed under this objective:
- In relation to the suggestion by Cardiff & Vale UHB to consider adoption of the population health indicators outlined in the Public Health Outcomes Framework for Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations Act, this work is currently ongoing as part of Council's review of its performance management arrangements. We are working with elected members on developing a suite of appropriate performance indicators to enable us to demonstrate progress against our four Well-being outcomes. This work will consider a wide range of measures including existing local and national indicator sets, the Public Health outcomes Framework for Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations and Social Care and Well-being indicator sets. In addition, where appropriate, new local measures will be identified to ensure a balanced set of indicators is used by the Council to reflect progress against each Well-being Outcome. This work will inform our 2016/17 quarter 1 performance reports to Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet from September 2016. We are committed to further dialogue with the UHB as part of the ongoing work to develop appropriate performance indicators.
 - In response to a resident's view that aspects of the Council's Local Development Plan were likely to increase social exclusion in the Vale of Glamorgan, this issue is directly addressed within the Local Development Plan document. In setting the framework for the future development of the Vale of Glamorgan through the Local Development Plan, we have been mindful of the need to regenerate and support our communities and in doing so the Plan seeks to achieve a balance between economic growth, social cohesion and environmental impact.

Objective 2: Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment

31. No amendment to the Improvement Plan is proposed under this objective as there were no objections expressed by respondents in relation to the Council working towards this objective.

Objective 3: Raising overall standards of achievement

32. No amendment to the Improvement Plan is proposed under this objective as there were no objections expressed in relation to the Council working towards this objective.
- In relation to a resident's suggestion to re-examine the difference between the top-funded and lowest funded schools in the area with a view to adequately supporting all schools, a review of the Schools Funding Formula is due to be undertaken during 2016/17. The review will be conducted by a range of head teachers from the primary and secondary sector along with key officers from the Learning and Skills Directorate and will ensure that the current funding formula remains equitable and relevant; and where not, to consider options for modernisation and redistribution. The findings of the review and any resulting changes to the current formula will be reported to the Schools Budget Forum with a view to implementing a new formula in April 2017.

Objective 4: Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles

33. The following amendments are proposed to this objective:
- In response to the Cardiff & Vale UHB suggestion, we have contacted Public Health Wales to make proposals about specific changes to the narrative under this objective to reflect opportunities provided by the environment to be physically active. It is proposed that the Improvement Plan be amended to reflect any agreed proposals.

- Adopting the suggested actions (below) by the Cardiff UHB will better reflect the wide range of work being undertaken by the Council and Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Health and Well-being Board and it is proposed that the Improvement Plan is amended to reflect these:
 - Development of a network to support health and well-being in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.
 - Implementing Phase 2 of the Cardiff and Vale Healthy Weight Framework
 - Implementing the Cardiff and Vale Eating Well Action Plan and the Cardiff and Vale Physical Activity Action Plan.
- In relation to the suggestion by the Cardiff & Vale UHB to consider adoption of the population health indicators outlined in the Public Health Outcomes Framework for Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations Act, this work is currently ongoing as part of the Council's review of its performance management arrangements. We are working with elected members on developing a suite of appropriate performance indicators to enable us to better demonstrate progress against our four Well-being outcomes. This work will consider a wide range of measures including existing local and national indicator sets, the Public Health outcomes Framework for Wales and the Well-being of Future Generations and Social Care and Well-being indicator sets. In addition, where appropriate, new local measures will be identified to ensure a balanced set of indicators is used by the Council to reflect progress against each Well-being Outcome. This work will inform our 2016/17 quarter 1 performance reports to Scrutiny Committees and the Cabinet from September 2016. We are committed to further dialogue with the UHB as part of the ongoing work to develop appropriate performance indicators.
- It is proposed that two further additions be made to the rationale for the objective to reflect the Council's contribution towards achieving this objective:
 - Implement the projects in the Vale Sport Plan for 2016.
 - Include a reference in the narrative to reflect the recent Play Sufficiency Assessment which has informed for the Play action plan to be delivered during 2016/17.
- In response to the concern expressed by a local resident regarding the safety and quality of the play area and play equipment in St Athan, the Council can confirm it is committed to ensuring the safety of all of our play provision. Monthly inspections of all sites are routinely carried out together with an external annual inspection to ensure compliance with safety requirements. The resident also expressed a desire to see play areas expanded and improved in order to contribute to a reduction in crime amongst teenagers and to provide social and health benefits for younger children. The Council is also always looking for opportunities to improve the provision and quality of our playgrounds. Several play areas have had extensive refurbishments in recent years and plans for the future include the upgrading of several key sites, including at St. Athan where a new roundabout is to be installed.

