



ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD

*Immediately Following Scrutiny Committee on
THURSDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2014*

ROOMS A&B NEATH CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1. To agree the Chairman for this Meeting
2. To receive any declarations of interests from Members
3. To receive the Minutes of the previous Economic and Community Regeneration Cabinet Board held on the 11th September 2014 (*Pages 1 - 4*)
4. To receive the Forward Work Programme for the 4th December 2014 (*Pages 5 - 6*)

Joint Report of the Director of Environment and the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning

5. Progress Report in respect of the New Leisure Centre at Aberavon Seafront (*Pages 7 - 18*)

To receive the Report of the Director of Environment

6. Property Performance Report (*Pages 19 - 50*)

To receive the report of the Head of Resources and Commissioning

7. Welsh Public Libraries Standards Annual Report 2013/14 (*Pages 51 - 88*)

To receive the Report of the Head of Planning

8. Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan (UDP) - Consideration of Responses received following Consultation on the Revised Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (*Pages 89 - 126*)
9. Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Statutory Instrument 2001 No 2290 (as amended)

S.Phillips
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Thursday, 16th October 2014

Cabinet Board Members:

Councillors: A.J.Taylor and M.L.James

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

CABINET BOARD - 11 SEPTEMBER 2014

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD

Cabinet Board Members:

Councillors: A.J.Taylor (Chairman) and M.L.James

Officers in Attendance:

S.Brennan, R.George and Mrs.J.Woodman-Ralph

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Agreed that Councillor A.J.Taylor be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

2. **MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD HELD ON THE 31ST JULY, 2014**

Noted by Committee.

3. **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2014/15**

Decision:

That the report be noted.

4. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

Decision:

That pursuant to Regulation 4 (3) and (5) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290, the public be excluded for the following items 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.

5. **THE DISPOSAL OF THE FORMER CADOXTON DAY CENTRE, BRYNCATWG, CADOXTON.**

Decision:

That, following consideration of the verbal update at the meeting, highlighting details of the purchase offer made by CMT and SMT for the former Cadoxton Day Centre, Bryncatwg, Cadoxton, as detailed in the private circulated report, the offer be approved.

Reason for Decision:

To enable the sale of surplus land and gain capital receipt.

Implementation of Decision:

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

6. **THE DISPOSAL OF THE FORMER GLYNDULAIS HOME FOR THE AGED, MARY STREET, CRYNANT**

Decision:

That following consideration of the verbal update at the meeting, highlighting details of the joint purchase offer made by Trinity Developments, Crynant Plant Ltd and GM for the former Glyndulais Home for the Aged, Mary Street, Crynant, as detailed in the private circulated report the offer be approved.

Reason for Decision:

To enable the sale of surplus land and gain capital receipt.

Implementation of Decision:

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

7. **PROPOSED LEASES OF THE SPORTS FACILITIES AT YNYSCORRWG PARK, GLYNNCORRWG, PORT TALBOT.**

Decision:

That the lease of the sports facilities at Ynyscorrwg Park, Glyncorrwg, Port Talbot to the Trustees of Glyncorrwg RFC and Glyncorrwg AFC, as detailed in the private circulated report, be approved.

Reason for Decision:

To allow for the sports facilities to continue to be used by the sports clubs and local community.

Implementation of Decision:

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

CHAIRMAN

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ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

FOR THE 4TH DECEMBER 2014

Meeting Date and Time	Agenda Items	Type (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Rotation (Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly)
04/12/14	1) Community Fund Policy	Decision	Annual
	2) Formalization of the Leisure Trust Agreement	Decision	Topical
	3) Complaints Report	Monitoring	Quarterly
	4) Performance Indicator Quarter 2	Monitoring	Quarterly
	5) Budget Monitoring Report	Monitoring	Quarterly
	6) Sale/Lease of Land Reports	Decision	Topical

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**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION
CABINET BOARD**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
AND THE
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, LEISURE AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

23rd OCTOBER 2014

SECTION B – MATTER FOR INFORMATION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

NEW LEISURE CENTRE AT ABERAVON SEAFRONT

Purpose of Report

To advise Members on progress in respect of the new leisure centre complex being developed at Aberavon seafront.

Background

Following the findings of the Task and Finish Group and the Cabinet report dated 9th April 2014, the Authority has entered into a development contract with Corban Investments who have in turn, appointed Heron Bros. Ltd as their main contractor, to build a new leisure facility, with a total budget of £13.604M (£13.372M + additional £232K).

Progress

There was initially a slow start to the works due to the requirement to effectively manage excavation works and contaminated ground concerns.

This work has now been completed without any detrimental effect on the project budget or the project completion date.

Site work is now progressing on the concrete construction of the swimming pools and pool-water pipework is being installed and tested as work proceeds.

The existing bowls hall building has been completely stripped of its existing roofing and cladding materials. The concrete foundations have been adapted as necessary to suit the new design and the existing concrete floor has been broken up and removed in preparation for the installation of new drainage installations and a new insulated concrete floor.

The existing steel frame, at the rear of the bowls hall has been adapted and extended to suit the height required for the new sports hall. Refer to progress photographs included as Appendix 1.

At this early stage, the programme completion is scheduled to take place pre-Christmas 2015.

Local Employment and Community Benefits

Both Corban Investments and Heron Brothers Construction are committed to maximising community benefits from their construction activities.

Community engagement is an ongoing process which is developed throughout the duration of the project and beyond. Relationships and trust are strengthened over time and engagement events are planned with this in mind.

Heron Bros. are working closely with the Council's Business Development team and Workways to ensure local businesses have an opportunity to benefit.

On 24th June a 'Meet the Buyer' event was held at the Aberavon Beach Hotel, which was well attended by over 80 contractors. Following this event, a local supplier database was established and many local sub-contractors will have an opportunity to tender for various work packages.

Due to the requirement for some specialist areas of work, it is not always possible to give work opportunities to local contractors, but to date, 41% of all appointments are to contractors from the South Wales area.

Examples of work opportunities awarded to date, are as follows:-

Project Manager - Resident of Porthcawl
Administration Assistant - Resident of Cadoxton
Gateman - Resident of Sandfields
Labourer x2 - Residents of Sandfields & Swansea

Examples of sub-contractors appointed to date, are as follows:-

Site Security - Neath based company
Cladding & Roofing - Pontypool based company
Steelframe - Gwent based company

In addition to the above, Heron Bros. are purchasing materials locally and their supply chain are investing in expenditure in Port Talbot, which includes the rental of 5 no. houses for site staff to live in whilst working on the project.

Heron Bros. also plan to visit local Schools to promote the project and construction as a career. They plan to arrange site visits for School ambassadors and they have prepared a newsletter (Appendix 2), which will be delivered to the local community in the next few weeks. They have also arranged to sponsor the Annual Santa Run at Aberavon Beach on the 6th December and a Heron Bros. employee is in training to take part.

As the project develops further, work opportunities will arise and it is hoped that most of the finishing trades can be awarded to local contractors.

Liaison with Leisure Services & Celtic Leisure

A number of co-ordination meetings have been held with colleagues from Leisure Services and staff at Celtic Leisure to integrate their requirements in respect of equipment and fixtures and fittings into the design.

The design team have prepared a number of sample panels to demonstrate the preferred palette of materials and colours selected for the wall, floor and ceiling finishes and these have generally been approved by the working group.

These samples will be located at site for future reference.

A review is being undertaken of the business plan for the new facility to further scrutinise the revenue position and this plan will be tailored to reflect all costs associated with the inclusion of the requirements of the Task and Finish group.

Sustainability, Energy Efficiency & Accessibility

The new leisure centre is being designed and constructed to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and it will incorporate a series of energy saving features, such as:-

- Rainwater harvesting.
- A combined heat and power plant installation.
- Pool covers to help retain the pool-water temperature overnight.
- Energy saving light fittings, heating controls and building management installation.
- Highly insulated walls, floor and roof which exceed building regulation requirements.
- Robust detailing to eliminate air leakage.

The building has also been carefully designed to consider the needs of disabled users. It is fully accessible and meets or surpasses the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations.

Accessible features include:-

- Fully accessible WC's and changing areas.
- Ramped access to the learner pool.
- Platform lift access into the main pool.
- Carefully selected finishes and colour scheme to assist visually impaired users.
- Level access.
- Audible loop installation to the reception and meeting rooms to assist users with hearing difficulties.
- Accessible counters to the main reception and cafeteria area.
- Designated viewing/seating areas for disabled users in the spectator galleries of the main pool and the Sports Hall.

Further consultations are to be arranged with a representative of NPT Access Group, as the project specification progresses, but it is envisaged that any further DDA requirements should be of a minor nature and easily incorporated.

Future Progress

Work will continue over the following few months to progress the superstructure of the new centre. The steel-frame and roof structure will be completed. Ground and first floors will be constructed, the pools will be formed and the construction of the external façade will commence.

At this point, it would be appropriate to arrange for Members to visit the site and it is suggested that a visit early in the New Year would be worthwhile.

List of Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Progress Photographs

Appendix 2 – Newsletter

Officer Contacts

Clive Barnard, Architectural Design & Project Management Manager
Property and Regeneration
Tel. No. 01639 686569
email c.barnard@npt.gov.uk

Neil Thomas, Coordinator for Sport Culture and Active Living
Partnerships & Community Development
Tel. No. 01639 861106
email n.g.thomas@npt.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Photograph 1



Development view.

Photograph 2



Development close-up.

Photograph 3



New 1st floor steelwork.

Photograph 4



New sports hall steelwork.

Photograph 5



New slab edge detail along GL A.

Photograph 6



Swimming pool with wall mesh prepared.

Photograph 7



Swimming pool.

Photograph 8



Phase 2 area awaiting steel.

Appendix 2

HERON
Bros. Ltd.

HERON BROS CONTRACTORS

The Heron Group of Companies has been established since 1956, is one of the longest established private trading groups in Northern Ireland and has developed a strong reputation as a leading land, property, construction and manufacturing specialists.

We offer a comprehensive range of design, construction and property services to a broad client base across Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales and Poland in all the market sectors.

We have achieved high recognition for our work within the UK and Irish Construction Industries as being among the best in design and construction. Our success has been built on the firm foundation of a strong family ethos, partnering, integrity, quality, value for money and an unrivalled commitment to providing client satisfaction.

The Group had annual revenue in 2013 of some £43m, employs around 200 people and operates across the UK, in Ireland and Poland.

COMMUNITY SURGERIES

If you would like to talk to us about the proposals, several ways to get in touch are shown in the grey box below. A representative of Heron Bros. will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about the construction process or the project generally.

MEET THE BUYER AND APPRENTICESHIPS EVENTS

Additionally we have recently ran a Meet the buyer and apprenticeship event which was very successful. If required we will hold further Meet the buyer and apprenticeship event over the course of the construction period. These events will be advertised locally.

A representative of Heron Bros. will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about the construction process or the project generally

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Please let us know if you have any questions, queries or concerns with regards to the construction process. We would also be grateful to hear your thoughts on community benefits or if you would prefer to receive this Newsletter by email.

You can keep in touch with us by contacting Heron Bros. office direct, site office or through our Community Liaison Officer, Shauna Young on any one of the following ways:

Heron Bros. Office : Shauna Young
Phone: 028 7962 8505
Mobile: 07795 347528
Email: shauna.young@heronbros.com
Web: www.heronbros.com

Site Office: Hugh McManus
Mobile: 07887 644325
Email: hugh.mcmanus@heronbros.com

PARTICULAR HAZARDS - BE SAFE!

Heron Bros. have your safety in mind at all times and will take every measure to prevent unauthorised access onto our site.

We kindly ask parents to please remind your children not to enter the building site at any time and to warn them about the dangers that exist.



Aberavon Seafront Leisure Facility, Port Talbot

QUARTERLY CONSTRUCTION NEWSLETTER NR1

Heron Bros. is delighted in having been chosen as the contractor for the exciting new Aberavon Seafront Leisure Centre, located adjacent to Reel Cinema, Port Talbot, Wales. We look forward to delivering this fantastic project in conjunction with Corban Investments, Neath Port Talbot Council and the design team in the months ahead, and to working closely with the local community and the local supply chain in its delivery.



Work is already underway on the brand new leisure facility currently referred to as Aberavon Leisure Centre.

The investment in the landmark seafront location will result in a purpose-built beachfront Leisure Centre, complete with 'wave design' roof and featuring a 25m pool with moveable floor; multiple changing facilities, gym/fitness suite, dance studio, four court sports hall, cafe and community rooms.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU—THE RESIDENT CHARTER

This Charter outlines Heron Bros. and our supply chain commitments to residents who will be affected as part of the development. Heron Bros. and our supply chain are committed to working closely with residents to assist them to make the best choices for their future and ensure the development delivers a legacy of sustainable benefits during the project and beyond to Neath Port Talbot.

OUR COMMITMENT

- To respect all residents and to be considerate during sensitive times.
- To keep noise and dust to a minimum.
- To erect hoarding and fences to safeguard residents and the public.
- To ensure construction workers park in designated areas.
- To endeavour that all deliveries are staggered during working hours only.
- To inform residents of disruptive operations at least 3 days prior, e.g. noisy works.

COMMUNICATION

- Updates on progress in a regular newsletter.
- Mail shots when required.
- Home visits when required to residents.



PROGRAMME – WHAT’S COMING UP?

Construction on the new Leisure Centre is already underway. The construction works are being phased in two main stages: demolition and refurbishment of the existing bowling alley and the construction of the new leisure facility. It is anticipated the whole project should take approximately 17 months to complete.

The key milestones will be as follows:

SUMMER 2014:

Work begins on site, starting with the site compound set up and commencement of works on site in early June 2014. Piling works and some demolition works will create increased levels of noise pollution, will run from Mid-June to late August

The main earthworks element of the contract is underway and excavation work for the new pool is progressing well. This work is likely to continue until mid September, followed by construction of the concrete pool deck.

AUTUM—WINTER 2014:

The next visible construction activity will be the erection of the new steel frame later this year.

Work has also started inside the existing building to form the foundations for new internal partitions and additional steel framework. This building will form part of the new Leisure Centre and house the four court sports hall, changing facilities and storage areas

The end of winter will see the completion of the steel frame, floors and .external façade. Construction of the roof frame and the Glulam beams will begin and the main substructure works to the pool area completed.

SPRING—SUMMER 2015

In the spring/summer of 2015 the building will become water and weather tight and the internal works and finishes will progress to completion. The final breakthrough from the existing building to the new will be carried out and the works will complete in early winter 2015.

KEEPING DISRUPTION TO A MINIMUM

Heron Bros. is working on a detailed Traffic and Construction Management Plan in conjunction with Corban Investments. These are designed to ensure that disruption to the local community is kept to a minimum during the construction process.

WORKING HOURS:

Noisy construction work and deliveries will be restricted to between 7.00am and 8.00pm Monday to Friday, and 8.00am to 1.00pm on Saturday. Sundays and Bank Holidays will be avoided where possible.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION:

All construction traffic will be timed to avoid peak times such as commuting hours and school times. No construction traffic is permitted to park on the surrounding streets and will be subject to predefined site traffic routes.

NOISE AND DUST:

Heron Bros. and our sub-contractors are committed to mitigating construction noise and dust. Wheel washing and road sweepers will be in regular use along with on site noise control measures.

VERMIN CONTROL:

Vermin control has already been initiated by a specialist contractor. Heron Bros. are committed to putting in place strict measures to mitigate construction vermin and pests. In addition to continuous vermin control through bait boxes all site staff are not permitted to eat outside the canteen area with all perishable rubbish removed from site.

ASBESTOS:

Heron Bros. is experienced in the demolition of buildings that include asbestos and only employ certified sub-contractors. We are committed to the health and safety of our staff but also the health and safety of the local residents.

CONSIDERATE CONSTRUCTOR SCHEME



As an Associate member of the Considerate Constructors Scheme, the redevelopment of Casement Park is registered by HB/V to participate in the scheme.

The scheme has been set up to improve the image of the construction industry through better site management and by encouraging good communications with site neighbours.

HB/V will be inspected under the following headings:-

- Enhancing the APPEARANCE
- Respecting the COMMUNITY
- Protecting the ENVIRONMENT
- Securing everyone's SAFETY
- Caring for the WORKFORCE

Following our inspection, we will advise you of our scoring.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Heron Bros. is committed to supporting the local communities living close to our construction projects. A community benefit package is being developed and is at the initial stages of its roll out. This will consist of funding for the regeneration of the local area, assistance to local schools and colleges including site visits and placement opportunities.

YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT TO US

We promise during construction of the project to ask your views on how the project is progressing. We are keen to know your thoughts on the following:

WHAT?

We would like to hear what your priorities would be on how construction of the Aberavon development can work best for the community. Examples might be supporting community events, children's sports, cross community events etc.

WHERE?

We believe that the community benefits should be used for the benefit of the local community actually hosting the Centre. Let us know whether you agree, or whether you think a wider area should benefit.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

Heron Bros. is dedicated to maximizing the local economic benefits that Aberavon facility can bring, which includes training and employing the local community. Heron Bros. will collaborate with Neath Port Talbot Council, Dept. of Work and Pensions, Workways and the local community to identify and target agreed training and recruitment initiatives in the areas of greatest need within Port Talbot.

We will:

- Engage with the Social Enterprises to establish training initiatives including attending employability skills seminars e.g. CV writing and interview skills
- Advise in careers in construction events for local residents
- Providing opportunities for student work placements in construction and admin/ICT duties



LOCAL PROCUREMENT

Heron Bros. is committed to finding ways to maximise the local economic benefits that our developments can bring. Many of the products and services needed for Centre are very specialist and can not usually be found locally. However, Heron Bros. will work with our larger sub contractors for local suppliers to get involved, in providing materials, such as ;

- Delivery of aggregates, concrete supply and pouring and supply etc.
- Transportation equipment and personnel
- Site supplies, such as Portacabins and Portaloo's
- Office and cleaning supplies
- Security and fencing

Heron Bros. recently completed St. Xaviers Primary School for East Ayrshire Council. The investment in the local supply chain accounted for 70% within a 30 mile radius. For the new Leisure Centre, this would potentially equate to around £6 million being spent on local goods and services during the entire construction period.

LOCAL TRADERS

Heron Bros. want to maximise the economic and social impact of the development of the new leisure facility beyond its construction.

We wish to assist all industries capitalize on our presence here in Neath Port Talbot, including the Tourism, Retail, Food and Beverage sectors.

We aim to do this by providing all local businesses with an opportunity to advertise on our E-Traders brochure. It will be emailed to all our site staff, head office employees and sub-contractors. We would also encourage local traders to promote their businesses by providing site staff with special offers, incentives and discounts. E.g. local butcher could advertise their BBQ meat pack; Local Hotels could offer weekend special deals etc.

Heron Bros. invite all local traders who wish to be included in this fantastic opportunity to contact csr@heronbros.com with their details.

