Neath Port Talbot
Castell·nedd Port Talbot
County Borough Council Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

AGENDA

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

Immediately Following Scrutiny Committee on

THURSDAY, 9TH JULY 2015

COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2 PORT TALBOT CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1.   To agree the Chairman for this Meeting.

2.   To receive any declarations of interest from Members.

3.   To receive the Minutes of the previous Policy and Resources Cabinet Board held on 28th May 2015 *(Pages 5 - 12)*

   To receive the Report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

4.   Miscellaneous Grants Applications *(Pages 13 - 16)*

   To receive the Reports of the Head of Financial Services

5.   Business Rates - Applications for Hardship Relief *(Pages 17 - 22)*

6.   Treasury Management Monitoring 2015/16 *(Pages 23 - 28)*

   To receive the Reports of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services

7.   Digital by Choice - Channel Shift Strategy *(Pages 29 - 100)*

S.Phillips
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Friday 3rd July, 2015

Cabinet Board Members:

Councillors: A.H.Thomas and A.N.Woolcock

Notes:

 (1)   If any Cabinet Board Member is unable to attend, any other Cabinet Member may substitute as a voting Member on the Committee. Members are asked to make these arrangements direct and then to advise the committee Section.

(2)   The views of the earlier Scrutiny Committee are to be taken into account in arriving at decisions (pre decision scrutiny process).

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EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

28TH MAY 2015

Cabinet Members:

Councillors: A.N.Woolcock (Chairman) and P.A.Rees

Officers in Attendance:

H.Jenkins, Mrs.K.Jones, D.Rees, S.John, N.Evans and I.Davies and N.Evans

1.   **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Agreed that Councillor A.N. Woolcock be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

2.   **MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS APPLICATIONS**

Decisions:

1. That the following Miscellaneous Grant Applications be approved for the following groups in the sums as detailed in the circulated report:

Abercregan United
Cwmafan Welfare Association
Taibach Rugby Football Club
Gwynfi United FC
Cwmafan Boys and Girls Club
Cwmafan Football Club
Cwmafan Rugby Club
Cimla Cricket Club and Football Club (One half of what will be Cimla Community Sports Association and Tonmawr AFC)
Croeserw Athletic Football Club
Afan Lido AFC
Pontardawe Community Sports and Recreation Association

Giants Grave Boys Club and Briton Ferry AFC
Community Ventures – Taibach Community Education Centre
Community Ventures – Baglan Community Centre

2. That the following Application for a Loan be approved in the sum as detailed in the circulated report following consideration of the comments made by the Scrutiny Committee:

Neath Port Talbot Credit Union

Reason for Decisions:

To enable the Council to progress grant applications.

Implementation of the Decisions

The decisions will be implemented after the three day call in period.

3. **COMMUNITY COUNCILS MINOR PROJECTS SCHEME APPLICATION**

Decision:

The application from Blaenhonddan Community Council complies with the conditions of grant and I therefore recommend that support at 30% up to a maximum of £6,000 in accordance with the Minor Projects Grants Scheme be made on receipt of paid invoices together with a copy bank statement.

Reason for Decision:

The decision is in compliance with the approved policy and would enable community improvements.

Implementation of Decision

The decision will be implemented after the 3 day call in period

4. **BUSINESS PLANS FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, LEGAL SERVICES AND ICT AND CORPORATE PROCUREMENT SERVICES 2015/16**

Members asked for clarification on the abbreviations contained within the Business Plans and asked for these to be included in the final documents. The Cabinet Board also asked for feedback to be provided to the Scrutiny Committee that it was disappointed that no questions had been asked on the Business Plans.

Decision:

That the Business Plans for Financial Services, Legal Services and ICT and Procurement Services 2015/16, as detailed within the circulated report, be endorsed.

Reason for Decision:

To approve the Finance and Corporate Services Business Plans for the financial year 2015/2016.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision will be implemented after the 3 day call in period.

5.   **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2015/16**

    Decision:

    That the report be noted.

6.   **BUSINESS RATES - SECTION 44A DISCRETIONARY RELIEF**

    Decision:

    That the adoption of the Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy Section 44A, as attached at Appendix 1 of the circulated report, be approved.

    Reason for Decision:

    To formalise applications received from business ratepayers for partial relief for NNDR.

    Implementation of Decision:

    The decision is urgent and for immediate implementation, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee had agreed to this course of action and therefore there would be no call in of this decision.

7. **BUSINESS RATES RELIEF SCHEME - WALES RETAIL RELIEF SCHEME 2015-2016**

Decision:

That Neath Port Talbot Council adopts the new scheme as outlined for 2015-16 and provide the relevant rate relief where qualifying criteria are met.

Reason for Decision:

To allow business rates relief in line with Welsh Government Scheme.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is urgent and for immediate implementation, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee had agreed to this course of action and therefore there would be no call in of this decision.

8. **COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY RELIEF POLICY**

Decision:

That the adoption of the Council Tax Discretionary Relief Policy as attached at Appendix 1 of the circulated report, be approved.

Reason for Decision:

To comply with the outcome of the Valuation Tribunal.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision will be implemented after the three day call in period.

9. **CHARGING PROPOSALS FOR COURT DEPUTY SERVICE**

Decisions:

1. That the outcome of the consultation exercise, as detailed in the circulated report be noted.

2. That the proposals re Court Deputy Savings as set out at Appendix2 of the circulated report be approved and implemented.

Reason for Decisions:

To implement the service charges for 2105/2016.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decisions are urgent and for immediate implementation, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee had agreed to this course of action and therefore there would be no call in of these decisions.

10. **REVISED STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN**

Decision:

That authorisation be granted to initiate formal public consultation on the Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2015-2019 commencing on 5th June and ending on 21st August 201,5 as contained in Appendix 1 of the circulated report, subject to the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services clarifying with the Head of Participation Objective 7 and amending the relevant item in Appendix 1.

Reasons for Decision:

1. To allow the Council to discharge its duties in relation to the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties)(Wales) Regulations 2011 to develop Equality Objectives and produce a Strategic Equality Plan containing the objectives and other information as laid out in the Regulations 2010.

2. To enable interested parties to comment upon the Equality Objectives and Strategic Equality Plan prior to Cabinet Board finalising the plan and then recommending the approval of final proposals by full Council.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decisions will be implemented after the 3 day call in period.

11. **COMMUNITY BOUNDARY REVIEW**

Decisions:

1. That the final proposals arising from the Community Boundary Review as contained with circulated report be noted and approved;

2. That the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services be authorised to submit the final proposals to the Local Democracy and

Boundary Commission for Wales, as detailed in Appendices A-D of the circulated report.

Reason for Decisions

To comply with the statutory responsibilities set out in section 55 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Implementation of Decisions

The decision will be implemented after the 3 day call in period.

12. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS - TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS PURSUANT TO REGULATION 4(3) AND (5) OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT 2001 NO. 2290 AND THE RELEVANT EXEMPT PARAGRAPHS OF PART 4 OF SCHEDULE 12A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972.**

Decision:

That pursuant to Regulation 4 (3) and (5) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290, the public be excluded for the following item of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

13. **HOUSING BENEFIT WRITE OFF**

Decision:

That the write off of the amount, as detailed within the private circulated report, be approved.

Reason for Decision:

The account is irrecoverable.

Implementation of Decision

The decision will be implemented after the 3 day call in period.

14. **COUNCIL TAX WRITE OFF**

Decision:

That the write off of the amounts, as detailed within the private circulated report, be approved.

Reason for Decision:

The accounts are irrecoverable.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call-in.

CHAIRMAN

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POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

9TH JULY 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND
CORPORATE SERVICES

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION
WARDS AFFECTED - ALL

MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS APPLICATIONS

Existing Policy Statement

a) Each application will be considered on its merits.

b) The Committee will only approve applications for financial assistance from voluntary or charitable organisations which are manifestly committed to voluntary endeavours of a local nature. This will not preclude the consideration of applications where the disposal of funds is outside the area but still provides significant benefits for the people from the Neath Port Talbot area.

c) No applications will be considered from religious bodies except relating to church halls and other premises where there is significant community use of the property for non-religious activities.

d) No applications will be considered from other public funded bodies such as community councils, hospital trusts, etc. or where the benefit may be in lieu of their contributions such as appeals for hospital equipment.

e) Applications from individuals may be considered where both the person and the community derive a benefit.

f) No grants will be made to any individual or organisation whose prime purpose is to distribute their funds to other charitable bodies.

Budget for 2015/16

The following grants are included and have been approved within this budget of £164,383:-

	Budget 2015/16 £
Citizen Advice Bureau	82,680
Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service	45,494
Swansea Bay Regional Equality Council	15,900
Maintenance of Mechanics Institute (in lieu of grant aid to Antiquarians & Archives)	14,280
West Glamorgan Association for the Blind	2,100
Port Talbot Horticultural Society	712
One-off grants budget	3,217
Total Budget	164,383

New Application

Applicant	Purpose	Amount Request/Cost of "Project"	Previous Support	Comments
Briton Ferry Old Age pensioners	General Grant	Not specified	£395.73 OAP Assoc. Grant paid 2013-14	

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members:

- Decide on the application set out above.

Reason for Proposed Decision

To decide on the grant application

List of Background Papers

Grant Applications

Appendix

None

Officer Contact

Mr H J Jenkins – Director of Finance & Corporate Services
(Tel. 01639 763251 - email: h.jenkins@neath-porttalbot.gov.uk)

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS APPLICATIONS

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call-in period.

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts:

Economic Prosperity	Positive
Education and Lifelong Learning	Positive
Better Health and Well Being	Positive
Environment and Transport	Positive
Crime and Disorder	Positive

Other Impacts:

Welsh Language	Neutral
Sustainable Development	Positive
Equalities	Positive
Social Inclusion	Positive

(c) **Consultation**

There has been no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES – DAVE REES

9th JULY 2015

SECTION A - MATTERS FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED – NEATH NORTH

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2015/16

BUSINESS RATES – APPLICATIONS FOR HARDSHIP RELIEF

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To consider applications for hardship relief in line with Section 49 of the Local Authority Finance Act to grant remission for business rates liability.

2. NPT Hardship Relief Scheme

2.1 At your meeting of November 2010, you agreed a scheme of hardship relief in respect of businesses affected by the recession, as follows:

- In the first instance, we would seek to help the businesses by applying any reductions which are available to the rates bill and/or we would agree a revised schedule of payments of the rates bill.

- If these measures were not sufficient, hardship relief would be considered if the business would suffer hardship if relief were not granted and if it was in the interests of council taxpayers for hardship relief to be granted.

2.2 In determining whether it would be in the interests of council taxpayers for hardship relief to be granted, the factors to be taken into account would include:

- the long term viability of the business;
- the number of people employed by the business;
- the nature of the jobs provided by the business;
- the amount of local business generated by the business;
- the nature of any services provided to the local community by the business, and whether the community would be adversely affected by the loss of those services;
- the availability of an alternative supplier of those services.

2.3 Where appropriate, Economic Development would carry out an assessment of the business.

2.4 Basically, the policy sees hardship relief as a last resort and something which would only be granted if, having regard to the factors listed in paragraph 3 above, it is in the interests of council taxpayers for relief to be granted.

2.5 Members should note that the Welsh Government NNDR Business Pool will fund 75% of the rates bill with the remaining 25% falling on the Local Authority.

Application

3. Baguette Bar, 3A Angel Place, Neath, SA11 1RS.

3.1 This application is for hardship relief from the 1st April 2014 to the 31st March 2016.

3.2 The business started in April 2005 but the owner has advised of a decline in business over the last two years. The owner attributes a recent decline in business to the fact that the car park outside his shop has imposed expensive parking charges.

3.3 The business currently employs 1 full time and 2 part time staff.

3.4 The business development team has assisted this business historically but there is no further support available that would make a difference to the business under the current circumstances.

3.5   A breakdown of the rates payable is detailed below –

Year	Gross Rates	Small Business Rates Relief	Wales Retail Relief	Net Rates Payable
2014/15	£5,084.75	£1,271.19	£1,000.00	£2,813.56
2015/16	£5,181.50	£1,295.38	0.00	£3,886.12

An application form for relief via the Wales Retail Relief Scheme has been sent to the Mr K David, owner of Baguette Bar, upon its return an amount of £1,500 relief will be granted to reduce the bill for 2015/16 to £2,386.12.

Should members approve the application the All Wales NNDR Pool will fund 75% of the cost with the remaining 25% funded by the Authority.

4.   Conclusion

In considering whether it is in the interests of council taxpayers to grant hardship relief, it is necessary to weigh up the nature of the services provided to the local community and the employment which it provides against the impact on the community if the business were to close.

5.   Recommendation

That Members consider whether they wish to grant hardship relief in respect of this application.

6.   Reason for proposed decision

To provide decision on application for hardship relief in line with policy.

List of Background Papers

Business Rates system

Officer Contact

For further information on this report item, please contact:

Mr. Dave Rees - Head of Financial Services
Tel. No. 01639 763646
E-mail: d.rees1@npt.gov.uk

Mrs Ann Hinder – Principal Council Tax Officer
Tel. No. 01639 763908
E-mail: a.hinder@npt.gov.uk

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

BUSINESS RATES - APPLICATION FOR HARDSHIP RELIEF

Baguette Bar

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call-in period.

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts:

Economic Prosperity	Positive
Education and Lifelong Learning	No impact
Better Health and Well Being	No impact
Environment and Transport	No impact
Crime and Disorder	No impact

Other Impacts:

Welsh Language	No impact
Sustainable Development	Positive
Equalities	No impact
Social Inclusion	No impact

(c) **Consultation**

There has been no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES – DAVE REES

9th JULY 2015

SECTION B - MATTER FOR INFORMATION

WARDS AFFECTED - ALL

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2015/16

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1   This report sets out treasury management action and information since the previous report.

2. **Rates of Interest**

2.1   Bank base rates remain at of 0.5% (since 5th March 2009) and detailed below are the changes in the bank base rate since April 2008.

Effective Date	Bank Rate
10 April 2008	5.00%
08 October 2008	4.50%
06 November 2008	3.50%
04 December 2008	2.00%
08 January 2009	1.50%
05 February 2009	1.00%
05 March 2009 to date	0.50%

2.2   The following table provides examples of external borrowing costs as provided by the Public Works Loans Board as at 29th June 2015:

	Equal Instalments of Principal		Annuity		Maturity	
	Previous 18 May 2015	Current 29th June 2015	Previous 18 May 2015	Current 29th June 2015	Previous 18 May 2015	Current 29th June 2015
	%	**%**	%	**%**	%	**%**
5-5.5 years	1.63	**1.79**	1.63	**1.79**	2.06	**2.35**
10-10.5 years	2.06	**2.35**	2.08	**2.38**	2.59	**2.98**
20-20.5 years	2.59	**2.98**	2.63	**3.04**	3.14	**3.46**
35-35.5 years	3.04	**3.39**	3.13	**3.47**	3.26	**3.49**
49.5-50 years	3.25	**3.53**	3.27	**3.52**	3.22	**3.40**

3. General Fund Treasury Management Budget

3.1 The following table sets out the treasury management budget for 2015/16 and consists of a gross budget for debt charges i.e. repayment of debt principal and interest, and interest returns on investment income.

2014/15 Outturn Position £'000		2015/16 Original Budget £'000
16,964	Principal and Interest charges	17,230
246	Contribution to Treasury Management Equalisation Reserve to fund SSIP and other Capital Programme over the next 3 years.	
17,210	**Subtotal Expenditure**	
	Investment Income	
(806)	- Total	(614)
227	- less allocated to other funds	210
(579)	**Subtotal Income**	**(404)**
16,631	**Net General Fund**	**16,826**

NB: Other funds include Trust Funds, Social Services Funds, Schools Reserves, Bonds etc.

4. Borrowing

4.1 No long term borrowing has been arranged since the previous report.

5. Investment Income

5.1 In line with the Council's Investment Strategy, the 2015/16 Original Budget for investment income is £614,000; treasury management investment income generated on investments made to date is £406,000.

Members should note that the majority of investments are classified as 'specified' i.e. up to 12 months and are currently with the major banks including Barclays, Lloyds Group, Bank Santander, Clydesdale and Nationwide Building Society.

5.2 The Council policy will allow investments up to a maximum of £25m for periods of more than 1 year and up to 5 years, and this will be considered when decisions on investing surplus funds are made.

5.3 No additional long term investments have been carried out since the last report. The Council currently has £10m invested for periods in excess of 12 months:

Counterparty	Value £'000	Period	Maturity	Rate %
Eastbourne Borough Council	4,000	4.5 Years	June 18	2.2%
Peterborough City Council	6,000	5 Years	Dec 18	2.1%
TOTAL	**10,000**			

Icelandic Bank Update

5.4 Members should note the following position in relation to the recovery of monies from investments in Icelandic related banks.

5.5 The tables below show the amounts outstanding.

Table 1 – Original Investments

Bank	Original Investment	Amount of Principal Repaid	Current Outstanding Investment
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Heritable	9,000	8,597	403
KSF	3,000	2,546	454
Total	**12,000**	**11,143**	**857**

Table 2 – Investments Held in Escrow Accounts – Icelandic Kroner

Bank	Investment (Sterling Equivalent) £'000	Amount Repaid £'000	Outstanding Investment £'000
New Glitnir	387	0	387

As previously reported the Local Government Association and Local Authorities are looking at how best to repatriate the amount held in Icelandic Kroner.

List of Background Papers
Treasury Management Files
PWLB Notice Number 188/15

Appendix
None

Wards Affected
All

Officer Contact
For further information on this report item, please contact:

Mr David Rees – Head of Financial Services
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E-mail: d.rees1@npt.gov.uk

Mr Huw Jones – Chief Accountant – Capital and Corporate
Tel. No: 01639 763575
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Mr Chris Rees – Senior Accountant
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POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES –
MRS. KAREN JONES**

9TH JULY 2015

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

DIGITAL BY CHOICE - CHANNEL SHIFT STRATEGY

Purpose of Report

To seek the authority of the Cabinet Board to initiate a period of public consultation on the attached draft Channel Shift Strategy – "Digital by Choice" – which will, if approved, replace the existing Access to Services Strategy.

Background

The Council's existing Access to Services Strategy initially delivered:

- ➢ Three One Stop Shops, one in each town. Between them they deal with 70,000 enquiries face to face per annum and regularly record customer satisfaction ratings of over 95%;
- ➢ A Corporate Contact Centre that deals with over 220,000 calls per annum;
- ➢ A Corporate web presence containing over 3,000 pages of information and increasingly providing the mechanism through which people access on-line services; and
- ➢ A customer service policy that aims to place the "citizen first".

In recent years, access arrangements have evolved, using the LEAN/system thinking methodology to focus service delivery on ""what matters whilst also designing out waste and reducing the cost of service transactions. The pioneering work done by the Council has been recognised by awards from APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) and the Welsh Local Government Association "Excellence Wales" awards. The Council has also initiated a national community of practice in Wales which brings together LEAN and systems thinking practitioners which has been endorsed by Welsh Ministers.

But, there is more to do. Citizens are rapidly taking up new digital options in the way they live their day to day lives and local authorities need to find new service delivery solutions to respond to the challenges posed by enduring austerity measures. This Digital by Choice Strategy has been developed to provide a corporate response to the emerging digital agenda whilst also ensuring that other, more traditional channels are appropriate, efficient and effective. Crucially, this strategy also recognises the need to tackle digital exclusion in our local communities to help increase competitiveness in our local economy and to reduce inequality.

We have made a good start, bringing six new transactional services on-line in the last twelve months; improving the accessibility of our corporate website and experimenting with a new integrated service with partners at our Holly Street "hub". This strategy sets out our proposals for building on these early successes and positions Digital by Choice as core to our thinking and financial strategies moving forward.

Equality Impact Assessment

This Strategy requires a full equality impact assessment.

There will be an impact on a number of groups with protected characteristics. The specific needs of those groups will be accommodated by ensuring there is systematic user involvement in

the service redesign methodology and there will be a specific plan of work to address the needs of those who are currently digitally excluded (many of whom will likely have protected characteristics). It is anticipated that by catering for those requirements in the ways suggested will lead to a positive impact on groups with a protected characteristic as a whole by making services easier to access and widening choice.

Recommended

That the Cabinet Board authorises the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services to initiate a public consultation exercise to determine support for the overall direction of travel set out in the proposed Digital by Choice Strategy and associated work priorities commencing on 17th July 2015 and ending on 17th August 2015.

Reason for Proposed Decision

To gauge the level of public support for the proposed strategy which will replace the existing Access to Services Strategy, prior to final proposals being considered by the Cabinet Board and the Council.

Officer Contact:

Mrs Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services, Tel: 01639763284 or e mail k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

Digital by Choice

Channel Strategy

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

2015/16-2017/18

Executive Summary

Neath Port Talbot Council has worked hard over many years to deliver high quality services for its citizens at best value for money.

Our initial Access to Services Strategy delivered:

➢ Three One Stop Shops, one in each town. Between them they deal with 70,000 enquiries face to face per annum and regularly record customer satisfaction ratings of over 95%;

➢ A Corporate Contact Centre that deals with over 220,000 telephone calls per annum;

➢ A Corporate web presence containing over 3,000 pages of public information and providing access to a range of online services; together with a

➢ Corporate ethos of "citizen first".

These achievements were developed further through the Council's programme of LEAN/systems thinking reviews. Over thirty services participated in this corporate transformation programme. Service delivery was critically examined from the end user perspective and then redesigned to ensure that we focused service delivery on "what matters" to the end user whilst designing out waste and reducing service cost. The Council's pioneering work in Wales was recognised with awards from both APSE and the WLGA "Excellence Wales" initiative and formed the basis of an innovative community of practice founded by the Council which has subsequently been supported by Welsh Ministers.

But despite these achievements there is more to do. Citizens are rapidly taking up new digital options in the way they live their day to day lives. Digital services can:

- ➢ Provide simpler and better access to services for citizens

- ➢ Increase choice for citizens;

- ➢ Support the move to greater integration of services within the Council and between agencies;

- ➢ Support the drive for more self-service and personalisation in service delivery;

- ➢ Reduce the cost of services substantially; and

- ➢ Generate greater customer and organisation insight through better management information.

This Digital by Design Channel Shift Strategy has been developed to provide a corporate response to the emerging digital agenda. Implementation of the Channel Shift Strategy will ensure that the Council and its citizens accesses the benefits of digital technologies, whilst also ensuring that use of other, more traditional channels are appropriate, efficient and effective. This Strategy also underlines the importance of having a local and coherent response to digital inclusion to increase competitiveness within the local economy whilst also reducing inequality amongst our local population

We have made a good start: bringing six new transactional services online in the last eighteen months; improving access to resources available through our corporate website; and also experimenting with a new joined up face to face service at our Pontardawe One Stop Shop "Hub". This Strategy explains how we will build on our early successes and position Digital by Choice as core to our thinking and work moving forward.

Part 1 - Introduction

WHAT IS A CHANNEL STRATEGY?

Neath Port Talbot Council has a responsibility to provide excellent services to the public and value for money to the taxpayer. The channels through which public services are delivered and by which the public has contact with the authority, (be that via telephone, online, in person, or via other means), are a critical part of public service provision, and there is an ongoing impetus for them to be managed effectively and efficiently for everyone.
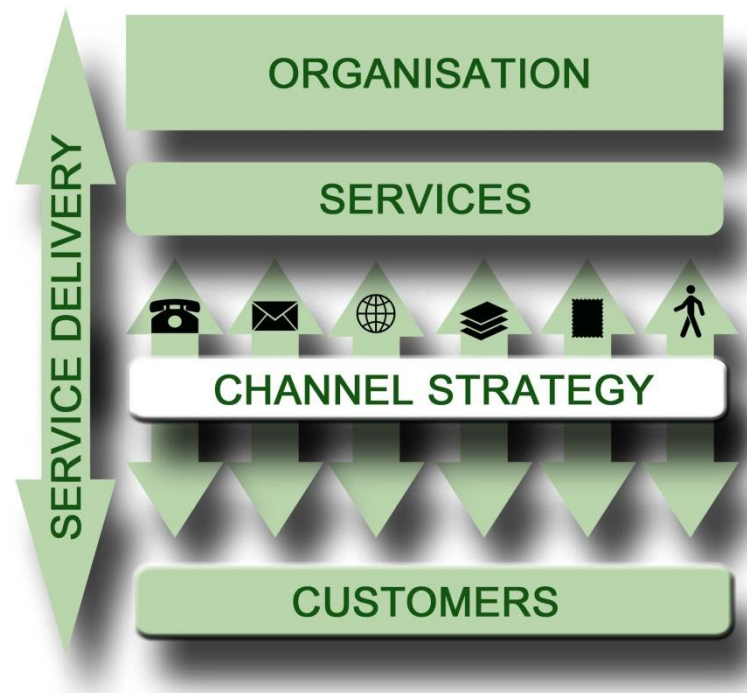
A channel strategy is an organisation's plan for the channels it will use to deliver services to, and interact with, its customers. A channel strategy explains how an organisation will meet the contact demands of its customers using the resources it has available bearing in mind the needs of the customer.