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 the unprecedented financial challenges.

34. No amendment to the Improvement Plan is proposed as respondents supported the Council in working towards this objective.

35. The Council also wishes to continue to work closely with the Cardiff & Vale UHB in areas that impact on our residents and service users. The Council and UHB have an established programme of integration and are working together in a range of fields, notably community health services.
36. In response to a resident's suggestion for Town and Community Councils to be included at all stages of engagement and discussions regarding Reshaping Services, the Council recognises the contribution that Town and Community Councils have in part of the Reshaping Services Programme. A dedicated project team has been established to identify and develop opportunities regarding closer working with Town and Community Councils and the Voluntary Sector. The project team includes representatives from the Town and Community Councils, Glamorgan Voluntary Service and One Voice Wales (who represent TCCs nationally). A representative from Town and Community Councils is also a member of the Programme's Management Board and ensures that TCCs are regularly updated and involved in discussions. The Council has begun a process of contacting all Town and Community Councils to understand what services they currently operate and potential interest in working with the Vale of Glamorgan Council in the future. Specific opportunities are now being developed and TCCs are also considered as part of service change.
37. A number of responses received did not make specific reference to any of the Improvement Objectives identified and were not on subjects that could be seen as contributing towards any of the objectives. Whilst not identified as Improvement Objectives for 2016/17, these related areas remain priorities for the Council and are being addressed within the Corporate Plan 2016-20. For example, a response referred to waste management which is being addressed under Well-being Objective 4, 'Promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment' and public safety is being addressed under Well-being Objective 2, 'Providing safe homes and communities'. These responses have been passed on to the relevant services to respond.
38. The Improvement Plan Part 1 will be revised to reflect relevant Cabinet and Council amendments and published following Council approval on 27th April 2016.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

39. In determining its priorities the Council has been mindful of the economic situation locally and nationally and taken into account legislation changes and government policy. Key Well-being Objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2016-20 and Service Plans either have resources committed to their achievement (Medium Term Financial Plan and annual budget review) or the likely prospect of such resources being made available in the period of the Plan.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

40. The proposed Improvement Objectives have given due consideration to sustainability and climate change implications on planned activities where appropriate.
41. The Corporate Plan emphasises the Council's commitment to promoting sustainable development and duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The many different aspects of sustainability (environment, economy, culture and social) are covered within the Corporate Plan as well as how the Council will maximise its contribution to the Well-being Goals for Wales. Service Plans, our primary delivery plans also reflect this approach, demonstrating the way in which the

Service areas will work congruently with the "sustainable development principle" as introduced by the Act.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

42. The Council has a duty to identify and publish its annual Improvement Objectives and report progress against them. An annual report detailing how well we achieved our intended outcomes in relation to our 2016/17 Improvement Objectives will be reported in October 2017.

Crime and Disorder Implications

43. The proposed Improvement Objectives have given due consideration to crime and disorder implications on planned activities where appropriate. Activities to improve community safety are also included in the Corporate Plan and one of the Well-being Outcomes is 'An Inclusive and Safe Vale' with a supporting objective 'providing decent homes and safe communities'.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

44. The proposed Improvement Objectives have given due consideration to equal opportunities implications on planned activities where appropriate. 'An Inclusive and Safe Vale' is one of the Well-being Outcomes in the Corporate Plan with a supporting objective 'reducing poverty and social exclusion'. There is also a Well-being Outcome 'An Aspirational and culturally vibrant Vale' with a supporting action 'valuing culture and diversity'.
45. A scoping for Equality Impact document has been completed on the proposed Improvement Objectives and is attached at [Appendix 3](#).

Corporate/Service Objectives

46. The Corporate Plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to improving social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being and promoting sustainable development in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Improving how the Council evidences and reports achievement of its Well-being outcomes contributes towards promoting well-being. Service Plans are a key building block in the Council's performance management framework and identify how each service will contribute towards achieving key aims and objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2016-20.

Policy Framework and Budget

47. The Corporate Plan, Improvement Objectives and Service Plans form part of the Council's approved policy framework. Proposals for Improvement Objectives require a decision by Full Council.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

48. In line with the requirement to consult on our Improvement Objectives, views have been sought from all Elected Members, the Local Service Board, Town and Community Councils, voluntary sector organisations, local businesses and the general public via an online survey, local media releases and social media.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

49. All

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer

Julia Archampong, Performance Manager

Officers Consulted

All relevant officers have been consulted on the contents of this report including:

Corporate Management Team

Heads of Service

Head of Performance and Development

Operational Manager Performance and Policy

Responsible Officer:

Rob Thomas, Managing Director.