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ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

23RD OCTOBER 2014

SECTION A – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

PROPERTY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Purpose of Report

For Members to note the Council's Property Performance Report for 2014.

Background

As Member's will recall, the Council has an adopted Property Asset Management Plan 2011-2016, which has previously been placed before the Economic Community and Regeneration Board. This Plan sets out the Council's proposals for the effective use of its property assets to support the delivery of quality public services and major regeneration initiatives.

As a five-year plan, the Property Asset Management Plan is of course a strategic document. The Property Performance Report however, is more dynamic in that it will be produced annually and will provide a more detailed analysis of the performance of the Council's property portfolio whilst setting out the emerging challenges and issues that will affect our use of property, together with an Action Plan that will address these issues.

Financial Implications

The asset management process and the monitoring of property performance are key elements in the drive to reduce expenditure and contribute to the Council's Forward Financial Plan, whilst reducing the maintenance backlog. These actions will assist with the aim of making the portfolio financially sustainable.

Consultation Outcome

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

Sustainability Appraisal

The Property Performance Report provides data and a reporting system to assist with the Council management of its property assets. Effective stewardship of its property assets enables the Council to direct its resources to the delivery and support of frontline services.

Its impact is therefore wide-ranging but specifically it impacts on sustainability by helping to reduce the Council's use of energy and CO₂ emissions by disposing of surplus and inefficient buildings and with regard to equality by promoting accessibility within Council premises.

List of Background Papers

None

Website Link

www.npt.gov.uk/PropertyPerformanceReport

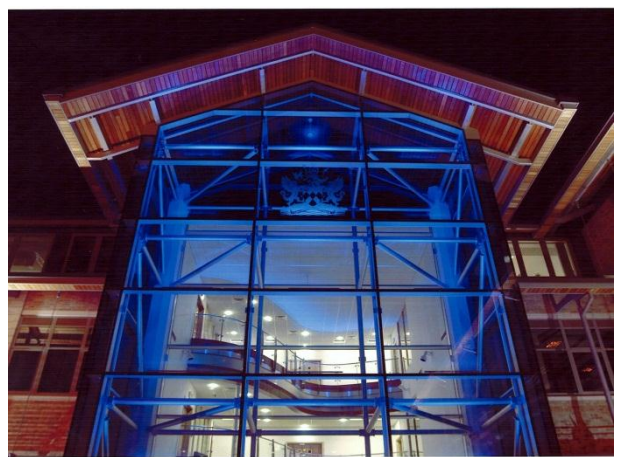
Wards Affected

All

Officer Contact

Simon Brennan, Property & Regeneration - 01639 686247 s.brennan@npt.gov.uk

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Property Performance Report 2014



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- 2. Performance Indicators**
 - 2.1 Background**
 - 2.2 Data unit Submission for 2013/ 2014**
 - 2.3 Commentary on KPI's**

- 3. Performance Criteria**
 - 3.1 Condition**
 - 3.2 Energy Efficiency**
 - 3.3 Capital Receipts**

- 4. Asset Management Issues/Pressures**

- 5. Progress**

- 6. Action Plan**

1. INTRODUCTION – The Purpose of a Property Performance Report

The Corporate Property Asset Management Plan sets out the strategic vision for the management of the Council's property portfolio up to 2016.

The Property Performance Report is produced annually and outlines, as set out below, a range of property performance data, the issues that face the Council in respect of its Property Portfolio and the Action Plan to address these issues.

Performance Indicators – these are the range of key performance indicators (kpi's) that are submitted to the Data Unit Wales to enable comparison on an all - Wales basis. When considering the data it should be recognised that the comparisons are for indication purposes only and acknowledge the difficulties that many councils have in collating the required information.

Performance Criteria – to ensure there is robust property data available to inform the decision making process the council has undertaken comprehensive assessments of all its properties on a rolling programme basis. The condition data is backed up by assessment of sufficient and suitability and energy performance. The collection of these latter data sets is ongoing with the new property groups being added on a continual basis.

Asset management Issues – recent years have witnessed significant changes in the delivery of public sector services and property has had to respond to these pressures. The current financial difficulties have exacerbated these challenges.

Action Plan – whilst the Strategic direction for property is set out in the Corporate Asset Management Plan, the annual 'Action Plan' within this document enables the Council to respond to changing financial, legislative and service delivery pressures.

Achievements - these are included to track how effective the Action Plan has been in terms of delivery.

2. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

2.1 Background

The Council collects a range of asset management performance indicator data in respect of its building stock and submits it to the Data Unit for Wales, who gather and analyze similar data from all Councils across Wales.

CAM006 – CAM009 (Previously CAM001ai – CAM001aiv) provides an indication of the current condition of a Council's buildings, by stating what percentage of the gross internal area, i.e. the floor space of its buildings, falls into the following categories:-

- A. Good – performing as intended and operating efficiently.
- B. Satisfactory – performing as intended, but showing minor deterioration.
- C. Poor – showing major defects and/or not operating as intended.
- D. Bad – life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure.

The buildings are assessed and rated by the Council's Asset Management Surveyor with updated information provided to the Data Unit on an annual basis.

The Council has more than 1300 buildings on over 340 sites. It is not possible therefore, with existing resources, to survey each building every year. The intention is to visit each building within a four to five year period.

This schedule is dependent upon the Council's work programme with recent efforts being concentrated on the schools and Social Services properties.

The surveys undertaken also set out the cost of the works that are required at each building. The required works are then split into three categories.



Priority Level 1 – Urgent Works

These are works that will prevent immediate closure of the premises and/or address an immediate risk to the health and safety of the occupants and/or remedy a serious breach of legislation.

Priority Level 2 – Essential Works

These are works that are required within two years that will prevent serious deterioration of the fabric or services and/or address a medium risk to the health and safety of the occupants and/or remedy a minor breach of the legislation.

Priority Level 3 – Desirable Works

These are works required within three to five years that will prevent deterioration of the fabric or services and/or address a low risk to the health and safety of the occupants and/or a minor breach of the legislation.

As with CAM006 – CAM009, this information is submitted to the Data Unit on an annual basis with the results being provided to each Council.

2.2 Data Unit Submission for 2013 / 2014

Reference	Indicator	Data Item(s)	2012-13	2013-14
CAM006 (previously CAM/001ai)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition category A - Good	The amount of GIA in condition category A (m2)	26,976	26,068
		The total amount of GIA in all the local authority's buildings (m2)	380,442	364,358
		PI Value	7.1	7.2
CAM007 (previously CAM/001aii)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition category B - Satisfactory	The amount of GIA in condition category B (m2)	133,062	150,023
		The total amount of GIA in all the local authority's buildings (m2)	380,442	364,358
		PI Value	35.0	41.2
CAM008 (previously CAM/001aiii)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition category C - Poor	The amount of GIA in condition category C (m2)	175,818	153,884
		The total amount of GIA in all the local authority's buildings (m2)	380,442	364,358
		PI Value	46.2	42.2
CAM009 (previously CAM/001av)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's buildings in condition category D - Bad	The amount of GIA in condition category D (m2)	44,586	34,383
		The total amount of GIA in all the local authority's buildings (m2)	380,442	364,358
		PI Value	11.7	9.4
CAM014 (previously CAM/001bi)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works of priority level 1 - Urgent	The value of required maintenance for works of priority level 1	£32,129,297	£22,864,701
		The total value of required maintenance for the year	£165,635,594	£150,863,828
		PI Value	19.4	15.2
CAM015 (previously CAM/001bii)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works of priority level 2 - Essential	The value of required maintenance for works of priority level 2	£99,179,402	£91,438,195
		The total value of required maintenance for the year	£165,635,594	£150,863,828
		PI Value	59.9	60.6
CAM016 (previously CAM/001biii)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works of priority level 3 - Desirable	The value of required maintenance for works of priority level 3	£34,326,895	£36,560,932
		The total value of required maintenance for the year	£165,635,594	£150,863,828
		PI Value	20.7	24.2

2.3 Commentary on KPI's



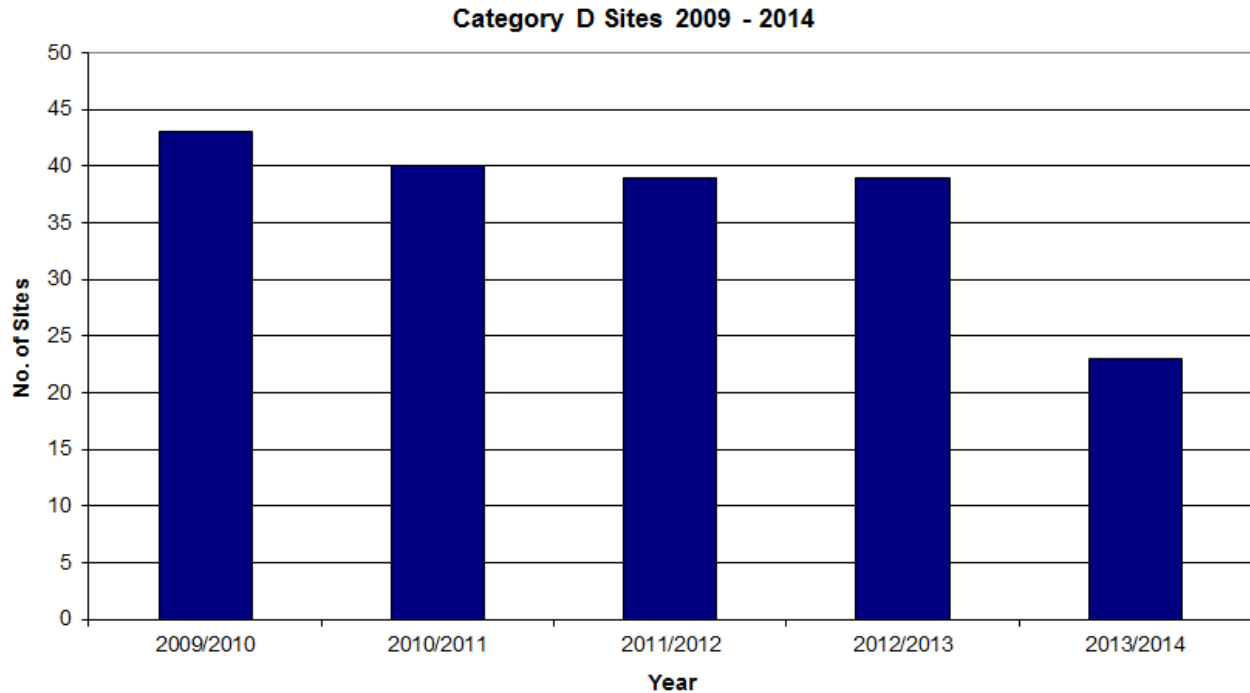
The data collected from the comprehensive programme of condition assessments accurately provides the current position of the portfolio's condition and maintenance liabilities. As this information is used as a key element of the asset management decision

making process, it is imperative that the collection and interpretation process is analysed and continuously reviewed.

The 2013/14 figures show a slight increase in Category A buildings, a significant increase in the number of Category B buildings, and a drop in the number of buildings in Categories C and D.

The improvement in the figures is a result of several factors, including the closure of a range of buildings in poor condition and the construction of several new buildings. It should be noted, however, that as the condition surveys are undertaken on a rolling programme, with each building surveyed every five years, this may also affect the total maintenance backlog figure.

In considering the all-Wales benchmarking data, it should be noted that there are issues with the interpretation of the guidance for the collection of the data.



The Council is endeavouring to remove all properties from Category D, those which are in very bad condition and require significant investment to bring them up to a satisfactory standard. In the main, this will be achieved by replacing the facility with a new building or by alternative means of service provision that renders the building surplus. In special circumstances a refurbishment project may be considered.

It is a concern that, with the limited maintenance budget currently available, there are likely to be more buildings 'slipping down' into the C and D categories. In addition, with the reduced capital funding available, there will be less opportunity to replace buildings that are beyond economic repair.

The following table sets out the proposals for of the 22 buildings that are currently classified as condition 'D'.

The action within the 2011-13 Action Plan to 'have proposals to replace or refurbish all Category D properties within 5 years' is therefore on target.

The table below sets out the properties that are currently classified as 'D' and the proposals for dealing with them:

The Council's 'D' Category Properties

Name	Proposal
Neath Multi Storey Car Park	To be demolished as part of Town Centre re-development
Cwm Bedd Cemetery	No current proposal
Cwmgors Village Workshops	Income generating
Glyncorwg Village Workshops	Income generating
Library Resource Centre	Alternative premises to be identified
Taibach Library	Library lease completed
Twyn Yr Hydd Stable Block	Listed building within Margam Park
Blaengwynfi Recreation Park	To be re-assessed
Glantawe Riverside Park	Legal formalities to lease the site
Maerdy Playing Fields	To be re-assessed
Commercial Road Resolven Public Convenience	To be demolished
Disused Bryn Public Convenience	Vacant and available for sale/to let
Disused Cwmllynfell Public Convenience	To be demolished
Disused Ystalyfera Public Convenience	To be demolished
Dyffryn Lower Comprehensive School	Operational property – future plan to rebuild as part of the Council's 21 st Century Schools programme (Band B)
St Joseph's Comprehensive School	Proposal to re-build as part of the Council's 21 st Century Schools programme
Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera	New school currently under construction
Bryndulais Avenue Depot	Legal formalities for disposal on going
Water Street Former Fire Station	Legal formalities for lease on going
YGG Gwaun Cae Gurwen Caretakers House	Vacant – Restrictive covenant affecting title but may form part of a scheme for the school.

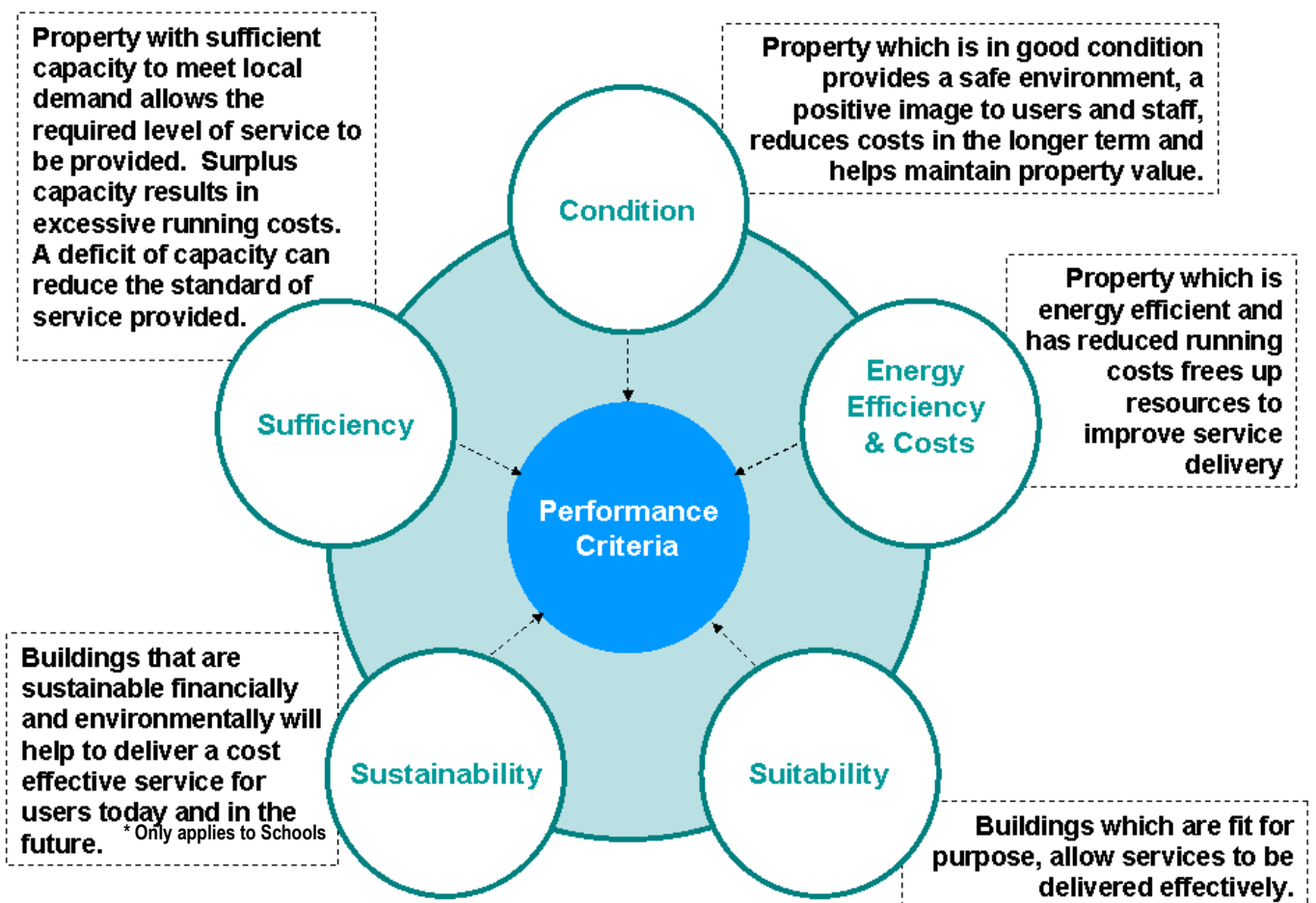
Briton Ferry Library House	Vacant attached to Library
Brynsiriol Senior Citizens Centre	Legal formalities for lease on going

Properties removed from the 2013 “D” list

Name	Proposal
Croeserw Community Centre	Demolished on completion of Croeserw Community Enterprise Centre.
Plot 18B Green Park Industrial Estate	Demolished
Plot 14 Green Park Industrial Estate	Demolished
Plot 8A Green Park Industrial Estate	Demolished
Blaengwynfi Social Centre	25YR Lease until 2038
Disused Jersey Public Convenience	Demolished
Dwr Y Felin Lower Comprehensive School	Demolished - Negotiation ongoing for disposal of the land
Glanymor Primary School	Demolished on completion of the new Awel Y Mor Primary School
St Joseph’s Comprehensive School	Proposal to re-build as part of the Council’s 21 st Century Schools programme
Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera	Proposal to re-build as part of the Council’s 21 st Century Schools programme
Site of Bethlehem Road Depot	Legal formalities for disposal completed
Canolfan Sheltered Housing	Demolished
Former Ty Afan Secondary Centre	Sold
Port Talbot Arts Centre	Sold

3. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Each property surveyed is given a grading for each category depending on how well it performs. As more information is made available more of the criteria will apply to each building type. The Categories used are the following:



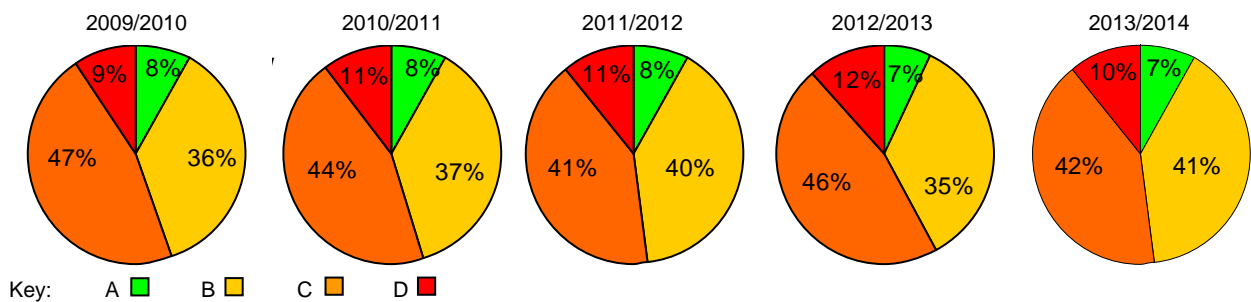
3.1 Condition.