A channel strategy is not simply a plan to move service provision to online channels.

WHY IS A CHANNEL STRATEGY IMPORTANT NOW?

Customers receive a high standard of customer service from many public and private sector organisations. However, citizens sometimes have low expectations of services provided by local government, and it will be necessary to exceed rather than meet these expectations to

achieve channel shift to cheaper and/or more effective channels. To achieve this, the public sector must continue to raise its own standards of service across all the channels it uses and offers.

In order to meet the needs of customers Neath Port Talbot Council must provide services that are:

- Easily accessible
- Simple to use
- Streamlined
- Convenient
- Cost effective
- Robust
- Secure

It is also important to bear in mind the target audience's access to technology, the type and complexity of the contact, their personal preferences as well their skill sets when selecting channels

Rising internet use and customer expectations of accessing public services online present an ongoing opportunity for public service providers. Competent online services are easy and quick to use, available whenever customers need them and have a relatively low administrative burden. Managed well, online access to services is a very effective channel with considerable benefits for customers and taxpayers.

The public sector must however also meet the needs of people who do not (yet) have access to the Internet. 'Digital Inclusion' therefore is a core element of any government/public sector channel strategy. The Cabinet Office Digital Efficiency Report Research (6 November 2012) suggests that online transactions are 20 times cheaper than by phone, 30 times cheaper than by post and as much as 50 times cheaper than face to face. Digital forms a central part of the Welsh Government's plans to transform public services. The draft document entitled Digital First is about delivering public services that are

focussed on the needs of the citizen. It promotes the need for digital services that are so straightforward and convenient – at any time and on any device - that all those who can use them will choose to do so whilst those who can't are not excluded.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The need for insight

The process of developing and implementing a channel strategy needs to be guided by insight, and insight specifically relating to:

- The customer;
- The services an organisation is providing and each service area in question;
- The current delivery channels at the organisation's disposal as well as those that may be available to be/need to be used in future; and
- Other organisation-specific micro/macro factors that may have an impact on service provision and delivery including the value and waste in each system. For Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council these factors include systems thinking and budgetary constraints.

It is also important to understand the wider online services revolution, as expectations of online services are driven by customer experiences of using similar services of other organisations. Additionally, we need to understand the opportunities and challenges presented by access to superfast broadband across our local communities and the skills and confidence of local people to engage with a digital agenda.

Organisational challenge

In considering a channel strategy, there is often a considerable challenge and change to existing organisational structures. A channel strategy needs to become an integral part of the structure of the organisation and the way the objectives of the organisation are

realised. It cannot be super-imposed or retro-fitted onto existing practices and as such is likely to require or precipitate considerable organisational change.

We also need to recognise that people will use different channels not just for different types of interactions, but also to suit their own convenience. Particularly at local level, an integrated channel strategy is required that takes into account the varied ways in which local people may want to interact with the council.

The majority of our customers use the telephone to contact us (approximately 20,000 calls a month through the corporate contact centre alone) but only during the limited council office opening times (primarily 8.30 -5 Monday – Friday) so if we highlight opportunities to deliver services through more efficient alternative channels it should have a big impact for both the Council and its customers. That said we need to be aware of the customer journey through the entire system, no matter what channel is used.

Focus on the Customer

We are striving to be an organisation that focuses on customers with a strategy that delivers "what matters", makes savings and supports culture change within our organisation and across our communities. We recognise that the Council website is increasingly a first port of call for customers, making it important that the redesign of the website makes this the default option, making the service more effective for customers and improving efficiency as customers do not have to use other channels to get the service they are seeking. As we bring more services online we use our LEAN/systems thinking methodology to support and encourage the change in culture that is needed and to ensure we realise the full potential of delivering a greater range of services across digital channels.

Part 2 – Basic Principles & Scope

PURPOSE OF STRATEGY

To outline the broad principles for the ways in which **Neath Port Talbot Council** will deliver its services through a range of contact channels that provide better value for money, are more accessible and are designed with the needs of the citizen at their core.

SCOPE

1. This strategy document sets out the basic principles by which **Neath Port Talbot Council** will deliver its services to the public through the contact channels currently available.

   Contact channels in scope include:

   - Face to face
   - Email
   - Internet, including web and social media
   - Telephone including Intelligent Voice Recognition and automated switchboard response
   - Mobile technology including SMS text messaging, apps and mobile web)
   - Post

2. This document focuses on three key types of contacts between the authority and the citizen

   - **Transactions** (e.g. registering a death, reporting a problem or paying a bill)
   - **Interactions** (e.g. obtaining advice, public consultations, petitioning)
   - **Information Provision** (e.g. cycle maps, leaflets, web pages)

3. This strategy should be relevant to the nature of the services provided by the authority and ensure that its services are

provided through a range of contact channels appropriate to the citizens' individual needs and preferences in a non-discriminatory way.

CHANNELS HIERARCHY & DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The choice of contact channels available to the public is growing all of the time as new technologies are developed and released. For example in the last 5 years we have seen the emergence and growth of channels such as digital social media (for example: Facebook TM and Twitter TM, mobile internet and more recently mobile phone applications (apps)).

Without a channel strategy many organisations typically adopt one of two approaches to using these channels by either 1) launching all of their products and services on all new channels without much thought to the relevance and cost of doing so or 2) focusing on switching their customer contact to the cheapest channel (often assumed to be the internet) without much thought as to the relevance of this channel to their entire customer base.

There is however a generally accepted model for the effectiveness of the major channels of contact available today as shown below

CHANNEL EFFECTIVENESS

LESS COST

MORE REASSURANCE

NO CONTACT

WEB SELF SERVICE

AUTOMATED PHONE

PHONE

EMAIL/LETTER

FACE TO FACE
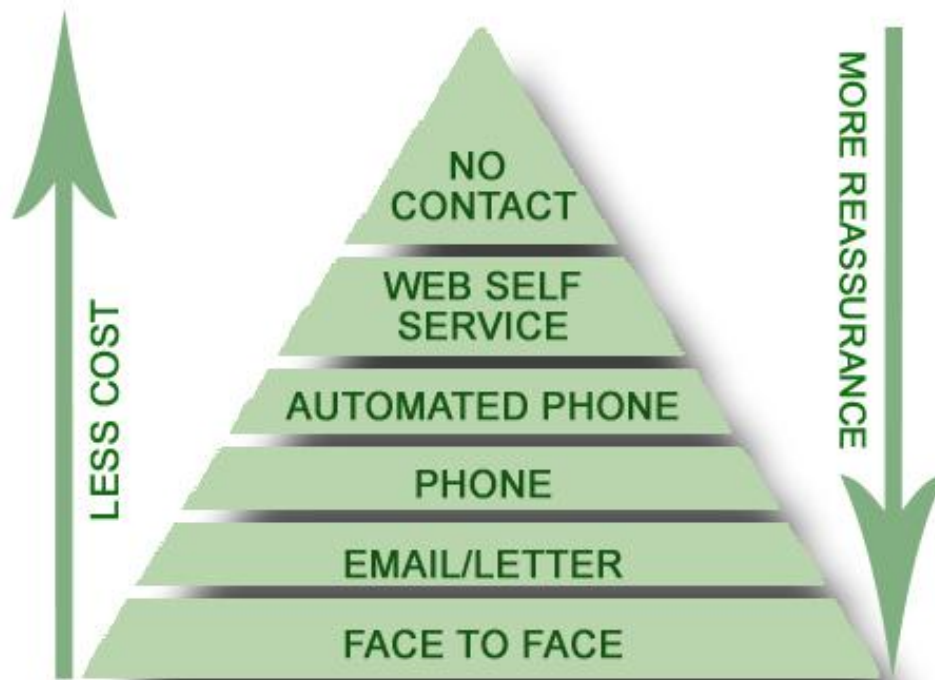
What this model shows is that as we move up the triangle the cost of delivery typically gets cheaper for the organisation. However for some types of contact a greater level of human contact is required, particularly for contacts that require some level of reassurance

For example:

Imagine you've received a letter asking you to pay a bill or the bailiffs will turn up at your house. You've just paid the bill and now want reassurance that your personal belongings are safe. You are unlikely to log on and have a look at the organisation's website's FAQ page for reassurance (even though this might be the most cost-effective solution for the organisation) but you may be more inclined to ring up the Contact Centre to request a letter confirming that matters are in hand. In this example, there may be a case for having online FAQs relating to debt recovery in terms of best practice, but there is probably little chance of shifting this individual contact online

It is therefore vital to fully understand each type of contact and the level of reassurance that the customer is likely to require before focusing the organisation's efforts on the design of any contact channel for that service.

But of course the conundrum doesn't end there. There may be little hope of shifting the channels that a certain group uses if that group simply doesn't access that channel. For example, internet penetration is currently very low amongst those not in work, the financially excluded, older people and people who do not read or speak English – all traditionally high users of Social Care services. Conversely, mobile telephone penetration is very high amongst teenagers, so SMS messaging might be a good channel to advise of last minute secondary school closures in bad weather. Customer insight goes a long way in the design of any channel strategy.

There are unfortunately even more factors to consider including "channel hopping", (an individual's propensity to use different channels for the same transaction depending on what is convenient to them at the time) and the public's increasing confidence in new channels that develops over years and sometimes months, creating a continually changing landscape.

The key factors to an effective channel strategy therefore would be

1. **Detail** - the deliberate design of the channel strategy for **each type of service**, bearing in mind the level of human interaction required and the needs of the targeted customer base;
2. **Fluidity** – the constant reviewing of the effectiveness of the channel strategy for each type of contact bearing in mind changing technologies, channel hopping and changing customer habits;

3. **Simplicity** – the optimum channels for the organisation should be the easiest to use for the customer to drive a shift in customer behaviour;

4. **Inclusion** – no group should be denied access to a service because of disability, language or cost of the access channel (e.g. mobile phone costs, broadband access). Options should be made available other than the organisation's preferred method of contact;

5. **Cost effectiveness** – particularly in the current economic climate, finding ways in which to deliver services effectively but at lower cost is increasingly important.

PROOF OF CONCEPT

Digital Channels

Demand data analysed by NPTCBC during specific bad weather events highlighted that over the last 2 years there has been a natural shift to online services e.g. school closures during snow. Previously there had been a reliance to ring the council switchboard to ascertain this information which often created queues and lost calls and at times not always helpful to the enquirer being restricted to the Council's opening and closing times. Now, messages about school closures when there are adverse weather conditions are accessed via social media, most particularly Facebook TM and Twitter TM, backed up by prominently displayed messages on the Council's main website and more traditional press releases.

In mid 2013, the Improving Customer Experience programme was established as part of the council's strategic 'Rising to the Challenge' transformation programme. The remit of the programme is to build upon LEAN/systems thinking programme of service reviews, extending the initial work to embrace digital innovation. Six transactional services have been redesigned as online services – increasing customer choice and reducing cost. Even with limited marketing, take up of the online service option has reached over 50% of all transactions for refuse, recycling and van permit transactions with pest control and bulk waste collections reaching 25% of all customer transactions.

Generally accepted SOCITM benchmark costs per customer interaction are:

- Face to Face £8.62
- Telephone   £2.83
- Web   £0.15

This early work has enabled the Council to test the robustness of the new technologies that underpin the development of digital channel

options and to demonstrate the benefits of increasing the range and take up of digital service delivery options.

Integrated Working

In response to the UK Government's Welfare Benefit Reform programme, the Local Service Board commissioned work to explore the support that might need to be in place to support benefit claimants from changes to processes that would require claims to be made on-line and for the frequency of payment of benefits to move from fortnightly to monthly.

Detailed mapping of services available in the Pontardawe area revealed significant support available to citizens in terms of benefits entitlement; money management; digital skills development and employment support. A pilot project, funded by the European Social Fund was initiated at the Council's One Stop Shop in Holly Street, Pontardawe. This brought all face to face services together under one roof. Citizens can now access wrap around support in one place and co-location of front line workers has removed duplication between agencies, whilst improving signposting between agencies and up-skilling front line workers. The project was formally evaluated and the concept will now be rolled out to other areas of the borough.

Part 3 – Neath Port Talbot Council's Channel Strategies

LOCAL CONTEXT

Neath Port Talbot Council comprises an area of 44,217 hectares, with a mix of urban and rural settlements. Urban areas include the towns of Neath, Port Talbot and Pontardawe, while inland, there are the Afan, Neath, Dulais, Upper Swansea and Amman Valley communities many of which have their origins in coal mining. With a population of 139,880 (2012) it has the 8th highest population density in Wales and is the eleventh largest council. The population of the County Borough is projected to increase by 8,900 (6.5%) by mid-2023 (the eleventh highest expected population growth).

Neath Port Talbot has much to be proud of, with many successful projects and initiatives delivering good outcomes but we are facing a number of challenges. Seventeen areas within Neath Port Talbot are within the top 10% of the most deprived communities in Wales with 4 Communities First Cluster areas. Demands on local public services are significant and rising.

We have a good track record of responding to the needs of our communities, with a mature approach to working in partnership with a wide range of people and organisations. For example, the Council is working closely with the University of Swansea to facilitate the development of a new university campus within the county borough boundaries; there is an extensive programme of housing development and community regeneration delivered through registered social landlord partners which is improving the quality of housing supply as well as offering a range of opportunities to improve the quality of life of tenants; local community and voluntary sector organisations have worked with the Council to take over the operation of many smaller community services, such as community centres and the maintenance of sports facilities; and close work with private sector investors in the area have realised significant community benefits for local people,

including work experience, apprenticeships and supply chain opportunities.

In terms of Digital Inclusion, The National Survey for Wales 2013/14 indicates that over 77% of local people use the internet for personal use. There is a growing use in internet useage in most age groups, but, there are still significant numbers of people aged over 65 who do not use the internet. There are a number of initiatives in place to support more people to access technology, however, there is scope to improve their effectiveness by establishing a clear framework that identifies need and targets resources to impact on need.

OVERARCHING CHANNEL STRATEGY

The Council's Corporate Improvement Plan 2015-2018 contains six improvement objectives. Objective six makes a commitment to:

"Improve customer/citizen access to services and functions provided by the Council, or on behalf of the Council, and to improve the efficiency of those services."

A focus of related improvement work is to increase the number of services available on-line and to improve the quality and efficiency of those services.

This Channel Strategy provides the framework within which the improvement work will be undertaken. The emphasis in this overarching strategy is to use the most appropriate channels to deliver services based on demand and customer choice, but, where appropriate the Council will seek to increase on-line transactions, interaction and information services and encourage take up of the on-line option. Using the strapline Digital by Choice we mean digital services that are so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use them will choose to do so whilst helping those who can't overcome any barriers that cause them to be digitally excluded.

- Neath Port Talbot Council will make access to its services available through appropriate and cost effective contact

channels designed with the needs and preferences of its individual customers and tax payers in mind.

- Neath Port Talbot Council will seek to encourage greater usage of the most effective contact methods by creating a series of well targeted channel shifts.

- Neath Port Talbot Council will not discriminate against any individual by limiting the choice of available contact methods.

OWNERSHIP OF NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL'S CHANNEL STRATEGY

Neath Port Talbot Council's Channel Strategy will be endorsed by the full Council. Its implementation will be the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services. The delivery of the strategy will involve all service areas to ensure that there is a consistency of service delivery standards across all of the contact channels and the associated services that the council offers.

REVIEW PERIOD OF NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL'S CHANNEL STRATEGY

Neath Port Talbot Council will carry out a full review of this Strategy in before the 31st March 2018. The focus of improvement work will however, be reviewed annually as part of the Corporate Improvement Plan cycle.

GOVERNANCE OF CONTACT CHANNELS AT NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL

Channel	Corporate Owner
Telephone/Contact Centre	Customer Services Manager
Website	PO Communications and Digital Services
Email – Generic	Head of ICT
Letters – Generic	Head of Legal Services
SMS	PO Communications and Digital Services
Face to Face	Customer Services Manager
New Media	PO Communications and Digital Services
Mobile Telephone	Head of ICT

Lead responsibility for cross cutting issues are allocated as follows

Cross Cutting Theme	Corporate Owner
Digital Inclusion	Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services
Equalities	PO Corporate Strategy
Avoidable Contact	PO Communications and Digital Services
Payments	Head of Financial Services

IT infrastructure	Head of ICT
Skills and training	Head of Human Resources/Corporate Training Manager
Marketing, communication and engagement	Corporate Communications Officer

THE AVOIDABLE CONTACT STRATEGY

> *We need to make sure that we get services right first time.*

Why should we minimise avoidable contact?

Local authorities are fundamental points of contact for the citizen when seeking access to public services. They provide key services for their local communities that greatly affect the quality of life for individual citizens and the overall community.

Local authorities and their customers have limited resources and therefore need to be as efficient as possible. By identifying customer contact that is 'avoidable', the local authority and its partners are better placed to redesign the way services and information are presented to customers and business processes arranged to provide an effective service response. Getting this right should mean that customers do not have to make unnecessary contacts, such as chasing delays in service, providing additional information etc, which are both frustrating for the customer and inefficient for the provider.

Case study:

Following the transfer of the housing function to NPT Homes, the Council's contact centre was still dealing with around 1,000 calls per month from housing tenants. The Council worked with NPT Homes to identify why tenants were still contacting the Council, rather than NPT Homes directly. Through joint work, calls were reduced from over 1,000 per month to under 300 per month. This change means that tenants are getting a better response to their needs as they are contacting the right people first time, whilst the cost to the Council of handling calls received in error have been reduced.

We will capture good quality management information to enable us to understand the demands placed on our services by customers. We will use the management information to identify services where there are high levels of avoidable contact and we will redesign services on a systematic basis to reduce that avoidable contact. We will work with our partners and internal departments to design processes that reduce

the need for customers to make contact with the public sector multiple times to complete one transaction. For example, notifying a change of address once, rather than contacting multiple sections. Re-designed systems will also be simpler for staff to use, reducing the opportunity for errors to be made.

The 3 Key Actions That We Will Take To Reduce Unnecessary Contact

1. We will build on our successful systems thinking programme to promote the importance of having clear insight across all council services about the volume and nature of demand on services and implement our data capture system in services where there are high volumes of customer contact to measure avoidable contact.

2. We will prioritise Customer Services, Council Tax, Community Care and Street Care services within our corporate improvement programme, redesigning services to reduce avoidable contact, whilst also seeking to increase the volume of services that can be offered on a self-service, digital basis.

3. We will build on the work we have completed at the Pontardawe "Hub" where we have co-located a range of agencies into our Holly Street premises to make it easier for citizens on low income to access benefits advice; money management services; employment support and digital skills training. Our ambition is to replicate this model across the county borough.

Performance Measures

- No of services measuring demand using recognised methodology
- Ratio of avoidable contact to value demands in each service prioritised within the programme
- Capacity released by redesigning services – cashable, non-cashable and cost avoidance

- % customers satisfied/very satisfied with service response provided first time
- % customers accessing self-service option
- % staff satisfaction with service processes

CHANNEL SHIFT STRATEGY

> *To increase the range of channels offered to customers via digital platforms for interactions, transactions and information services. To encourage and support greater use of self-service and digital channels whilst continuing to offer existing channels where this works best for the customer.*

What is Channel Shift?

Channel Shift is the process by which organisations seek to encourage customers to access or interact with services via channels that they would not normally choose.

Deliberate channel shift is the design and marketing of alternative channels because they are the most appropriate channels for the type of contact, customer or organisation in question. Channel shift forms one part of an overall channel strategy, and implemented well it can lower costs, build reputation, empower the citizen and improve the overall service proposition.

Shifting customers to particular channels involves behaviour change on the citizen's part, but once they are aware of the channels available, they will use the one that works best for them.

Case study:

In 2014/15 the Council made additional services available on-line and promoted the new channels to customers. By the end of March 2015, there was a good take up of the new on-line service option as follows:

- ➢ Refuse and recycling equipment requests – 53% of all transactions
- ➢ Bulky household waste collection requests – 24.5% of all transactions
- ➢ Pest control service requests – 26% of all transactions
- ➢ Obtaining a van permit for the civic amenity site – 58% of all transactions

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The 3 key actions that we will take to create Channel Shift

1. We will develop and implement a marketing strategy to bring about the behaviour change that is necessary for more people to choose self-service and on-line service options and train our front line staff and partners to promote the use of more effective and efficient channels, equipping customers with the skills and confidence to use on-line service options in greater numbers.

2. We will identify which transactional services delivered by our Customer Services, Streetcare, Council Tax, Community Care and Payments departments can be offered on a self-service/on-line basis and we will implement the system changes necessary to achieve this.

3. We will create a public information catalogue and move to a Digital by Default policy for all public information, ensuring the catalogue is available in formats suitable for downloading to a range of digital devices, whilst only printing hard copy versions where it is necessary to do so.

Performance Measures

- The number of new services available on-line during each financial year.
- The % of total customer transactions where there is an on-line service option where customers have opted for the on-line option
- % customers satisfied/very satisfied with their initial service response.
- % Customer Services staff trained to support customers move to digital options
- % public information leaflets and plans available in downloadable formats
- No. of "hits" to the public information catalogue
- Capacity release – cashable, non-cashable and cost avoidance

DIGITAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

> *To ensure that citizens who do not have access to digital channels at home or work are helped to overcome those barriers.*

What is a Digital Inclusion Strategy?

Not being able access digital channels matters as those most affected are likely to have the greatest need for public services. Being able to access services through digital channels can reduce the price people pay for services as traditional services can attract higher charges than on-line options; can open up opportunities to receive services in a different way, for example on-line services often have a home delivery option; or to have opportunities to access new service opportunities, for example using technology to communicate with people remotely, using Skype TM, Facetime TM or other such on-line media.

Addressing digital inclusion also matters for the delivery of efficient public services, because when people cannot access services online they invariably access them via alternative means which are generally more expensive. The Welsh Government has launched "Digital First (Wales)"…" it is about delivering public services that are focused on the needs of the citizen. We want to make it much easier for people to find and use public services - at any time and on any device. This will remove barriers, create choice and make life simpler for people…"

The Welsh Government National Internet Survey for Wales shows a growing increase in internet usage across most age groups, but there are some groups where internet usage is considerably lower than most:

> ➢ 97% of people aged between 18-24 use the internet;
> ➢ 95% of people aged between 25-44 use the internet;

➢ 83% of people aged between 45-64 use the internet;
➢ 60% of people aged between 65-74 use the internet; and
➢ 25% of people aged between 75 and over use the internet.

The Welsh Government has made funding available to reduce the number of people digitally included and over the lifetime of this Strategy, the Council will work in partnership with other agencies to increase the number of people across communities confident to use the internet.

Case study:

As part of work to mitigate the impact of Welfare Benefit changes on local people, the Council, with partners, has accessed digital inclusion support from the Welsh Government's Communities 2.0 Programme. Training for Communities First front line staff has been accessed to enable those staff to assist people to acquire basic internet usage skills. Through the programme, it has also been possible to train volunteers to assist in increasing the number of people confident to access on-line services.

The 3 key actions that we will take to reduce Digital Exclusion

1. Identify and continue to promote public internet access at key locations including Civic Centres and Libraries, including mediated access.

2. Identify and where possible increase the support available to help people access on-line services confidently.

3. Develop a Digital Inclusion Strategy to complement this Channel Strategy

Performance Measures

- The number of public access internet points across the borough.
- The number of public access internet points where there is support available to those who need help to access the internet
- The number of agencies offering digital inclusion training
- The % of people accessing digital inclusion training across the borough

- Measures of broadband access/take up or i-procurement take up (to be further developed)
- The Local Service Board and Council endorses a Digital Inclusion Strategy by no later than 31st March 2016

EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO CHANNELS

To ensure service options are accessible to all, especially those people who have protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

What is Equality of Access?

