



Directorate Plans 2026/2027

Scrutiny March 2026



Directorate Plans 2026/27

- ❑ Overview of Directorate Plans
- ❑ Structure of the Plan
- ❑ Learning and Skills Directorate Plan - Key Issues, Risks, Actions, Measures and Targets for 26/27



Context

- **Vale 2030, the Corporate Plan** is a key means of fulfilling the Council's statutory obligations, performance monitoring and planning arrangements.
- As part of the arrangements to deliver Vale 2030, our approach to business planning provides a more **integrated approach to planning** and strengthened alignment to the Annual Self-Assessment and budget-setting process.
- The **Five Directorate Plans** are a key element of the arrangements to deliver Vale 2030.
- The draft Plans are reported to the **Scrutiny Committee** where there is greatest alignment.
- **Feedback and recommendations** from Scrutiny Committees will be referred to Cabinet in April for final approval of the Plans.
- **An Annual Statement for 2026/27** will be reported to Cabinet in May, drawing on the latest Self-Assessment, the five Directorate Plans and resident voice.

Directorate Plans – Key Points

- ❑ Directorate Plans set out how each directorate contributes to Vale 2030 Well-being Objectives and national goals. The Plans include planned activities, performance measures and associated performance targets for 2026/27.
- ❑ The Learning & Skills Directorate Plan(s) 2026/27 (Appendix A) is the primary plan(s) aligned to the remit of this committee.
- ❑ All Directorate Plans are included as background papers to provide a holistic context for proposed directorate priorities and performance targets.
- ❑ All Draft Directorate Plans have been subject to moderation by the Strategy & Insight Advisory Group and the Chief Executive with all five Directors to ensure planned performance measures and activities are suitable and are in alignment with Vale 2030.
- ❑ Relevant Cabinet members have also reviewed the Plans ahead of presenting to the Scrutiny Committee.



Structure of Plans

The Directorate Plan comprises 5 sections:

1. Who we are and what we do
2. Purpose of our Directorate Plan.
3. Managing our resources to deliver our priorities
4. What will we do in 2026/27
5. How will we measure success

Scrutiny:

- Scrutiny Committee Members are asked to review the Directorate Plan 2026-27 and endorse via recommendation to Cabinet the **planned activities and proposed measures and performance targets**.
- Scrutiny Committee Members are asked to refer any comments and recommendations with regards to the Directorate Plan 2026-27 to cabinet for their consideration and endorsement.



Learning & Skills

The report seeks Scrutiny Committee endorsement of the Learning & Skills Directorate Plan 2026–27, including: in year priority activities, performance measures and performance targets.

The Directorate's priority actions for the coming year focus on:

1. Improving education outcomes
2. Community inclusion and engagement through arts, culture and adult and community learning
3. Youth services and engagement
4. Reshaping priorities.



Section 3 – Managing Our Resources

Key budgetary and reshaping information is provided in the Plan and includes;

The Directorate’s service delivery is supported by an estimated base budget of £ 151.774M for 2026/27.

Reshaping and Efficiency Savings, Income Targets and Other Service Improvement Opportunities 2026/27 are detailed and include:

- Use of Welsh in Education grant to facilitate meeting our commitments set out in the WESP (£160,000), Enabling Pupils with ALN to remain in their local schools and challenging the culture with regards to ALN value for money in mainstream schools (£102,000), Special school model review (£99,000).

Key Engagement Activity for the Year ahead includes

- ALN Resource Base Consultation
- Consultation on School Admission Arrangements 2027/28 and Parental Satisfaction Survey following annual admission round.

Partnership work is also detailed in the Plan

Relevant Corporate and Directorate risks includes:

- Corporate Risk: Additional Learning Needs (CR5) – Significant pressures on ALN delivery and capacity.
- Corporate Risk: School Finances (CR13) – Risk of school budget deficits impacting sustainability.
- Failure to improve outcomes for eFSM learners (LS/DR3) – Widening attainment and engagement gaps.
- Uncertainty of funding & cessation of grants (LS/DR6) – Affecting continuity of core services.
- Insufficient match funding for SCfL programme (LS/DR8) – Impact on school buildings and learning environments.
- Workforce, assets and resource mobilisation challenges (LS/DR1) – Risk to delivering sustainable services.
- Inability to realise Transformation Savings (LS/DR10) – Risks to long term sustainability.
- Exclusions and disengagement (LS/DR2) – Persistent risk of poor outcomes for vulnerable learners.

Section 4 – What We will do

This section 4 sets out the key actions including milestones and outcomes for 26/27 including:

- School Improvement Partnership - enhance inclusive teaching and leadership with a focus on disadvantaged learners or those at risk of disengagement.
- Refine the Community Focused Schools approach, making particular use of libraries to develop the new national reading scheme to tackle those living in disadvantaged areas.
- Improve the quality and consistency of local provision for learners with ALN and SEMH
- Deliver the transformation programme and work with school to support them in reducing their budget deficits and strengthen financial stability
- Cradle to Career pathways - pre and post 16 opportunities with a focus on disadvantaged learners or those at risk of disengagement
- Our Bravery Brought Justice - Safeguarding, our comprehensive response to the North Wales enquiry



Section 5 – How we will measure success

This section sets out measures and targets for the year ahead.

The proposed measures and targets are based on past performance trends, previous targets, and available benchmarking data. They also reflect the priority of each indicator for the Council and the realistic potential for improvement. Targets have been set for ongoing indicators where appropriate, while new indicators will establish baseline data during 2026/27.

- Increased number of quarterly and midyear measures (in response to scrutiny feedback (Joint Performance Scrutiny December 2025).
- Mix of service user and service outcome indicators.
- Targets are challenging but realistic, informed by trend data, benchmarking and capacity





Diolch

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