The Council has over 1300 buildings across more than 340 sites throughout the County Borough. The condition of the buildings can vary significantly not only between different sites but also between individual buildings within the same site.

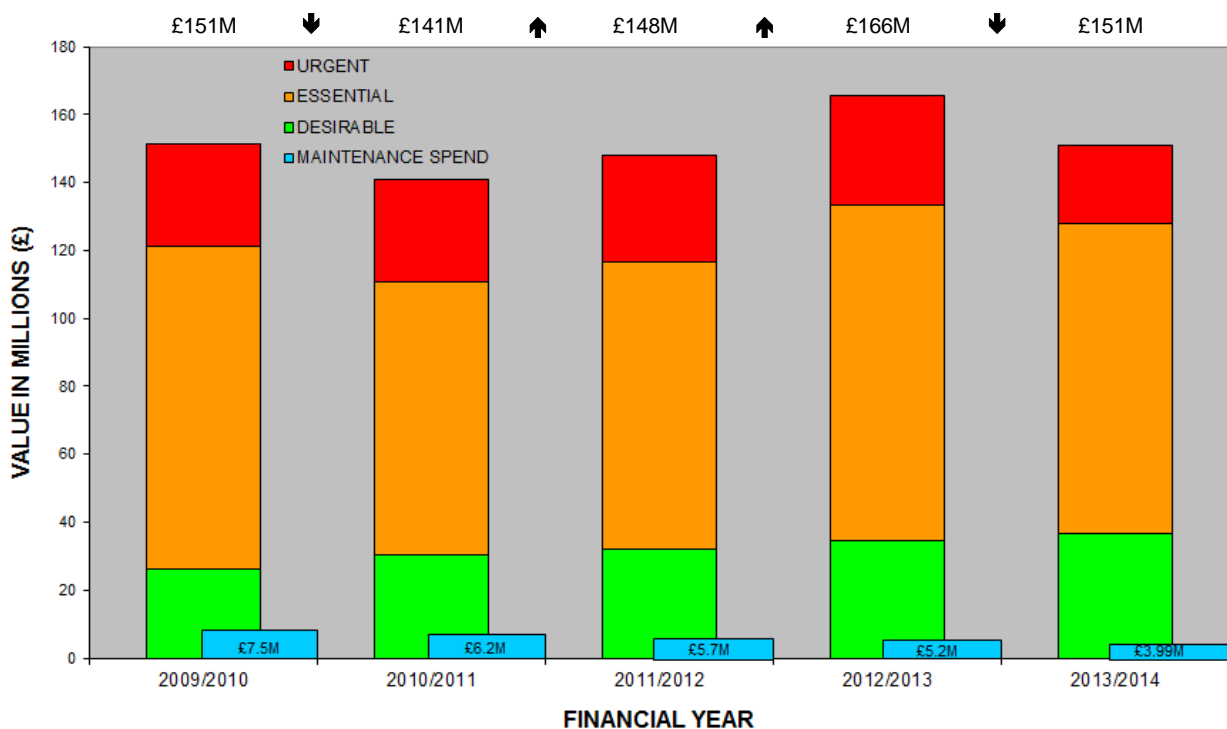
As noted previously the Council's aim is to have proposals to vacate or refurbish all category D properties within five years. It is acknowledged, however, that some of those properties at the lower end of category C may also require considerable investment.

It should be noted, however, that in real terms, the budget available to maintain the buildings has more than halved in the last five years.

Building Condition Grading per M²



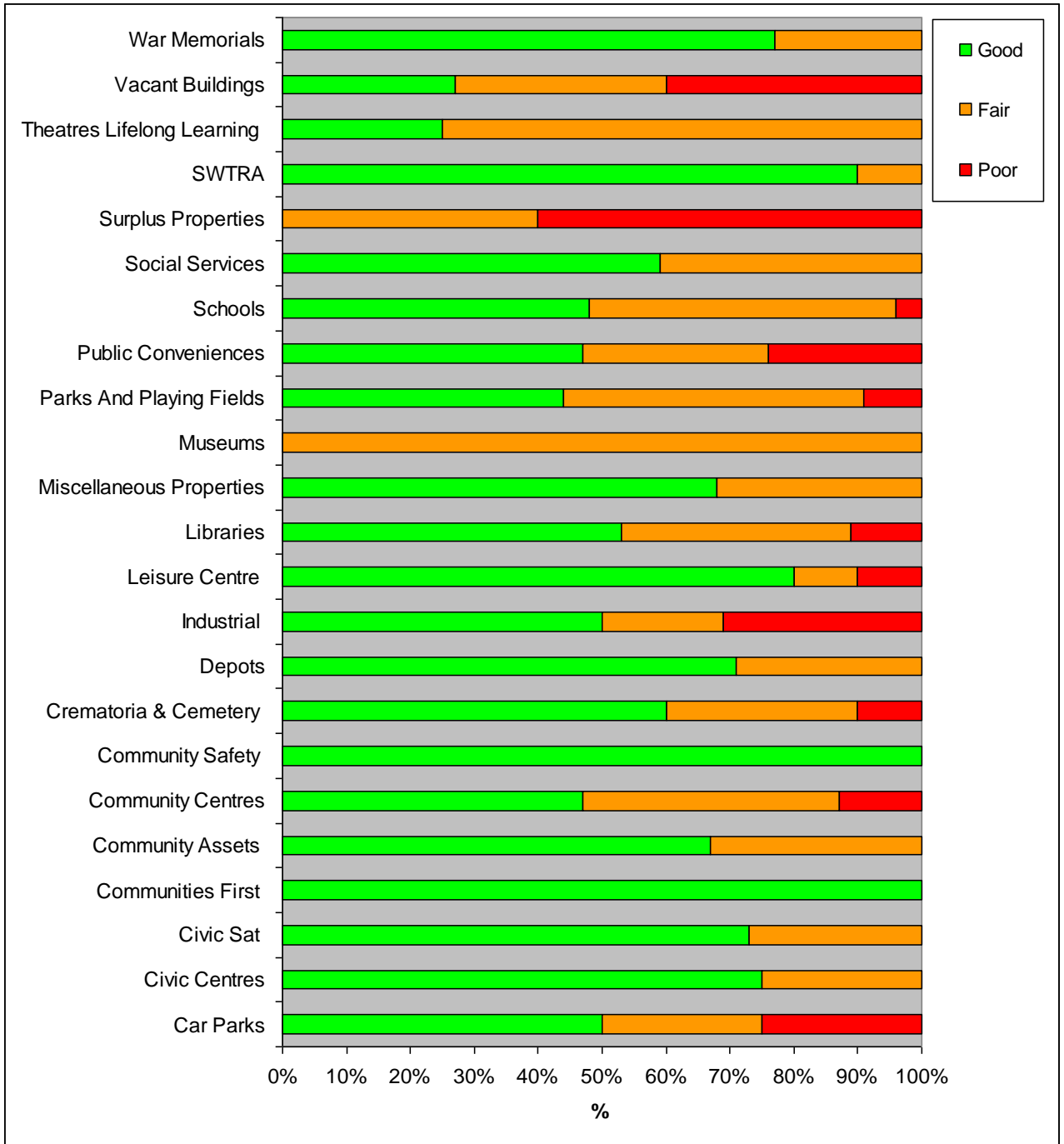
Backlog of Maintenance in £M



The chart below shows the condition of the Council building's in terms of the Number of Properties for each property category.

Traffic Light Definition	% Of number of properties that require only revenue expenditure to enable the service to be delivered to a satisfactory level.	% Of number of properties that require moderate levels of investment to enable the services to be delivered to a satisfactory level	% Of number of properties that Requires Significant investment or releasing to enable the services to be delivered to a satisfactory level.
Category	Good	Fair	Poor
Car Parks	50 %	25 %	25 %
Civic Centres	75 %	25 %	0 %
Civic Sat	73 %	27 %	0 %
Communities First	100 %	0 %	0 %
Community Assets	67 %	33 %	0 %
Community Centres	47 %	40 %	13 %
Community Safety	100 %	0 %	0 %
Crematoria & Cemetery	60 %	30 %	10 %
Depots	71 %	29 %	0 %
Industrial	50 %	19 %	31 %
Leisure Centre	80 %	10 %	10 %
Libraries	53 %	36 %	11 %
Miscellaneous Properties	68 %	32 %	0 %
Museums	0 %	100 %	0 %
Parks And Playing Fields	44 %	47 %	9 %
Public Conveniences	47 %	29 %	24 %
Schools	48 %	48 %	4 %
Social Services	59 %	41 %	0 %
Surplus Properties	0 %	40 %	60 %
SWTRA	90 %	10 %	0 %
Theatres Lifelong Learning	25 %	75 %	0 %
Vacant Buildings	27 %	33 %	40 %
War Memorials	77 %	23 %	0 %

The bar chart below provides an illustration of the condition of the Council's buildings in terms of the number of properties in each property category.



3.2 Energy/Carbon & Water Management

The Authority's expenditure on energy, water and CRC/EES for 2013/14 was £3.66M (Electricity £1.73M; Gas £1.14M; Oil £0.05M; Water £0.57M; CRC/EES £0.17M) for operational buildings (exclusive of Street Lighting) under its management control.

The following activities are currently being worked upon by the Energy Section to negate and reduce energy consumption and consequential costs of its operational buildings and their additional energy / carbon related statutory obligations:

- Ensure compliance to Carbon Reduction Commitment/ Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRC/EES) (2013/14 Cost: £167,875);
- Implementation of operational building water management programme;
- Invest to Save Projects: Installation of a Photo Voltaic Array at Neath Civic Centre, also evaluating other potential viable energy / carbon related projects with acceptable payback periods within civic buildings;
- Management and production of Display Energy Certificates (DECS) for the Authority ensuring statutory compliance;
- Facilitating assessment of solar PV arrays on suitable operational buildings within the Authority;
- Develop and enhancement of the energy management database;
- Undertake detailed feasibility district heating study within the Authority.

Over the coming year the Energy Section plan to undertake the proposed activities listed below:

- Individual energy / carbon & water performance report
- Write and implement a strategic energy/carbon & water policy, this will be achieved via a staged approach:

- a) Energy, Carbon and Water Policy Statement
- b) Energy, Carbon and Water Policy Document
- c) Energy, Carbon and Water Strategy Programme

- Develop site specific energy / carbon action plans for civic buildings.
- Development of a Building Management System (BMS) strategy.
- Development of dedicated schools energy/carbon and water management guide for schools.

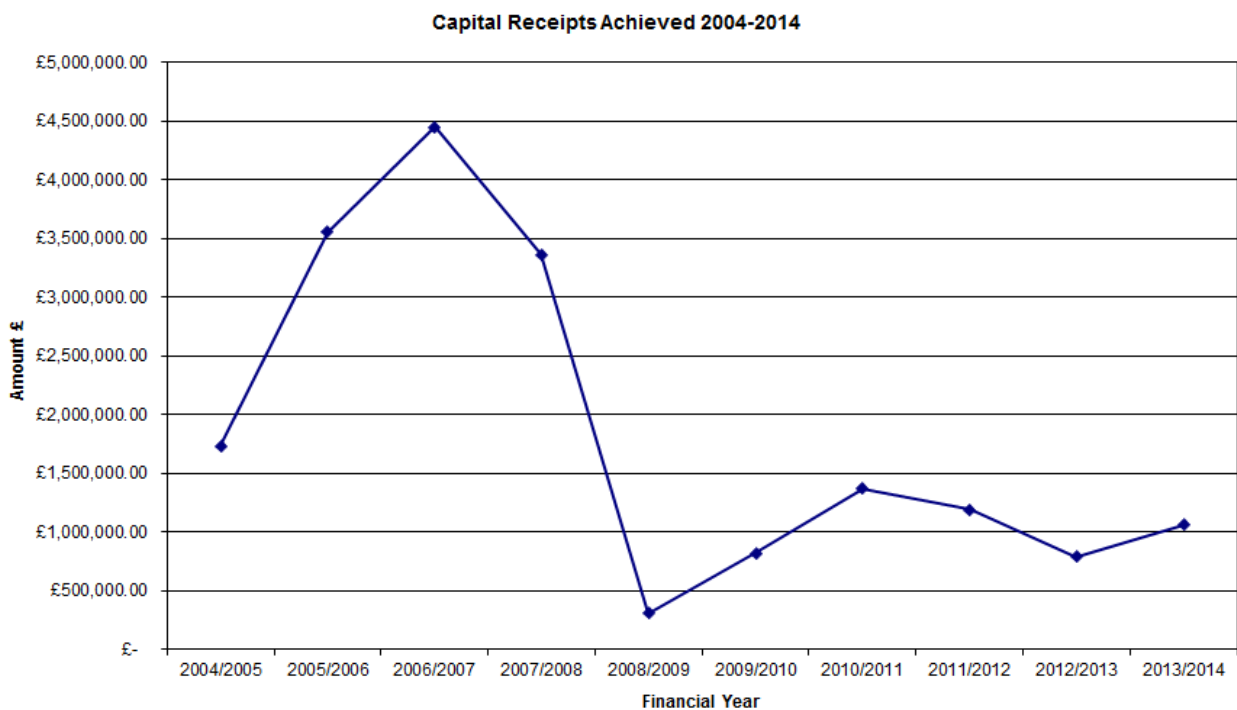
3.3 Capital Receipts

The Council has endeavoured to maximise its returns from the disposal of surplus or under utilised properties. The Capital Receipts for the last 10 financial years can be found in the graph below.

The trend illustrates the difficult market conditions over the last few years and the reduction in capital receipt opportunities.

A large number of the buildings that were identified within the Community Buildings Review have been transferred to community groups and organisations.

In addition, several potential redevelopment sites have proved difficult to bring to market due to National Resources Wales determination of flood zones within Neath Port Talbot.



4.0 PRESSURES ON THE PORTFOLIO

Pressures on the portfolio - There are currently a range of financial, social, political and technical challenges facing all services within the public sector that will shape the Council's property portfolio over the next five year period. An outline of these challenges will be set out as a means of underpinning the decision making process.

New pressures/ legislation that may impact on the portfolio are:-

- Financial
- Service Reviews
- Legislation
- Consultation

4.1 Financial -DR

The extremely challenging financial position facing all public sector organisations has and will continue to have a profound effect on the Council's Property Portfolio.

There will need to be a significant future reduction in the number of properties held and those buildings remaining will, in many cases, need to be more flexible to deal with the changes in service delivery demands.

Since 2009, Neath Port Talbot Council's funding has been reduced by over £50m whilst the October 2014 prepared Forward Financial Plan shows the need to save another £50m by 2018, the most recent Spending Review and Welsh Government announcements indicate even further budget reductions will be needed. This position will continue to be monitored as the financial position changes.

The Council has undertaken a review of community facilities and buildings and it can be expected that due to the financial pressure there will be a substantial reduction in the number directly managed/used by the Council over next few years. This will also include a reorganisation of service provision as is the case with residential care and

the schools, and also ensuring buildings are used more intensively and by a range of services.

The impact will be felt both in terms of reduced revenue maintenance budgets that could see an increase in the maintenance backlog and fewer major projects capital schemes to replace buildings that are beyond economic repair or functionally obsolete.

4.2 Service Reviews

As noted above, a number of service reviews have been undertaken within the past 12 to 18 months.

The Community Buildings Review identified 28 properties for consideration, of which 11 have now been sold, leased or transferred, and there are firm proposals to deal with 16 of the remaining buildings.

The library review has resulted in the transfer of 4 facilities to Community Councils and local organisations.

In addition, discussions are on-going with over 35 sports clubs and organisations, in respect of the transfer of various playing fields and changing rooms.

4.3 Legislation

There were no major new legislation issues affecting property in 2013/14.

4.4 Consultation

With the financial pressures and the increased levels of scrutiny as a public body, consultations regarding the effects of, for example, budget reductions or the relocation / closure of a service and the consequences on the asset portfolio are of paramount importance.

Where there is a statutory requirement to consult, it is normally clear that the Council has to organise such a process.

The Council believes it is good practice when making a decision or developing a policy/strategy or a new initiative regarding the management of the portfolio, to anticipate the likely effects it may have and to consult and take steps to prevent or minimise any likely harmful effects.

The Equality Act 2010

The Council has adopted an equal opportunities policy in line with the Equality Act 2010. The policy commits the Council to carrying out equalities impact assessment as a means of ensuring that it meets the public sector equality duty under the Act. This is achieved through Equality Impact Assessments, which are a systematic way of taking equal opportunities into consideration when making a decision. Whether a new or existing function, service, policy, procedure, strategies, plan or project, an analysis is required of whether the decision affects any person or group of persons adversely.

Consultation is a key part of our equality impact assessment process so service users, staff and others likely to be affected by a proposal have the opportunity to get involved and shape the final decision. The views of people from the 'protected characteristics' are obtained to find out how the proposal is likely to affect them and use those views to inform recommendations to Councillors.

5.0 Progress

5.1 Progress 2013-2014

The actions from the Action Plan within the 2013 Property Performance Report and the progress that has been made are set out below:

Action	Progress		
To deliver a capital receipts target of £1M.	2011/ 2012	£1,190,200	Achieved.
	2012/ 2013	£790,600	The target has not been achieved due to the current economic climate.
	2013/ 2014	£1,061,400	Achieved
To refurbish Aberafan House	Negotiations to refurbish Aberafan House could not be concluded and as a consequence, over 250 staff were relocated into existing accommodation with a reduction in running costs of around £300K p.a.		
To increase the number of staff working from Neath Civic Centre by 10%.	This has been temporarily postponed whilst Social Services review their staff locations.		