In the context of this document, equality of access relates to the ease or difficulty that a citizen may experience when trying to access services from the Council. For example, someone with hearing difficulties may find the telephone unusable and may prefer to communicate through email. Equally, a customer whose first language is Welsh may wish to access any contact channel through the medium of Welsh.

The Equality Act 2010 places a number of statutory duties on all councils. The Welsh Language Act 1993 and subsequent legislation and guidance also places a number of statutory duties on all councils and these will increase over time as new Welsh Language Standards are applied across public services.

Case study:

Members of the Disabled Network Action Group worked with the Streetcare Division to ensure that calendars distributed to Neath Port Talbot householders, which contains important information as to when different types of waste should be presented for collection could be accessed by people with visual impairments.

The 3 Key Actions that we will take to enable equality of access

1. Involve end users of service, particularly those who have protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 in service redesign, especially end user testing of services before redesigned services are made generally available.

2. Ensure there is a Welsh language option for all channels, prioritising the development of the Welsh content of the corporate website.

3. Promote the availability of Language Line to those whose first language is not Welsh or English and the availability of alternative format information for people who may have a disability.

Performance Measures

- Equality impact assessments of redesigned services
- % corporate website pages available in both Welsh and English
- No of people accessing Language Line
- No of people requesting alternative format information.
- No of complaints and compliments received in relation to equality of access to services and the resolution of any complaints received

Part 4 – Strategies for Specific Channels

TELEPHONE STRATEGY

> **Improve customer response times at the Corporate Contact Centre whilst simultaneously encouraging a greater take up of on-line services and reducing avoidable contact.**

The Corporate Contact Centre handles over 220,000 calls each year from members of the public and is the Council's out-of-hours contact point. Calls range from the straightforward, e.g. "can you please put me through to…" to more complex transactions e.g. "I want to complain about…"

During 2014/15 the Corporate Contact Centre experienced considerable change to its operations. On the one hand good progress was made in migrating volumes of calls to new on-line service options, such as bulky waste bookings; refuse and recycling equipment bookings; and reducing avoidable contacts from NPT Homes' tenants. In total the focus on reducing avoidable contact and moving customers to on-line services accounted a reduction of 51% in telephone demand related to the new on-line services being dealt with by the Contact Centre. On the other hand, the scale of changes introduced across the Council and occasionally changes made by other agencies (such as the temporary closure of Junction 41 by Welsh Government) created new and significant demands which at times outstripped available staff capacity. The Contact Centre also continued to be affected by the promotion of incorrect contact details with the main number 686868 sometimes used incorrectly, rather than the correct service number. As a consequence, performance at the Corporate Contact Centre was mixed at times.

Looking to the future, whilst an efficient and effective corporate contact centre will continue to play a key role in providing access to services for citizens, more needs to be done to ensure that the main contact number is used appropriately; that more customers are

encouraged to use on-line service options; that greater use is made of available technology to drive up response times to telephone calls; and that there is a greater degree of agility in the Contact's Centre's response to unexpected peaks and troughs in demand. Taken together, these measures will drive down avoidable contact, drive up customer response times and improve service efficiency.

Case study:

In depth analysis of calls into the Corporate Contact Centre showed a higher than usual volume of calls from customers about changes to refuse and recycling collection arrangements. In addition to receiving significantly more calls, calls were taking on average longer to deal with due to the complexity of the enquiry. The combination of higher call volumes and increased call durations led to an increase in the % of calls abandoned by the caller prior to response and a reduction in the % calls answered within 15 seconds.

Communication between the Contact Centre and Team Supervisors in the Streetcare Section enabled the refuse and recycling service to address the causes of the issues reported by customers and the Contact Centre was able to organise technology and staffing resources to respond more effectively to the temporary increase in demand. The outcome of this joint approach was an immediate reduction in customer enquiries due to improved service response, together with an immediate improvement in Contact Centre performance.

The 3 Key Actions to Provide Easy Telephone Access

1. Introduce greater use of Interactive Voice Recognition technologies to deal with a higher volume of calls without the need for a customer services officer acting as intermediary.

2. Act on the telephone call data to increase the range of services available on-line and migrate more customers from telephone contact to digital service options. Priority areas to initially include Streetcare, Council Tax, Customer Services, Payments and Community Care services.

3.

4. Refresh the Council's call handling policy to ensure the right service numbers are published to ensure customers are accessing the right contact number first time and enabling avoidable contacts to be reduced.

Performance Measures

- Volume of calls received at the Corporate Contact Centre
- % of calls received at the Corporate Contact Centre abandoned
- % of calls received at the Corporate Contact Centre answered within 15 minutes
- Volume of calls migrated to on-line services following service redesign
- Volume of avoidable contact reduced following service redesign
- % customers satisfied or very satisfied with initial service response
- Capacity release at the Corporate Contact Centre – cashable, non-cashable and cost avoidance.
- Revised call handling policy in place

WEB STRATEGY

> ***To develop the corporate website as the main access point for transactions, interactions and information services.***

The corporate website experiences over 200,000 hits per month. Around 70% of visits to the website are to find information about council services but we are also growing the number of transactional services, such as booking and paying for a bulky waste collection on-line.

There is a sustained trend too for people to access on-line services on mobile devices such as smart phones, tablets and notebooks, rather than the personal computer. The development of on-line services that are suitable for mobile devices must therefore be at the forefront of system redesign.

The redevelopment of the corporate website sits at the heart of this Channel Shift Strategy. We want the corporate website to be the first point of contact for transactions, interactions and information services. We want customers visiting the website to find it easy to access the services they need with the minimum amount of effort. We also want the website to increasingly become the main access channel for the workforce, enabling all staff whether office or community based to have equal access to information and support services.

Case study:

For citizens of NPT to use the Civic Amenity Site a Van Permit must be obtained from the Council to prove that they are not traders, disposing of commercial waste. The process used to only be possible during normal working hours with access through the Corporate Contact Centre or at one of our One Stop Shops. This meant that if a resident with a van wanted access to the CA site during the weekend or evening, they would have to plan in advance and telephone the council.

The service was redesigned in 2014 to allow residents to apply for a day permit to visit the CA Site online. This new online service means that resident have access to a permit 24/7 – far more convenient to customers. This new service not only means a better, more accessible service for residents but also a reduction in contacts into the Contact centre.

The 5 Key Actions to develop the corporate website

1. Complete the review of website content, ensuring it is accessible, up to date, fully bilingual and optimised for mobile devices.

2. Increase the number of transactional services available on line, prioritising services in Community Care, Streetcare, Council Tax, Payments and Customer Services.

3. Develop a secure "my account" service for citizens so that website access can be personalised to the needs of individual customers who need to make repeated visits to the Council's on-line services or who want to track the progress of their service requests.

4. Introduce a digital by default policy for public information, including the development of an on-line catalogue of public information leaflets.

5. Establish the business case for moving to a single site that services external customers and staff. Establish a more robust basis for developing and managing micro sites.

Performance Measures

- Number of website hits
- Number of new transactional services delivered on line in each financial year
- % of transactional services available on line where the customer has selected the online service option
- % website pages reviewed in last 12 months and confirmed as up to date
- % website pages fully bilingual and compliant with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme

- % customers satisfied or very satisfied with the experience of using the on-line services
- Number of citizens who have registered for "my account"
- Digital by default policy approved and implemented
- Strategy for intranet and micro sites agreed.

FACE TO FACE STRATEGY

> *Reduce the number of transactions, interactions and information services delivered face to face by the One Stop Shops overall, but increase the % of services delivered on one visit by those customers who need to access services face to face.*

The original Access to Services Strategy approved by the Council introduced three One Stop Shops, based at Neath Civic Centre, Port Talbot Civic Centre and Pontardawe. The aim of the One Stop Shops was to enable customers to have all of their transactions dealt with in a single, face to face visit, rather than having to navigate services from individual departments of the Council.

In the first instance, the range of services provided by the One Stop Shops was limited to a small number of high volume services, such as Council Tax enquiries, Housing Benefits, Housing Management. Over time, the range of services delivered by the three One Stop Shops has extended to include many other services, such as applications for a Blue Badge and Bus Passes.

As customers opt in increasing numbers to access self-service options, the role of the One Stop Shops will change. It is expected that the service will see an overall reduction in the number of people accessing simple transactions, however, where applicants need to be seen in person because of service or legal requirements; need to produce original documentation for inspection; or be unable or not wish to access online or telephone channels, then the One Stop Shops will continue to play an important role in the overall Channel Strategy.

One of the more recent developments has been the co-location of other agencies in the Council's building at Pontardawe to enable "wrap around" services to be provided to people on low incomes. Customers accessing the services at Pontardawe are able to access benefits advice; money management advice; employment support and

digital skills support all in one visit. Evaluation of this new service has been positive and it is planned to extend this model to other parts of the county borough.

Case study:

The Council, together with its Local Service Board partners formed a group to examine the impact of welfare benefit changes on local people. The loss of benefit income per adult of working age in Neath Port Talbot is ranked amongst the top ten areas in the UK.

Partners quickly identified that many people affected by these changes would need access to: discretionary housing benefit payments; help to draw down all of the benefits that they were entitled to; help in managing family budgets; help to carry our their claims on-line as the Department for Work and Pension expect most claims and evidence of job seeking to be done on-line.

The Holly Street Offices at Pontardawe provided an excellent opportunity to trial the bringing together of local agencies who deliver the support identified above under one roof. Supported by European Social Funding, the Council's Housing Benefits and Coucil Tax Service; NPT Credit Union; NPT Homes; Citizens Advice Bureau and Welfare Rights, together with support from library staff who can provide support in accessing online services are providing one-stop services for people on low incomes from the area.

The new service has increased knowledge amongst agencies of wider services on offer and reduced duplication. Customers using the service give it a high rating too. Where specialist support is needed, the partners have worked together to ensure referrals can be made to the relevant agency, or an appointment to see the person at Holly Street can also be arranged.

The 3 Key Actions to Develop our Face to Face Provisions

- Use the management information collected on demand to identify avoidable contact and any services that are not being delivered "one stop". Redesign services to achieve optimum channel efficiency. Ensure all end to end services, where possible, also have an on-line/self-service option.

- Ensure all customer services staff are able to support customers to use self-service/on-line options as default.

- Extend the model of integrated service achieved at Pontardawe to other areas of the county borough, working with relevant agencies to achieve co-location where this best meets the needs of customers.

Performance Measures

- Volume of callers to the One Stop Shops
- % callers walking off before seen
- Average wait times at front desk
- % face to face transactions at One Stop Shops dealt within in "one stop"
- % Customers satisfied or very satisfied with One Stop Shop experience
- Complaint and compliments received and resolution of complaints

POST/PAPER COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

To minimise the amount of post and paper communication and ensure its effective and efficient management

Whilst electronic methods of communication have been gradually replacing traditional mail, the Council still receives and sends a considerable amount of information on paper and through the traditional mail service.

For example, the Elections Service must make provision for over 23,000 voters who have elected to cast a postal vote. This is a considerable exercise which must be carried out diligently and to high cost and quality standards.

If paper communication is the most appropriate channel to communicate through then it is important to ensure the most economical means of reproducing the paper documentation is selected. The Council decided as part of its wider budget considerations in 2014/15 to close its own Print and Graphics Unit. The Council now relies on external purchasing of print and design materials, or prints required documentation through local print devices. To ensure best value for money a Print Commissioning Manager has been established within the Communications and Digital Services Division.

Therefore, whilst the amount of paper communication circulated through traditional mail methods may be reducing over time, post/paper communication remains an important channel for the Council which needs to be managed efficiently and effectively.

Case study:

The Corporate Mailroom Supervisor has developed a clear framework for officers of the Council to aid those needing to use post/paper communication in selecting the most effective and economic methods.

The framework has been promoted in various communications to staff and placed on the staff intranet as a "how to" guide,

The 3 Key Actions to develop our paper based provisions

1. Periodically audit incoming and outgoing mail to ensure the most economical methods are being used.

2. Gather data on the type and volume of paper demand incoming and outgoing to identify the potential for channel shift.

3. Analyse the volume, type and cost of print and design materials purchased and ensure clear guidance is in place to support decisions to print through local print devices.

Performance Measures

- Expenditure on externally posted mail, including costs of courier services
- % outgoing or incoming mail identified as suitable for channel shift
- % traditional mail responded to within 10 working days
- % printed materials identified as suitable for channel shift

EMAIL STRATEGY

Reduce the volume of e mails received from customers in respect of transactions, interactions and information services.

Establish ground rules for internal and business-to-business use of incoming and outgoing e mails to improve business efficiency and effectiveness.

E mail has become of the main means of communication within and between the Council, its partners and wider community. Used in the right way, e mail communication can be reliable, efficient and effective. However, there is growing concern that some e mail practices, including the increasing use being made by commercial organisations of mailing lists to market goods and services directly to individual officers, can reduce efficiency and effectiveness by bombarding in-boxes with irrelevant/unwanted communication, resulting in wasted hours sifting through significant volumes of information. There is also some evidence that e mails are used in place of more appropriate channels, such as telephone or face to face communications with the result that communication is impaired.

E mail costs a great deal of money. Both in terms of the time spent composing, reading and responding to communication but also in terms of storing and retrieving the data. The scope to reduce unnecessary expenditure and to improve effectiveness needs to be explored as part of this Channel Strategy.

Case study:

An analysis of the Council's website identified a number of "contact us" e mail accounts that had been set up to enable customers to notify the Council of comments, suggestions about service delivery or in some cases to receive service requests.

On closer examination it was found that most of the "contact us" mail boxes were not connected to any business process and were often not monitored by anyone in particular. Generic "contact us" e mail boxes have now been removed and replaced by more appropriate mechanisms that enable customer data to be captured and automatically processed so that enquiries receive an efficient and appropriate service response.

The 3 Key Actions to develop our email provision

1. Identify the main causes of inefficiency in e mail usage and draw up policy guidance to encourage a shift away from poor e mail practice.

2. Establish good e mail recording keeping practice to minimise storage and retrieval costs

3. Research the options and business case for developing and alternative to e mail to internal communications

Performance Measures

- *Number of e mail demands identified as being suitable for channel shift*
- *Volume of e mail transactions shifted to alternative channels*
- *Volume of e mails stored by the Council*
- Option appraisal and business case on alternatives to e mail completed

NEW MEDIA STRATEGY (INCLUDING EMERGING SOCIAL MEDIA)

> ***Establish a clear purpose for the use of new social media to improve better access to information to improve the communication, reduce costs and widen access to services***

The growth in use of technology and the pace at which technology is adapting is well documented. For many, there has been a significant shift from traditional ways of communicating and accessing services including: mail to e-mail; newspapers to blogs; phonecalls to instant messaging; to name but a few.

If the Council is to connect effectively with its communities then we must embrace these innovations and make clear and wise choices as to where they feature within our service delivery arrangements.

Social media provides an excellent means of gaining insight into the way some people perceive the Council. It also provides a highly effective method of getting key information across to large groups of people very quickly – for example: school closures; road closures etc. Social media provides for a highly personalised response to customers due to the two-way flow of information. Although councils needs to be prepared for views that may not always be positive, used in the right way, social media can create stronger links with citizens, enhance the council's reputation and reduce service costs.

Case study:

The Corporate Communications Team were early adopters of social media, using Twitter ™, Yammer ™ and Facebook ™ to support the Council's service response on occasions where there is severe weather. Yammer enabled the on-call team to communicate effective from home without making the hazardous trip to the office, ensuring that an early and responsive service was available throughout the day. Use of the corporate Facebook and Twitter accounts enabled clear messages to be sent to parents, pupils, businesses and the general public and to update the status of information throughout the day.

The 3 Key Actions to develop social media use

1. Evaluate the current use made of social media to identify who is currently using the channels and the effectiveness of current use.

2. Ensure that social media channels are integrated with other channels, ensuring an integrated, multi-channel approach to public information

3. Benchmark current practice against industry best practice to inform further development of the Council's social media activities

Performance Measures

- The number of corporate social media accounts
- The number of other service-based social media accounts
- The number of followers etc of corporate accounts
- The overall tone of social media conversations
- % of public information broadcasts by the Council that make use of social media channels
- % social media followers engaging with the Council

PAYMENT CHANNELS STRATEGY

Maximise the number of customers paying for council services via electronic channels

Collecting income due to the Council efficiently and effectively is a key activity. The total income raised and the cost of collecting and administering the payments is a significant activity for us.

There are many different ways in which fees and charges are administered and there are multiple ways in which people can pay over the sums owed to the Council. Current methods include: cash, telephone payment, on-line payment, cheques, debit cards, credit cards, direct debits and standing orders, to name but a few.

Setting appropriate, fair and reasonable fees for services is even more crucial at a time of continuing austerity. Similarly, maximising the collection of income owed whilst minimising the cost of income collection is of growing importance. Examining our current practices is a priority action within this Channel Strategy.

The 3 Key Actions to develop our Payment Channels Provisions

- Draw up a policy that ensures equitable, reasonable and economic fees and charges across the Council

- Use data on existing transactions to identify those transactions where there is greatest opportunity and impact in shifting customers to different payment channels

- Draw up a corporate policy to ensure there is a legal, proportionate and consistent approach to debt recovery across the council.

Performance Measures

- % income owed collected
- % payment transactions undertaken via digital channels
- % value of payments undertaken via digital channels
- Cost of income collected/transaction
- Ratio of cost of income collection processes to value of income collected
- % customers satisfied/very satisfied with payment arrangements

Part 4 – Glossary of Terms

Customer

A person using a public service.
The person could be using the service for personal reasons (e.g. to register the birth of a child), for business reasons (e.g. filing company information) either for themselves or on behalf of someone else.

Service

A service is a provision of information or a transaction that an organisation delivers to its customer.
Examples of public sector transactional services are the state pension and vehicle registration.

Service delivery

The processes by which a customer receives or accesses a service. Service delivery often involves multiple stages, for example a public sector service delivery process may involve:

- Enquiries and requests for information (e.g. "What benefits am I entitled to?")
- Service fulfilment (e.g. registering for benefits and payment of benefits to customer)
- Follow-up and after care (e.g. reviewing a benefit entitlement after a change)

Public sector service delivery can involve a complex chain of actions across multiple organisations.

Channel

A means of communication by which a service is delivered or accessed. Examples of direct channels used by the public sector

include post, telephone, mobile telephone, web, and face-to-face (services delivered in physical locations, such as Civic Centres).

Channel strategy

An organisation's plan for the channels it will use to deliver services to its customers. A channel strategy explains how an organisation will meet the demands of its customers using the resources available.

Efficient

Channels that are efficient deliver services without wasting time, money or effort for either the customer or service provider.

Effective

Channels that are effective deliver services which meet the desired outcome, with minimal difficulty for the customer or service provider.

Insight

An insight into a customer is a deep truth based on an understanding of customer behaviour, experiences and attitudes, and their needs from a service. Organisations with insight into their customers can deliver the services their customers need, through the right channels.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REPORT FORM

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Report Form

This form should be completed for each Equality Impact Assessment on a new or existing function, a reduction or closure of service, any policy, procedure, strategy, plan or project which has been screened and found relevant to Equality and Diversity.

Please refer to the 'Equality Impact Assessment Guidance' while completing this form. If you would like further guidance please contact the Corporate Strategy Team or your directorate Heads of Service Equality Champion.

Where do you work?
Service Area: Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services
Directorate: Chief Executive's Office

(a)   This EIA is being completed for a…

Service/ Function	Policy/ Procedure		Project	
Strategy	Plan	Proposal		
☐	☐	☐	√☐	☐
√☐				

(b)   Please name and describe below…

Draft Digital by Choice Channel Shift Strategy

(c)   It was initially screened for relevance to Equality and Diversity on …

12th June 2015

(d) It was found to be relevant to…

Age .... √☐   Race .... √☐

Disability .... √   ☐ ....Religio

Gender reassignment .... √☐   Sex .... √☐

Marriage & civil partnership   √☐ ....Sexual

Pregnancy and maternity ..... √☐   Welsh language .... √☐

(e) Lead Officer

(f) Approved by Head of Service

Name: Mrs Karen Jones   **Name**: as lead officer

Job title: Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services

Date: 12th June 2015

Section 1 – Aims (See guidance):

Briefly describe the aims of the function, service, policy, procedure, strategy, plan, proposal or project:

What are the aims?
The draft Digital by Choice Strategy has been developed to update the Council's Access to Services Strategy
It aims to establish a corporate approach to the way in which the Council will design access to services through a range of different channels, with an overall aim of increasing the number of services available on-line and encouraging a significant take up of the on-line service options, with a corresponding reduction in other, more expensive channels**.**

Who has responsibility?
The Strategy will need to be approved by the full Council as it is listed in the Council's policy and budget framework.
The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services is the Lead Member and the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services is the Lead Officer.

Who are the stakeholders?
There are many different stakeholders – the principal stakeholders are the staff affected by the service changes that will flow from the Strategy and the members of the public who access council transactional and information services.

Section 2   - Information about Service Users (See guidance):

Please tick what information you know about your service users and provide details / evidence of how this information is collected.

Age..	√	Race...	√	
Disability.............................	√	Religion or belief	√	
Gender reassignment	☐	Sex..	√	
Marriage & civil partnership	√	☐..Sexual		
Pregnancy and maternity	√	Welsh language......................	√	

What information do you know about your service users and how is this information collected?

The draft strategy is a corporate strategy and will therefore bring a range of services within its scope. The level of detail available about service users will vary from service to service but it believed to include the level of detail shown above. Gaining the best customer insight is an integral feature of the approach that will be taken to service redesign – the method adopted will seek to establish who is currently using the service and to involve representative service user grouping in the design and implementation of each change. By taking this approach we hope to identify groups with protected characteristics and to take into account any specific needs throughout the service redesign lifecycle.

We also recognise that as far as on-line services are concerned, there are significant numbers of people who are digitally excluded and that older people are more likely to be digitally excluded compared with other groups. We have used Welsh Government survey data to establish this. We intend to develop a digital inclusion strategy to complement this Channel Shift Strategy so that those currently excluded are helped to overcome any barriers. It is planned that the draft digital inclusion strategy will be ready for public consultation in early autumn 2015.

Any Actions Required?

Ensure the methodology develops the customer insight for each service area to ensure that service redesign meets the needs of those who would wish to access

that channel.

Bring forward a draft digital inclusion strategy for consideration in early autumn to help remove barriers to using on-line service options for those who are currently digitally excluded.

Section 3 - Impact on Protected Characteristics (See guidance):
Please consider the possible impact on the different protected characteristics. This could be based on service user information, data, consultation and research or professional experience (e.g. comments and complaints).

	Positive		**Negative**	
Neutral	**Needs further**			
investigation				
Age	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Disability	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Gender reassignment	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Marriage & civil partnership	√☐	☐	☐	☐
Pregnancy and maternity	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Race	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Religion or belief	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Sex	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Sexual orientation	→√☐	☐	☐	☐
Welsh language	→√☐	☐	☐	☐

Thinking about your answers above, please explain in detail why this is the case? including details of any consultation (and/or other information), which has been undertaken to support your view?

It is believed the impact will be overall positive for each group with protected characteristic as the aim of the strategy is to increase customer choice by offering services across a wider range of channels. By including service users in the design and testing of new service options, it will should be possible to identify any potential barriers to access that groups with protected might experience and to specifically cater for those.

In terms of the Welsh Language, the service redesign will specifically seek to ensure there is equality with English language options and to address some of the non-compliance areas identified, for example, with the Council's website resources.

What consultation and engagement has been undertaken (e.g. with the public and/or members of protected groups) to support your view?

We have held workshops in drawing up our Strategic Equality Plan where there is some overlap between actions in this draft Strategy and that Plan which involved members of the older persons' forum, youth council, BME forum, lesbian gay and transgender forum, disability network and wider equality organisations.

We adopted user testing for the redevelopment of our website and on-line service developments several years ago and have used the learning from those arrangements to inform this proposal.

