

Matter which the Chairman has decided is urgent by reason of the need to consider the reference from Scrutiny in conjunction with the Service Plans listed on the Cabinet agenda for 23rd May 2016

Agenda Item No.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 23RD MAY, 2016

REFERENCE FROM HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 18TH MAY, 2016

“ SERVICE PLAN 2016-20: HOUSING AND BUILDING SERVICES (DEH) -

Committee received the Housing and Building Services Service Plan (2016-20).

Service Plans for 2016-20 specifically identified how each Head of Service would contribute towards the achievement of Corporate Plan wellbeing outcomes by asking two questions:

- “Which wellbeing objectives does the service contribute to and what actions will we be taking this year to achieve these?”
- How will we manage our resources to achieve these actions and support our service?”

Informed by the self-assessment, the Service Plans also comprised a brief overview of the issues facing the service against each of the corporate health perspectives (risk, customer focus, resources - workforce, finance, assets, ICT). The plans also included an action plan for how resources would be used to support the delivery of wellbeing outcome actions as well as managing risks, collaboration and engagement activities.

The Council was currently consulting widely on proposed Improvement Objectives for 2016/17 and these would be reflected within relevant Service Plans once approved by Council in April 2016.

Appendix 1 to the report contained the Service Plan for Housing and Building Services. Key areas of note within the Service Plan were:

- Section 1 - Introduction: Sets the context for the Service Plan and provides an overview of the service area, the purpose of the plan, and the key service considerations which have informed development of the plan.
- Section 2 - Our Priorities for 2016-20: Outlines the specific actions that the service will be taking during 2016/17 to contribute towards the corporate wellbeing objectives and outcomes. It also identifies the key enabling actions the service will be taking to support its achievement of the well-being outcomes for example through reshaping of its services.

- Section 3 - How we work and our Resources: Describes how the service will use its resources to deliver its priorities in the Service Plan and outlines key workforce development priorities, significant ICT projects, required budget savings and areas of focus in relation to assets, procurement and major capital projects. This section also identifies how the service will engage with stakeholders and work in partnership/collaborate to achieve its priorities and incorporates a service risk evaluation.
- Appendix A and B (within the Service Plan) contains the Service Improvement Action Plan for 2016/17. This identifies planned service actions, intended outcomes and key milestones, relevant performance measures to demonstrate progress, responsible officer, timescales for completion and the anticipated resources requirements of planned actions.
- The revised Service Plan format, which takes on board comments and feedback received by the Policy and Performance Team (PPT) in the past, is intended to be easier to complete and will facilitate clearer links with team plans. It is recognised, however, that the format will continue to evolve over the next couple of years as the new performance management arrangements are bedded in.

The Environment and Housing Services Directorate would now develop Team Plans to underpin their Service Plans.

The Head of Housing and Building Services advised that the Service Plan was much improved on previous versions and picked up on the 'golden thread' approach.

The Head of Housing and Building Services spoke of new initiatives that would have an effect in the forthcoming year:

- The new-build programme, due to commence in September.
- Changes to Housing Benefits.
- Pressures on the budget.
- The Supporting People Grant.

Members spoke of the aging work force, which had an effect on the sickness absence figures.

Members also spoke of the pilot room share housing initiative and requested that Committee receive a report on this initiative.

In considering the structure of the Service Plan, Members of the Committee felt that there were still two areas of weakness that should be addressed in future Service Plans:

1. There was no section for analysis of strengths and weaknesses in delivery of the 'main functions' which would inform the priorities and actions to follow.
2. The Action Plan format listed individual 'actions' first and then 'outcomes' expected from each action; this was action focussed not outcome focussed as required. It was felt that intended outcomes should be identified first and then the actions listed which would contribute to achieving each outcome. This would provide

a more purposeful approach with coherent grouping of actions towards outcomes, and prompt considerations of actions necessary or desirable to achieve outcomes which were not currently undertaken.

Committee felt that the comments should be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

Discussions further ensued regarding:

- Difficulties being experienced in filling vacant posts.
- The timescales involved in Anti-Social Behaviour Management.

Having considered the Service Plan 2016-20: Housing and Building Services, it was

RECOMMENDED -

(1) T H A T the Housing and Building Services Service Plan for 2016-20 be endorsed.

(2) T H A T Cabinet be informed of the view of the Committee that there were still two areas of weakness that should be addressed in future Service Plans, i.e.

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2. The Action Plan format listed individual 'actions' first and then 'outcomes' expected from each action; this was action focussed not outcome focussed as required. It was felt that intended outcomes should be identified first and then the actions listed which would contribute to achieving each outcome. This would provide a more purposeful approach with coherent grouping of actions towards outcomes, and prompt considerations of actions necessary or desirable to achieve outcomes which were not currently undertaken.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To confirm the Service Plan as the primary document against which performance for the Housing and Building Services will be measured.

(2) To better reflect the format of the Service Plan.”