<p>To support the delivery of the first tranche of the Strategic Schools Improvement Plan and the disposal of vacated premises.</p>	<p>Duffryn Afan Primary School</p>	<p>5yr lease completed Option to purchase activated - Legal Formalities.</p>
	<p>Dwr-Y-Felin Lower Comprehensive School</p>	<p>Negotiations for disposal on-going with another party.</p>
	<p>Ysgol Y Glyn</p>	<p>Negotiation for sale on-going.</p>
<p>To agree the proposal to vacate 4 community buildings in the Sandfields area as part of the Afan Lido redevelopment.</p>	<p>One of the buildings has now been transferred to NSA Afan and discussions are on-going in respect of the other 3.</p>	
<p>To determine the future for Day Service buildings as part of the TOPS Programme.</p>	<p>This review has commenced as part of the wider review in to Transforming Older Persons Services with the aim of reducing revenue costs and backlog maintenance.</p>	
<p>To deliver four sites suitable for development as residential care homes.</p>	<p>Three sites agreed, one under negotiation.</p>	

<p>To develop an individual Asset Management Plan for Margam Crematorium.</p>	<p>Draft report underway.</p>
<p>To undertake a 'One Place' study of Pontardawe in conjunction with other public bodies to identify potential opportunities to rationalise the total number of public buildings.</p>	<p>This will now form part of the area review process with Pontardawe included in the Swansea Valley Review. To reduce revenue costs and backlog maintenance.</p>
<p>To reduce the total maintenance backlog by 5% in 5yrs.</p>	<p>Whilst the maintenance backlog is now £151M, compared to £151M in 2009/10, in real terms taking into account inflation within the construction industry it has dropped by 7.2% or £11M. This is set against a reduction in the maintenance budget available of over 50% in real terms.</p>
<p>Have proposals to replace or refurbish all Category D properties within 5 years.</p>	<p>Proposals are now in place for 26 of the 32 buildings that are currently classified as condition 'D'. To reduce revenue costs and backlog maintenance - Over 80% in place.</p>
<p>To release a number of satellite offices.</p>	<p>The proposal has been superseded by</p>

	the decision to close Aberafan House and the Portakabin in Neath. A proposal involving over 250 staff.
To agree the closure of the Velindre Library HQ site and the transfer of staff/service delivery to alternative premises.	To reduce revenue costs and backlog maintenance. Identify property and prepare report.
To develop an Asset Management Plan for public conveniences including the identification of acceptable alternative service delivery methods.	Several facilities have been closed and a number of the remaining buildings have been refurbished. New legislation and guidance will be analysed to assess the impact on the remaining facilities.
Transfer of staff from Theodore Road Adult Community Learning Centre and Unit 1a Milland Road to the vacant Tir Morfa School Building.	Completed – Lease on Unit 1a Milland Road Industrial Estate to be determined December 2014.

5.2 Additional Progress 2013 – 2014

Action
Delivery of a Llys Y Seren care home, Moor Road, Baglan, as part of the project agreement with Gwalia for improving.
Delivered major capital projects, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ysgol Awel Y Mor and demolition of Glan Y Mor Primary School, Sandfields.• Trem Y Mor - New adult respite centre at Scarlet Avenue, Sandfields.• Croeserw Community Education Centre.• Refurbishment works at Margam Park - Heritage Lottery Fund.
Designed and managed delivery of £1.8m capital maintenance, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rolling programmes in respect of DDA improvements, Leisure Investment, Education, Social Services, and Health & Safety Works.• Refurbishment of Tir Morfa School for office and training facilities, releasing Theodore Road and Unit 1a Milland Road Industrial Estate.• Refurbishment of part of Port Talbot Civic Centre to accommodate staff relocating from Aberavon House.

6.0 ACTION PLAN TARGETS

The five year programme of work in the Corporate Asset Management Plan is supplemented by a more target driven annual Action Plan within the document. This provides a platform to be far more responsive to the changing needs of the services within the Council. The pressures that influence the decision making process in property are set out below.

These targets form part of the Council's ongoing drive to reduce property expenditure and make a contribution towards the Council's Forward Financial Plan.

6.1 Action Plan Target 2014/2015

Action	Financial Implications	Comments
To deliver a capital receipts target of £1M.	£1M Capital.	
To support the delivery of the first tranche of the Strategic Schools Improvement Plan and the disposal of vacated premises.	Significant revenue savings.	On-going disposals.
The following projects are due to commence on site in the near future:	Delivering and maintaining buildings within the portfolio.	
To conclude the negotiations on the properties identified in the Community Buildings Review.		

<p>To relocate 85 Social Services staff to Cimla Resource Centre.</p>		
<p>To support the delivery of the first tranche of the Strategic Schools Improvement Plan and the disposal of vacated premises.</p>		
<p>To conclude the transfer of over 35 sports and community facilities to local clubs and organisations.</p>		
<p>To undertake the Area Review for Port Talbot.</p>		
<p>To reduce the total maintenance backlog annually.</p>		
<p>To reduce the number of Category D buildings annually.</p>		
<p>To transfer the Meals on Wheels service to Social Services</p>		
<p>To facilitate the refurbishment of 8 Wind Street, Neath.</p>		

To commence the consultation of the new Ysgol Bae Baglan.		
To commence Phase 1 of the Neath Town Centre Redevelopment.		
To Progress the Vibrant and Viable Places Programme.		
To undertake the enabling works in preparation for the redevelopment of YGG Ystalyfera.		

6.1 Property FFP Targets 2014/2015

Action	Financial Implications	Comments
To reduce the civic catering budget by £100K p.a.		
Reduction in Council building floor space. Saving in running costs as floor space reduces in the civic buildings. This is subject to staff savings being achieved on a corporate basis.	£8K in 2014/15 £98K in 2015/16	
Lonlas Workshop rent saving.	£5K in 2014/15	
Community Meals - change staffing structure to reflect activity levels. Service delivery changes.	£4K in 2014/15	
Property increase income and reduce expenditure. Will be possible once current arrangements are reviewed.	£50K in 2015/16	
Building Maintenance reduce expenditure. Will impact on the condition of the County's buildings.	£50K in 2014/15 £25K in 2015/16	

Reduce Annual contribution into civic building maintenance reserve.	£50K in 2015/16	
Cut Industrial Units maintenance by 20%.	£20K in 2014/15	
Increase Miscellaneous Land income target by 5%.	£20K in 2014/15	
Stop annual Property transfer to reserve.	£5K in 2014/15	
Reduce Estates Management budget by a reduction in staff.	£50K in 2014/15	
Public Conveniences: Reduction in staff.	£75K in 2014/15	
Carbon Reduction Commitment: Reduce base budget.	£238K in 2014/15	
Additional savings from closing Aberavon House.	£57K in 2014/15 -£57K in 2015/16	
Civic Buildings: Additional savings target.	£20K in 2014/15	

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF RESOURCES AND COMMISSIONING

23 OCTOBER 2014

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS – ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose of Report

To approve the annual report to the Welsh Government in respect of the Welsh Public Library Standards.

Background

Public libraries are a statutory service under the Public Libraries and Museum Act 1964. In Wales all local authorities are required to report annually to the Welsh Government via CyMAL (Museums, Archives and Libraries – Wales) on their performance against the current standards framework of the Welsh Public Library Standards. These Standards provide guidance and are regarded by Welsh Government as their interpretation of complying with the statutory function by providing a comprehensive and efficient library service as required under the 1964 Act.

This annual report covers the third and final year of Framework four of the Standards, which encompasses the years 2011-14.

The current framework focuses on maintaining core public library services in what is recognised as a very challenging time for the public sector.

There are 9 Standards and 8 Performance Indicators which are published and provide information on relative performance of public library authorities in Wales.

In 2011, the first year of Framework four the Authority fully achieved 6 out of the 9 Standards and partially achieved an additional 2 standards. Last year 2012-13, the service fully achieved 7 out of the 9 standards and partially achieved an additional Standard.

This year, the final year of the existing framework, the service has continued to maintain its performance against the Standards and fully achieved 7 standards and improved performance in an additional standard, meeting the minimum recommended expenditure on stock for the first time.

The Standard that the service fails to meet is WPLS 8 - relating to staffing levels. The cap in meeting this standard continues to widen, with the service now operating at the lowest staffing level in Wales. However, despite failing to achieve the standard on staffing, the Assessment report from Welsh Government (Appendix A), recognises that the service continues to operate effectively, develop and be innovative and in terms of performance against the Standards, Neath Port Talbot's Library service performs above average for Authorities in Wales.

WPLS Framework 5

From April 2014 the Fifth framework of the WPLS was introduced, covering the years 2014 to 2017. The new framework consists of 18 Core Entitlements and 16 Quality Indicators. This new Framework will be particularly challenging for NPT, especially in the first year in view of Welsh Governments opposition to the concept of Community Managed Libraries and further reductions proposed for the library service budget. In addition, the Ministers Expert Review Panel will be producing a report on the Future of Public Libraries in Wales, which clearly indicates that Welsh Government have high expectations of Public libraries and reminds local Authorities of their Statutory responsibilities. The Quality Indicators that will be particularly challenging are:

WPLSQI 8 – Provision of up to date reading material - recommends a minimum spend of £2,180 per 1,000 population, which equates to £305,2000 a shortfall on the existing budget of over £40,000 before any further budget reduction for 2015-16.

WPLSQI 10 – On line access – recommends 9 devices per 10,000 population, in relation to NPT this would require 126 devices as against our current provision of 89. A number of PC's were transferred to Community libraries and the previous Standard required a minimum of 7 devices per 1,000 population.

WPLSQI 13 – Staffing levels – states that NPT should have a minimum staffing level of 3.6 per 10,000 population, a total of 50.4 full time staff, against our existing structure of 37.8 FTE and this is likely to be reduced further under current budget proposals.

Appendices

A – Neath Port Talbot Annual Report 2013-14 Feedback from CyMAL -Welsh Government on service performance.

Recommendation

That the report to CyMAL be approved.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

This will enable us to comply with our statutory requirement in respect of the public library service and provide the basis for future improvement.

List of Background Papers

None.

Officer Contact

Wayne John, County Librarian, Tel: 01639-899829.
E-Mail: w.john@npt.gov.uk

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS

(a) Implementation of Decision:

This decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

(b) Sustainability Appraisal:

Community Plan Impacts

Economic Prosperity	positive
Education & Lifelong Learning	positive
Better Health & Well Being	positive
Environment & Transport	no impact
Crime & Disorder	no impact

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	positive
Sustainable Development	positive
Equalities	positive
Social Inclusion	positive

(c) Consultation

This item is not subject to external consultation.

Welsh Government

CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales

Maintaining a Valued Service

The Fourth Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards April 2011 – March 2014

Annual Return Pro Forma (2013-14)

All library authorities are required to complete this pro forma and are asked to follow the instructions provided carefully as the requirements in terms of reporting differ between sections.

All library authorities are requested to provide commentary against each and every Standard (WPLS) and against *each and every* Performance Indicator (WPLPI) in the 'Authority self-assessment' column provided, but only when data is included in the Actual Performance column. Failure to provide commentary could result in the pro forma being returned to library authorities for completion.

Completed *Annual Returns* should be submitted as an electronic document by Friday 4th July 2014 (Draft by Wed 21st May)

Please send to:
Elizabeth Bennett, CyMAL, elizabeth.bennett@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Any questions please contact: Alyson Tyler, Libraries Development Programme Manager (alyson.tyler@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

Name of authority: Neath Port Talbot

Population: 139,980

Please tick as appropriate

This Annual Return has been approved by the authority prior to its submission to CyMAL

Yes No

If Yes, state whether approval was granted by

Full Council

Cabinet/Executive

Portfolio Member

Other (state title)

If No, state when approval is expected and when the definitive Annual Return submission will be forwarded to CyMAL

Approval expected September 2014

Definitive submission to CyMAL by October 2014

Please indicate briefly below:

1. The authority's scrutiny procedures applied to the assessment of library service performances undertaken by the Welsh Government for the year 2012-13, and sent to authorities for their consideration and action in September 2013 by the Welsh Government.

As in previous years, the Annual Return to CyMAL was discussed in detail with the Cabinet Member and Head of Service. Further discussion on performance and planning of the service was held at the senior management team meeting and the report and feedback letter from CyMAL was presented to ECR scrutiny committee in October 2014 for comment by elected Members.

http://www.npt.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3530&id=ECRB&searchall=false&file_name=ECRB-171013-MIN&doc_id=16772&qt=DOC&name=Economic%20and%20Community%20Regeneration%20Cabinet%20Board&file_type=1&mtg_date=17/10/2013

2. What decisions were made by the authority as a result of scrutiny procedures that sought to improve library service performances in relation to the Welsh Public Library Standards and Welsh Public Library Performance Indicators?

An Action plan was produced by the County Librarian to target areas to improve performance against the WPLS as identified in the feedback letter. As a consequence, this annual report sees improvements in many areas of performance: Spending on stock, overall visitors and issues, usage of ICT, provision of requests, replenishment rates and satisfaction rates have all improved or remained at very high levels during this framework period. Where possible, the service will continue to strive to meet the requirements of the Standards, subject to sufficient resources and finance.

3. What action was agreed as a consequence of those decisions?

It was originally proposed that a budget cut of £20,000 for the library service be taken from the book fund for the year 2013-14. In view of the authorities' commitment to achieve the WPLS, alternative budget proposals were made within the service area. Neath Port Talbot recognises the importance of continued investment in the book fund which is crucial to service improvement, with targeted spending on specific areas such as Children's stock to support literacy targets and additional expenditure on Welsh content, both of which have seen an increase in issues.

Following improvements in technology, the library service is committed to the replacement of its existing Wi-Fi provision in libraries. The library service continues to closely monitor service performance at branch libraries.

4. (a) If you indicated in your Annual Return for 2012-13 that your authority was undertaking a formal review of its library service, please indicate whether the review has now been completed:

YES NO N/A

4. (b) If your authority commenced a formal review of its library service during 2013-14, please indicate whether that review has now been completed:

YES NO N/A

If you answered YES to either (a) or (b), briefly outline the main recommendations of the review, noting whether these recommendations have been accepted by the authority and at what level (e.g. Full Council, Cabinet, Executive, etc.). Please also indicate what actions have been taken / are planned in order to implement those recommendations:

A report outlining the Review of the library service in Neath Port Talbot was presented to Cabinet in September 2013. http://www.npt.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3530&id=CAB&searchall=false&file_name=CAB-180913-MIN&doc_id=16579&qt=DOC&name=Cabinet&file_type=1&mtg_date=18/09/2013.

At this meeting, it was agreed that officers would take option2 as outlined in the report (a recommendation to close 9 underperforming community libraries) out to public consultation and report back to Cabinet in December.

Following an extensive consultation process where a number of alternative methods of delivering a library service to communities were explored, a further report was presented to Cabinet in December.

http://www.npt.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3530&id=CAB&searchall=false&file_name=CAB-181213-MIN&doc_id=17068&qt=DOC&name=Cabinet&file_type=1&mtg_date=18/12/2013

It was agreed at that meeting, that senior officers support the transfer of the 9 libraries to Community led management with effect from 1st April 2014.

The library service in Neath Port Talbot will continue to support the Community libraries providing access to the authorities Library management system. Fixtures and fittings, together with public access PC's would be transferred to the community groups, while the authority would continue to provide and rotate book stock to Community libraries on a regular basis. Access to the book stock at all libraries in NPT would continue together with professional training and support which would continue to be provided by NPT library staff.

5. Please indicate whether there have been any changes made to the resources available to the library service during 2013-14 compared to 2012-13, e.g. efficiency savings, resource reductions/increases, restructuring of staff, etc., and indicate how they have impacted on the service in 2013-14 (do NOT include any commentary relating to 2014-15 and subsequent years) in this section:

An initial reduction in the library services budget of £20,000 was approved for 2013-14. This was originally proposed to be removed from the book fund, however this would have had a detrimental effect on the service and its ability to improve performance especially in relation to the WPLS. Alternative areas for savings were identified within the library service, namely a reduction in the ICT budget, Audio Visual budget and a proposal to increasing income.

There were no staff reductions during 2013-14 and the book fund received an additional overall budget increase of £15,000, enabling the authority for the first time to meet the minimum recommended requirements for stock expenditure.

The Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) 2011-14

Notes on completion:

Annual data or information is required for WPLS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

Authorities should follow the guidance provided by the pro-forma against each Standard, and returns should be as required – further information and guidance is available within the published Framework document, and authorities should have due regard to this.

Authorities may be asked to resubmit *Annual Returns* if the data or information do not comply with the requirements.