Any actions required (to mitigate adverse impact or to address identified gaps in knowledge)

We will consult on this draft equality impact assessment as part of the public consultation specifically with groups who have protected characteristics to check the accuracy of this impact assessment.

Section 4 - Other Impacts:
Please consider how the initiative might address the following issues. You could base this on service user information, data, consultation and research or professional experience (e.g. comments and complaints).

Foster good relations between Different groups	Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
Elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Reduction of social exclusion and poverty

(Please see guidance for definitions)

Please explain any possible impact on each of the above.

This draft strategy aims in the main to reduce social exclusion and poverty as on-line service options increase choice, life opportunities and can reduce cost. The development of a digital inclusion strategy to complement this Channel Shift Strategy is key to securing this objective.

In terms of advancing equality of opportunity between different groups, widening choice of channel should mean that we are better able to cater for the needs of different groups for whom face to face and telephone contact may present barriers.

What work have you already done to improve any of the above?

We have tested the concept of increasing our on-line presence and seen a significant take up of the new service options by the local population. This ranges from 25%-to just over 50% of total transactions

We have been user-testing our web developments over a number of years and have been able to make adjustments to our approach in light of feedback received.

Is the initiative likely to impact on Community Cohesion?

It is likely that there will be no discernable impact on community cohesion

How will the initiative treat the Welsh language in the same way as the English language?

The approach embraces the Council's existing Welsh Language Scheme and anticipates some of the new requirements that will flow from the Welsh Language Standards.

Actions (to mitigate adverse impact or to address identified gaps in knowledge).
-
- No additional actions to those identified early in this impact assessment

Section 5 - Monitoring arrangements:

Please explain the arrangements in place (or those which will be put in place) to monitor this function, service, policy, procedure, strategy, plan or project:

Monitoring arrangements:

The outcome of public consultation will be reported to Members with the final draft strategy early autumn.

Performance indicators are included in the draft strategy and will form the basis of monitoring

Actions:

Ensure performance data is captured to enable progress against the strategy to be secured

Section 6 – Outcomes:

Having completed sections 1-5, please indicate which of the outcomes listed below applies to your initiative (refer to guidance for further information on this section).

Outcome 1: Continue the initiative… √☐
Outcome 2: Adjust the initiative… ☐
Outcome 3:Justify the initiative… ☐
Outcome 4: Stop and remove the ☐
initiative…
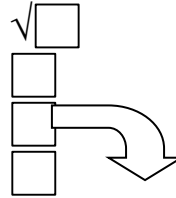
For outcome 3, detail the justification for proceeding here

Section 7 - Publication arrangements:

On completion, please contact the Corporate Strategy Team for advice on the legal requirement to publish the findings of EIAs.

Action Plan:

Objective - What are we going to do and why?	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	Outcome - How will we know we have achieved our objective?	Progress
Conduct a public consultation exercise on the draft strategy to establish the level of support for the direction of travel and associated priority work areas	Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services	End August	A report detailing the results of the consultation exercise will be produced and this will accompany final proposals that will be submitted to Members in September 2015	
A digital inclusion strategy will be developed to complement this strategy	Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services	September 2015	A draft strategy will be submitted to Members in September with a view to seeking authority to consult on its content	Discussions with LSB partners have already commenced to ensure there is a partnership input to the development of the strategy

Establish data Systems to enable Members to gauge the progress made in implementing the Digital by Choice Strategy	Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services	September 2015	Statistical data is available to Members as part of the monitoring arrangements put in place to gauge the progress and impact of the strategy	Some data has already been developed to support the early work of the programme. This will now be expanded to enable progress across the entire scope of the strategy to be measured and reported upon.l

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

(a) Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for implementation following the three day call in period

(b) Sustainability Appraisal

Economic Prosperity   -   Neutral
Education & Lifelong Learning   -   Neutral
Better Health & Wellbeing   -   Neutral
Environment & Transport   -   Neutral
Crime & Disorder   -   Neutral

Other Impacts
Welsh Language   -   Positive
Sustainable Development   -   Positive
Equalities   -   Positive
Social Inclusion   -   Positive

(c) Consultation

Informed consultation has been undertaken with representatives of interested groups from the outset of the review and there will now follow a period of formal public consultation.

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES –
MRS. KAREN JONES

9TH JULY 2015

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

RESETTLEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN PEOPLE SCHEME

Purpose of Report:

To seek Member approval for the Council to participate in the Afghan Locally Engaged Staff Ex-Gratia Scheme.

Background:

On 4 June 2013, the Secretary of State for Defence announced the National Security Council's agreed scheme to relocate to the UK, interpreters or equivalent grades in front line roles and their immediate family from Afghanistan during 2014 and 2015.

By participating in the Scheme, the Council will receive funds to resettle Afghan households within the County Borough. At this stage there is no indication as to how many households will require relocation. The Council will be advised of the numbers and timings of those arriving under this Scheme at a minimum of four weeks in advance of their arrival. Under the Scheme, the Council will provide newly arrived clients with help to adjust to life in the UK including providing them and their immediate family members with:

- Accommodation for four months;

- Financial assistance pending access to welfare benefits or the new arrival securing employment (whichever occurs first, but limited to 4 months); and

- Integration support, including but not limited to providing employment advice and assistance accessing services and benefits

(Officers will closely monitor any additional demands any resettlements may bring on other Council services e.g. housing, social services, education).

The precise amounts of funding will be dependent on the particular circumstances of the new arrival, for example the size and make-up of the accompanying immediate family, how long accommodation / cash support is provided for.

An example is shown below of the total funding available for a family of six individuals comprising two adult parents, two school aged children, one toddler and one baby.

Accommodation	
Set up and void costs	£7,500
4 months rent @£15 per person per day	£10,800
Hotel	£300
Baby pack	£225
Integration	
@£4,500 per person	£27,000
Cash Support	
For four months	£5,190.24
Transport	
@ £40 per person	£240
Total	**£51,255.24**

Recommended:

That the Cabinet Board approves and supports the Council signing up to the Afghan Locally Engaged Staff Ex-Gratia Scheme.

Reason for Proposed Decision:

To support the relocation and integration activity for Afghan Households entering the UK as part of the Afghan Locally Engaged Staff Ex Gratia Scheme.

List of Background Papers:
Home Office Grant Agreement for the Afghan Locally Engaged Staff Ex-Gratia Scheme.

Officer Contact:
Mrs Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services, Tel: 01639763284 or e mail k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3-day call-in period

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts

Economic Prosperity	-	Neutral
Education & Lifelong Learning	-	Positive
Better Health & Wellbeing	-	Positive
Environment & Transport	-	Neutral
Crime & Disorder	-	Neutral

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	-	Neutral
Sustainable Development	-	Neutral
Equalities	-	Positive
Social Inclusion	-	Positive

(c) **Consultation**

This item is not subject to external consultation

SECTION C – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DATA 2014-2015 – QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE (1ST APRIL 2014– 31ST MARCH 2015)

Purpose of Report:

To report quarter 4 performance management data for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 for Chief Executive's and Finance & Corporate Services Directorates and, the performance management data for the same period for services that are within the remit of the other four main Scrutiny Committees (CYPE, SCHH, E&H and ECR). This will enable the Policy & Resources Cabinet Board and Scrutiny Members to discharge their functions in relation to performance management.

Background

The role of scrutiny committees was amended at the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2010 to reflect the changes introduced by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009:

1. Scrutinise the service improvement set out in the Corporate Plan which fall within the committee's purview;

2. Scrutinise the performance of all services within its purview and the extent to which services are continuously improving;

3.   Ensure performance measures are in place for each service and that the measures reflect what matters to local citizens;

4.   Commission and participate in systems reviews through appropriate mechanisms and report onwards to the Executive

5.   Monitor implementation by the Executive of responses to the conclusions and recommendations of the Council's external regulators; and

6.   Promote innovation by challenging the status quo and encourage different ways of thinking and options for service delivery.

Appendices

Quarterly Performance Management Data 2014-2015 – Quarter 4 Performance (1st April 2014– 31st March 2015) – APPENDIX 1 (PRB-090715-REP-CE-KJ)

List of Background Papers:

The Neath Port Talbot Corporate Plan - 2014/2017 "Rising to the Challenge";

Policy & Resources Committee report date 30th July 2010 – Securing continuous improvement and scrutiny work programme.

Officer Contact:

Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy & Democratic Services. Telephone: 01639 763284. E-Mail: k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

Nita Sparkes, Corporate Strategy & Performance Manager. Telephone: 01639 766172. E-Mail: n.sparkes@npt.gov.uk

Shaun Davies, Performance Management Officer. Telephone: 01639 763172. E-Mail: a.s.davies@npt.gov.uk

Quarterly Performance Management Data 2014-2015 – Quarter 4 Performance (1st April 2014– 31st March 2015)

Report Contents:

Section 1: Key points.

Section 2: Summary of Quarterly Performance data by Committee/Service Area.

Section 3: Quarterly Performance Management Data and performance key

Section 1: Key points.

The Council made a conscious decision to prioritise certain areas of work and these are expressed as the Council's six improvement priorities. On the whole performance demonstrates improvement in line with what we planned to deliver.

- **Improvement Objective 1 – Safer, Brighter Futures**

   Children's Services
   In February 2015, the Care and Social Services Inspectorate of Wales (CSSiW) completed a full inspection and the outcome was notified to the Council on 21st April 2015. As a consequence of the significant improvements made during the past two years, the CSSiW announced that the Serious Concerns Protocol had been lifted from Children's Social Services.

   The service has consistently achieved the required standard for all of the 8 key priority measures that were initially agreed with CSSiW and are clearly being maintained as the Service moves forward. All 8 priority measures improved and exceeded their target in the year.

- **Improvement Objective 2 –Better Schools, Brighter Prospects**

  Education
  Schools in NPT have secured an improvement in pupil attendance in both sectors, in particular in the primary sector with a 1.6% rise. Key Stage 4 results have maintained in line with 2012/13 performance with NPT continuing to compare favourably across Wales. Key Stage 2 results are steadily improving with Key Stage 3 maintaining their performance compared to 2012/13.There has been a rise in fixed and permanent exclusions in the Secondary sector and a rise in fixed exclusions in the Primary sector which NPT are actively working on to decrease.

- **Improvement Objective 3 -Maximising Choice & Independence**

  Adults Services
  9 of the 11 adult services performance indicators have improved or achieved maximum performance during the period. We saw excellent progress in carers assessments and delayed transfers of care. As we have remodelled what we do, it has been a challenge to ensure if review performance is good enough. This is a main priority in 2015/16 and we have robust plans in place to improve performance.

  Housing - Private Sector Renewal
  We achieved our Corporate Improvement Plan revised target (285 days) and completed our Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) on average in 252 days. This was a planned increase from last year's 204 days due to the introduction of the Rapid Adaptation Grants process which took smaller jobs out of the DFG process and also due to a number of more complex grants being completed. During 2014/2015 there were also a number of very complex extensions for children which were started in previous financial years. We were however able to complete more DFG's, 323 this year (287 last year) due to the average cost being lower than predicted allowing the budget to go further.

- **Improvement Objective 4 –Prosperity for All**

  Economic Development
  All three measures exceeded their targets as set in the Corporate Improvement Plan for 2014/15. A growing confidence in the local business community, resulting in an increase in number of enquiries that

the Business Development team handled throughout 2014/15 compared to the previous year. The availability of Enhanced Local Needs Support has also had a positive impact on the number of business enquiries in addition to the Business Development team continuing to be fully engaged with businesses leading to the requirement to deal with enquiries covering a wide range of issues and topics.

In terms of the number of jobs created and the number of new business start-up enquiries, during the year we saw a planned lower output compared to the previous year.

- **Improvement Objective 5 – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**

  Waste Management
  The Council is progressing with the implementation of its waste strategy and has achieved the 2015/16 statutory recycling and composting target of 58% during 2014/15. All six waste performance indicators have improved.

- **Improvement Objective 6 – Better, Simpler, Cheaper**

  Sickness Management
  Sickness across the Council has increased slightly (by 2.3%) to an average of 9.4 FTE (full time equivalent) for 2014-2015 compared to 9.19 FTE days last year. The Council did not meet its target to reduce sickness by 5% for the year.

  Scrutiny Committee recently received a presentation outlining measures being taken to bring about a step change in levels of long term sickness absence.

- **Customer Services**
  Customer waiting times (face to face contact at Neath and Port Talbot One Stop Shops) continues to improve with fewer customer walk offs. There has also been a marked reduction in the number of customers that we saw on a face to face basis 67,886 this year compared to 75,576 last year. This may be partly attributed to the introduction of and the promotion by staff of online service requests for customers. Also, through continued collaborative working with NPT Homes we have further reduced the number of incorrect enquiries made by their tenants to the Council. All customers who visit the One Stop Shops are encouraged to make use of online requests e.g. booking van permits, booking bulk collections, the ordering of recycling/refuse equipment. This naturally reduces the need for customers to attend in person or telephone. The

percentage of calls abandoned after 5 seconds has also improved on last year. Over the year there was an increase in the average time to answer telephone calls for previously documented reasons (including external influences). However, since addressing these we have seen a significant improvement in performance in the three month period January to March 2015 our across these measures which have been further improved during the 1st quarter of 2015-2016.

Other areas that are drawn to committee's attention include:

- **Youth Justice**
  NPT Youth Offending Team has now amalgamated with Bridgend and Swansea to form the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service. NPT Youth Offending Team has improved its performance in 2014/15 and moves into Western Bay with a commitment to maintaining and developing its performance as part of Western Bay whilst ensuring local issues within Neath Port Talbot are addressed.

- **Homelessness and Housing**
  Performance measured against one indicator continued at the maximum possible, one measure improved slightly and the remaining four measures deteriorated. This deterioration was in the context of a 30% increase in statutory homeless cases presenting to the Housing Options Service compared to the previous year, an ongoing increasing complexity of cases dealt with and continuing difficultly in securing suitable move-on accommodation. Effective early intervention and prevention work was nonetheless successful with the majority of those households who present to the Service

- **Public Protection**
  Just 2 out of 8 comparable Public Protection performance indicators have declined in the period (percentage of significant breaches rectified for animal health purposes and contact with new businesses for Trading Standards), whilst 3 saw improved performance and 4 remained the same (3 of which achieved 100% performance). All significant breaches are dealt with as quickly as possible and new businesses are contacted at the earliest opportunity, once they are identified. This set of Public Protection performance indicators are therefore very positive.

- **Planning**
  Planning has seen mixed performance during the period; improvements include determining all major and other planning applications during the year

within 8 weeks and reducing the average time taken for making a decision on applications. Some of the indicators saw a drop in performance which includes minor planning and householder planning applications determined within 8 weeks. Although not a measure in itself, overall the performance of the team in determining planning applications within the statutory 8 weeks has fallen this year from 78.5% to 76.8%, which is indicative both of the complexity of applications and appeals the team has had to deal with, and the recent pressures on staff resources. Nevertheless, despite these challenging times, officers remain committed to the delivery of a quality planning service, and will continue to ensure that Officers encourage and engage in 'front-loaded' negotiations, through the successful chargeable pre-application service. This was introduced in 2014 and is effective in reducing delays for developers later in the process.

- **Building Control**
  100% of building control 'full plan' applications were checked within 15 working days .This has been achieved at the same time that there has been a reduction in the number of experienced staff employed within the Building Control Section as a result of contributions to the Council's Forward Financial Plan. The number of full plan applications approved first time dropped marginally but continues with a high performance level of 96.6%.

- **Libraries**
  The figures for the Library Service cannot be compared like for like to the previous year's performance, as NPTCBC ceded overall responsibility for five of the libraries to various community groups on 1st April 2014 and a further four on 1st May 2014. Comparing like for like (with the remaining Libraries), visits are up 1.44%, Material Issued down 11.13%. The withdrawal of the Mobile Library service from Southern Powys has impacted on the Material Issued figures (withdrawal of funding from Powys).

- **Asset Management**
  Six of the seven buildings categories have improved since last year. There has been slight improvement in condition of buildings that are good and satisfactory. The percentage of buildings in category C (poor) and the percentage of urgent and essential works has continued to drop, resulting from further reduction of poor/bad category buildings owned or leased by NPT.

- **Transport and Highways**
  All six indicators have improved which include improved condition of our roads, a reduction in average time to repair street lamp failures during the year and a higher percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a

concessionary bus pass. With respect to roads, these have benefitted from several years of substantial additional funding, firstly the Council's three year Urban Streets Initiative and secondly additional WG Local Government Borrowing Initiative funding, both of which have ended.

- **Street Scene & Countryside Management**
  We have increased the percentage of total length of 'Rights of Way' which are easy to use by members of the public and our highways and relevant land cleanliness has improved. The statutory fly tipping performance indicator has seen a drop in the performance outturn for the year, an explanation for this is reported under performance indicator number 163.

Section 2 - *Summary of Quarterly Performance by Committee/Service Area* **- (quarter 4, 2013-2014 position in brackets)**

Service Area	Scrutiny Committee	Improved or Maximum Performance	Maintained Performance	Marginally declined - within 5%	Performance declined by 5% or more	No Comparable data	Number of Performance Indicators
1. Chief Executive and Finance & Corporate Services	P&R	7 (7)	0 (0)	2 (4)	3 (2)	1 (0)	13 (13)
P&R Total		**7 (7)**	**0 (0)**	**2 (4)**	**3 (2)**	**1 (0)**	**13 (13)**
2. Education	CYPE	8 (15)	2 (2)	8 (3)	4 (2)	0 (0)	22 (22)
3. Social Care – Youth Justice	CYPE	5 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	1 (0)	6 (6)
4. Social Care – Children's Services	CYPE	31 (33)	0 (0)	8 (3)	5 (4)	1 (5)	45 (45)
CYPE Total		**44 (53)**	**2 (2)**	**16 (6)**	**9 (7)**	**2 (5)**	**73 (73)**
5. Social Care – Adults Services	SCHH	9 (9)	0 (0)	2 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (11)
6. Housing – Homelessness and Housing Advice	SCHH	2 (3)	0 (0)	1 (3)	3 (0)	0 (0)	6 (6)
7. Housing – Private Sector Renewal	SCHH	2 (4)	0 (0)	0 (1)	3 (0)	2 (2)	7 (7)
8. Planning & Regulatory Services – Public Protection	SCHH	6 (7)	1 (0)	1 (1)	1 (2)	1 (0)	10 (10)
SCHH Total		**19 (23)**	**1 (0)**	**4 (7)**	**7 (2)**	**3 (2)**	**34 (34)**
9. Planning & Regulatory Services – Planning	ECR	4 (1)	0 (0)	1 (3)	3 (1)	1 (4)	9 (9)

Service Area	Scrutiny Committee	Improved or Maximum Performance	Maintained Performance	Marginally declined - within 5%	Performance declined by 5% or more	No Comparable data	Number of Performance Indicators
10. Planning & Regulatory Services – Building Control	ECR	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (2)
11. Economic Development	ECR	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	0 (0)	3 (3)
12. Asset Management	ECR	6 (6)	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (7)
13. Leisure & Libraries	ECR	1 (4)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0 (0)	5 (0)	6 (6)
ECR TOTAL		**13 (16)**	**0 (1)**	**3 (4)**	**5 (2)**	**6 (4)**	**27 (27)**
14. Environment & Transport – Waste Management	E&H	6 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	6 (6)
15. Environment & Transport – Transport and Highways	E&H	6 (5)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (6)
16. Environment & Transport – Countryside Management	E&H	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)
17. Environment & Transport – Street Scene	E&H	2 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	1(1)	0 (0)	3 (3)
E&H Total		**15 (11)**	**0 (0)**	**0 (3)**	**1 (2)**	**0 (0)**	**16 (16)**
Total Number of Performance Indicators		**98 (110)**	**3 (3)**	**25 (24)**	**25 (15)**	**12 (11)**	**163 (163)**
Overall performance Percentage (of comparable measures)		**65.0% (72.4%)**	**2.0% (2.0%)**	**16.5% (15.8%)**	**16.5% (9.8%)**		

NB - Quarter 4, 2013-2014 position in brackets.

Section 3: Quarterly Performance Management Data and Performance key

2014-2015 – Quarter 4 Performance (1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015)

Note: The following references are included in the table. Explanations for these are as follows:
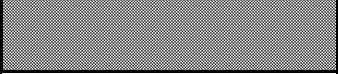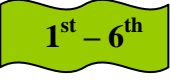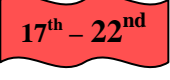
(NSI) National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) - are used to measure the performance of local authorities at a national level and focus on key strategic priorities. Local authorities are under a legal duty to collect & report on these measures.

(PAM)   Public Accountability Measures - consist of a small set of "outcome focussed" indicators, selected initially from within the existing Performance Measurement Framework. They will reflect those aspects of local authority work which local authorities agree are considered to be important in terms of public accountability. For example, recycling, educational attainment, sustainable development, etc. This information is required and reported nationally, validated, and published annually.

(SID)   Service Improvement Data - can be used by local authority services and their regulators as they plan, deliver and improve services.

All Wales   The data shown in this column is the figure calculated using the base data supplied by all authorities for 2013/2014 i.e. an overall performance indicator value for Wales.

(L)   Local Performance Indicator set by the Council.

	Performance Key
☺	Maximum Performance
↑	Performance has improved
↔	Performance has been maintained
v	Performance is within 5% of previous years performance
↓	Performance has declined by 5% or more on previous years performance - Where performance has declined by 5% or more for the period in comparison to the previous year, an explanation is provided directly below the relevant performance indicator.
▬	No comparable data (data not suitable for comparison / no data available for comparison)
	No All Wales data available for comparison.
1st – 6th	2013/14 NPT performance in upper quartile (top six of 22 local authorities) in comparison with All Wales national published measures (NSI & PAM's). **18 of 43 comparable measures in upper quartile.**
7th – 16th	2013/14 NPT performance in mid quartiles (7th – 16th) in comparison with All Wales national published measures (NSI & PAM's). **15 of 43 comparable measures in mid quartiles.**
17th – 22nd	2013/14 NPT performance in lower quartile (17th – 22nd) in comparison with All Wales national published measures (NSI & PAM's). **10 of 43 comparable measures in lower quartile.**

1. Chief Executive's and Finance & Corporate Services

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
1	**Benefits M001** (Local)	Percentage of new claims correctly assessed.	100%		**100%**	**100%**	☺
2	**Benefits M002** (Local)	Average days taken for new claims and changes of circumstances from application to assessment.	N/a New		**7.53**	**6.86**	↑
3	**CS001** (Local)	Customer Services - Average customer waiting times (face to face contact)	13 minutes		**8 minutes**	**6.8 minutes**	↑
4	**CS003** (Local)	Customer Services - Percentage of telephone calls abandoned after 5 seconds	10.5%		**12.87%**	**12.47%**	↑
	CS004 (Local)	Customer Services - Percentage of customers leaving before being seen (walk offs)	1%		**0.13%**	**0.08%** 53 of 67,886	↑
6	**CFH/007** (SID)	The percentage of council tax due for the financial year which was received by the authority.	97.1%	97.01%	**97.3%**	**97.5%**	↑
	CFH/008 (SID)	The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the local authority.	97.3%	97.0%	**98.1%**	**100.7%**	↑
7	In 2014/15 the net collectable debit decreased in March 2015 due to a significant decrease in Rateable Value for Tata Steel. As Tata Steel had already paid their rates based on the higher Rateable Value and the refund was not actioned until 2015/16, the Business Rates team had effectively received more income than rates due for that financial year hence the 100.7% collection rate. Had the refund to Tata Steel been actioned in the same financial year (i.e 2014/15) the collection rate would have been 98.2%.					
8	**#CHR/002** (PAM)	The number of working days/shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence.	9.65	Data not yet available	**9.19**	**9.4**	V

The sickness PI, CHR002 is a Public Accountability Measure (PAM) with effect from 1st April 2014.