Please note the additional information required on this occasion in respect of WPLS 5, 6 and WPLS 7 relating to average performances over the period April 2011 to March 2014

	Framework 4 Standard	Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
1	<p>(i) Authorities whose resident population density is 20 or more persons per hectare shall ensure that the proportion of occupied households within 2 miles of a static library service point will be at least 95%</p> <p>or</p> <p>(ii) Authorities whose resident population density is between 1.1 and 19.9 persons per hectare shall ensure that the proportion of occupied households within 2.5 miles of a static library service point (or 10 minutes travelling time by public transport) will be at least 75%</p> <p>or</p> <p>(iii) Authorities whose resident population density is 1.0 persons or less per hectare shall ensure that the proportion of occupied households within 3 miles (or 15 minutes travelling time by public transport) of a static library service point shall be at least 70%</p> <p>Authorities who are failing to meet the stipulated requirement in (i) (ii) or (iii) shall also report on the number of households within a quarter of a mile of each scheduled mobile stop and within 2 miles of any other kind of service outlet providing access to library materials.</p> <p><i>Library services should briefly describe the nature of that provision and the numbers of households served in the Authority self-assessment column.</i></p>	96%	<p>For the duration of the fourth framework Neath Port Talbot has retained its network of 17 static branch libraries and 2 mobile libraries. The majority of the static libraries are readily accessible by public transport. Those that are not (Cwmllynfell and Gwaun Cae Gurwen for example – serve relatively small communities so shortage of public transport is not essentially a barrier to accessing the service) are well covered by the mobile library service.</p> <p>Mobile libraries currently operate on a two weekly schedule covering all communities within the borough, specifically focused on delivering a library service to more remote communities not served by a static library and directly to an increasing number of schools in the authority.</p> <p>Over the course of the framework this standard has not changed. However Neath Port Talbot has always responded to public demand and ensured that sufficient library provision is made available, be this with regard to opening hours (which are closely monitored) or relocation of libraries where appropriate.</p> <p>Up to March 2014 the Service had provided a regular mobile library in areas of South Powys in partnership with Powys Libraries on a recharge basis. However, due to financial pressures, Powys has decided to cancel this arrangement from April 2014 onwards.</p>

State numbers of:	2012-13	2013-14	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Static service points managed by the authority 	17	17	<p>The number of static libraries in NPT has remained constant during this framework.</p> <p>Other modes of service delivery include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collections to Residential / Sheltered homes • A specialist home delivery service to the housebound • A range of stock / collections for Child-minders • Collections to crèches / Childcare facilities • Toy library service to groups and schools • Schools services – linking public libraries to schools • Online services – remote services available 24/7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mobile service vehicles operated by the authority 	2	2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other kinds of service points/modes of delivery <i>Describe briefly in Authority self-assessment column</i> 			

Framework 4 Standard		Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
2	<p>(i) Library authorities shall provide access to the service for those not able to use conventional service points</p> <p>(ii) Library authorities will continue to provide specialised assistance, facilities and equipment for people with particular access requirements</p> <p><i>Library services should briefly describe the nature of the provision in the Authority self-assessment column</i></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>(i) Access to the service for those not able to use conventional service points is provided via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Library – 1404 registered borrowers • Home Delivery Service – 635 registered borrowers • Book collections to residential homes, sheltered housing, mobile visits, institutions and other workplaces • A Toy Library service to carers, playgroups and schools • Targeted services to schools across the county including those in outlying communities with no library provision • A free downloadable E-Books service • E-magazine service • A full range of electronic On line information services / catalogues / membership services <p>(ii) Specialised assistance is provided via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist IT equipment for users • Trackball mice • Joystick mice • Finger mice • Alternative keyboards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Big keys ○ Flexible keyboards ○ Mini keyboards • Keyboard stickers • Lap trays • Dolphin Supernova software (Pen drives) • The service stocks a range of practical resources for users at all libraries • MP3 players available for visually impaired users • Books are available in Braille • A range of material including spoken word in all formats is available • Services are provided to special needs sections in schools • Specialist training for library staff • DDA compliant buildings <p>Furthermore the Service is very proactive in liaising with specific groups and organisations in order to enhance current provision and make residents aware of what additional facilities the library service can provide e.g. Social Services, Lifelong Learning, Age Concern, Shaw Trust and Department of Work and Pensions.</p> <p>In the last year the Library service has worked in partnership with Neath Port Talbot's Educational Psychology department offering up space for counselling sessions in libraries. More recently the</p>

			<p>Service has partnered up with Neath Port Talbot's Looked After Children Department and Education Development Service to target literacy issue amongst looked after children.</p> <p>The Service is also represented on the Authorities Disabled Persons Access Group.</p> <p>The library service works with other partners to ensure services are delivered, these are: Council for Voluntary Services, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Health Board and Neath Port Talbot College.</p> <p>Working with Literature Wales the Service is one of four partners delivering the South Wales Literature Development project. The aim of which is to provide opportunities for engagement in creative writing amongst residents who do not have easy regular access to such services. As a result work has been undertaken with carers, home educated children, looked after children, residents at sheltered and residential homes, adults with basic skills, refugee/asylum seeker groups, EAL (English as Additional Language) students, children at PRUs (Pupil Referral Units), young mothers groups and residents receiving treatment for mental health conditions.</p> <p>The library service is actively supporting NPT citizens with regard to social welfare reforms and library staff will receive training to assist the public in dealing with and managing claims.</p> <p>The Service is working with the DWP to deliver a back to employment pilot scheme for residents – Work Wednesday, Work Friday which are based initially at Port Talbot library, but will be rolled out to other libraries within the authority.</p> <p>Utilising social media the Service is able to reach many more people for more of the time. Amongst some users there is now an expectation to be able to communicate with the Service through social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter which have become an important element of delivering library services and raising awareness of events and services.</p>
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<p>3</p>	<p>(i) Library authorities will ensure that the aggregate annual opening hours for all service points shall be no less than 120 hours per 1,000 resident population</p> <p>Library authorities having 4 or less static service points shall ensure that the aggregate annual opening hours shall be no less than 104 hours per 1,000 resident population</p> <p>(ii) Library authorities will ensure that emergency non-opening hours of static libraries will be no more than 1% of total planned opening hours in any year</p> <p>(iii) Library authorities will ensure that mobile library visits/stops missed or cancelled will be no more than 2.5% of total planned number of visits/stops in any year</p> <p><i>The extent of any disruption caused by unusually severe winter weather should be considered and allowed for in the above returns for (ii) and (iii) by removing any losses of service due to severe weather from the calculations.</i></p>	<p>No. of hours: 167</p> <p>No of service points 17</p> <p>0.06%</p> <p>1.4%</p>	<p>(i) There have been no changes to opening hours across the library service during the past year. Branch library opening hours are closely monitored to ensure they meet the needs and requirements of users. Since April 2011, six libraries – Neath, Port Talbot, Pontardawe, Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Baglan and Cwmafan have all seen changes in opening hours to reflect community needs.</p> <p>Over the course of this framework two libraries have been refurbished, namely Port Talbot and Baglan. While both libraries were closed a replacement mobile library was provided for the full duration of the closure.</p> <p>(ii) The Service strives to keep branch libraries open at all times and is proud of its success in this area. Any temporary closures are as a result of urgent building work that is out of the Service's control.</p> <p>(iii) The Service aims to maintain any frontline service whenever possible. Any missed mobile stops are down to factors beyond our control i.e. mechanical fault or routine servicing of vehicles.</p> <p>Library Management are working closely with Fleet services to reduce the amount of time vehicles are off the road for inspection or servicing.</p>
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Framework 4 Standard		Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
4	(i) Library authorities will provide the following ICT facilities for users:	Insert ✓ or X against each	The library service provides 111 PCs for use by the public. In addition, NPT Libraries have a number of PCs, iPads, Android tablets, laptops and netbooks that are available for use by adult education classes, school groups / classes and for training purposes. NPT Libraries have replaced PCs in most of its branches with new all-in-one PC units which have proved to be popular with users and more reliable.
	(a) At least 7 networked public access personal or laptop computers per 10,000 resident population, providing free access to the Internet and full access to the authority's on-line catalogue of total holdings	✓	(b) As part of the roll out, new or updated software has been installed on all new PCs. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windows 7 operating system • Microsoft Office 2010 • Chrome browser available as an alternative to Internet Explorer • Google apps installed, including Picasa (photo editing tool) and Google Earth • Open source software installed, including Inkscape (graphic editor) and GIMP (photo editing) • Skype
	(b) Current hardware and software at library service points, renewed or refurbished according to corporate policies	✓	(c) All NPT libraries have facilities for members to use their own laptops or portable devices.
	(c) Facilities that enable residents to use their own laptop computers in the libraries	✓	(d) Wi-Fi provision is available in 10 libraries, which includes all libraries open 30 hours or more. These include: Neath, Port Talbot, Pontardawe, Sandfields, Cwmafan, Glynneath, Baglan, Skewen, Taibach and Briton Ferry.
	(d) WiFi at all larger service points (open for 30 hours or more per week) by March 2014	✓	We will be upgrading our Wi-Fi provision within all libraries, moving away from the current authentication process, but with the view of extending the use to children and teenagers with a three tier filtering system, which will bring Wi-Fi provision on the same level as our fixed PC provision. The new Wi-Fi system will also broadcast our schools Wi-Fi network, which will allow classes from local schools to use our libraries as extended class rooms.
	Note: if equipment has been purchased but installation not yet completed as it is the responsibility of another corporate department or supplier, and installation is subject to their timetable, place tick in the next column. If equipment not yet purchased place x in next column		(f) All public access PC's have plug in facilities. Each library also has provision for members to re charge their laptops or portable devices.
	(e) Scanning and printing facilities	✓	(h) Introductory or basic support to ICT is offered in all NPT Libraries This service has also now expanded in some libraries to include formal training in the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter and use of eBooks.
	(f) Plug-in facilities for digital media sources and portable devices	✓	(i) Regular Information literacy sessions are included as an important part of the role of libraries in NPT.
	(g) Free email access	✓	NPT Libraries supports an intergenerational learning project in one local primary school. Staff have trained digital leaders (selected Year 6 children) to teach each other's parents and grandparents in the use of emerging technology.
	(h) Access to free introductory or basic support in the use of ICT facilities	✓	NPT Libraries received addition funding from the Carnegie Trust UK (one of only four library services in the UK), to expand and evaluate the Technoclubs programme with Neath Port Talbot. We now host two Technoclubs, one in a local primary school and the other in Sandfields Library, where staff teach children the basics of computer science using robots, game making programmes and app creation. These clubs have now been running for four months, with additional sessions being held at local comprehensive schools.
	(i) Information literacy sessions for users (to develop use of library services and facilities)	✓	NPT Libraries have been working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and Get NPT Online to run a pilot project (funded through ESF) to run regular
	(ii) Library authorities will provide the following ICT-based resources for users:		
(a) General and reference information services (please describe briefly in the Authority self-assessment column)	✓		
(b) Newspapers and other current information	✓		

	<p>sources online</p> <p>(c) Community information</p> <p>(d) Local history and family history sources</p> <p>(e) Local authority and other governmental information sources</p> <p>(f) Access to e-learning resources and services</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>work club sessions in Port Talbot Library, with a view to expanding the model to other libraries in the county. Jobcentre Plus advisors refer clients to the library between their appointments in the job centre; this could be because the advisor believes that the client needs additional support on Universal Job Match or help getting online. On a dedicated afternoon (Working Wednesdays), Jobcentre Plus staff and the Get NPT Online team attend the library and help the referred clients. This has proved to be so popular that we have had to expand to a second afternoon, on a Friday.</p> <p>(ii) NPT Libraries provide the following subscription ICT-based resources for users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encyclopædia Britannica Online – this service provides three levels of access – Adult, Student and Junior. • InfoTrac Newsstand - full-text newspaper resource • Zinio digital magazine service – access to popular and recreational magazines • Ancestry Library Edition – family history resource. • Theory Test Pro - online simulation of the UK's driving theory test. All material is licensed from the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) • Go Citizen - online study resource for candidates preparing for the Life in the UK Test or British citizenship test. <p>In addition to this, all PCs have the libraries' local authority website, as their homepage where users can find a range of information, including community information and links to governmental information sources. The library service is committed to extending our range of on line electronic resources. Our subscriptions are regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated to ensure we provide a relevant service.</p>
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	Framework 4 Standard	Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
5	<p>Library authorities shall achieve the following target for annual acquisitions of new collection items (in all formats) made available for public use in each year (per 1,000 total resident population)</p> <p>(a) For use by adults – 124 items per annum</p> <p>(b) For users under 16 – 61 items per annum</p>	<p>Actual performance in year</p> <p><u>No. of items:</u></p> <p>2011-12 = 154 2012-13 = 157 2013-14 = 164 Average over 3 year period = 158.67</p> <p><u>No. of items:</u></p> <p>2011-12 = 66 2012-13 = 89 2013-14 = 89 Average over 3 year period = 81.33</p>	<p>In each year of this framework the Service has achieved the target for acquisitions for both adult and children's items. The number of adult items purchased has increased by 9.6% since 2011-12. The number of items for children has increased by 36.1% since 2011-12. The significant growth in items for children relates to the Service's drive to enhance all aspects of service delivery to children. The result of this can be seen in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • year on year increase in participation of the summer reading challenge • over 40 reading clubs for children set up since 2012 • junior and teen issues increased by over 60% since 2011-12 • high levels of user satisfaction amongst under 16s <p>Over the last three years purchasing policy with regard to adult stock has seen a more targeted approach, improving stock levels and rotation in areas of higher demand. New, themed rotating collections have been set up to maximise the coverage of stock and to ensure that all libraries get access to the range of books available. The specially designated reading collection for adults has been extended to over 100 titles in both English and Welsh making it one of the largest designated collections in Wales. This has enabled the Service to meet the needs of 30 reading groups since 2011-12, which includes providing books for groups outside of Neath Port Talbot's boundaries. Reading groups also get the opportunity to select books for the collection with all reader recommendations having been added to the list.</p> <p>The most recent survey (2013) of adult users undertaken (WPLPI 2 (ii)) would suggest that library users are very happy with the range of items offered at the library.</p> <p>It is worth noting that the number of issues of books and other items issued for both adults and children has increased by 1.5% over the course of the fourth framework. This figure represents a significant improvement of the back of over ten years of continuous decline.</p>

6	<p>(i) (a) Library authorities shall maintain a level of expenditure on collection items for adults per 1,000 total resident population that does not fall below the lowest quartile (UK 09/10) on average throughout the period to March 2014</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Lowest quartile £1685</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Median £1925</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Top quartile £2137</p> <p>(b) Library authorities shall maintain a level of expenditure on collection items for those under 16 per 1,000 total resident population that does not fall below the lowest quartile on average throughout the period up to March 2014</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Lowest quartile £263</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Median £322</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Top quartile £426</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Actual expenditure</u></p> <p>2011-12 = £1676 2012-13 = £1664 2013-14 = £1702 Average over 3 year period = £1680.67</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Actual expenditure</u></p> <p>2011-12 = £302 2012-13 = £359 2013-14 = £405 Average over 3 year period = £355.33</p>	<p>When measured against the resident population, the actual spend on items for the duration of framework four has risen 6.5%. Much of this is attributable to the 39.5% spending increase in children's items. As indicated in WPLS5 the Service has focussed on its work with children in recent years delivering many significant projects.</p> <p>As outlined previously there are targeted areas of work such as reading groups for both adults and children, meaning that spend is much more focused on users. Consequently there have been decreases in expenditure for CDs of 19.6% and DVDs of 16.7% respectively, related to the decrease in demand for these formats with the development of new technology allowing downloading or streaming of material via the internet. On the other side of this is the 151.9% increase in Welsh language stock expenditure. Each of these relates to what our customers are asking for, and using.</p> <p>There have been significant financial pressures upon the Service during the course of this Framework. It is therefore some achievement to be able to demonstrate an increase in the expenditure on the book fund over this period. Furthermore the high levels of user satisfaction, the increase in issues, the growth in reading groups and the upsurge in library based events can all be traced back to the Authorities commitment to the book fund.</p> <p>The Service has made important strides in the last five years with regard to preserving and enhancing the book fund. Over this time expenditure has risen by approximately £60,000. In achieving this, the Service dutifully acknowledges the role of CyMAL in ensuring and supporting Neath Port Talbot's commitment to the book fund, as a means of improving performance.</p>
6	<p>(ii) Library authorities shall ensure that they spend</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Either</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(a) a minimum average for the three-year period to March 2014 of £750 per annum per 1,000 Welsh speaker total resident population (adult and children under 16) on the purchase,</p>		<p>Following feedback in 2012 expressing concern at the low level of spend on Welsh language materials an extra £7000 was added to spend on Welsh stock. As stated in the WPLS last year it was the Service's intention to closely monitor the issues of Welsh items in 2013-14. The result of this has shown an overall increase in Welsh issues of 30% (40% children, 6% adult).</p> <p>The Service is committed to delivering more for Welsh language users in Neath Port Talbot. There are now three adult reading groups for Welsh readers with a dedicated collection provided for</p>

	<p>marketing and promotion of Welsh-language materials</p> <p>Or</p> <p>(b) a minimum of 4% of the total library materials purchasing fund on average for the three-year period to March 2014 on the purchase, marketing and promotion of Welsh-language materials for adults and children under 16</p> <p>(iii) Library authorities will compare their acquisition performance during 2013-14 against an indicative selected list of Welsh Writing in English titles to be circulated after consultation with the Welsh Books Council. Authorities should purchase a minimum of 75% of those titles listed annually and an average of at least 3 copies of those titles</p> <p>(iv) (a) Library authorities shall ensure that the time taken to replenish the lending stock on open access for adult users is no more than 8.9 years</p> <p>(b) Library authorities shall ensure that the time taken to replenish the lending stock on open access for users under 16 is no more than 8.9 years</p> <p>Note: reserve stocks should not be included in the calculation of performances against part (iv) (a) and (b) this Standard</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>State %</u></p> <p>2011-12 = 1.2%</p> <p>2012-13 = 3.3%</p> <p>2013-14 = 3.24%</p> <p>Average over 3 year period</p> <p style="text-align: center;">= 2.58%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">% of list purchased</p> <p style="text-align: center;">87.5%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Average no. of copies of each title purchased</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3.5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">State performance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8.1 years</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6.4 years</p>	<p>them. In addition the Service is delivering targeted reading and writing projects at four Welsh medium primary schools.</p> <p>Neath Port Talbot as the lead authority for the E books for Wales service and Zinio E zines service has actively ensured that our suppliers provide an increasing number of titles in this new format in the Welsh language.</p> <p>Neath Port Talbot is fully committed to supporting Welsh writing in English. We have strong established links with the key publishers – Parthian, Seren, Accent, Gomer / Pont. These Publishers are featured in the reading group collections for both adults and children and writers from Wales are always featured among author events at Neath Port Talbot Libraries. Most recently the Service held a full day event in partnership with Seren and Literature Wales to promote their poetry collection. The event, headlined by Gillian Clarke received a good deal of positive feedback from audiences.</p> <p>As has been outlined above there have been considerable changes to how stock is purchased in the last three years. Running parallel has been improvements in how stock is managed. This is reflected in the improved performance in the replenishment of material. More and more the Service has been able to improve the stock offer to library users and this is clearly shown in the increase in issues and satisfaction rates. Better management of stock and increased expenditure has led to this improvement.</p>
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	Framework 4 Standard	Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
7	<p>Library authorities will ensure that no less than</p> <p>(a) 64% of all requests shall be supplied within 7 calendar days</p> <p>(b) 79% within 15 calendar days</p> <p>(c) 89% within 30 calendar days</p> <p>on average over the three-year period to March 2014</p> <p><i>Calendar days are to be calculated from when the request / reservation was made to the time when the borrower was informed that the material was available.</i></p> <p><i>Requests for pre-publication material should be calculated only from the date when materials are made available for purchase to the library service, i.e. exclude pre-publication requests still in the system.</i></p> <p>Note: Please indicate (insert ✓ or X) whether this data has been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ calculated via the service LMS <p>or</p>	<p>2011-12 = 73%</p> <p>2012-13 = 78%</p> <p>2013-14 = 83%</p> <p>Average over 3 year period = 78.3%</p> <p>2011-12 = 94%</p> <p>2012-13 = 94%</p> <p>2013-14 = 94%</p> <p>Average over 3 year period = 94%</p> <p>2011-12 = 98%</p> <p>2012-13 = 99%</p> <p>2013-14 = 96%</p> <p>Average over 3 year period = 97.7%</p>	<p>Request figures are obtained via two sample periods carried out each year - in June and October. It is not possible to obtain the figure via the LMS (Library Management System). They are carried out in accordance with Cifpa guidelines, overseen by NPT audit and information management unit.</p> <p>The Library Service has set out to improve performance in this area over the last ten years. From a position of 33%, 68% and 82% in 2003, continuous improvements to deliveries, purchasing policies which include obtaining multiple copies and reducing the loan period for bestseller titles and a concerted effort by staff to achieve this standard has led to the current high level of performance. A number of options are now available for obtaining reserved titles in a relatively short time scale, including purchasing direct from Amazon or inter lending from neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>What is of more importance to the Service is what is done in terms of promotion and engaging with readers. Every library in NPT displays lists of new and forthcoming titles and requests are actively sought in an attempt to stimulate discussions and interest around new publications. This had led to a vibrant expectancy amongst readers with opportunities for them to engage and share with one another. It has become a mainstay of our reader development work at libraries and through social media. At the moment this does not affect performance but if in time satisfaction rates begin to fall then that will be an outcome that the Service will accept.</p> <p>Issues are continually monitored in conjunction with our purchasing policy which is reviewed to take into account any changes or borrowing trends. In recent years there has been a steady reduction in the demand for non-fiction titles which is now reflected in our allocation of resources.</p> <p>Books4U, which promotes free inter lending between 12 local Authorities in Wales, including NPT continues to be an important element in delivering improved performance by increasing access to resources and raising expectations amongst users.</p> <p>The demand for commercially available retail E books continues to grow and has impacted on libraries book issues. Albeit from a relatively low base, E book issues rose at a rate of 59% in the final three months of 2013-14.</p> <p>Following the recent Government report on E book lending in public libraries, usage of the libraries E books for Wales service continues</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ calculated on the basis of a sample period survey	✓	to grow, but is hampered by the restrictive policies of publishers in releasing new product to public libraries, together with restrictions on the number of loans per copy or the time period libraries are allowed to lend the book. Hopefully this situation will improve following evaluation of the pilot projects on E book lending in libraries. The demand for retail E books seems to be levelling out, however it is anticipated that on line services such as E books and E Zines will continue to develop over the next few years.
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Framework 4 Standard		Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
8	(i) Library authorities shall ensure that total staffing establishment levels shall not fall below 0.37 per 1,000 resident population	State figure: 0.34	<p><i>For parts (i) and (ii) of this Standard please comment here on the position relating to any library service establishment posts vacant on 31 March 2014, and the length of time they have been vacant.</i></p> <p>There has been no change to the Council's policy regarding staffing and recruitment, therefore the staffing structure remains the same, with an emphasis on protecting front line posts and services. However a stronger, improved partnership with ELRS has been formed under the County Librarian, which has resulted in shared functions and savings in areas such as transport (deliveries), administration and bibliographic services. Specialist schools library staff now work with their public library counterparts and this has improved links to schools and services to children. Despite our low staffing levels in NPT, the service continues to operate at a very efficient level as is highlighted throughout this report.</p> <p>We currently have a number of young professional staff who are highly motivated and have been responsible for developing new and innovative services, ensuring that NPT libraries are at the forefront of professional development in such service areas as E books, ICT , Social Media and Marketing, E magazines, using emerging technologies such as iPads and projects such as technocamps. The service also has an excellent record of training and developing staff – with a number of staff attending external courses and obtaining professional qualifications. A further member of staff is completing her final year in the foundation degree.</p> <p>The County Librarian has been a professionally chartered librarian since 1984.</p> <p>There are presently six volunteers undertaking work throughout the service. This work is complimenting the work of full or part time staff, freeing up their time to enhance and deliver within their own remit. The work of volunteers is overseen by a Volunteer Coordinator, who is a Senior member of library staff who ensures that all volunteers undergo the same induction, training and follow the same guidelines as regular library staff.</p> <p>The Service works in partnership with NPT Council for Voluntary Services in providing volunteering opportunities and support.</p> <p>The service is actively working towards meeting the National Occupational Standards for Managing Volunteers and Investing in Volunteers.</p>
	(ii) Library authorities shall ensure that at least 23% of total staff shall be formally qualified in library and information studies / science	State % 16%	
	(iii) Library authorities shall ensure that the designated operational manager of library services shall be the holder of recognised professional qualifications in librarianship or information science or information management	State qualification of post holder ALA / MCILIP	
	(iv) Library authorities that use volunteer staff shall ensure that they:	Insert ✓ or X against each	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a designated volunteer coordinator from the permanent staffing establishment ✓ • provide a written role description for each volunteer ✓ • meet the legal requirements for each volunteer in relation to the role being undertaken ✓ • provide induction training for volunteers ✓ • provide continuing training for volunteers ✓ • provide appropriate supervision for volunteers ✓ • are aiming to achieve accreditation status recognising that the organisation is meeting the standards noted in the National Occupational Standards for Managing Volunteers and Investing in Volunteers ✓ 		

Framework 4 Standard		Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
9	<p>Library authorities will indicate:</p> <p>(i) Capital investment in their library service points (including mobile services) from</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) the authority's own resources</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b) from external sources</p> <p><i>State sources of any external capital investment in the Authority self-assessment column.</i></p> <p>(ii) Their actual repair and maintenance expenditure for each year of the Framework per 1,000 resident population, including any actual central charge levied on the library service for use of buildings as service points</p> <p>(iii) That they have undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an asset/condition survey for their service points or internally reviewed such surveys on one occasion in the five year from March 2009 to April 2014. Note: if service point has been refurbished during the period, a condition survey can be regarded as being part of that work 	<p>£ Nil</p> <p>£ Nil</p> <p>2011-12 = £520.83 2012-13 = £830.79 2013-14 = £556.23</p> <p>Insert ✓ or X</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>Date of survey: January 2010</p> <p>Date of audit: January 2010</p>	<p>(ia) Throughout the process of the review of library services in NPT, additional capital expenditure on library buildings was suspended so as not to prejudice or influence any decisions.</p> <p>(ib) Unfortunately, the Service failed to secure CyMAL funding for the refurbishment of Cymer Afan Library, despite its location in an area of high deprivation.</p> <p>(ii) Expenditure for repair and maintenance in 2013-14 was £ 77, 861 compared with £116,293.75 in 2012-13 and £72,906 in 2011-12. Therefore the authority has invested additional resources in building maintenance during the course of the framework. The Service pays a total annual rent of £11,804 for four of its community based venues. These are paid to external organisations - local health board and community councils. The Service has an ageing building stock – 3 of our library buildings are more than 100 years old with on-going maintenance and structural issues. Where feasible, the service is looking into the viability of relocating to shared facilities/venues with other departments or service providers. Two of our libraries, Baglan and Pontardawe, both share their buildings with a Youth facility and NPT Council's One Stop Shop. Future library provision will be planned around shared premises.</p> <p>(iii) A full asset/condition survey was undertaken in January 2010. A Disability audit was also conducted at the same time. As a result of the recent library review the survey was updated for those libraries identified in the report.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a disability audit on one occasion in the five-year period from March 2009 to April 2014 Note: if service point has been refurbished during the period, a disability audit can be regarded as being part of that work <p>(iv) The total aggregate public area offered by the library service points per 1,000 resident population. The indicative standard is 27 square metres</p> <p>(v) Any other capital expenditure on the library service not relating to buildings incurred during the year <i>State nature of expenditure in (v) in the Authority self-assessment column.</i></p>	<p>January 2010</p> <p>35 m²</p> <p>£32,801</p>	<p>(iv) The Service is meeting the requirement of the standard. This figure has remained at 35m² for the duration of the Framework. Public library space has increasingly been opened up to a number of other services – Education, Family Learning, Social Services, and Employment. Library space is often used outside of the normal library opening hours. These are targeted areas of work that the library is actively engaging in. They further enhance the community role of the library. Most recently Pontardawe Library now offers a wider range of Council services, previously carried out by customer services staff via the Hub @ Pontardawe, This ensures continuity of services to the community in the most cost effective method.</p> <p>(v) Mobile library leasing charges.</p>
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The Welsh Public Library Performance Indicators (WPLPI) 2011-14

Notes for completion

Data is required annually for Performance Indicators (WPLPI) 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 - all are marked with * for the sake of clarity. Data should only be submitted for WPLPI 2 when the PLUS surveys (or their local equivalents) have been completed and when results are known.

Library authorities NEED NOT offer comments in those Performance Indicators where no data can yet be submitted (and until, for example the PLUS survey, or its equivalent has been conducted).

Authorities who do not use the PLUS survey services in their entirety are required to provide the following information in their Annual Return

- (i) When and by whom was the survey conducted?
- (ii) How and where was the survey conducted?
- (iii) How was the analysis undertaken and by whom?
- (iv) What questions were asked for each Performance Indicator?
- (v) What was the survey target sample and how was it calculated?
- (vi) What was the response rate?

Performance data should be cited to two decimal points where appropriate

Performance Indicators (WPLPI)		Reported Performance 2012-13	Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
1*	The number of people using the library service per 1,000 resident population	No. per 1,000 population: 6866	No. per 1,000 population: 6902	<p>Please report separately here on how these figures break down in terms of the total number of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical visits ▪ Virtual visits (website / librarywales.org ONLY) ▪ Attendance at events / activities <p>Please also report on usage of social media</p> <p>The overall total for all visits to the library - physical and virtual - improved on last year's performance by 0.5%. The breakdown for this figure is as follows. Physical visits – 740001 Virtual visits – 218161 Attendance at library based events – 48062 Attendance at events outside of the library but organised by the service – 7069 Library.Wales – 7386</p> <p>While physical visits and events outside of the library may have decreased by a small amount on last year's performance, the numbers visiting the library via the website has grown by a further 5.8% (16% over the course of the framework). Also the numbers of people attending events at libraries has increased by 37% during framework four. This represents a Service that has been very proactive in providing for users, a library that goes beyond meeting the basic requirement. The library is now a vibrant community venue where residents come to expect quality events. Library based events have now become a core function for the service. These events include – Song and Rhyme sessions, Class visits, author/storyteller visits, craft sessions, after school clubs, film screenings, reading groups, writing groups, local history groups and workshops/learner taster sessions. During Adult Learners Week for example over 30 events were held in NPT libraries.</p> <p>Physical visits to libraries have fluctuated over the 3 years; compared to performance in 2011 current figures show a drop of 0.03%. This small drop can be attributed to library refurbishments that have taken place. In each case a replacement mobile library has been put on site while the library was closed. Therefore actual figures are reported, not estimates based on previous years' performance.</p>

				<p>Attendance at events outside of the library has dropped by 1.7% in 2013/14. However the Service has been active and attended a number of community events which have been organised by other partners for which we make nil returns. Most notably, there was a significant library presence at the summer 2013 CBeebies Live event in Margam Park, Port Talbot. Compliments were received from the BBC who praised the Service for its commitment and enthusiasm during the weekend event. The two day event saw over 15,000 visitors.</p> <p>The service is an active user of social media, both Twitter and Facebook, taking the opportunity to engage with regular users and advertise and publicise events and services.</p>
2	<p>(i) The % of library users (adults and children under 16) who are satisfied or very satisfied with the library service provided. <i>The benchmark of the Framework for an acceptable level of performance in this part of the Indicator is 90%</i></p> <p>(ii) The % of adults who think that the choice of books available in the library they use is 'very good', 'good' or 'adequate'</p> <p>(iii) The % of users under 16 who think that the choice of books in the library they use is 'good' or 'OK'</p>	<p>*99%</p> <p>97%</p> <p>n/a</p>	<p>n/a</p> <p>n/a</p> <p>**95%</p>	<p>*Adult survey undertaken in February 2013. ** Children's survey undertaken in September 2013</p> <p>*A survey of over 3,600 adult users across ten libraries was carried out in February 2013.</p> <p>The survey asked a number of questions to determine satisfaction rates across a number of areas – i.e. staff, ICT facilities and opening hours in addition to overall satisfaction with the library and with the selection of books on offer. The two questions asked relevant to this report were: - How would you rate this library? - How would you rate the range of books at this library?</p> <p>The high satisfaction scores come as no surprise given the high regard libraries are held in within Neath Port Talbot, given the value to the community and helpfulness and quality of staff.</p> <p>It reflects well on the effort and enthusiasm staff are putting into delivering a good library service.</p> <p>The libraries surveyed were Cwmafan, Baglan, Neath, Skewen, Pontardawe, Port Talbot, Resolven, Glynneath, Sandfields and the Mobile library service.</p> <p>Surveys were carried out and analysed by the administration department at library headquarters. Sample sizes were calculated using the guidelines as set out in the Framework document. The response rate across all ten libraries was 93%.</p> <p>** The Children's survey adopted the some model as the adult in that it surveyed the same libraries and was managed and analysed in the same manner. 567 out of 800 surveys were returned. Questions asked were (as per Cipfa guidance): Using the library has enabled me to -</p>

				<p>Read Better</p> <p>Do Better at School</p> <p>Learn & Find Things Out</p> <p>Use Computers Better</p> <p>Make Friends</p> <p>Try New Things</p> <p>In addition children were asked to rate the books on offer at the library.</p>
3*	The % of time allocated for use of public access ICT facilities actually taken up by users	46%	48%	<p>The two most significant factors in the slight improvement in performance since 2012-13 are the replacement of ICT hardware at all libraries and the effect of welfare reform. Replacing all hardware now gives users a much improved ICT experience with better performance PC's.</p> <p>Wi-Fi is available at ten libraries in NPT, including all those open over 30 hours. Visitors can now use their own devices – smartphones, tablets etc. - to access the internet. In addition, the library service provides a number of iPads and laptops at libraries which are not counted in these calculations.</p> <p>Improved training facilities have been established at Taibach and Briton Ferry libraries with additional PC's available to groups. Again these are not included in the calculations as they are not connected directly to the libraries IT network but are available for public use in the library.</p>
4*	The annual issues (loans) per 1,000 total resident population	<p>No. per 1,000 population:</p> <p>4146</p>	<p>No. per 1,000 population:</p> <p>4194</p>	<p>Overall issue figures increased by 1.74% on performance reported in 2012-13. The increase is spread across a number of libraries (Glynneath, Cwmafan and Pontardawe reporting increases in issues of over 10%) and stock areas (Junior issues increased by 14%). There has been, as indicated above, a significant increase in issue of Welsh language titles.</p> <p>Compared to performance in 2011 the number of issues has increased by 1.5%. This should be taken against a background of over 10 year's continuous decline.</p> <p>This can attributed to a number of factors Library refurbishments have created a much more</p>

				<p>vibrant, open plan and user friendly environment in the libraries concerned.</p> <p>A focus on children's work has resulted in an increase in junior issues of over 70% since 2011 and an increase in teenage issues of 12%. Targeting children at the library and at school is fundamental to Neath Port Talbot's aims and mirrors the wider national concerns centred on literacy and engagement. Over the course of this framework the Service has set up and delivered 41 reading groups in schools targeting KS2 and 3 and a range of abilities. There has also been a strong focus on working with boys.</p> <p>Library staff are committed to improving performance. Issues are monitored quarterly in accordance with Corporate policy and as such it is possible to see trends emerge. Library staff are made aware of targets for the number of issues and best practice is shared across the Service. Furthermore across the library network there is a passion amongst staff to engage with readers and promote reading. This can be seen in the improved performance of WPLS7 (Requests Service).</p> <p>A comparison of e book issues over the year has seen an increase of 59%. Although E book issues as a whole in most authorities remain below 1% of total issues.</p>
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Performance Indicators (WPLPI)		Reported Performance 2012-13	Actual Performance as at March 31 2014	Authority self-assessment
5*	The % of total annual authority expenditure on the library service spent annually on the purchase of books and other collection items in all formats and made available to the public	8.71%	10.47%	See commentary in WPLS 5 and 6 relating to expenditure on stock. The book fund was increased during the last year to £245,000 enabling the service for the first time to fully achieve the minimum recommended spend on acquisitions.
6*	The % of total authority revenue expenditure spent annually on the public library service The actual recharge (in £s) levied on the library service for central services	1.03% £763,766	0.54% £ 585,714	Expenditure on the Library Service remains at the level of the previous year. The reason for this lower figure reported here is the increased expenditure on other areas of the authority. Over the course of the Framework actual spending on the Service has increased. Recharges for 2013-14 are lower due to reductions in staffing levels and support elsewhere within Neath Port Talbot council.
7*	The % of total authority capital allocations expended on public library facilities this year	0.51%	Nil	As per WPLS 9, capital spending was suspended for the duration of the library review and the consultation process that followed.
8*	The net annual revenue expenditure on public library provision per 1,000 resident population, including staffing, materials, revenue costs of buildings and any recharge levied on the library service for central services	£19084	£18967	Actual spending on the frontline delivery of library services has not decreased despite this reported figure. The fall here is due to the reduction in the recharge for central services being £178,052 less than in 2012-13 as is highlighted in WPLPI 6.

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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Neath Port Talbot Annual Report 2013-14

Maintaining a Valued Service: The Fourth Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards

The year under review is the third, and final, year under the Welsh Government's fourth framework of Welsh Public Library Standards. The framework was operational for the three-year period from April 2011 to March 2014; its focus was on the maintenance of core library services in what was recognised as a challenging period for the public sector. Although the benchmarks and Standards set reflected a more limited approach than in previous frameworks, as indicated in the reports for the first two years of this framework, the Welsh Government was still seeking reassurance that Welsh library authorities were endeavouring to carry out their statutory responsibilities in the delivery of the core library service.

The requirements

Under the fourth framework of library standards, Welsh public library authorities were required to submit an Annual Return - reporting on performance against the framework's 9 Welsh Public Library Standards and 8 Welsh Public Library Performance Indicators. For the 2013-14 year, the authorities were asked to submit their returns by the end of May 2014, earlier than in previous years, in order to facilitate the work of the Public Libraries Review Panel established by the then Minister for Culture and Sport. The Welsh Government is grateful for the co-operation of Welsh library authorities in this regard. The Annual Returns were considered by a panel of assessors, including a peer review reference group, drawn from senior service managers in the sector, assisted by independent external expertise.

The authority's Annual Return for 2013-14, which was submitted by the authority in accordance with the stipulated requirements, has now been considered by the assessors.

This report - issued by CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales, the division of the Welsh Government with responsibility for administering the framework - represents the considered view of the assessors on the authority's performance in 2013-14.

The authority's scrutiny of performance and its response to the Welsh Government's previous assessment

The Annual Return indicates the detailed nature of the authority's scrutiny and consideration of the Welsh Government's previous report. It was discussed at various levels: initially with the Cabinet Member and Head of Service, then within the senior management team, and again at the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. Subsequently an action plan was drawn up by the County Librarian in order to respond to the issues raised by the assessors in their report. In addition a proposed reduction in the service's materials

fund was reconsidered as it was recognised that it would have a negative effect on the authority's work to achieve more of the Standards. A similar level of spending reductions was achieved by other means. The authority was also able to continue to increase its allocation to the materials fund in accordance with an agreement between itself and CyMAL arrived at some years ago. The library service continued to prioritise spending on materials for young users and added to the budget for Welsh language materials, and in both areas the impact was entirely beneficial and fully justified by user response.

This detailed approach to the scrutiny of reports and the subsequent formulation of an action plan to address issues raised by the assessors is commended as excellent practice. The regular review of performances within the service itself is also having a beneficial effect.

Evidence of service planning

Nevertheless, it is clear that this is a period of substantial change within the service, and even though no changes were made to the pattern and nature of provision during 2013-14, a number of major decisions were made during the year concerning future provision, the impact of which raises a number of issues. The authority has decided on a community provision model for a number of its service points, a model whose track record is largely unproven. As a result, the authority will have to consider which aspects of the service it will be able to include and report as part and parcel of its provision of a statutory service in future. The Welsh Government will be issuing guidance on the matter in due course following the deliberations of its Library Review Expert Panel. Defining the service could have major implications for the calculation of performance levels in future in very many of the Standards and Performance Indicators.