1. Chief Executive's and Finance & Corporate Services - continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
9	CFH/006 (SID)	The percentage of undisputed invoices which were paid within 30 days.	92.4%	91.5%	91.6%	90.7%	**v**
10	7.7(L) (Local)	Percentage of standard searches carried out in 10 working days.	99.4%		97.9%	86.3%	↓
		The searches that have been over 10 days are due to the complex nature of searches against areas of land and also delays in getting responses to the enquiries from other internal departments.					
	CS002 (Local)	Customer Services - Average time to answer telephone calls	28 seconds		30 seconds	33 seconds	↓
		During the first 2 quarters of 2014-2015 the Contact Centre experienced very high levels of demand for a number of previously reported reasons including strike action after effects and the introduction of new Recycling routines. These had a considerable effect on telephone demand and our ability to answer increased customer call volumes. Measures were put in place to address these concerns such as the introduction of a specific Interactive Voice Recognition system (Press 1 for Refuse and Recycling etc.) on the 686868 telephone number and the introduction of new working methods using alternative faster computer systems. From the end of the second quarter, improvements have been made in our key performance indicators. However, the high call demand in the first two quarters of the year has meant that even though we have made very good improvements in the second half of the year, the average time remains slightly higher than last year due to this high demand period at the beginning of the year.					
12	L(P) 13 (L) (Local)	Annual Savings (£)	£1,462,117		£797,516	£534,399	↓
		The savings generated through procurement activity are reliant on the contracts that have been undertaken during that period and the ability to measure savings against an existing contract or service provision. In 2012-2013, the figures were largely inflated by the huge savings recorded in home to school transport which had never been subject to any previous form of competition. In 2013-2014, we also recorded large Home To School Transport savings of £347k, whilst this year it's a more modest but still significant £100k. These alone, would account for the difference and reduction year on year					
13	CHR/001 (SID)	The percentage of employees (including teachers and school based staff) who leave the employment of the local authority, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis.	7.88%	Data not yet available	9.63%	Data not yet available	—

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2. Education – Schools

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual (2011/12 Academic year)	All Wales 2013/14 (2012/13 academic year)	Quarter 4 2013/14 (2012/13 academic year)	Quarter 4 2014/15 (2013/14 academic year)	Direction of Improvement
14	**EDU/002ii** (NSI)	The percentage of pupils in local authority care, in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding August, who leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without and approved external qualification.	0%	2.0% **Joint 1st**	**0%**	**0%**	☺
15	**EDU/003** (NSI/PAM)	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.	80.6%	84.6% **20th**	**82.0%**	**84.1%** (1,144 of 1,360 pupils)	↑
16	**EDU/009a** (SID)	The average number of school days that permanently excluded pupils did not receive an offer of full time appropriate education provision during the academic year.	50.4	24.9	**82.2**	**79.8**	↑
17	**EDU/011** (NSI/PAM)	The average wider point score for pupils aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority.	486	505 **6th**	**537**	**540**	↑
18	**EDU/016a** (PAM)	Percentage of pupil attendance in Primary Schools.	93.1%	93.7% **22nd**	**93.0%**	**94.6%** (3,153,617 of 3,333,372 sessions)	↑
19	**EDU/016b** (PAM)	The percentage of pupil attendance in Secondary Schools.	92.3%	92.6% **12th**	**92.6%**	**93.5%** (2,182,564 of 2,333,737 sessions)	↑

2. Education –Schools - continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual (2011/12 Academic year)	All Wales 2013/14 (2012/13 academic year)	Quarter 4 2013/14 (2012/13 academic year)	Quarter 4 2014/15 (2013/14 academic year)	Direction of Improvement
20	**EDU/004** (PAM)	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.	68.8%	77.2% **19th**	**73.1%**	**73.1%** (1,096 of 1,500 pupils)	↔
21	**EDU/008a** (SID)	The number of permanent exclusions during the academic year per 1,000 pupils from Primary Schools.	0.1 1 pupil	Data not yet available	**0.1** 1 pupil	**0.1** 1 pupil	↔
22	**EDU/006ii** (NSI)	The percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of: Key Stage 3.	10.3%	17.0% **14th**	**10.3%**	**10.0%** (150 of 1,500 pupils)	V
23	**EDU/010b** (SID)	The percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the academic year, in Secondary Schools.	0.111% 1,658 days	0.095%	**0.107%** 1,572 days	**0.112%** 1,598 days	V
24	**EDU/017** (NSI/PAM)	The percentage of pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved the level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics.	54.1%	52.5% **7th**	**56.0%**	**55.8%**	V
25	**EDU/002i** (NSI/PAM)	The percentage of all pupils (including those in local authority care), in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding August, who leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without and approved external qualification.	0.2%	0.3% **7th**	**0.1%** (2 of 1,619 pupils)	**0.2%** (3 of 1,667 pupils)	V

2. Education - Schools -continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual (2011/12 Academic year)	All Wales 2013/14 (2012/13 academic year)	Quarter 4 2013/14 (2012/13 academic year)	Quarter 4 2014/15 (2013/14 academic year)	Direction of Improvement
26	EDU/006i (SID)	The percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of: Key Stage 2	16.5%	20.0%	**16.4%**	**15.4%** (209 of 1,360 pupils)	**V**
	The decrease is due to the annual variation in take up of Welsh language education. It is expected that the percentage of pupils receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh first language will remain fairly consistent over the next 2 to 3 years.						
27	EDU/010a (SID)	The percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the academic year, in Primary Schools.	0.012% 191 days	0.013%	**0.011%** 186 days	**0.016%** 262 days	**V**
	There has been an increase in permanent exclusions in the secondary sector and a rise in days lost due to fixed term exclusions in both sectors. Measures are now in place to look at these rises:- • Inclusion Review in place with behaviour / exclusions identified as a priority area. • Exclusions shared with Challenge Advisors as they occur. • Chronology that led to the exclusions is being audited in a sample of schools						
28	EDU/008b (SID)	The number of permanent exclusions during the academic year per 1,000 pupils from Secondary Schools.	1.26 10 pupils	Data not yet available	**1.0** 8 pupils	**1.3** 10 pupils	↓
	Same comment as EDU010a above						
29	EDU/009b (SID)	The average number of school days that permanently excluded pupils did not receive an offer of part time appropriate education provision during the academic year.	16.1	11.9	**38.5**	**52.2**	↓
	EDU009 guidelines states that the definition for Part Time provision is at least 10 hours per week. Neath Port Talbot Home Tuition policy states that pupils up to year 9 should receive 1 hour a day tuition, year 10 pupils 1.5 hours a day and year 11 pupils 2 hours a day. These are in conflict with EDU009 performance indication guidelines. There have also been extreme difficulties accommodating 3 SEN pupils due to their complex needs.						

2. Education - Other

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
30	EDU/015b (NSI)	The percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks excluding exceptions.	100%	96.6% Joint 1st	100%*	100%*	☺
31	L(SEN) 1a (Local)	Number of children with new statements of special educational needs.	112		103*	77*	↑
32	L(Yth)2+ (Local)	The percentage of 11 - 19 year olds in contact with the youth service.	27.48%		33.07%	30.24%	V
33	L(SEN) 1b (Local)	Total number of children with statements of special educational needs.	774		788*	790*	V
34	L(FP) 1+ (Local)	Number of full day childcare places provided.	1,707		1,800	1,624	↓
		The decrease in the number of places can be attributed to the re-classification of childcare/day centres by CSSIW. The indicator definition will be re-addressed for 2015/16.					
35	EDU/015a (NSI)	The percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks including exceptions	27.7%	69.6% 20th	32.0%*	23.37%*	↓
		The increase in time taken to issue statements can be attributed to the increasing complexity of the individual cases coming through the Statutory Assessment process					

*- Calendar year data -12 months data

3. Social Care - Youth Justice

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
36	SCY/003a (SID)	The percentage of children and young people in the youth justice system identified via screening as requiring a substance misuse assessment that commence the assessment within five working days of referral.	92.7%	90.4%	**98.5%**	**100%**	☺
37	SCY/003b (SID)	The percentage of those children and young people with an identified need for treatment or other intervention, who receive that within ten working days of the assessment.	100%	96.6%	**100%**	**100%**	☺
38	SCY/001a (SID)	The percentage change in the average number of hours of suitable Education, Training or Employment (ETE) children and young people receive while within the youth justice system by Children and young people of statutory school age.	0%	1.2%	**25.8%**	**50.5%**	↑
39	SCY/001b (SID)	The percentage change in the average number of hours of suitable Education, Training or Employment (ETE) children and young people receive while within the youth justice system by: Young people above statutory school age.	-9.7%	16.1%	**38.2%**	**71.3%**	↑
40	SCY/002a (SID)	The percentage change in the proportion of children and young people in the youth justice system with suitable accommodation at the end of their court order compared with before the start of their court order.	4.1%	-1.7%	**-3.7%**	**2.6%**	↑
41	SCY/002b (SID)	The percentage change in the proportion of children and young people in the youth justice system with suitable accommodation upon their release from custody compared with before the start of their custodial sentence.	-20%	5.3%	**0%**	**n/a**	—
		No young people had a closed custodial sentence within that period therefore nothing to measure for this indicator.					

NB - The above Youth Justice indicators will be not be reported after 2014-15 and will be replaced in 2015-16 by new regional 'Western Bay' measures which will be reported to Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee on a six monthly basis. These will include a new 'Mental Health Measure'.

4. Social Care – Children's Services

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
42	*SCC/001a (SID from 2014-15)	**Priority Measure:** The percentage of first placements of looked after children during the year that began with a care plan in place.	58.4%	90.9% **Joint 1st**	**100%**	**100%**	☺
43	SCC/013ai (SID)	The percentage of open cases of children who have an allocated social worker - Children on the child protection register.	99.8%	99.9%	**100%**	**100%**	☺
44	SCC/013bi (SID)	The percentage of open cases of children who are allocated to someone other than a social worker where the child is receiving a service in accordance with his/her assessment or plan - Children on the child protection register.	0%	0%	**0%**	**0%**	☺
45	*SCC/030a (SID from 2014-15)	The percentage of young carers known to Social Services who were assessed.	100%	85.9% **Joint 1st**	**100%**	**100%**	☺
46	SCC/030b (SID)	The percentage of young carers known to Social Services who were provided with a service.	84.2%	80.1%	**64.7%**	**100%**	☺
47	Local	**Priority Measure:** The percentage of child protection visits undertaken within 6 weeks. .	N/a New		**99.6%**	**100%**	☺
48	SCC/044a (SID)	The percentage of children looked after who were permanently excluded from school during the previous academic year	0%	0.1%	**0%**	**0%**	☺

*- No longer a Public Accountability Measure (with effect from 2014-15)

4. Social Care – Children's Services – continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
49	SCC/002 (NSI)	The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more change of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March.	15.8%	13.8% **15th**	15.7%	10.7%	↑
50	SCC/006 (SID)	The percentage of referrals during the year on which a decision was made within 1 working day.	93.1%	96.3%	97.2%	98.5%	↑
51	SCC/010 (SID)	**Priority Measure:** The percentage of referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months.	35.9%	22.2%	22.1%	15.4%	↑
52	SCC/011a (PAM)	The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the Social Worker.	79.2%	78.9% **20th**	68.3%	74.4%	↑
53	SCC/011b (NSI)	The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker.	43.1%	42.9% **16th**	38.7%	47.1%	↑
54	SCC/013aii (SID)	The percentage of open cases of children who have an allocated social worker - Children looked after.	95.2%	95.2%	99.1%	99.6%	↑
55	SCC/013aiii (SID)	The percentage of open cases of children who have an allocated social worker – Children in need.	66.3%	76.4%	68.0%	71.8%	↑
56	SCC/013biii (SID)	The percentage of open cases of children who are allocated to someone other than a social worker where the child is receiving a service in accordance with his/her assessment or plan – Children in need.	29.4%	19.6%	31.8%	25.5%	↑

4. Social Care – Children's Services – continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
57	SCC/013bii (SID)	The percentage of open cases of children who are allocated to someone other than a social worker where the child is receiving a service in accordance with his/her assessment or plan - Children looked after.	0.6%	4.5%	0.9%	0.4%	↑
58	SCC/014 (SID)	The percentage of initial child protection conferences due in the year which were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion.	67.8%	89.9%	93.5%	94.4%	↑
59	SCC/021 (SID)	**Priority Measure:** The percentage of looked after children reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year.	69.2%	95.9%	95.0%	96.6%	↑
60	SCC/022a (SID)	The percentage attendance of looked after pupils whilst in care in primary schools.	90.1%	95.1%	93.1%	94.2%	↑
61	SCC/025 (PAM)	**Priority Measure:** The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations.	68.3%	85.3% 14th	86.9%	91.9%	↑
62	SCC/034 (SID)	The percentage of child protection reviews carried out within statutory timescales during the year.	87.2%	98.1%	97.5%	98.5%	↑
63	SCC/035 (SID)	The percentage of looked after children eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment.	52.9%	51.6%	42.1%	57.1%	↑
64	SCC/036 (SID)	The percentage of looked after children eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 3 achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment.	33.3%	37.2%	55.6%	57.1%	↑
65	SCC/40 (SID)	The percentage of placements started during the year where the child is registered with a provider of general medical services within 10 working days of the start of the placement.	N/a	88.3%	93.0%	97.2%	↑

4. Social Care – Children's Services – continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
66	SCC/041a (NSI)	The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required.	20.0%	89.2% **21st**	69.8%	83.9%	↑
67	SCC/042a (SID)	**Priority Measure:** The percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 working days.	38.1%	71.9%	80.6%	91.9%	↑
68	SCC/042b (SID)	The average time taken to complete initial assessments that took longer than 7 working days to complete.	30	19	18	14.2	↑
69	SCC/043a (SID)	**Priority Measure:** The percentage of required core assessments completed within 35 working days.	48.7%	81.2%	70.2%	84.4%	↑
70	SCC/43b (SID)	The average time taken to complete those required core assessments that took longer than 35 days.	68	58	56	44.3	↑
71	SCC/045 (PAM)	The percentage of reviews of looked after children, children on the child protection register and children in need carried out in line with the statutory timetable.	No data reported	89.6% **20th**	82.2%	88.6%	↑
72	Local	**Priority Measure**: The percentage of qualified and unqualified workers that receive supervision within 28 calendar days.	N/a New		92.5%	93.8%	↑
73	SCC/004 (NSI/PAM)	The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year.	8.7%	8.3% **6th**	6.4%	6.9%	V

4. Social Care – Children's Services – continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
74	SCC/007a (SID)	The percentage of referrals during the year that were allocated to a social worker for initial assessment.	48.5%	75.5%	**94.1%**	**93.1%**	**V**
75	SCC/007b (SID)	The percentage of referrals during the year that were allocated to someone other than a social worker for initial assessment.	6.3%	7.9%	**4.4%**	**5.5%**	**V**
76	SCC/015 (SID)	The percentage of initial core group meetings due in the year which were held within 10 working days of the initial child protection conference.	82.3%	90.0%	**91.4%**	**88.4%**	**V**
77	SCC/022b (SID)	The percentage attendance of looked after pupils whilst in care in secondary schools.	83.8%	91.6%	**89.7%**	**85.4%**	**V**
78	SCC/033d (NSI)	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19.	72.2%	93.4% **12th**	**95.7%**	**95.2%**	**V**
79	SCC/041b (SID)	The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have been allocated a personal advisor.	96.0%	92.7%	**100%**	**96.8%**	**V**
80	SCC/001b (SID)	For those children looked after whose second review (due at 4 months) was due in the year, the percentage with a plan for permanence at the due date.	69.5%	93.4%	**89.8%**	**86.5%**	**V**
81	SCC/024 (SID)	The percentage of children looked after during the year with a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school in the year ending 31 March.	63.6%	62.7%	**85.7%**	**77.1%**	**↓**
		It is recognised that this is an area which requires development and work is ongoing to improve mechanisms for capturing this information more accurately.					

4. Social Care – Children's Services – continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
82	SCC/033e (NSI)	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19.	92.3%	85.9% Joint 1st	100%	90%	↓
		The small numbers of young people in this category impact on the figures. The young people affected were in transitional arrangements pending their subsequent move to suitable accommodations.					
83	SCC/033f (NSI)	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19.	46.2%	54.8% 8th	63.6%	40.0%	↓
		The significant drop in in part can be attributed to the complex needs of the young people.					
84	SCC/037 (NSI)	The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting.	162	262 4th	335	296	↓
		Results vary depending on cohort of the children. However the Corporate Parenting Panel is focusing on improving the educational attainment of Looked After Children.					
85	SCC/044b (SID)	The average number of days spent out of school on fixed term exclusions for children looked after who were excluded during the previous academic year.	3.8	6.8	4.0	5.3	↓
		Fixed term exclusions will be a priority for NPT in 2015-16					
86	SCC/007c (SID)	The percentage of referrals during the year that did not proceed to allocation for initial assessment.	45.2%	16.7%	1.5%	1.4%	—

5. Social Care - Adults Services

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
87	SCA/018a (PAM)	The percentage of carers of adult service users who were offered an assessment or review of their needs in their own right during the year.	100%	85.8% Joint 1st	100%	100%	☺
88	SCA/019 (NSI/PAM)	The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed.	100%	94.45% Joint	100%	100%	☺
89	SCA/001 (NSI)	The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over.	5.97	4.70 11th	3.49	3.21	↑
90	SCA/002a (NSI)	The rate of older people (aged 65 or over): Supported in the community per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March.	99.98	74.48 5th	107.8	111.46	↑
91	SCA/002b (NSI)	The rate of older people (aged 65 or over): Whom the authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March.	23.36	19.84 20th	23.86	21.71	↑

5. Social Care – Adult Services – c ontinued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
92	SCA/003a (SID)	The percentage of clients who are supported in the community during the year, in the age groups: Aged 18-64.	91.17%	93.84%	92.45%	93.27%	↑
93	SCA/018b (SID)	The percentage of carers of adult service users who had an assessment in their own right during the year.	23.9%	39.4%	20.0%	40.48%	↑
94	SCA/018c (SID)	The percentage of carers of adult service users who were assessed during the year who were provided with a service.	44.6%	63.8%	66.7%	71.35%	↑
95	SCA/020 (PAM)	The percentage of adult clients who are supported in the community during the year.	82.6%	86.33% **16th**	85%	88.9%	↑
96	SCA/003b (SID)	The percentage of clients who are supported in the community during the year, in the age groups: Aged 65+	79.4%	83.71%	81.98%	81.66%	V
97	SCA/007 (NSI)	The percentage of clients with a care plan at 31st March whose care plans should have been reviewed that were reviewed during the year.	76.1%	81.1% **13th**	81.7%	79.3%	V

6. Housing – Homelessness and Housing Advice

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
98	HHA/016 (SID)	The average number of days all homeless families with children spent in bed and breakfast accommodation.	0	22.91	0	0	☺
99	HHA/013 (NSI/PAM)	The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months.	97.1%	66.4% *See note	95.2%	95.5%	↑
100	HHA/008 (SID)	The percentage of homeless presentations decided within 33 working days.	96.6%	87.5%	96.4%	92.2%	V
101	HHA/002 (SID)	The average number of working days between homeless presentation and discharge of duty for households found to be statutory homeless.	71	135	62	74	↓
		It took **13,784** working days to discharge duty on the **186** statutory homeless presentations during the period, i.e. an average of **74** working days. For the same period in **2013/14** it took **8,237** working days to discharge duty on **132** statutory homeless presentations. There has been 19% deterioration in performance against this indicator but this is in the context of a 30% increase in the volume of cases to which the measure applies.					
102	HHA/017a (SID)	The average number of days that all homeless households spent in bed and breakfast accommodation	16.02	35.57	16.61	17.51	↓
		45 homeless households spent time in B&B accommodation totaling **788** days. **Explanation for 17a & 17b :** This deterioration in performance is reflective of the ongoing and increasing difficulty in securing suitable move-on accommodation for statutory homeless households.					
103	HHA/017b SID	The average number of days that all homeless households spent in other forms of temporary accommodation.	111.97	159.19	106.49	127.20	↓
		80 homelessness households spent time in other forms of temporary accommodation totaling **10,176** days.					

*. Note - A Wales Audit Office report (published in 2013 identified a wide variation in how local authorities interpret guidance for indicator HHA/013 relating to homelessness prevention, resulting in a wide variation of performance reported. Due to these variations, the Welsh Government Statistical Release has advised in the publication of this data that the indicator should not be compared across local authority boundaries, however comparisons can be made over time within individual local authorities.

7. Housing - Private Sector Renewal

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
104	**PSR/004** (NSI)	The percentage of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months at 1 April that were returned to occupation during the year through direct action by the local authority.	5.28%	9.23% **3rd**	**37.38%**	**68.59%**	↑
105	**PSR/007a** (SID)	Of the Houses in Multiple Occupation known to the local authority, the percentage that: Have a full license.	1.7%	Data not yet available	**1.4%**	**1.63%**	↑
106	**PSR/002** (NSI/PAM)	The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant.	244	239 **6th**	**204**	**252**	↓
106		We achieved our Corporate Improvement Plan revised target (285 days) and completed our Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) on average in 252 days. This was a planned increase from last year's 204 days due to the introduction of the Rapid Adaptation Grants process which took smaller jobs out of the DFG process and also due to a number of more complex grants being completed. During 2014/2015 there were also a number of very complex extensions for children which were started in previous financial years. We were however able to complete more DFG's, 323 this year (287 last year) due to the average cost being lower than predicted allowing the budget to go further.					
107	**PSR/009a** (SID)	The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant for: Children and young people	386	Data not yet available	**310**	**437**	↓
107		30 DFG's were delivered to Children & Young People, at an average of 437 calendar days per DFG, compared to 18 at an average of 310 days in the previous 12 months. Explanation for increase as per indicator 106 above.					

7. Housing - Private Sector Renewal - continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
108	**PSR/009b** (SID)	The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant for: Adults	233	Data not yet available	**197**	**233**	↓
	293 DFG's were delivered to Adults, at an average of **233** calendar days per DFG, compared to **269** at an average of **197** days in the previous 12 months. Explanation for increase as per indicator 106 above.						
109	**PSR/007b** (SID)	Of the Houses in Multiple Occupation known to the local authority, the percentage that: Have been issued with a conditional license.	0%	Data not yet available	**0%**	**0%**	—
110	**PSR/007c** (SID)	Of the Houses in Multiple Occupation known to the local authority, the percentage that: Are subject to enforcement activity.	0%		**0.2%**	**0%**	—

8. Planning and Regulatory Services - Public Protection

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
111	**PPN/001i** (SID)	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for Trading Standards.	100%	99%	**100%**	**100%**	☺
112	**PPN/001iii** (SID)	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for Animal Health.	100%	96%	**100%**	**100%**	☺
113	**PPN/001iv** (SID)	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for Health and Safety	100%	No data available	**100%**	**100%**	☺
114	**PPN/001ii** (SID)	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for Food Hygiene.	99%	97%	**82%**	**98%**	↑

8. Planning and Regulatory Services - Public Protection - continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
115	PPN/007i (SID)	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for Trading Standards.	70.4%	87.7%	78.7%	86.8%	↑
116	PPN/009 (PAM)	The percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly' compliant with food hygiene standards	83.02%	90.3% 8th	92.2%	92.8%	↑
117	PPN/008ii (SID)	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year: Food Hygiene	56%	92%	79%	79%	↔
118	PPN/008i (SID)	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year: Trading Standards	60%	60%	56%	51.6%	v
119	PPN/007ii (SID)	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for Animal Health.	90%	92.6%	77.3%	71.4%	↓
		Of the **7** significant breaches that required rectification during the year, **5** were rectified by intervention for Animal Health. Most of the infringements recorded relate to animal movement and tagging of animals. All sheep, goats, cows and pigs have identification tags and when they are moved, licenses are issued. Failure for these to be present or completed is deemed a breach. Although regarded as infringements, they can be resolved easily by advising the keepers of the animals. The bulk of these issues have been resolved swiftly; or referred to neighbouring authorities for further action. Just recently a joint investigation has been completed with the Animal & Plant Health Agency into storage of animal by-products on a premises, which has diverted resources from routine inspections. The recording of infringements by the Animal Health section has improved considerably, and this figure is more reflective of the work that is being carried out than in previous years. Like Trading Standards, it would be unprofessional to resolve the more serious infringements without a thorough and formal investigation, and this can take a few months.					
120	PPN/008iii (SID)	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit or returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year: Animal Health.	44%	61%	100%	N/a*see note	—

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* Note- There were no new businesses identified during this reporting period.

9. Planning and Regulatory Services – Planning

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
121	PLA/002 (SID)	The percentage of applications for development determined during the year that were approved.	96.6%		95.5%	96.4%	↑
122	PLA/004d (SID)	The percentage of all other planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	83.5%	70.3%	73.9%	79%	↑
123	PLA/M002 (Local)	Average time taken from receipt of application to date decision is issued - days	N/a New		87.6 days	82.7 days	↑
124	PLAM/004 (Local)	The percentage of major planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	N/a New		23.1%	30.4%	↑
125	PLA/M001 (Local)	Average time taken from receipt of application to validation of application -days	N/a New		30.1 days	30.6 days	V
126	PLA/004b (SID)	The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	75.5%	63.3%	71.3%	63.5%	↓
	Performance has dropped from 71.3% to 63.5%, which remains a consequence of the complexity of the type of application determined and pressures on staff resources, but continues to be partly balanced by the increase in performance for 'all other' planning applications - **PLA/004 d) –** which increased from 73.9% to 79%.						

9. Planning and Regulatory Services – Planning - continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
	PLA/004c (SID)	The percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	98.0%	86.3%	**94%**	**87.4%**	↓
127		Performance remains high at close to 88% but falls short of the high standards set in recent years (94% overall during 2013-14). Two relatively poor quarters (Quarter 1 and Quarter 4) have affected these cumulative figures, and it is acknowledged that there is a need to 'go back to basics' and focus more on performance measurement. Although not a measure in itself, overall the performance of the team in determining planning applications within the statutory 8 weeks has fallen this year from 78.5% to 76.8%, which is indicative both of the complexity of applications and appeals the team has had to deal with, and the recent pressures on staff resources. Nevertheless, despite these challenging times, officers remain committed to the delivery of a quality planning service, and will continue to ensure that Officers encourage and engage in 'front-loaded' negotiations, through the successful chargeable pre-application service. This was introduced in 2014 and is effective in reducing delays for developers later in the process.					
	PLA/006(b) (NSI)	The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all additional housing units provided during the year.	27%	37% **5th**	**69%**	**42%**	↓
128		This Authority fully utilises its Social Housing Grant programme and has taken advantage of other innovative funding opportunities to deliver affordable housing and where the opportunity has arisen secured affordable housing through the Planning System. The variation in data between 2014-15 and 2013-14 for this indicator is affected by external market forces which can dictate our ability to secure affordable housing through the planning system, availability of grant funding and variations of onsite productivity (schemes can take many months/years from initiation to development to completion and it could be that in one year we have schemes on site and the next year we have schemes completed). These factors are outside the control of the local authority. 2014/15 information for this indicator is pre-populated with data from the Affordable Housing data collection return (to the Welsh Government) for the year ending 31 March 2014 representing total affordable housing units provided in the local authority area; pre-populated with data from the Newbuild data collection return (to the Welsh Government) for the year ending 31 March 2014 representing the total number of properties newly completed in the local authority area, including those inspected by both the local authority building control department and also the National House Building Council (NHBC).					

9. Planning and Regulatory Services – Planning - continued

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
129	PLA/M003 (Local)	Percentage of applications where the quality of the development has been improved (following negotiation by the case officer either at pre-application stage or during the course of the application).	N/a		36%	29.3%	▬
		The percentage figure has dropped in comparison with the same quarter last year. This figure is largely dependent on the nature of applications that are received during any quarter and, as a consequence, is subject to minor fluctuations throughout the year. The cumulative figure was 29% of applications requiring the intervention of Officers to improve proposals to make them more acceptable. This reduction in the overall number of applications requiring improvement can be attributed to the fact that the Department received a greater number of applications which were acceptable upon submission, and as such did not require negotiation.

This measure will be deleted from the planning data set reported to scrutiny for 2015-2016. Whilst it is important as an indicator for the Planning Section to understand, as a comparative year on year indicator it is not appropriate. | | | | | |

10. Planning and Regulatory Services – Building Control

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
130	BCT/004 (SID)	Percentage of Building Control 'full plan' applications checked within 15 working days during the year.	96.1%	93.6%	98.1%	100%	☺
131	BCT/007 (SID)	The percentage of 'full plan' applications approved first time.	97%	97%	99%	96.6%	V

11. Economic Development

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
132	L(ED) 3 (Local)	Number of business enquiries resulting in advice, information or financial support being given to existing companies through Business Services.	651		682	686	↑
133	L(ED) 1 (Local)	Number of jobs created as a result of financial support by the Local Authority.	137		255	187	↓
133	It was anticipated that there would be lower output for 2014/15 which was reflected in the Corporate Improvement Plan target for the year of 145 (which was exceeded). Whilst businesses would seek funding to make investments, there remained uncertainty about the economic recovery and how this would impact on job creation. Secondly, changes to European Regulations requiring the Loan Fund to be registered with the Financial Conduct Authority meant that this fund would not be available for at least part of the year. The Loan was not available for the first six months of 2014/15 and this had an impact on the outputs achieved for this indicator. In addition, during the year, the Business Team has also administered an additional fund, Enhanced Local Needs Support which has contributed to the number of jobs created.						
134	L(ED) 2 (Local)	Number of new business start-up enquiries assisted through Business Services	349		429	361	↓
134	It was anticipated that there would be lower output for 2014/15 which was reflected in the Corporate Improvement Plan target for the year of 150 (which was exceeded). the Business Development team has had a great deal of success in setting up monthly Enterprise Clubs to fill a gap in the support market for individuals thinking about starting a business with Job Centre Plus being the key source of referrals. However, Job Centre Plus now invites business advisors from the Centre for Business to provide advice and this has resulted in a decrease in the number of enquiries for support. However, the changes to the welfare system have resulted in more individuals enquiring about self-employment so this should impact on outputs reported for this indicator in 2015/16.						

12. Corporate Health – Asset Management

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
135	CAM/001ai (SID)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition categories: A – Good	7.1%	16.4%	**7.15%**	**7.21%**	↑
136	CAM/001aii (SID)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition categories: B – Satisfactory	35.0%	57.3%	**41.17%**	**43.33 %**	↑
137	CAM/001aiii (SID)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition categories: C – Poor	46.2%	22.8%	**42.23%**	**39.79%**	↑
138	CAM//001bi (SID)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works of priority level: 1 – Urgent work	19.4%	8.4%	**15.16%**	**15.11%**	↑
139	CAM/001bii (SID)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works of priority level: 2 – Essential work	59.9%	52.0%	**60.61%**	**56.72%**	↑
140	CAM/001 biii (SID)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works of priority level: 3 – Desirable work	20.7%	39.5%	**24.23%**	**28.17%**	↑
141	CAM/001aiv (SID)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition categories: D – Bad	11.7%	3.6%	**9.45%**	**9.67%**	V

13. Leisure and Libraries

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
142	LCS/002(b) (NSI)	The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure centres during the year, per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity.	5,839	8,954 **22nd**	**5,696** (798,044 visits)	**5,775** (807,892 visits)	↑
143	LCL/001(b) (NSI)	The number of people using Public Libraries during the year, per 1,000 population.	6,831	5,851 **4th**	**6,839** (958,162 visits)	**5,709** (798,609 visits)	—
144	LCL/002a (SID)	The number of publicly accessible computers per 10,000 population.	8	9	**8**	**6**	—
145	LCL/002b (SID)	The percentage of available computer hours, in use.	46%	39%	**48%**	**46%**	—
146	LCL/003 (SID)	The percentage of library material requests supplied within 7 calendar days.	78%	69%	**83%**	**81%**	—
147	LCL/004 (SID)	The number of library materials issued, during the year, per 1,000 population.	4,146	4,424	**4,190** (587,079 issues)	**3,219** (450,318 issues)	—

The figures for the Library Service cannot be compared like for like to the previous year's performance, as NPTCBC ceded overall responsibility for five of the libraries to various community groups on 1st April 2014 and a further four on 1st May 2014. Comparing like for like (with the remaining Libraries), visits are up 1.44%, Material Issued down 11.13%. The withdrawal of the Mobile Library service from Southern Powys has impacted on the Material Issued figures (withdrawal of funding from Powys).

14. Environment & Transport – Waste Management

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
148	WMT/009b (NSI/PAM)	The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated bio wastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way.	48.33%	54.33% **14th**	**54.04%**	**58.10%**	↑
	All Wales 2014/15 data will be published by the Welsh Government on 2nd September 2015. Our ranking 14th as shown in the flag relates to 2013/14 performance.						
149	WMT/004b (NSI/PAM)	The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities sent to landfill.	20.3%	37.72% **3rd**	**14.04%**	**11.10%**	↑
150	WMT/010i (SID)	The percentage of local authority municipal waste: Prepared for re-use.	0.15%	2.06%	**0.18%**	**0.29%**	↑
151	WMT/010ii (SID)	The percentage of local authority municipal waste: Recycled.	34.92%	33.80%	**38.09%**	**38.47%**	↑
152	WMT/010iii (SID)	The percentage of local authority municipal waste: Collected as source segregated bio-wastes and composted or treated biologically in another way.	13.27%	18.49%	**15.76%**	**19.34%**	↑
153	WMT/012 (SID)	The percentage of local authority collected municipal waste used to recover heat and power.	27.54%	9.11%	**29.33%**	**32.40%**	↑

15. Environment & Transport – Transport and Highways

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
154	**THS/009** (SID)	The average number of calendar days taken to repair street lamp failures during the year.	1.94	4.75	**1.83**	**1.56**	↑
155	**THS/007** (NSI)	The percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a concessionary bus pass.	91.8%	84.3% **6th**	**88.9%**	**90.6%**	↑
156	**THS/011a** (SID)	The percentage of: Principal (A) roads in overall poor condition.	7.9%	4.5%	**6.8%**	**5.8%**	↑
157	**THS/011b** (SID)	The percentage of: Non-principal/classified (B) roads in overall poor condition.	6.7%	6.1%	**5.2%**	**4.0%**	↑
158	**THS/011c** (SID)	The percentage of: Non-principal /classified C roads in overall poor condition.	9.6%	18.9	**8.2%**	**7.0%**	↑
159	**THS/012** (PAM)	The percentage of Principal (A) roads, Non-principal (B) roads and Non-principal C roads that are in overall poor condition.	8.0%	13.2% **4th**	**6.7%**	**5.6%**	↑

16. Environment & Transport - Countryside Management

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
160	CMT/001 (SID)	The percentage of total length of 'Rights of Way' which are easy to use by members of the public.	68%	69%	67%	68.9%	↑

17. Environment & Transport - Street Scene

No	PI Reference	PI Description	2012/13 Actual	All Wales 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2013/14	Quarter 4 (Full Year) 2014/15	Direction of Improvement
161	STS/005b (PAM)	The percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness.	83%	96.8% 9th	97.8%	98.8%	↑
162	STS/005a (SID)	The cleanliness Indicator	70	73.2	67.6	70.6	↑
163	STS/006 (NSI)	The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days.	95.25%	95.03% 21st	81.10%	72.06%	↓
		We saw an increase in reporting of fly tipping incidents this year (1,242 compared to 1,111 last year). One of the reasons for this is due to more accessible contact channels through social media, including Twitter and Facebook. There has also been an increase in elected Members reporting incidents. The overall drop in performance is as result of proactive work of the waste enforcement section, and our continued commitment to address fly tipping and subsequent prosecutions. As 15 days (statutory notice under the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978 – Section 6) is given to remove investigated incidents, waste is not permitted to be cleared within the 5 days; this will affect the overall performance of this Performance Indicator.					

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POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES –
MRS. KAREN JONES

9TH JULY 2015

SECTION C – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMMENTS - ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose of Report

To provide Members of the Cabinet Board with details of the annual report regarding complaints, compliments and comments.

Background

This report provides an overview of the complaints, compliments and comments during the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 in accordance with the Councils two stage policy.

In July 2011, the Welsh Government issued a model policy for adoption by public service providers in Wales with a view to creating a standardised, streamlined and seamless process for complaints from members of the public. The Welsh Government also issued accompanying guidance on implementing the model policy which was then adopted by NPTCBC in August 2011.

The guiding principle underlying the policy is "investigate once, investigate well" with an emphasis on conducting one investigation to deal thoroughly with the concerns raised, rather than multiple investigations at differing levels of the Council.

There are two stages to the policy and complainants who are dissatisfied with the Council's response after those stages have been completed may refer their complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales or other appropriate organisation for independent external consideration.

Two stage policy overview

Stage 1 - **informal resolution** - complaint is handled by the staff directly responsible for delivering the service with a response provided within 10 working days.

Stage Two- **formal investigation**- complaint is formally investigated by the designated complaints officer within the relevant directorate and a response provided within 20 working days.

Independent external consideration – the complainant is made aware of the ability to refer to another organisation for external consideration e.g. the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman should normally be satisfied that the matter has already been raised with the Council and that it has had a reasonable opportunity to investigate and respond in accordance with the two stage policy.

Reporting Processes

The Council has a Corporate Complaints Group, the members of which are responsible for implementing the policy and co-ordinating responses to complaints for the relevant directorate in which they work. This group is chaired by the Customer Services Manager and meets regularly to promote a corporate approach to handling and recording complaints and share good practice. Collated information is now stored electronically in a shared folder as a holistic record of dealings by the designated officers. As requested by Members, complaint summary reports relating to each directorate will be a regular item on scrutiny committee agendas going forward.

The Customer Services Manager also attends the All-Wales Complaints Group meetings held twice a year to share experience and learn from other councils.

The Head of Legal Services also reports annually to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board on complaints referred to the Ombudsman following receipt of the Ombudsman's Annual Report to enable comparisons between this authority and other Welsh Councils.

Furthermore, in accordance with the set Welsh Language Commission deadlines, the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services reports annually on complaints regarding the Council's Welsh Language provision to Policy and Resources Cabinet Board.

Summary/Overview 2014/2015

Social Services, Health and Housing

The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulation 2014 and the Representation Procedures (Wales) Regulation 2014 came into effect on the 1st August 2014. A key implication flowing from the implementation of the regulations on complaints is the need for the authority to strengthen the way in which it manages the process of investigating and responding to complainants within required timescales and learning and applying any lessons identified.

Consultation findings concluded that arrangements should be differentiated to clearly separate the administrative and investigative functions at Stage 1 of the complaints process.

Following an internal restructure the Directorate Support Office is now responsible for administering and supporting the complaints system by applying the procedures within the regulations.

The individual service areas are responsible for ownership of the process and investigation of complaints at Stage 1, bringing them to resolution or outcome and learning and applying the practice, procedural and policy implications.

The vast majority of the resolved complaints during this period were alleged communication difficulties and quality of social work support. Complaints resolved under The Children Act 1989, once again, reduced compared to the previous year. Thirty-eight complaints were considered and resolved under the

Community Care Act and nine were resolved for Business Strategy, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Housing related services.

Three complaints were resolved at Stage 2 of the procedure in 2014/15 compared with ten in the previous financial year. The dedicated Complaints Team found that mediation has been a useful tool in promoting a resolution to some complaints without recourse to a formal investigation.

Three complaints were resolved at Stage 3 (Independent Panel) which is the same as the previous financial year. Apart from a requirement to apologise in a variety of circumstances, the resulting action plans highlight several recommendations which the services use to improve future service delivery. It should be noted that from 1st August 2014, Stage 3 of the Social Services procedures has been removed; complainants who remain dissatisfied with the response at Stage 2 can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Environment

Since the task and finish group outcomes, improved recording of information and action taken has taken place. Complaints at stage 1 have increased from 7 to 12 and at stage 2 decreased from 16 to 14 compared to last year with compliments decreasing from 30 to 21.

A total of 8 Stage 1 complaints were upheld, the majority of which were regarding Waste Collection Services. These complaints were rectified and apologies made. Three Stage 2 complaints were also upheld, two of which were regarding Waste Collection Services and one a Building Control complaint which resulted in a change of policy.

Education and Lifelong Learning

There were 15 Stage 1 complaints of which 14 were not upheld following further investigation. The remaining complaint was partly upheld which resulted in the process relating to time taken to issue a statement of special needs being changed.

Twenty stage 2 complaints arose of which 17 were not upheld. Two were partly upheld due to external factors outside the council control. The remaining one related to a statement of special educational needs which then

resulted in a change in the procedure to improve the issuing of future statements.

Two compliments were received.

Finance and Corporate Services

Compliments relating to the Council website are now routinely recorded, increasing overall compliments received for the Chief Executive's teams to 213 for Corporate Strategy, Customer Services, Committee Section, Elections, Mayoral and Scrutiny sections.

Twenty three stage 1 complaints were received covering a range of services including council tax and benefits disputes, registrars, bus pass and blue badge administrative processes. Six were upheld and dealt with in accordance with Council policy with processes reviewed and updated as needed.

Four complaints were recorded at Stage 2 and although not upheld, procedures were reviewed and updated where relevant.

One case had been subject to a Public Ombudsman enquiry but this was not upheld.

<u>Summary</u>

The number of complaints made under the Council's Complaints Policy has increased compared to the same period last year. It is likely that part of the increase is due to consistent expectations and improvements in capturing and recording complaints. It should be noted that the number of complaints upheld remained relatively low with the vast majority being resolved or not upheld.

Complaints will continue to be monitored to help identify the cause of any continuing or recurring service area issues. Complaints and Compliments activity is now incorporated in to the Council's wider performance management arrangements to better support Members in overviewing performance on a holistic basis. Managers also encourage the recording of compliments to help others learn from what our customers tell us we do well. This is particularly important as we work to deliver challenging savings targets and there are fewer staff to meet those targets.

The level of activity demonstrates that customers are using the complaints process appropriately. The low level of complaints escalating to stage 2 evidences that in the main, complaints are addressed by responsible service area managers at an early stage and, where applicable, lessons learned following investigation are being implemented.

Appendices

None

List of Background Papers

None

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

(a)   Implementation of Decision

This item is for immediate implementation.

(b)   Sustainability Appraisal

Community Plan Impacts

Economic Prosperity   -   No Impact
Education & Lifelong Learning   -   No Impact
Better Health & Wellbeing   -   No Impact
Environment & Transport   -   No Impact
Crime & Disorder   -   No Impact

Other Impacts

Welsh Language   -   No Impact
Sustainable Development   -   No Impact
Equalities   -   No Impact
Social Inclusion   -   No Impact

(c)   Consultation

This item is not subject to external consultation

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POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES –
MRS. KAREN JONES

9TH JULY 2015

SECTION C – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2014-15 AND CORPORATE ACTION PLAN 2013/2016

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with the Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report for 2014-2015 and the updated Corporate Action Plan.

Background

It was anticipated that the Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2013-2014 would be the last such report due to the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards. However, as the introduction of the Standards has been delayed to autumn 2015, the Welsh Language Commissioner has requested a monitoring report for 2014-2015.

Overview of Progress

While we have continued to work towards meeting our commitments under the current Welsh Language Scheme, we have been conscious of the anticipated requirements of the Welsh Language Standards and consequently focused on progressing existing initiatives rather than initiating new ones.

Progress on the action plan is included in the Monitoring Report Appendix 1

Welsh Language Standards

The Welsh Language Commissioner has prepared compliance notices for the introduction of the Welsh Language Standards. Officers are currently considering the compliance notices and the implications for the Council and will report to Members at the Special Policy and Resources Cabinet Board on 23rd July 2015.

Following receipt of the Council's response, final compliance notices will be served by the Commissioner in September 2015.

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Welsh Language Scheme Annual Monitoring Report 2014-2015.

List of Background Papers

None

Officer Contact

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL NEDD PORT TALBOT

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

2014-15

Annual Monitoring Report 2014-15

CONTENTS

1. **Scheme Management and Administration**

   Responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the Council's Welsh Language Scheme (the Scheme) lies with Caryn Furlow, Corporate Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager**.**

   The Heads of Service Equality and Community Cohesion Group monitors progress on the implementation of the Scheme and its action plan as well as supporting the mainstreaming of equalities within the Council.

   Each directorate provides assistance in monitoring the Scheme. This information in turn informs and supports the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan and the Neath Port Talbot partnership Single Integrated Plan, as well as strengthening our underlying principles.

   At an Elected Member level the Scheme, and its implementation, falls within the Cabinet portfolio of the Equality Champion, Cllr Arwyn Woolcock.

   The Scheme, the Annual Report and Action Plan are subject to the Council's established executive reporting mechanism which includes scrutiny at senior officer and elected member level, i.e. Heads of Service Equality and Community Cohesion Group, Corporate Management Group and Policy and Resources Cabinet Board/Scrutiny and Council.

2. **Dealing with Other Organisations and Procurement**

   The procurement service works to ensure a consistent approach to procurement across a wide range of supplies, services and works.

   The service is mindful of its legal obligations not only with regard to the spending of public money but also to the legal requirements in respect of the Welsh language. The procurement team works with service managers during the entire process to ensure that the Welsh language and equalities are considered at every stage.

   WLB/WLI 1 Number and percentage of the sample of third parties monitored that conform to the requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme

   Care Services
   As in previous years, in order to examine, assess and monitor services provided on behalf of the Council, and in particular Social Services, Health and Housing, by contractors, consultants, agents and third parties a survey was undertaken of a sample of providers of social care.

   A telephone questionnaire was undertaken with a snapshot of 12 providers of residential care and 5 providers of domiciliary care.

Survey Results

Generally the results were positive; 89% of the providers approached employed Welsh speaking staff, which is an increase on last year. They actively converse directly with Welsh speaking residents, which 78% of the homes/care agencies currently work with; and providers continue to recognise the importance of this. 1 home which does not currently have Welsh speaking staff, does offer bi-lingual literature.

The production of bilingual information/leaflets remains low but higher than last year, with 50% responding to having this in place. Unusually and in contrast to this only 17% had bilingual place signs.

It is recognised that generally, further work is required to educate, support and advise providers in relation to the responsibilities and expectations placed on them with regard to Welsh language. Officers will need to be sensitive to market needs and provide guidance on how best to approach this, including the sharing of best practice.

Officers within the Directorate have produced an action plan to address the strategic framework for Welsh Language in Health, Social Services and Social Care, 'More Than Just Words'. Work will progress during 2015-16 to develop the profile of Welsh language and adopt services to meet need.

Grants and Funding

As a result of the review of funding to third sector organisations in Neath Port Talbot a revised Grant Funding Scheme is being developed to ensure we have a more robust system around the provision of grants to the third sector.

One of the aims of the Scheme is to foster genuine partnership working between the Council and the Third Sector to promote the wellbeing of local people and communities.

3. <u>Welsh Language Frontline Services and Linguistic Skills</u>

Staff Awareness

We continue to raise awareness amongst staff of the requirements of our Scheme as well as the potential requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. Activities have included articles on the Welsh language have in our internal newsletter 'In the Loop', publicity of the 'How to...' guides which includes sections on producing bilingual publications as well as being an agenda item at individual service team meetings, senior management and Cabinet Board meetings

We are continuing our work to update and translate our website. Services have been working to ensure that their webpages are relevant, up to date and translated into Welsh and we now have approximately 1800 live webpages of which 62% are translated.

This work has also provided an opportunity not only for officers to be reminded of the requirements of our Scheme but also to have more awareness of the Welsh language in general.

Frontline Services

Guidance for the designation of posts is available on the Intranet, to assist in the process of designating posts as 'Welsh essential' or 'Welsh desirable' in accordance with the Scheme. Due to the financial challenges faced by the Council there are a limited number of posts advertised and the majority of these are only being advertised internally.

WLI 2: Number and Percentage of main reception, call centres or one stop shop posts that have been denoted as 'Welsh essential' and have been filled by staff who are bilingual

Number of Staff FTE	21
Number of Welsh Speaking Staff	4
Percentage of Staff	19
No. of Posts Designated Welsh – No Requirement/Desirable/Essential	3 Essential 18 Desirable

The number of Welsh speakers in the service has recently decreased with the overall numbers of staff working within Customer Services also reducing and continuing to reduce over the next 2 years to meet the savings identified in the forward financial plan. The ability to fill posts with Welsh speakers is affected with no external advertising of vacancies due to internal staff redeployment requirements to avoid compulsory redundancies.

The introduction of Skype services at Pontardawe will help overcome this, providing customers with remote interview facilities with Welsh speaking staff when required.