On a more micro management level, the authority has also taken various decisions regarding the manner in which it will draw on additional authority staffing expertise in future to compensate for past losses in the library service, but also to secure benefits from closer collaboration. It has also decided on operational matters such as improving the WiFi provision to make it more accessible and compatible with other learning and educational services. Future planning of this nature is encouraging and entirely appropriate as a method of meeting substantial challenges, but again, defining services and responsibility, as well as disaggregating expenditure and budgets for reporting and assessment purposes, could have major implications in future.

The Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS)

The authority's performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards during 2013-14 has been assessed as follows. The authority:

- Is achieving 7 of the 9 Welsh Public Library Standards. This is the same as in 2012-13, and is one more than in 2011-12, but there are changes within performance levels within certain Standards, usually for the better, which is a commendable performance overall.

In WPLS 1 (location of service points and access to them) provision remained the same, but as noted above, it will have changed significantly from April 2014, both within the authority itself and in terms of ceasing collaboration with a neighbouring authority. In WPLS 2 (services to users with special needs), provision remains at a very commendable level, characterised by collaboration with other corporate departments and external organisations and agencies. No changes were made to provision in WPLS 3 (opening

hours and delivery of scheduled services), so the authority continues to meet the requirements of the Standard up to March 2014.

ICT provision continues to remain within the requirements of the Standard (WPLS 4), and it is noted that the provision of WiFi facilities within all libraries will be further enhanced and developed.

Annual acquisitions of library materials (WPLS 5) have met the stipulated requirements both for adults and children in 2013-14 and throughout the framework, highlighting the value of a consistent and adequate budget allocation. Improved levels of expenditure on materials have also enabled the authority to meet the requirements of WPLS 7 (delivery of user requests), with performances improving consistently in respect of the most demanding target (section (a)) over the lifetime of the fourth framework.

The authority also meets all the requirements of WPLS 9 (buildings and space), and even though the surveys and audits of the buildings took place in 2010, the assessors decided to award the Standard in its entirety as they took place within the timescale indicated by the Standard. Under its new community library model the authority may have to calculate its space performance on a different basis in future, and there could be a significant decline in provision as a result.

- Is partly achieving the requirements of 1 Standard.

There has been a gradual and significant improvement in performance in WPLS 6 (annual expenditure on books and materials) throughout the fourth framework to the extent that the majority of the requirements are now being met. This can be directly attributed to increased allocations to the book fund and the protection and prioritisation accorded to the fund. However, the problems caused by historically low allocations cannot be solved immediately, and past shortcomings in investment levels are still affecting two performances in this Standard. The average overall expenditure on materials for adults falls below the target set in section 6(a), and historically low expenditure on Welsh language materials has also reduced the overall average performance in section (ii) (b). Both performances have improved, indeed as the Annual Return points out, the performance in section 6(a) indicates that the service has achieved this target for the very first time since the introduction of the assessment frameworks in 2002. This is a considerable achievement. It is also good to note that additional expenditure on Welsh language material has been followed by a significant increase in its use, which belies the often quoted excuse for lack of expenditure on such material, namely that there is no demand for it in many public libraries in Wales. The authority is to be commended for its work in this regard.

- Is failing to achieve the requirements of the remaining Standard (WPLS 8 staffing).

Both performances within this Standard fall some way below the targets set, and even though the Annual Return indicates how the authority is seeking to address the issue by adopting some innovative means to add some staffing capacity, involving collaboration and sharing resources, it is unlikely that the situation can be improved substantially, bearing in mind the financial challenges that lie ahead.

Overall

For the purpose of comparing performances with that of other Welsh public library

authorities, the average number of Standards being met by all authorities in 2013-14 was 6.5, the highest number achieved was 9, and the lowest 4. Neath Port Talbot's performance is therefore above average when compared with others in Wales.

The Welsh Public Library Performance Indicators (WPLPI)

The framework also asked library authorities to report against 8 Performance Indicators: many of these were comparable with figures reported under the third assessment framework (2008-11), and it was therefore possible for authorities to identify certain trends in service performances. The following table lists the authority's reported performances alongside Welsh average performances.

WPLPI	Authority Performance	Welsh average
1. Use (physical/virtual visits, attendance at events) of service (per 1,000 population)	6902	5635
2. User satisfaction levels		
(i) % of users who are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the library service	99%	96%
(ii) % of adults who think the choice of books is 'very good', 'good', or 'adequate'	97%	96%
(iii) % of users under 16 who think the choice of books is 'very good', 'good', or 'adequate'	95%	98%
3. % take-up of public access PCs	48%	41%
4. Annual issues (per 1,000 population)	4194	4424
5. % of total authority library expenditure spent on the purchase of library stock	10.47%	12.90%
6. % of total authority revenue expenditure spent on the public library service	0.54%	0.90%
7. The % of total authority capital allocations expended on public library facilities in this year	Nil	0.56%
8. Net expenditure on public library provision (per 1,000 population)	£18,967	£16,341

These are encouraging performances on the whole. The total of visits to the authority's libraries has increased slightly (WPLPI 1) as has computer use (WPLPI 3) - attributed to ensuring that the facilities are modern and reliable, and issues are also on the increase (WPLPI 4), reversing both local and national trends. The service is probably correct in its view that this can be attributed to increased level of expenditure on library materials, particularly for young users and Welsh speakers. This provides more than adequate justification for the management's action plans.

Some of the financial performances convey a slightly different message in the data returned for WPLPI 5 to 8, where slight decreases are apparent. However, the Annual Return seeks to explain that accounting methods and expenditure levels in other parts of the authority tend to hide the fact that allocations and expenditure for the library service during the year have remained broadly the same compared to 2012-13.

Concluding remarks

Taking all the evidence into consideration, with a consistent total of Standards being achieved and better performances reported under many of the Indicators, it would appear that the authority is now providing its statutory library service in a more efficient and

effective manner.

It has certainly applied itself conscientiously and effectively to the challenge posed by the fourth assessment framework. Having identified the performance areas in need of attention, its subsequent action plans appear to have brought about the anticipated benefits, and overall the performance is commendable.

Only time will tell whether its more recent major decisions will have such beneficial outcomes.

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**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION
CABINET BOARD**

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING – N. PEARCE

23rd OCTOBER 2014

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

**NEATH PORT TALBOT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (UDP) –
CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES RECEIVED FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION ON THE REVISED AFFORDABLE HOUSING
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

Purpose of Report

To consider the responses received following consultation on the revised UDP Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).

Introduction

The current version of the Affordable Housing SPG was adopted by the Authority in July 2008 and updated in 2010 and provides detailed guidance in order to explain how relevant policies on Affordable Housing in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) will be applied in particular circumstances.

A recent review of the document and its effectiveness highlighted the need for the document to be amended to further improve clarification. A report was presented to this Board on the 27th June 2014 which highlighted the proposed changes. Authorisation was obtained from Members to undertake consultation upon the revised document. This consultation took place between Monday 11th August and Monday 8th September 2014 for a total of 4 weeks.

Members will be aware that towards the end of 2015 the current UDP is programmed to be replaced by the Local Development Plan (LDP) and work is already underway to produce an entirely new version of the Affordable Housing SPG which will supersede the current guidance document.

Proposed Amendments

In the interim period, the Council consulted on the amendments set out below to provide further clarification and to assist the Council in its Affordable Housing negotiations with developers – the SPG incorporating such proposed changes is provided in Appendix 1.

1. Definition of Market Value

It was proposed that the definition of Market Value is replaced with the following Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) definition to establish a site by site valuation rather than an average for sub-zone:

‘The estimated amount for which a property should exchange on the date of valuation between a willing buyer and a willing seller in arm’s-length transaction after proper marketing wherein the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion’

2. Calculation of Fees

The negotiation of affordable housing contributions can involve considerable work by Estates and this should be funded by the developer. The existing document requires the payment of a flat rate of £250 for the consideration of submitted viability assessments, however it is suggested that this rate is reviewed and the ability to amend the charge be delegated to the Head of Planning and staged as follows:

- 3 to 10 units £250
- 11 to 20 units £500
- 21+ units £1,000

3. Methodology & Calculation for Contributions

Appendix 4 and 5 of the original document provides a methodology and calculation for establishing contributions to Affordable Housing. It is proposed that the calculation set out in Appendix 4 be removed and the calculation set out in Appendix 5 be updated to provide clearer guidance and worked examples to assist developers.

4. The Options

An amendment to Option 4 is proposed, with the existing requirement for a developer to provide serviced land and 30% construction costs removed and replaced with, *'which shall not equate to less than the affordable housing contribution under option 1'*. This is to provide clarity that Option 1 is the preferred option and developers should not choose subsequent options to reduce their affordable housing contribution.

5. Paragraph 1.7

For clarification, it is proposed that Paragraph 1.7 is amended to state in most cases it is expected affordable housing contributions will be provided on-site, in the interest of inclusive and mixed communities.

6. Paragraph 1.10 and 6.4

It is proposed paragraphs 1.10 and 6.4 are amended to provide further clarity to state that the Authority will, when negotiating affordable housing contributions, balance the need for affordable housing against the potential for a development to be rendered unviable and will consider reducing contributions, where appropriate.

Consultation Responses

The consultation period ran from Monday 11th August to Monday 8th September 2014 for a total of 4 weeks. Following consultation, the Council received a total of 3 duly made representations. An additional comment was received after the consultation deadline and as a consequence does not form part of this report.

Each of the duly made comments received by the Council are summarised below along with the officer response.

1. Steve Lloyd (BJ Group): *Suggests maximum amount a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) can pay for unit is in line with the Acceptable Cost Guidance (ACG) document as the 40% market value approach could exceed values contained within the ACG document.*

Suggested Response: No change.

The Council favours the use of Market Value (MV) rather than Acceptable Cost Guidance (ACG) for several reasons. ACG is used as a benchmark value for

financial appraisal of housing schemes and is designed to be used as a guide for schemes developed with Social Housing Grant (SHG). Using ACG would therefore limit affordable housing to purely social housing where there is grant available and would not be suitable for all types of affordable housing contribution.

Through linking RSL contributions to a percentage of MV, it is easier to react to changes in the market and takes account of any changes to MV which occur naturally within the market place, whereas changes to ACG rely on the Welsh Government updating the ACG costs.

The MV approach has previously been used in Neath Port Talbot proving successful and during recent consultations with RSLs, it was confirmed that they favoured the use of MV rather than ACG. In modelling and comparing MV and ACG, results have shown that using the MV method achieves more affordable housing units and will therefore provide a greater contribution to communities across the County Borough.

2. Tim Gent (Savills): *Objects to the definition of affordable housing set out in Technical Advice Note 2, stating the limitation to two basic forms of tenure constrains provision. Suggests that there should be a willingness to consider new forms of tenure to make the guidance more contemporary and flexible, with the suggested approach following what has already been formalised in England.*

Suggested Response: No change.

The comment relates more to the definition of affordable housing as set out in national policy guidance. The Council is required to conform with the definitions and guidance as set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2: Planning and Affordable Housing.

The predominate need for affordable housing in Neath Port Talbot is for Social Housing and as a consequence this tenure will be sought where possible. Notwithstanding this point, the Council adopts a tenure neutral approach whereby there can be a mix of social and intermediate housing should a need for different types of housing arise. The Council considers this approach to be flexible to fit the needs of Neath Port Talbot.

3. Christopher Jenkins (Persimmon Homes West Wales): *The revised definition of market value is considered broadly acceptable, however, it is important to consider the potential implications the proposed change may have in relation to the calculation of off-site commuted sums, particularly in*

development of smaller sites. The new definition of market value is likely to increase the cost burden in such circumstances.

Suggested Response: No change.

The Council will accept commuted sum payments in circumstances where an on-site contribution is not appropriate or where the affordable housing contribution does not equate to a whole unit. The Council believes that the means of assessing affordable housing contributions via commuted sums is fair, reasonable and will provide a contribution to affordable housing in Neath Port Talbot. The use of commuted sums should not be used as a means of lowering the affordable housing contribution and should be at least of equivalent value as the cost to the developer of providing on-site affordable housing.

The Council does not consider the calculation for commuted sums will increase the financial burden on small scale projects. Where a development considers the level of affordable housing provision could make a site unviable, the Council will consider reduced contributions or phased payments.

Recommendation

That having considered the responses to the consultation, it is resolved to make the following recommendation for consideration:

1. The revised Affordable Housing SPG, be adopted.

Reason for Recommendation

The recommendation is needed to provide further clarification and to assist the Council in its Affordable Housing negotiations with developers.

Financial Appraisal

The revised SPG will be placed on the Council's website and will not incur any additional costs in its implementation.

Consultation Outcome

The revised SPG has been the subject of both internal and external consultations and its final form reflects the outcome of that process.

Sustainability Appraisal

The proposals would not have any impacts on sustainability.

Equality Impact Assessment

In order to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, an Equality Impact Assessment Screening Exercise has been carried out.

The revised SPG provides detailed guidance to explain how relevant policies on Affordable Housing in the UDP will be applied in particular circumstances. The UDP was subjected to a Sustainability Appraisal process which included an assessment of the UDP's policies and proposals on equalities.

These aspects have therefore been assessed alongside all the other sustainability and environmental issues, enabling the effects of the Plan to be fully assessed.

Given that the SA of the UDP incorporated an Equalities Impact Assessment, the Screening Exercise concluded that there is no requirement to carry out an additional separate exercise.

List of Background Papers

- Planning Policy Wales Edition 7 (2014)
- Technical Advice Note 2: Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)
- Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan (2008)

Wards Affected

All

Contact Officer

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ITEM NO. 2

PART 1. SECTION A - COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

**NEATH PORT TALBOT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (UDP) –
CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES RECEIVED FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION ON THE REVISED AFFORDABLE HOUSING
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

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

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts

Economic Prosperity	..	No Significant Impacts
Education & Lifelong Learning	..	No Significant Impacts
Better Health and Wellbeing	..	No Significant Impacts
Environmental & Transport	..	No Significant Impacts
Crime and Disorder		No Significant Impacts

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	..	No Significant Impacts
Equalities	..	No Significant Impacts
Social Inclusion	..	Positive Impact

(c) **Consultation**

The report has been the subject of internal and external consultations and its final form reflects the outcome of that process.

APPENDIX 1

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Foreword

This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) supplements and explains the policies in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The UDP was adopted in March 2008 and forms the Development Plan for the whole of the County Borough area.

This SPG has been prepared following a public consultation exercise that was undertaken in the Spring of 2008 and it was adopted by the Authority as guidance in July 2008. This is in accordance with the advice set out in the 'Unitary Development Plan: Wales' (WAG 2001). It does not form part of the Development Plan but will be taken into account when planning applications are considered as a material consideration.

The guidance was reviewed in early 2010 and again in 2014 and several amendments were made to clarify certain elements of the guidance. This further amendment clarifies the definition of Market Value to be used in Affordable Housing discussions and negotiations.

As work progresses on the Local Development Plan (LDP) which is programmed to replace the UDP in 2015, the need to review or prepare new SPG's will be kept under consideration.

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Summary

The aim of this Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is to deliver affordable housing to meet the significant need in Neath-Port Talbot County Borough, (currently estimated using WG's toolkit at approximately 500 houses p.a.).

This will be addressed by two main categories of housing; Social Rented and Intermediate/Assisted Purchase with legal arrangements in place to ensure it remains affordable for future occupiers. Where a scheme allows "stair-casing" to full ownership, there will need to be secure arrangements in place to ensure the recycling of capital receipts to provide replacement affordable housing.

The Authority is seeking a contribution of 20% from all housing developments of 3 units and above, with a commuted sum being sought for developments between 3-4 units.

The Council's preferred method of achieving affordable housing is for developers affordable units (on-site) for transfer to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL)/ Local.

The Authority's preferred list of RSL providers currently operating within the Neath-Port Talbot area are outlined in Appendix 2.

The options in order of preference:

Option 1 - The on-site, 'tenure neutral' built units, will be transferred to an RSL or the Authority at 40% of the current market value;

Option 2 –If the development site size falls within the 3-4 units threshold, a commuted sum will be sought. This calculation will be based on a developer's contribution of 30% of the market value (Refer to Appendix 5 for a worked example);

Option 3 – The on-site serviced land will be transferred over to an RSL or the Authority at no cost. The developer will then pay 30% of construction costs to an RSL or the Authority.

Option 4 The off- site provision of built units or serviced land, which shall not equate to less than the affordable housing contribution under option 1 and will be transferred to an RSL or the Authority).

Option 5 – A commuted sum on sites of 5 units and above, which shall equate to not less than the sum of option 1, would only be implemented where justified. This calculation will be based on a developer's contribution of 60% of the market value (refer to Appendix 5 for a worked example);

The above options use option 1 as a base from which all the other options follow. If the Authority agrees that the affordable housing contribution can be delivered by Option 2, 3, 4, or 5, then the value of that contribution should not be less than the affordable contribution that would have been obtained under Option 1.

Where developers consider that this level of provision would make the development of the site uneconomic, the feasibility of the site will be considered. Where appropriate, the Authority will consider reduced contributions or phased payments. This will either be tied to short term time-limited planning permissions or through s106 agreements that enable the reassessment of viability for any dwellings not completed within 12 months of the grant of planning permission.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Status of this document

- 1.1 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) was adopted as planning guidance in July 2008 (see Foreword).
- 1.2 It has been prepared in accordance with Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement (MIPPS) 01/ 2006 which supersedes Chapter 9 of Planning Policy Wales (2002) and Technical Advice Note Wales (TAN) 2 (2006) (available on the Welsh Government web-site: www.wales.gov.uk). It is also informed by the Local Housing Strategy and relevant sub-strategies. It explains the approach the Council will take in applying Policies H4 (Affordable Housing) and H5 (Affordable Housing in Villages to Serve Local Need) of the Neath Port Talbot Unitary Development Plan (UDP). These policies are concerned with securing affordable housing where there is a demonstrable need. The policies can be inspected on the Authority's web-site (www.npt.gov.uk).
- 1.3 The Council will have regard to this SPG when making planning decisions with immediate effect. It will form an important material consideration in decisions on individual planning applications, alongside other relevant SPG. As the Welsh Government (WG) advises, SPG that has been subject to public consultation has more weight than that which has not. It does not however carry the special statutory status of the Development Plan.

What is affordable housing and how is it relevant to planning?

- 1.4 Affordability is related to income levels and market prices: whether housing is affordable is defined as the ability of households to purchase or rent property that satisfies their needs on the open market. In recent years, affordability has become an increasing problem throughout Wales, even in areas of traditionally lower house prices, in the context of rapidly rising house prices relative to income levels.