Customer Services staff work across three different locations (two face to face and one telephone based) to provide a first point of contact enquiry service for the Council during Council opening times. Since 1st April 2015 there are 2 bilingual staff whose first language is Welsh and 2 bilingual staff who can converse competently in Welsh to deal with first point of contact enquiries. Any further training needs for Welsh language delivery would be fully supported by the service managers.

There is a dedicated Welsh language line for the Council's switchboard provision for first point of contact queries which should be published alongside the English line contact details on general Council correspondence and on the Council's website.

As significant numbers of staff have left the Council there is a likely impact on the overall numbers of staff available to deal with customer enquiries in Welsh; this will feature in the considerations over the implementation of the new Standards.

Welsh Language Training

WLI 4 (a): The number of staff who have received training in Welsh to a specific qualification level.

The Council can access five levels of Welsh language courses for its employees, provided by Swansea University Welsh for Adults Centre.

There is currently 1 employee undertaking training at Intermediate Level (Year 6). Numbers enrolling for courses have dropped in recent years however we are currently exploring new opportunities for learning the Welsh language. One such opportunity is collaboration with Unison to provide a tailored course for staff working in social care. The course is based on an entry level syllabus and will run 2 hours per week, over 12 weeks. The course aims to give linguistic skills and enable learners to understand and converse with others at a level to allow daily conversation.

WLI 4 (b): The number of staff who have received language awareness training.

Service	2013/2014 No. Employees
Chief Executive's	3
Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning	4
Environment	0
Finance & Corporate Services	2
Social Services, Health & Housing	29
Other	37
Total	**75**

The above figures are representative of the following training sessions:
- Understanding Cultural Diversity in a Welsh Context
- Welsh Language Awareness for Social Work Students
- Customer Care and Telephone Skills

Customer Care and Telephone Skills

The Council runs a Customer Care and Telephone Skills Course, which is a one day training course that is open to all employees. The course defines customer care, looks at the consequences of good and poor service and helps participants to develop communication skills. Part of the course also raises awareness about the requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme and meeting the Communicating with the Welsh Speaking Public objectives.

Social Work Degree

Social Work students seconded and hosted by the Council receive "Welsh Language Awareness in Neath Port Talbot' training. The course raises awareness of the use of the Welsh language across the geographical areas of Neath Port Talbot based on the latest census information and looks at the equal opportunities that staff working in social care should provide to users accessing services.

Practice assessors and facilitators of social work students receive training on 'Cultural Diversity within a Welsh Context'. The course supports assessors and facilitators with the applying knowledge and context to support students through their learning and application to practice in accordance with National Occupational Standards for Social Work and Code of Practice for Social Care Workers.

Welsh language, culture and its context is an integral part of the degree course in Wales and Welsh context and practice must be sufficiently evidenced throughout the course. We have practice learning opportunities that can be offered through the medium of Welsh with practice assessors able to complete the assessment process in Welsh.

Practice and Consolidation Programme

As part of social workers First Year in Practice Programme newly qualified social workers are asked to reflect on their experience of working in Neath Port Talbot. This includes considering Welsh context in Neath Port Talbot and how they apply policy and procedure. This allows the opportunity for reflection especially for those newly qualified social workers who have not studied in this area or who studied in England.

Newly qualified social workers entering their 2nd year of practice are required to undertake a consolidation programme. Neath Port Talbot CBC is part of the 'Porth Agored' partnership. The Porth Agored partnership is responsible for the writing, development and implementation of the consolidation programme and work in conjunction with University of South Wales,Trinity Saint David.

This programme can be undertaken in both Welsh and English and the partnership has sufficient resources to offer this. In addition a section of the required portfolio is 'Characteristics and needs of Wales, its languages, culture, geography and institutions'. Candidates are required to compose a timeline to show the historical context of the Welsh language including legislation and policy and are asked to reflect on the timeline with examples from their social work practice.

Multi-Agency and Foster Carer Training

Welsh language awareness is included where possible on any multi-agency and assessment training. Case studies used are set in a context of Welsh language and emphasise the need for its use in particular with vulnerable adults and children whose first language is Welsh; the need to provide services to gain an accurate reflection or assessment; where the service is requested through the medium of Welsh e.g. children whose first language is Welsh or service users with dementia.

Foster carers providing placements for Welsh speaking children and young people are supported to attend local Welsh classes. All carers are sign posted to online courses through the "learn at home" section of the Foster Carers Training Programme.

<u>Children's Services Staff Training</u>

A case study used on 'Working together to safeguard children' focuses on a young child whose first language is Welsh. The purpose of this is to highlight the need for staff to consider bilingual provision when interviewing children in particular. This is reinforced further on core skills training including 'Court Skills' where further case studies require staff to consider bilingual provision in order to ascertain the wishes and feelings of the child in care proceedings in the family court.

<u>Health and Social Care Diploma</u>

All candidates enrolled to complete Health and Social Care Diploma (Level 3-5) must complete the mandatory unit 'Promote equality and inclusion in health, social care or children's and young people's settings'. They are encouraged to consider Welsh language, context and to provide evidence as part of their portfolios. Through standardisation internal assessors working in Neath Port Talbot will focus on ensuring that the need to consider services for citizens through Welsh is explored as part of the assessment process.

Further key areas to note and training implications:

The Neath Port Talbot CBC Training and Development Team is a registered centre with Agored – the Welsh awarding organisation committed to promoting the Welsh language by encouraging the assessment of learning through the medium of Welsh.

All learners entering onto a programme of learning or undertaking a qualification are asked to complete an equalities questionnaire which ensures learners are offered their preferred choice of learning environment and studying through medium of Welsh.

Employees requesting a Dyslexia Workplace Needs Assessment are asked their first language choice. English medium assessments are undertaken internally and there is currently no provision to undertake Welsh medium assessments. Employees who require a Welsh medium assessment will be referred to Dyslexia Cymru.

Course evaluations are bilingual and the Training Department welcome feedback in both Welsh and English.

One of the challenges to delivering dementia services in Wales is the need to be able to provide a Welsh language service, in particular to support communication as dementia progresses. A direct link to this work has also been made to **More than just words.** Many people with dementia will often revert to their first language and it is essential that they can be understood and reassured by a carer who can converse in their first language and positively impacts on providing person centred services in an individual's first language.

'They all speak English anyway' – through this Welsh Language Awareness Training Resource we are continuing to reinforce the importance of the Welsh Language.

Section 14 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 makes provision for the Welsh language by imposing requirements on local authorities to provide the required range and level of services and assessment through the medium of Welsh. As such one of our key priorities for 2015-16 is the improved provision of Welsh Language training opportunities in order to strengthen Welsh language services in Neath Port Talbot.

The National Outcomes Framework will help track locally and nationally, progress towards the transformation of care and support services and measure how that care and support is helping people achieve well-being outcomes. Quality standards and performance measures will require us to report on whether people receive services through the Welsh language if they need it and the percentage of people who use the welsh language to communicate with health or social care staff.

A Performance Measurement Framework will underpin the National Outcomes Framework. Reporting against the performance measurement framework will be integral to an annual report, provision of which is included in the Social Services Regulation and Inspection Bill. The outcome of these is likely to impact on the provision and availability of Welsh language training in Neath Port Talbot.

Linguistic Skills

Applicants are asked to complete an equalities questionnaire as part of the recruitment process and the information is recorded on Vision, the Council's personnel and payroll system, on appointment.

The following information has been collated for all services using the Vision System. The tables below summarise the percentage and number of staff who are Welsh speakers and learners spilt via service and grade.

As stated above the data currently held is recorded on appointment.

WLI 5: The number and percentage of staff within the Council's services who are able to speak Welsh (excluding school teachers and school based staff)

Number and percentage of staff within the Council's Service who are Welsh speakers according to service division

DIVISION	Grade 1		Grade2		Grade3		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12		Grade 13	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%
BUSINESS STRATEGY AND PUBLIC	-	-	2	40	4	5	5	22	3	11	0	0	7	15	0	0	3	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES	0	0	0	0	1	14	2	11	4	10	7	10	2	13	1	4	5	9	5	10	4	27	1	100	0	0
COMMUNITY CARE AND COMMISSIONING SERVICES	0	0	3	23	1	3	36	11	22	11	3	12	2	17	2	9	4	4	2	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	3	14	0	0	2	25	2	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	50	-	-
ENGINEERING AND TRAN	-	-	1	2	3	8	0	0	2	10	2	13	2	11	0	0	0	0	1	13	1	20	0	0	0	0
FINANCIAL SERVICES	-	-	-	-	1	7	0	0	7	9	1	4	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	17	0	0	0	0
HUMAN RESOURCES	1	100	-	-	1	100	1	33	5	22	0	0	0	0	4	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ICT	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15	0	0	1	5	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LEGAL	0	0	0	0	2	9	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	1	10	1	17	1	33	0	0
PARTICIPATION	0	0	0	0	3	5	2	10	3	7	1	3	6	19	1	25	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
PLANNING	-	-			0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14	2	50	2	13	1	9	-	-	1	20	-	-	0	0
PROPERTY AND REGENERATION	7	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	19	1	17	1	5	0	0	1	14	0	0	1	100	0	0
SOUTH WALES TRUNK ROAD AGENCY	-	-	-	-	2	17	0	0	1	8	1	13	1	3	3	20	0	0	2	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
STREETCARE SERVICES	-	-	10	13	11	7	3	5	15	10	3	9	7	20	4	40	0	0	1	33	0	0	0	0	1	50
TRANSFORMATION	0	0	11	19	9	9	3	13	4	8	2	7	5	19	2	9	2	12	0	0	1	25	0	0	0	0
WESTERN BAY	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	-	2	17	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	-

8

Number and percentage of staff within the Council's Service who are Welsh learners according to service division and grades of posts

DIVISION	Grade 1		Grade2		Grade3		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12		Grade 13	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%	no	%
BUSINESS STRATEGY AND PUBLIC	-	-	0	0	12	16	1	4	7	25	2	9	5	44	0	0	3	15	1	13	1	14	1	50	0	0
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES	1	7	0	0	1	14	3	17	3	8	12	17	3	20	2	7	3	5	6	12	2	14	0	0	2	33
COMMUNITY CARE AND COMMISSIONING SERVICES	-	-	-	-	1	3	20	6	16	8	6	23	0	0	3	14	10	17	4	31	1	17	0	0	1	25
CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	2	9	1	25	1	13	3	17	2	33	0	0	0	0	1	100	-	-
ENGINEERING AND TRAN	-	-	1	2	1	3	1	8	4	19	2	13	4	21	1	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	33	0	0
FINANCIAL SERVICES	-	-	-	-	1	7	1	13	3	4	2	8	3	13	1	25	0	0	0	0	1	8	0	0	0	0
HUMAN RESOURCES	0	0	-	-	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0	2	22	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	50
ICT	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0	4	19	0	1	17	1	1	5	3	16	1	14	1	25	0	0	0	0
LEGAL	0	0	1	25	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	-	-	2	17	2	20	0	0	1	33	0	0
PARTICIPATION	-	-	-	-	8	14	2	10	6	14	3	8	6	19	0	0	1	17	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
PLANNING	-	-	-	-	0	0	1	25	0	0	1	14	0	0	1	7	1	9	-	-	0	0	-	-	1	50
PROPERTY AND REGENERATION	0	0	0	0	1	8	0	0	0	0	2	25	1	14	3	14	1	10	1	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
SOUTH WALES TRUNK ROAD AGENCY	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	13	3	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0
STREETCARE SERVICES	-	-	2	3	8	5	2	3	9	6	3	9	6	17	1	10	1	11	1	33	0	0	2	100	0	0
TRANSFORMATION	0	0	6	11	11	11	3	13	2	4	4	13	3	12	3	14	4	24	1	14	0	0	1	33	1	50
WESTERN BAY	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	-	3	27	0	0	-	-	0	0	1	8	1	50	-	-	1	100	-	-

Youth Services

As reported on for the last 2 years changes to funding have once again impacted on the breadth of activity the Youth Service has been able to provide to promote Welsh language and culture during 2014/15.

External grant funding was used to support Welsh language and culture this year with staff awareness sessions in clubs and training in art and craft which was then cascaded to young people in youth settings and come targeted groups. Examples of the work include

- Studying the work of Welsh Artist David Carpinini; artwork inspired by the landscape and the village of Blaengwynfi.
- Producing collages of the Welsh Flag
- Looking at the traditions and story associated with St Dwynwen.
- Card and gift making to celebrate St Dwynwen's Day
- Raising awareness of St David's Day by creating Welsh flags, daffodils and leeks with a range of different art and craft resources. S
- Within the Autistic Youth Club 17 Young People made Christmas, St Dwynwen's Day and Easter Cards as well as Easter Wreaths with the message of Pasg Hapus. Ball games have also been used in the youth club to encourage the use of Welsh Language where the young people are learning the days of the week, months of the year and numbers
- Sessions with the Traveller Education Unit included making bilingual cards for Christmas, St Dwynwen's Day and Easter, wreath making for St Dwynwen's Day with the words 'Cariad' or 'Cwtch' and for St David's Day they made daffodil brooches and bookmarks illustrated with the Welsh flag.

Some crafts projects undertaken by the young people have been Agored Cymru accredited. The Welsh Culture Agored Cymru unit has been offered to 15 youth clubs and a number of young people took part in a range of activities. The unit specifically at Welsh culture events, symbols associated with Wales, sporting, musical and literary traditions associated with Wales, Welsh myths and legends, Welsh language and Welsh performers. Five young people have completed the unit and are awaiting moderation. These sessions have increased the young people's knowledge of the traditions and customs of Wales along with building on, literacy, communication and teamwork skills.

Providing opportunities for young people to experience activities and places for the first time have been part of the work of the service throughout the year. One opportunity was a visit to the Millennium Stadium to watch the Wales v Fiji Autumn International. It was an opportunity to be patriotic, be proud of being welsh and experience a successful sporting win.

The use of Welsh has been encouraged and supported in the youth clubs; particularly Cwmlynfell, Crynant and Seven Sisters. This helps reinforce the Welsh language for those who are fluent, provides opportunities for staff and young people who are already learning and encourages others to start. The mobile youth provision, the Rolling Zone, in Ystalyfera between April and November 2014, provided a range of activities delivered through the medium of Welsh.

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The Youth Service has been working with other services and organisations to provide specific pieces of work for young people and the wider community. These include:

- Producing Welsh language sex relationship education packs for key stages 2 and 3 for all schools.
- Youth workers also provided support to run bilingual sex relationship education sessions in YG Ystalyfera
- Communities First youth workers and staff and young people from Glyncorrwg youth club worked with the local community with the aim of having a war memorial erected in their community. A great deal of research was carried out within the community and with other organisations and although unfortunately the project didn't come to fruition learning about the role Wales played in both World Wars was a rewarding experience for all.
- The Communities First youth work team supported a young person last summer to revise for her Welsh GCSE.
- Working with the Youth Council a candidate pack for their upcoming elections has been translated into Welsh.

Childcare

We are continuing to work with all childcare settings to increase the amount of Welsh language used. Mudiad Meithrin (the organisation that supports Welsh medium settings) have recently changed their organisations structure and now have a language support officer for each region, so this should improve the quality of the language used in Cylchoedd Meithrin.

Currently there are 9 registered Cylchoedd Meithrin in the area, along with approximately 10 parent and toddler groups that are classed as bilingual - Cylchoedd Ti a Fi.

The location of bilingual provision is mainly focused in areas with a significant population who use the Welsh language; the Amman, Upper Swansea and Dulais valleys.

4. **Standard of Welsh Language Services**

WLI 6 Number of complaints received in relation to the operation of the Language Scheme and the percentage dealt with in accordance with the Council's corporate standards

No complaints in relation to the Welsh language were received during 2014-15.

5. <u>Analysing Performance and Publishing Information</u>

Scrutiny arrangements for the Annual Monitoring Report and Corporate Action Plan remain the same as in previous years, with the report being published on the Council's website.

A summary of progress is highlighted in the following Corporate Action Plan.

Those actions that were identified as completed in last year's report have been removed and so the numbered actions in the following action plan will not be sequential.

As the Welsh Language Standards will require a different approach to both delivery and monitoring arrangements it is considered appropriate that outstanding actions from the current action plan are reconsidered as part of the ongoing work following the introduction of the Standards

Summary of successes in 2014-15

- We have made significant progress to determine the relevance and appropriateness of the information contained on the website as well as existence of equivalent Welsh web pages.

Priorities for 2015-16

- Improve monitoring and compliance of the Council's website, which remains a priority action in the 2013/2016 action plan.

- Implementation of the Welsh Language Standards

- Consider linguistic skills as part of the 'More Than Just Words' Strategy/Action Plan

6. <u>Welsh Language Standards</u>

The introduction of the Standards in autumn 2015 will provide a new framework for the council in taking forward its commitment to the Welsh language. However, should the Standards be applied in full it will create additional financial and human resource pressures at a time of enduring austerity. It will be an unreasonable and disproportionate use of our limited resources to fully implement the Standards and the Council will therefore need to work with the Welsh Language Commissioner to agree a course of action that is appropriate and relevant, given the anticipated further cuts in local government budgets.

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7. Corporate Action Plan

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
MAINSTREAMING				
1e	Consider the development of an Equality Impact Assessment template/guidance for collaborative projects in South and South West Wales Region	2013/15	🟩	The South West Wales Regional Equality Group provided recommendations to the Heads of Policy All Wales Group on a template for use on collaborative projects. Progress on this matter is dependent on the response from the Heads of Policy All Wales Group. However, with the demise of the Equalities Unit in the WLGA there may be limited support for this work should it go forward**.**
DEALING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND PROCUREMENT				
2	Social Services, Health and Housing to undertake exercises to meet the Welsh Language Commission's best practice guidance as detailed in "Contracting out Public Service Contracts and the Welsh Language".	2013/14	🟧	The Social Care Health and Housing Department has undertaken a survey with a sample of external providers on their Welsh language provision. This survey will continue each year on a sample of different providers until all have been surveyed. This work is ongoing

KEY	Yes	In Part	No
	🟩	🟧	🟥

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
FRONTLINE SERVICES AND LINGUISTIC SKILLS				
2a	Ensure that reference to and inclusion of equalities and the Welsh language is taken into account when procuring services, including the work on the Programme for Improving Corporate Systems (PICS)	2013/14		Reference to and inclusion of equalities and the Welsh language are included in tender documentation.
3	To consider the Welsh Language Commission's guidance on the "Assessment of Linguistic Skills" as part of the Council's recruitment process.	2014/15		With the current general moratorium on external recruitment this work has been interrupted. This will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards
3a	Update 'A Guide to the Designation of Posts' in light of the advice document 'Recruitment: Welsh Language Considerations'	2014/15		The current general moratorium on external recruitment makes work to increase linguistic capability in our workforce very difficult and has delayed work in relation to this action. This will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
3b	Social Services to consider language and recruitment as part of the 'More than Just Words' Strategy and Action Plan	2013/15		'Welsh Language Awareness in Neath Port Talbot' continues to be a core element of the Social Work Degree Course. This includes raising language awareness and looks at the equal opportunities that staff working in social care should provide to those accessing services. As part of the 'More than Just Words' action plan work is continuing to marry together geographic, service user and staff language profiles. This remains challenging particularly in light of personnel and organisational changes throughout the directorate.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
4	Develop language awareness opportunities.	2014/15		This will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards
4a	Include Welsh language as an item in the Equalities Conference	2014/15		The Conference was held in September 2014 and was attended by Elected members and Officers of the council. The focus of the conference was why and how to engage with various equality groups and the importance of engagement when undertaking Equality Impact Assessments. It was also hoped to provide an update on the Welsh Language Standards but this was not possible due to the limited information that was available at this time. However, there have been other opportunities such as articles in the Loop, team briefings, briefings to the Heads of Service Equality and Community Cohesion Group and Corporate Management Group as well as updates to Elected Members.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
4b	Identify further relevant training opportunities to incorporate language awareness	2013/15		This will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards
5	Welsh language to be considered at a future Children and Young People's Partnership Management Group meeting	2014/15		We are continuing to work with all childcare settings to increase the amount of Welsh language used and the presence of a Mudiad Meithrin language support officer in Neath Port Talbot officer will help improve the quality of the language used
STANDARDS OF WELSH LANGUAGE SERVICES				
6	Monitor and improve website compliance with the Scheme.	2014/15		Significant progress has been made during 2014-15 on updating revising and translating our website. A small team has been established to support service areas on updating their information as well as ensuring that it is translated and available on the appropriate Welsh web pages.
6a	Update, revise and translate home page	2014/15		
6b	Identify most accessed areas	2014/15		
6c	Revise and translate most accessed areas	2014/15		

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
6d	Update the website with new bilingual 'self-service' applications: • Bulk Collections • Pest Control • Pot Holes • Refuse and Recycling Equipment • Street Lighting	2014/15		As the problems with the form request, appointments and payment area of the webpage are linked to back office systems software the translation of these areas has not been able to be resolved. The cost to update the software along with the limited number of staff available with the relevant language skills will greatly impact on our ability to offer these services completing bilingually. However, this will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards
6e	Develop an Online Strategy ensuring that new and current content is bilingual with a target of a fully bilingual website	2014/16		The development of the Digital by Choice policy will address this.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
PUTTING THE SCHEME INTO PRACTICE AND MONITORING PROGRESS				
8	Continue to promote and develop the network of employees who are Welsh speakers and learners.	2014/15		Unfortunately we have not been able to progress this work during 2014/5 due to the continuing high number of changes in personnel. This will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards.
8a	Review the Network in light of recent personnel changes	2014/15		Personnel changes continued during 2014/15. The work to progress this action has been delayed due to the reasons set out in **8** above. This will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards.
8d	Develop an editorial policy, to clarify certain issues, to be read in conjunction with the current Welsh Language Scheme	2013/14		We have considered it a better use of resources to delay this work and develop guidance for use in conjunction with the Standards.

Action No.	Action	Target Date	Action Completed	Comment
PUTTING THE SCHEME INTO PRACTICE AND MONITORING PROGRESS (Cont)				
8e	Identify opportunities to promote and develop the network, e.g. equalities conference	2013/14		The Equalities Conference was held in September 2015. This will continue to be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards.
8f	Review the Welsh Language Scheme Employee Guidance	2014/15		This will be considered in light of the new Welsh Language Standards
8g	Revise the Welsh Language Employee Guidance in line with New Standards	2015/16		Await the Standards and produce appropriate documentation
IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLANS AND TIMETABLE				
9	Implement the Welsh Language Commission's final version of the Standards, once published.	2014/15		Await the Standards and produce appropriate documentation.
9a	Review Single Integrated Plan following publication of the Standards	2014/15		Await the Standards and produce appropriate documentation

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SECTION C – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Purpose of Report:

To report progress on the Corporate Assessment action plan (Appendix 1) drawn up by Officers to respond to the proposals for improvement from the Wales Audit Office's report:

"Neath Port Talbot Annual Improvement Report, incorporating the Corporate Assessment Report 2014, November 2014."

Background

The Wales Audit Office is required to deliver a rolling programme of in-depth corporate assessments once, during a four year period for each Council. Our corporate assessment was undertaken in June 2014.

The action plan to address the proposals for improvement set out in the Report, was agreed at Council on 14th January 2015 and since then it has been incorporated into the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan 2015-2018 (as part of the delivery programme).

Progress

In total we received 20 proposals for improvement and to date, progress is as follows:

- 7 proposals for improvement have been completed. These are P5, P6, P7, P8, P10, P16 and P19;
- 13 proposals for improvement have been partially completed. These are P1, P2, P3, P4, P9, P11, P12, P13, P14, P15, P17, P18 and P20; and

Further progress reports will be brought back to Members on a quarterly basis throughout the civic year.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Corporate Assessment Action Plan

List of Background Papers:

Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report, incorporating the Corporate Assessment Report 2014 http://www.wao.gov.uk/publication/neath-port-talbot-county-borough-council-annual-improvement-report-including-corporate

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

LATEST UPDATE

Governance				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
P1	**Establish a skills training programme which supports members to discharge their roles and responsibilities effectively.**	1. Revised format for Member Seminars introduced.	Completed	Green
		2. Refresher training for Members undertaking Annual Development Reviews with other Members completed.	Completed	Green
		3. Survey of all Members to be conducted to identify development priorities for civic year 2015/16.	30.04.15 Survey is underway. Delay in completion – 31.07.15.	Amber
	Introduce formal appraisal of the roles of Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs as a means of driving skills development.	4. It has been decided that no further action will be taken at this time to introduce formal appraisal. Other mechanisms will be employed to ensure Members access the development they need.	n/a	n/a
P2	**Revised scrutiny arrangements to establish a more balanced range of scrutiny activity, produce a forward programme to enable planning and coordination of activity and end time-consuming practices that lack impact.**	1. Forward work programmes established for each committee and published.	Completed	Green
		2. Pre-decision work now operating on a selective basis.	Completed	Green
		3. Evaluation of changes to scrutiny to be undertaken towards the end of the civic year to identify further priorities for improvement.	30.04.15 Review underway. Discussing Wales Audit Office	Amber

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Governance				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
		feedback from follow up work.		
P3	**Provide comprehensive and accessible information about the business conducted by the Council.**	1. Replacement committee administration system "Modern.gov" went live October 2014	Completed	
		2. Forward work programmes now in place for all scrutiny committees and cabinet boards.	Completed	
		3. Procedures to record decisions taken by officers under delegated authority to be reviewed.	30.09.15 Work not started.	
Note	**Actions P1 to P3 – Karen Jones to produce a report for Council prior to recess with next set of development actions.**			
P4	**Improve whistle blowing by:** • **Clarifying reporting arrangements.** • **Bringing together the information currently held in different documents.** • **Giving more information about safeguards that the council will provide to employees under the arrangements.**	1. The policy and procedure will be reviewed in line with WAO advice and amalgamated into one document.	30.06.15 Policy and procedure is being reviewed and this work will be completed by 31.8.15. (revised date). We are working with the Corporate Communications Team to develop a communication strategy and ensure that the policy is well publicised and known to employees and other workers of	

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Governance				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
			the Council.	
P4	**Improve whistle blowing by:** • **Clarifying reporting arrangements.** • **Bringing together the information currently held in different documents.** • **Giving more information about safeguards that the council will provide to employees under the arrangements.**	2. The policy and procedure will be reviewed in line with WAO advice and amalgamated into one document.	30.06.15 Policy and procedure is being reviewed and this work will be completed by 31.8.15. (revised date). We are working with the Corporate Communications Team to develop a communication strategy and ensure that the policy is well publicised and known to employees and other workers of the Council.	Amber
		3. The accessibility of the policy will be reviewed, again in line with WAO advice.	30.06.15 As above comment.	Amber

Performance Management				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Performance Management				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
P5	**Ensure programme delivery expectations are based on a realistic assessment of resources available – especially in the Transforming Adult Social Care Programme and Regeneration Programme.**	The scope and aims of the 2 priority programmes will be reviewed as part of the annual development of the Corporate Improvement Plan and confirmation that sufficient resources are available to deliver the agreed, revised programme will be part of that review.	Completed New programme established.	Green
P6	**Place a focus on poorer performing schools to drive and sustain improvements having regard to the levels of performance expected for schools in Wales with similar levels of deprivation.**	1. Already accommodated within the Corporate Improvement Plan priority 2 "Better Schools, Brighter Prospects."	Completed	Green
		2. Enhanced scrutiny and monitoring arrangements have been identified to enable Members to have a greater insight into performance at schools level.	Completed	Green
P7	**Implement proposed performance reporting improvements to bring together information in a way that allows the council to evaluate whether it is making effective use of its resources.**	1. Post-implementation review of progress in developing report cards at accountable manager level to be carried out in early 2015.	Completed	Green
		2. Corporate performance and resource dashboard developed.	Completed	Green
	Introduce performance review arrangements that enable evaluation of the contribution of internal trading agencies to the achievement of the council's objectives.	3. Arrangements to ensure systematic review of the operation of internal trading agencies to be considered.	To be decided Property Bay Wales business is in the process of being wound up and the accounts are being prepared accordingly.	Green

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Financial Planning				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
P8	**Improve financial planning and monitoring by combining financial and performance information more effectively, particularly reinforcing links between the Forward Financial Plan and Business Plans.**	1. Revised budget monitoring arrangements have been introduced and will be subject to continuous improvement.	Completed	Green
		2. Timetabling of budget and performance monitoring subject of review with the aim of securing better integration.	Completed	Green
P9	**Clarify the corporate policy on income generation and charging to ensure a consistent approach to concessions and target groups.**	Prepare corporate policy on income generation and charging.	30.09.15 The income generation project is underway and the policy will be written in line with the findings of the project.	Amber
P10	**Improve reporting of financial information to assist understanding of:** • **The implications of savings plans and additional pressures on the quality and range of services especially those services which support improvement priorities.** • **The links between budget reports and the Forward Financial Plan to explain the impact on the savings target and risk assessment.**	Covered in actions taken regarding P8.	n/a	n/a
P11	**Review Accounting Instructions and Financial Regulations to ensure they**	Review started before the corporate assessment and will be on-going, each of the Accounting	To be decided This is an on-going piece of	Amber

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Performance Management				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
	reflect the latest working practices and Council policies and communicate requirements to staff.	Instruction's needs to be continually reviewed periodically.	work. Responsibility for the Accounting Instructions has been assigned to appropriate officers and all of them have to be reviewed on a three year cycle plus whenever there are significant changes in processes or procedures relevant to a particular Accounting Instruction.	

Human Resources				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
P12	**Part 1:** **Ensure full adoption by December 2015 of an appraisal process that ensures staff are equipped to do their jobs and enables people to be held to account.**	Chief Officer Appraisal process implemented in 2014. An end of year review of process will take place post 31st March 2015, to ensure fit for purpose.	Completed Chief Officer Appraisal process implemented in 2014. All Chief Officer appraisals have been completed in the 2015 cycle. The review of this process is planned as part of the wider work in relation to Appraisal	Green

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Human Resources				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
Page 189		(see below), and will be discussed and agreed with representing trade unions.		
		Roll out to Accountable Managers has begun.	31.12.15 This is happening on a voluntary basis, and there is more take up in some parts of the Council than others. It is intended that the process itself will be reviewed as part of the wider work in relation to Appraisal (see below), and will be discussed and agreed with representing trade unions.	Amber
		Appraisal process for wider workforce to be developed and implemented during 2015.	31.12.15 (pilot) This will be developed over the coming months in partnership with representing trade unions. It is intended that the new process will be piloted by December 2015 with full roll and implementation by 31.03.15.	Amber

WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Human Resources				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
Page 190	**Part 2:** **Implement an induction process and ensure new staff are briefed on corporate expectations.**	A Corporate Induction process is in place – The Induction Checklist. This will be reviewed in line with WAO expectations. It will be determined if this can be linked to on line learning as part of the re-launch of the Checklist.	31.12.15 The Induction Checklist has been reviewed, however monitoring shows that completion rates run at around 5%. Therefore a full review of the process is to take place with a view to ensuring that all new employees, and employees who move jobs within the Council do receive a proper induction and that this is recorded. As this forms part of the Employee Performance Framework, this review will be carried out in conjunction with the review of appraisal process. On target for completion 31.12.15	Amber
	Part 3: **Establish a Workforce Plan.**	1. Establish a Workforce Plan.	30.04.16 We are focusing on starting to get workforce information out to management teams which will	Amber

WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Human Resources				
Ref:	Proposal for Improvement	Actions	Target completion date	RAG
Page 191			form the basis for developing plans – so the Organisations Structures database is the first step towards that, and then dashboards later in the year. We are looking to build in an element of workforce planning into the business planning process for next year.	
		2. VISION development, under the Efficiency Programme Board aims to establish the collation of accurate workforce data to enable managers to workforce plan as part of the Business Planning process.	A costs benefits analysis of 'Reachout' is underway and will be reported to July Efficiency Programme Board to determine the future development of VISION.	Amber
		3. Data cleansing of the establishment data held on the VISION system will be completed by 30/4/15 and to enable the provision of accurate post data.	30.04.15 Initial cleansing has been completed. New processes are now established to maintain establishment data. In addition a 'Workforce Planning Organisational	Amber

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Human Resources				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
Page 192			Structures' database has been developed with I.T. and is currently being piloted by the Chief Executive / Directors of Finance & Environment and the Finance & Corporate Services / Chief Executives Heads of Services prior to full roll out to senior management teams. Not only will this provide useful information in relation to employees and posts within service areas for workforce planning purposes, it will also encourage managers to ensure that information is provided in a timely way to the HR team to maintain the validity of the data. Workforce profiles are being developed to provide Heads of Service with dashboards setting out key data in relation to their workforce – we aim to have this implemented across the Council	

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NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Human Resources				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
			by 31.3.16.	
		4. The Corporate Improvement Plan will set out the actions the Council plans to take to improve its workforce planning.	Completed	Green

Asset Management				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
P13	**Update the Asset Management Plan so that it acts as a point of reference for the next five years and corresponds more closely to current priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan.**	Plan to be revised and aligned to the Corporate Improvement Plan.	30.09.15 Some work has started but been delayed due to resource implications.	Amber
P14	**Ensure asset management consideration is included within Service Business Plans.**	Business planning guidance to be revised and reissued.	31.03.16 Will be considered as part of P15 and revised guidance to be issued for 2016/17 business planning framework.	Amber
P15	**Formalise arrangements for the Strategic Asset Management Working Group by:** • **Producing a terms of reference**	Terms of reference and reporting lines to be established and the Group will then meet at regular intervals.	31.08.15	Amber

Policy and Resources Cabinet Board 9.7.15

WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Asset Management				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
	and stating expected corporate working practices (based on existing custom and practice); and • **Produce an indicative annual work programme, and produce notes of decisions made by the Group.**			

Information Technology and Information Management				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
P16	**Ensure the Information Technology Strategy identifies and mitigates risks arising from reduced staff resources.**	Incorporated into the Service Business Plan	Completed	Green
P17	**Finalise the Council's Information Strategy and communicate this to all staff.**	Final draft to be presented to Members for approval.	31.03.15 Not yet presented to members. Target date September 2015.	Amber
P18	**Provide an annual report on information management and information governance matters to members to enable them to evaluate performance and the effectiveness**	Annual report to be produced alongside annual data protection report.	31.03.15 Work in progress, date for completion to be confirmed.	Amber

Policy and Resources Cabinet Board 9.7.15

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NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Information Technology and Information Management				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
	of arrangements.			

Collaboration				
Ref:	**Proposal for Improvement**	**Actions**	**Target completion date**	**RAG**
P19	**Engage with key partners to establish a programme of community capacity building to support alternative methods of service delivery.**	Discussions have been initiated with the WCVA and NPTCVS to identify opportunities for developing further options for service delivery.	Completed	Green
P20	**Further develop reporting arrangements to enable evaluation of the effectiveness and sustainability of collaborative activity.**	1. Enhanced arrangements have been established to monitor the effectiveness of the ERW arrangements.	Completed	Green
		2. Discussions are taking place to put scrutiny of the Western Bay collaborative on an enhanced footing.	30.04.15 Discussions are underway.	Amber
		3. Scrutiny forward work programmes contained selected topics for scrutinising the work of the Local Service Board.	Completed	Green
		4. Scrutiny Members will be surveyed to establish what improvements to information they would wish to commission to their scrutiny of the large partnership contracts in place with Grwp Gwalia, NPT Homes and Celtic Leisure.	Completed	Green

Policy and Resources Cabinet Board 9.7.15

WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

NEATH PORT TALBOT ACTION PLAN

Policy and Resources Cabinet Board 9.7.15

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POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES –
MRS. KAREN JONES

9TH JULY 2015

SECTION B – MATTER FOR INFORMATION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

Purpose of Report:

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2015. This report provides an outline of the timeline for the implementation of the various provisions within the Act, based on information currently available.

Background:

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act makes a number of changes to governance arrangements with the aim of improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

A specific aim is to require the public bodies listed in the Act (Appendix 1) to embrace sustainable development – balancing the long-term impact of policy with short term pressures.

Main Provisions

(i)   Common Aim and Well-being Goals

The Act sets out a common aim of public bodies to improve well-being – "improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales in accordance with the sustainable development principle".

The sustainable development principle is defined as " seeking to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

The Act also introduces well-being goals which the Council (and other listed public bodies) must pursue. The goals are contained within the body of the Act and are as follows:

➢ A prosperous Wales
➢ A resilient Wales
➢ A healthier Wales
➢ A more equal Wales
➢ A Wales of cohesive communities
➢ A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

A description of the intent of the goals is also set out in the Act. These wellbeing goals reflect, to a large extent, the goals within the existing Single Integrated Plan for Neath Port Talbot.

Welsh Ministers may by regulations amend the goals having consulted with the Sustainable Development Commissioner, other public bodies and any other such person as the Minister deems appropriate.

The Council (and other public bodies) must set and publish objectives designed to maximise the Council's contribution to the achievement of the well-being goals:

"Each public body must carry out sustainable development and the action a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development must include:

(a) Setting and publishing objectives ("well-being objectives") that are designed to maximise its contributions to achieving each of the well-being goals, and

(b) Taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives".

Part 2 "Improving Well-being 3 "well-being duty on public bodies' paragraphs (1) and (2)

This means that each public body listed in Appendix 1 must work to improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of Wales (these are the aspects of well-being known as the "common aim").

(ii) <u>Sustainable Development Principle</u>

The Act puts in place a "sustainable development principle" which governs how organisations go about meeting their well-being duty under the Act.

Public bodies will need to make sure that when making decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future. There are 5 ways of working public bodies will need to think about to show they have applied the sustainable development principle:

1. Long term – The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long –term needs.

2. Prevention – How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives

3. Integration – Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies

4. Collaboration – Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

5. Involvement – The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

The Act creates a new office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales who is provided with a range of powers to fulfil their role to promote the sustainable development principle, monitor progress against the well-being goals as well as offering advice to Welsh Ministers and public bodies. This appears a similar role to that performed by the Welsh Language Commissioner, Older Persons Commissioner and the Children's Commissioner.

(iii) <u>Annual Reports and National Indicators</u>

The Act places duties on Welsh Ministers to set and publish national indicators for measuring progress towards the achievement of the well-being goals and to publish progress each financial year.

The Act similarly places duties on each public body (including councils) to publish annual reports of progress made in meetings its well-being objectives and the public body must also review its well-being objectives when preparing the annual report.

Likely Impact:

In practice, the Act should not have a significant impact on existing planning and reporting arrangements. Many of the wellbeing goals are already expressed in the Single Integrated Plan which provides the over-arching framework for the Council's own Corporate Plan. The successor to the Single Integrated Plan (which will be known as the Wellbeing Plan from 2016 onwards) will need to position existing priorities clearly within the framework of the well-being goals. In terms of reporting arrangements, the Council already produces an annual report and this also includes review of existing improvement objectives as an integral feature of the process. It should be relatively straightforward to adjust existing reporting arrangement to meet specific duties and responsibilities set out it the Act.

As far as sustainable development is concerned, there will be a need to ensure the sustainable development principle is clearly visible and embedded in arrangements. A draft policy has already been prepared and some tweaking of existing impact assessment tools is also likely to be necessary. It is not yet known how the Commissioner will operate in practice, but if the role follows the function of other commissioners,

there is likely to be some additional administrative burden to service. If the Council follows the requirements of the Act it should be possible to keep administrative burdens to a minimum.

(iv) <u>Public Service Boards</u>

The Act establishes statutory Public Service Boards (PSB's) for each local authority area in Wales, replacing the existing Local Service Boards. The aim of the PSB's is to improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of its area by working to achieve the following well-being goals set by the Welsh Ministers (as stated in the Act)

A PSB must publish an assessment of the state of economic, social and environmental well-being in its area (no later than one year before the date on which a local well-being plan is to be published). The content of the assessment is detailed in the Act. Each Board must send a copy of the assessment to the Welsh Ministers, the Commissioner, the Auditor General for Wales and the local authority's overview and scrutiny committee. The PSB must make reference in its assessment to:

➢ the national indicators published by the Welsh Ministers;

➢ the most recent review of the sufficiency of nursery education provision in the area;

➢ the most recent assessment of the sufficiency of childcare in the area;

➢ the most recent assessment of the sufficiency of play opportunities in the area;

➢ the most recent assessment of the need for care and support, support for carers and preventative services;

➢ the most recent strategic assessment related to the reduction of crime and disorder in the area;

➢ the most recent strategic assessment of measures to combat substance misuse in the area; and

➢ the most recent strategic assessment related to the reduction of offending in the area.

Having conducted the assessment, the PSB must then prepare a local well-being plan which includes objectives designed to maximise the Board's contribution to the well-being goals. The first well-being plan must be published no later than one year after the next local government ordinary elections. The Act places duties on the PSB in relation to consultation, sustainable development and reporting on progress. The Act also gives the PSB power to merge or collaborate with another public services board if considered beneficial to the aim of each board.

Public Service Board members must include the local authority, the local health board, the relevant fire and rescue authority and Natural Resources Wales. PSBs must invite the Welsh Ministers, the chief constable, the police and crime commissioner, the National Offender Management service and a body representing voluntary organisations to participate in the activity of the Board. These representatives will be "invited participants" not members of the board. Other partners to the PSB are listed in the Act and there is a requirement on PSBs to seek advice from those partners and to involve them in such a manner and to such extent as it considers appropriate.

A PSB is to hold its first meeting no later than 60 days after the date on which the board is established and the first meeting is to be chaired by the local authority. At this meeting, the PSB must agree its Terms of Reference (the Act specifies what the ToR must include). For mandatory meetings, a PSB must hold a meeting no later than 60 days after the date of each ordinary election held under section 26 of the Local Government Act 1972 (to be chaired by the local authority).

Likely Impact:

In Neath Port Talbot, the composition of the Local Service Board already mirrors, to a large extent, what the new Act requires. The main change is to include the Police and Crime Commissioner as well as the chief constable in the activity of the Board and to the status of the different partners. Under the new arrangements, some will be full partners, some invited participants and others regarded as partners. The existing terms

of reference and membership will need to be amended but this should be relatively straightforward.

In terms of the needs assessment and the requirement to publish a well-being plan and associated reports, the provisions are similar to those already in place. One issue to be addressed at an early stage is the ability of some of the recently introduced regional arrangements to articulate needs at the local authority level for inclusion in the local assessment. Otherwise, the planning and monitoring arrangements appear to represent an evolution of existing arrangements rather than completely new.

Welsh Government currently provide funding to support the work of the Local Service Board and we are awaiting advice as to the funding arrangements that will pertain to the operation of Public Service Boards which are likely to be a requirement from 1st April 2016.

(iv) <u>Overview and scrutiny committees</u>

The Act states the executive arrangements within a local authority must ensure its overview and scrutiny committee has power to:

a) Review or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken by the PSB in the exercise of its functions

b) Review or scrutinise the PSB's governance arrangements

c) Make reports or recommendations to the board with respect to the board's functions or governance arrangements

d) To consider such matters relating to the board as the Welsh Ministers may refer to it and to report to the Welsh Ministers accordingly

Any report or recommendation made / produced under c) above a copy must be sent to the Welsh Ministers, the Commissioner and the Auditor General for Wales. The committee, for the purpose of exercising any of the above powers may require the PSB, or one or more if its members to attend a committee and provide it with explanations of such matters as it may specify.

Likely Impact:

There will be a need to ensure there is explicit reference in the Council's Constitution to the powers provided to local authorities to review or scrutinise decisions made by the public services board and to be clear which committee/committees are so designated for the purposes of the Act.

In practice it is unlikely there will be much change initially, as partners invited to meet with scrutiny committees have generally been content to attend scrutiny meetings on a voluntary basis. In the longer term there may be external pressure on scrutiny committees to discharge scrutiny responsibilities in particular ways.

Recommended

That Members of the Cabinet Board note that the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 has received Royal Assent and that the provisions within the Act will require an adjustment of corporate planning and partnership planning arrangements in Neath Port Talbot in due course once statutory guidance is available and the timetable for commencement of the various provisions within the Act is known.

Officer Reporting:

Mrs Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services Tel: 01639 763284 or e-mail: k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

Public bodies listed in the Act:

- Welsh Ministers
- Local Authorities
- Local Health Boards
- Public Health Wales NHS Trust
- Velindre NHS Trust
- National Park Authorities
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Natural Resources Wales
- The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
- The Arts Council for Wales
- Sports Council for Wales
- National Library of Wales
- National Museum of Wales

Outline Timetable (subject to further advice from Welsh Government):

Milestone	Key Task	Anticipated Timetable
Public Service Board to be established	Review terms of reference and membership to ensure compliance with Act	End September 2015
	Revised terms of reference and membership approved by partners	End December 2015
	New Public Service Board established	February 2016
Wellbeing Plan established for NPT area	Stocktake of assessments of need against compared with evidence base underpinning existing Single Integrated Plan	End December 2016
	Stocktake of existing aims and objectives against Wellbeing Goals and National Indicators	End December 2016
	Report produced describing output of stocktake and method for embracing sustainable development principle	End March 2016
	Public Service Board agrees draft well-being objectives and priorities for action and authorises public consultation	End September 2016
	Consultation on proposed well-being	End December 2016

	objectives and priorities completed	
	Wellbeing Plan for Neath Port Talbot published by Public Service Board and adopted by Council	April 2017
	First annual progress report produced	June 2018
Wellbeing objectives and sustainable development principle incorporated into Council planning, policy making and performance management arrangements	Corporate Improvement Plan adjusted to make explicit link between established priorities and the well-being goals and national indicators	February 2016
	Business Planning and Performance Management Framework adjusted to ensure well-being goals and national indicators are clearly reflected in frameworks	September 2016
Sustainable Development Policy established	Draft Policy and associated action plan approved for public consultation	March 2016
	Consultation completed	July 2016
	Policy and Action Plan formally approved	September 2016

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POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD DRAFT FWP ITEMS FOR 3RD SEPTEMBER AND 15TH OCTOBER MEETINGS

Meeting Date and Time		Agenda Items	Type (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Forwarded to: CDG, CMB, Cabinet, Council, back to CYPEB	Rotation (Topical, ,Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly)	CONTACT
3rd September 2015	1.	Write Off Reports/Treasury Management Monitoring Report	Decision & Information		Each Meeting	D. Rees/H. Jenkins
	2.	Quarterly Performance Monitoring	Monitoring		Each Meeting	S. Davies
	3.	Access to Services Strategy (Digital by Choice): Consultation on Draft Strategy – **Final Proposals**	Decision		Topical	K.Jones/S.Griffiths
	4.	Strategic Equality Plan – **Final Proposals**	Decision		Topical	R. Headon

POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD DRAFT FWP ITEMS FOR 3RD SEPTEMBER AND 15TH OCTOBER MEETINGS

3rd Sept.2015.cont. Page 212	5.	Digital Inclusion Draft Strategy for Consultation (**Final proposals report to 19th/11/15 meeting or 7/1/16 meeting tbc as no scheduled P &R meeting in December 2015**)	Decision		Topical	K.Jones/S.Griffiths
	6.	Outcome Agreement	Decision		Annual	S.Davies/N.Sparkes
	7.	Community Cohesion Strategy – Update Report	Decision			C. Furlow
	8.	CCTV Appraisal – Consultation Outcome	Decision		Topical	J.Banfield
	9.	Information Strategy - ICT	Decision			S. John
	10.	CEX & FCS Complaints	Information			D. Michael

POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD DRAFT FWP ITEMS FOR 3RD SEPTEMBER AND 15TH OCTOBER MEETINGS

Meeting Date and Time		Agenda Items	Type (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Forwarded to: CDG, CMB, Cabinet, Council, back to CYPEB	Rotation (Topical, ,Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly)	CONTACT
15th October 2015	1.	Treasury Mgt. Monitoring/Private Reports e.g.Write Offs	Decision			D. Rees/H.Jenkins
	2.	Miscellaneous Grants	Decision			H.Jenkins
	3.	ICT – Contract Renewals	Decision		Annual	S.John
	4.	Income Generation - tbc				D. Rees
	5.	Fees & Charges – tbc	Decision			D. Rees

POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD DRAFT FWP ITEMS FOR 3RD SEPTEMBER AND 15TH OCTOBER MEETINGS

NOTA BENE: A **Special Policy and Resources Cabinet Board** is scheduled for **23rd July 2015** to bring the following business:

1. Review of Grants Policy (Third Sector) - Final Proposals
2. Welsh Language Standards - Consultation

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