- 1.5 In Wales, “affordable housing” refers to housing with “secure mechanisms in place to ensure that it is accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and to subsequent occupiers” (TAN 2, ¶5.1). It comprises social rented and intermediate housing, the latter including low-cost ownership schemes where measures are in place to recycle capital receipts.
- 1.6 WG has identified the role of the planning system as one of the key mechanisms that will provide affordable housing, in its concern to provide sustainable and inclusive communities. It expects affordable housing to be part of the mix of most market housing developments, provided for by developers according to the same logic that they have to provide for other infrastructure and facilities necessary to enable a community to function.
- 1.7 In most cases, it is expected that the affordable housing contribution will be provided as units on-site to enable inclusive and mixed communities. However, some UDP housing allocations as a result of their location may not be well suited to the needs of those in most need of the affordable housing. In such situations, the Authority may consider that in place of on-site affordable contributions, that developers make financial or off-site contributions to enable provision in more appropriate locations.

Content and Structure of this Guidance

- 1.8 The guidance that follows commences with a look at the detailed requirements of national planning policy, together with the relevant UDP policies. It then explains the Authority’s approach to assessing and monitoring housing need, and different types and mechanisms of affordable housing provision that may contribute to meeting affordable housing need. It goes on to set out likely housing site thresholds at which affordable housing provision will become a consideration in the assessment of proposals, before explaining the related policy-implementation procedures. Further guidance is then provided on design issues.

- 1.9 The purpose of this SPG is to explain the application of UDP and national planning policy in the Neath Port Talbot context and thereby clarify for developers the Authority's affordable housing expectations. This should help to speed up negotiations and the completion of Section 106 agreements.
- 1.10 The Authority may seek other contributions from developers to address a range of potential impacts relating to the development (e.g. off-site highway improvements, education provision, community and health facilities, public open space etc.(see Developer Contribution's SPG). However, the Authority recognises that the economic viability of each new development is not equal and will balance the contributions needed to address any potential development impact against the requirement for new development to meet the needs of the local area and community. However, if the impact of development, even after taking into account developer contributions is considered to be unacceptable, the Authority will consider refusing the application.

2 The Policy Context

National Planning Policy

- 2.1 The MIPPS (01/2006, ¶9.1.4) that supersedes the housing chapter of Planning Policy Wales, (PPW) together with TAN 2, (§7) emphasises the importance of an in-depth knowledge of the local housing market through the production of Local Housing Market Assessments (LHMA). These provide the knowledge required for the planning system to be able to anticipate and deliver local housing requirements, both quantitative and qualitative.
- 2.2 The MIPPS indicates that on the basis of these assessments, there will be a need to make appropriate local provision for affordable housing through the development plan, and that there should be a realistic authority-wide target for such provision (¶9.1.2, 9.2.15). Further to this, it charges local planning authorities (LPAs) with promoting sustainable, mixed-tenure communities through their planning policies and development control decisions (¶9.1.2, 9.2.14,). The MIPPS also advocates that LPAs join with the

community and private sector ‘to meet the challenges and particular circumstances in their areas in specific locations’ (¶9.2.4).

- 2.3 The MIPPS identifies the role of the new Local Development Plan (LDP) in setting strategy and policies to secure affordable housing provision. This will be a key task in the preparation of the LDP and the Neath Port Talbot Local Housing Partnership will play an important role in the work.
- 2.4 The TAN gives advice on how to set such targets and thresholds, emphasising the importance of securing a balance between securing affordable housing provision and site viability (¶10.4). It also notes that affordability can change over a short period of time, so any targets should be treated as indicative (¶10.10). It adds that LPAs will be justified in stipulating that they will apply their affordable housing policy on sites that fall below a threshold where they can demonstrate this is appropriate to secure sustainable communities. This may be the case for example where the site is capable of delivering more units, or is part of a larger site (¶10.8).

UDP Policies

- 2.5 The relevant UDP policies are H4 and H5. H5 is ‘rural exception’ policy, which allows for the favourable consideration of affordable housing development proposals on sites where housing development would not normally be allowed, subject to demonstrable local need and adequate arrangements to ensure its ongoing affordability.
- 2.6 Policy H4, as recommended for amendment by the Inspector following the Public Inquiry into the UDP, is the main affordable housing policy for all other housing sites, whether allocated in the plan or not. The Inspector recommended that the threshold that would trigger the provision of affordable housing be removed. It states that where such a study or other properly conducted survey demonstrates local need, subject to site suitability, an element of affordable housing will be sought on housing sites. Site suitability is defined according to its size, the economics of the development of the site and other objectives which would include accessibility for occupiers and other planning considerations (which could

include whether other uses would be more appropriate for the land). It defines affordable housing as both low-cost market and other forms of subsidised housing which may have various tenure or ownership characteristics, available to people who cannot afford dwellings on the open market.

3. ASSESSING AND MONITORING HOUSING NEED IN NEATH PORT TALBOT

- 3.1 The Authority is working with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), private developers and estate and letting agents to better understand and address local housing requirements. A Local Housing Partnership was created in May 2007, and the review and monitoring of the effectiveness of this guidance will be an important feature of its work.
- 3.2 In 2001-2002, the Authority's Housing Services commissioned a Housing Needs Survey from the consultancy, Opinion Research Services (ORS). This report provides a snapshot of the County Borough Housing Market in 2000/2001, however, due to changing trends and socio-economic conditions it is now out-of-date.
- 3.3 A Housing Market Survey was commissioned of ORS in 2005. Findings from this study show that the population of Neath-Port Talbot and its related local housing market situation has undergone changes. Since 2002 the previous pattern of long-term decline has changed to a more positive situation, due to significant levels of in-migration from the South of England and the rest of Wales. Information on migration can be volatile both as migration flows change and as information is improved and will be closely monitored.
- 3.4 While out-migration has been outbalanced by in-migration, house prices within the County Borough have increased dramatically. As a result, the position concerning affordable housing in Neath Port Talbot since 2000 has changed significantly. High vacancy levels amongst local authority and housing association stock have been replaced by a large and growing waiting list of households in need.

- 3.5 The Authority follows the suggested approach to assessing need in the WAG Local Housing Market Assessment Guide (March, 2006) and guidance issued by the ODPM in December 2005. The results from this work indicate a considerable need which affects the whole of the County Borough. This equates to some 500 affordable housing units being needed each year. This compares with a total average build rate over the last 5 years of some 350 houses per year (ie including both open market and affordable housing). This emphasises the scale of the problem for the County Borough and its communities.
- 3.6 The Authority will provide and keep up-to-date information on the need for affordable housing and sizes of property. This will be summarised and included in Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Annual Monitoring Reports.
- 3.7 It should be noted that while housing markets may overlap local authority boundaries, in the interest of clarity, the efficient processing of applications and securing the prompt delivery of affordable housing, the Authority will base its consideration of proposals on the identified needs within the County Borough alone.

4. TYPES AND MECHANISMS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION

- 4.1 Affordable Housing need is addressed by two main categories of housing provided with private and/or public subsidy: Social Rented or Intermediate.
- 4.2 **Social Rented Housing** is housing available to rent at affordable, below market prices. It is owned and managed by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL)/ Local Authority and can be subsidised by the Government through the provision of Social Housing Grant (SHG).
- 4.3 **Intermediate Housing** is an option for people whose income may be insufficient to raise a mortgage to buy a suitable home for themselves but who can afford a mortgage or cannot afford to rent without assistance.

- 4.4 Where a scheme allows “stair-casing” to full ownership, there will need to be secure arrangements in place to ensure the recycling of capital receipts to provide replacement affordable housing.

5. **SITE THRESHOLDS AND SCALE OF CONTRIBUTION**

- 5.1 The Council’s preferred method of achieving affordable housing is for developers to either build houses (on-site) for transfer to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL)/ Local Authority or to provide serviced land together with a contribution to cover the construction costs of the affordable housing. This would be secured through Section 106 agreements or planning conditions.
- 5.2 Within the context of the significant scale of affordable housing need described in Section 3, the Authority considers that in principle, all new housing on sites of 3 or more units should make an appropriate contribution to affordable housing provision. This would include conversions from non-residential use to residential use, or the subdivision of a residential property. It would also include proposals to develop part of a site that would be capable of accommodating more housing than proposed (and in which case would be above the threshold) or proposals that could reasonably be considered to form part of a more substantial site which would in its total be likely to be above the threshold. This would be regardless of ownership. Note: ‘houses’ includes flats and bedsits and ‘site’ means sites and buildings.
- 5.3 On all sites, that meet the affordable threshold, 20% affordable housing provision will be sought as a starting point. It is recognised that in the case of small sites (between 3 and 4 units), a financial contribution would be more appropriate than providing affordable units on site. In most other cases, it will be expected that the affordable housing units are provided on site to provide for inclusive, mixed communities.

Preferences for delivery

Option 1

The on-site, ‘tenure neutral’ built units, will be transferred to an RSL or the Authority at 40% of the current market value;

Option 2

If the development site size falls within the 3-4 units threshold, a commuted sum will be sought. This calculation will be based on a developer's contribution of 30% of the market value.(Refer to Appendix 5 for a worked example)

Option 3

The on-site serviced land will be transferred over to an RSL or the Authority at no cost. The developer will then pay 30% of construction costs to an RSL or the Authority.

Option 4

The off-site provision of built units or serviced land, which shall not equate to less than that affordable housing contribution under option 1 and will be transferred to an RSL or the Authority.

Option 5

A commuted sum on sites of 5 units and above, which shall equate to not less than the sum of option 1, would only be implemented where justified. This calculation will be based on a developer's contribution of 60% of the market value (refer to Appendix 5 for a worked example).

- 5.4 The above options use option 1 as a base from which all the other options follow.
- 5.5 Where it is determined that off-site provision of serviced land or built units may be more appropriate, Appendix 4 outlines the methodology for calculating how much will be sought.
- 5.6 Where it is determined that off-site provision via a commuted sum may be more appropriate, Appendix 5 outlines the methodology that would be used to calculate the amount. This figure will be based on 60% of the market value (on sites of 5 units and above) and 30% of market value (on sites between 3-4 units).
- 5.7 The Authority accepts that the ability of developments to contribute to the provision of affordable housing may be constrained by the viability of the site. Where the developer can demonstrate that the economics of the site cannot carry this level of contribution or that it conflicts with other over-riding planning objectives for the site, there may be scope for it to be relaxed. However, TAN 2¶10.10 states; 'In negotiation with developers

there should be a strong expectation that the indicative target will be provided.’ Nonetheless, new development is needed to sustain communities and there is no wish to discourage it or to jeopardise the delivery of housing identified in the housing landbank (Policy H1) of the UDP.

- 5.8 The Authority also recognises that the affordability of housing can change over a relatively short period of time. As a result, affordable housing targets are subject to change according to up-to-date information, but this will always be fully justified and explained. The targets set out in the SPG are indicative and although there is a strong expectation of the targets being delivered, the Authority may negotiate for a lower or higher proportion of affordable housing.
- 5.9 While housing markets may overlap local authority boundaries, in the interest of clarity and efficient processing of applications and managing the delivery of affordable housing, the Authority will base its consideration of proposals on the identified needs within the County Borough. Although there are divisions in the housing market, the Authority considers that the whole of the County Borough should be treated as one housing market. This reflects the situation where housing need extends across the whole County Borough, and where people and families in need of affordable housing may seek the accommodation elsewhere within the County Borough in order to better address their needs. This may reflect family or work circumstances, or the need to be able to get better and easier access to facilities.

6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 **Pre-Application Discussion** – Before an applicant submits a housing proposal, the Authority recommends a discussion with its planning officers (see Appendix 1 for contact details), who will liaise with internal departments.
- 6.2 The Authority will endeavour to confirm at an early stage in discussions how the affordable housing should be provided (by preference) – refer to Section 5.3.
- 6.3 Detailed negotiations will focus on which of the options (set out above at 5.3) is most appropriate, together with the size and type of housing units needed to meet the local community’s needs.

- 6.4 The Authority recognises that the economic viability of different development sites are not the same. Therefore, when negotiating an affordable housing contribution, the Authority will balance the need for affordable housing against the potential for a development to be rendered uneconomic. However, the Authority will need to be convinced that the cost of development (including affordable housing) would make the scheme economically unviable before considering a reduction in any contribution. Where the development would create impacts on infrastructure, facilities and the community, including roads (and cycle/pedestrian ways), public transport, sewerage, schools, open-space community and health facilities, the Welsh Language etc these will also be addressed at this stage (as explained in the Developer Contributions SPG).
- 6.5 When negotiating with a developer over contributions for affordable housing, and other developer contributions, the Authority will need to be convinced that a reduced contribution can be justified. This Authority will favour an “open-book” assessment being undertaken to identify development costs, income and profits. This information would be treated as being commercially sensitive. Unless adequate information is submitted it is likely that the Authority will have to reject the application.
- 6.6 Developers who are confident that the level of affordable housing contribution sought would render their scheme unviable are required to submit an economic viability. Guidance Notes for submitting a viability assessment are available on the Authority’s website. The negotiation of affordable housing contributions can involve considerable work by the Authority and this will be funded by the developer. The current fees for work undertaken by the Council’s valuer are set out within the Viability Assessment Guidance Notes and will be subject to review and amendment by the Head of Planning.
- 6.7 In the event of a failure to reach agreement, the Authority will appoint an Independent Chartered Valuation Surveyor to arbitrate over the contribution the development could reasonably support. The Authority will make the appointment and the cost will be borne by the developer. The size and purpose(s) of the resulting contribution will be made available to the public.

- 6.8 In rural areas where developments of 100% affordable housing are proposed in accordance with Policy H5 on land which would not normally be released for residential development, this would have to be fully justified in relation to local need for affordable housing and why this need would not be likely to be met by affordable housing provided by developments within the community or area concerned.

The relevance of affordable housing provision to the decision to grant planning permission

- 6.9 Where a development would pose demands and pressures, having taken potential developer contributions into account, that in the Authority's view would be unacceptable, it will consider refusing the application.
- 6.10 If, having had regard to all material considerations, the LPA considers that site proposals do not satisfactorily address the objective of making a reasonable contribution to the provision of affordable housing, then the authority will consider refusing the application.

The nature of the planning permission

- 6.11 Where **Outline Planning Permission** is granted, the permission will identify whether a contribution towards affordable housing will be made as part of the development. The proportion and type of properties will also be considered at this stage.
- 6.12 Where **Full Planning Permission** is granted, the Authority will have agreed with the applicant how any affordable housing contribution would be made, including the number, mix, type and location of the dwellings and the tenure.
- 6.13 Any grant of planning permission (whether outline or full) of which includes an element of affordable housing will be subject to a related planning condition and/or the developer will be expected to enter into a related Section 106 (S106) agreement. This will ensure that the affordable housing is provided, occupied and managed in accordance with UDP policy and the guidance in TAN 2.

- 6.14 Where occupancy criteria are specified by the condition and/or S106 agreement, a 'cascade' mechanism will be included to ensure that occupants will always be found for affordable housing when such housing is vacated. Given that there is likely to be a continuing need for affordable housing, either the Authority or RSL will control occupancy to ensure that the affordable housing provided is occupied by people falling within particular categories of need, both now and in the future. This will be particularly important on rural exception sites where the development will only have been granted permission on the basis of over-riding local affordable housing need.
- 6.15 Should it appear that there is no longer a need for affordable housing that the property should meet, the potential to relax the requirement will be considered. Eligibility criteria could relate to local residents, people employed locally or people with other local connections who are in need of affordable housing and would be led by up-to-date assessments of need.
- 6.16 Where payment of a commuted sum is considered appropriate, the associated S106 agreement will specify how it will be held and its purpose. Should it not be spent within an agreed period (usually 10 years from the date of payment) the money would be refunded to the developer together with accrued interest. In the event of the developer or a successor in title not existing, the funding would be retained and spent on meeting other needs associated with the impact of the development.

Monitoring

- 6.17 The LPA will monitor the provision of affordable housing against the target, and will publish this as part of the Unitary Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report. Where necessary it will take remedial action to ensure that the target is met.

7. DESIGN

- 7.1 Where part of a larger scheme, the affordable housing should be indistinguishable from general market housing and should be located throughout the site and not concentrated. Developers will be expected to take account of good design practice, as set out in the Technical Advice Note 12 (TAN 12) on Design.

- 7.2 Developers should also take account of the Welsh Assembly Government's 2005 Design Guidance: Development Quality Requirements (DQR) for New Dwellings and South Wales Police's Secured by Design initiative, which aims to design out crime.
- 7.3 The 'Lifetime Homes' concept that is promoted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation aims to provide homes which are flexible and can cater for people with a wide range of disabilities. These standards should also be taken into consideration by developers when designing affordable homes.

APPENDIX 1

HOUSING

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APPENDIX 3

Local Housing Market Assessment Calculations**Model 1****(Source: WAG (2005) Local Housing Market Assessment Guide).**

CURRENT NEED

(as at – September 2006)

Note: An updated version of this model is available on request from the contacts identified.

	ELEMENT AND STEP IN CALCULATION	DATA SOURCES	NOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS	<u>FIGURE S</u>
1	Existing households in need of alternative accommodation	Housing Register	Housing Register → child points → no points	5525
2	PLUS Current non-households in need of affordable housing	-Housing Register -Priority Homeless in temporary accommodation -Hostel move-on needs -Homeless agencies data	Approx 70% on tenants receive Housing Benefit. 30% on average can meet needs financially	72
3	MINUS cases where they can afford to meet their needs in the market	Housing Register	Approx 70% of tenants receive Housing Benefit. 30% on average can meet needs financially	2486
4	EQUALS Total Current Housing Need	1+2-3		3111

AVAILABILITY OF STOCK TO OFF-SET NEED

	ELEMENT AND STEP IN CALCULATION	DATA SOURCES	NOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS	FIGURES
5	Current occupiers of affordable housing in need	Local Authority Transfer List		655
6	PLUS surplus Stock	Local Authority Record	As at 01/01/05	0
7	PLUS Committed supply of new affordable units	Development programmes of LAs and HAs, including conversions and intermediate housing products. Regeneration Schemes.	This is based up to 2016 and an average of 50 units per year.	534
8	MINUS Planned units to be taken out of management.	Demolition and conversion programmes of LAs, HAs, Regeneration Schemes.	No demolitions. Reconfigurations will be negligible.	0
9	EQUALS Total available stock to meet current need	5+6+7-8		1189
10	EQUALS Total Current need	4-9		1922
11	TIMES quota progressively to reduce level of current need	Policy Judgement	Ten years up to plan period.	0.1
12	EQUALS Annual need to reduce level of current need	10 x 11		192.2

NEWLY ARISING NEED

	ELEMENT AND STEP IN CALCULATION	DATA SOURCES	NOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS	FIGURES
13	New Household formation (gross p.a.)	Output of HMA & Demographics	Based on average household formation and average migration rates (over last 7 years).	750
14	TIMES Proportion of newly arising households unable to buy or rent in the market	Secondary data sources on household incomes and income proxies. Output from Chapter 4, establishing entry level rents and property prices	Based on an average entry level house price of £53k.	0.39
15	PLUS Existing households falling into need and unable to afford market housing	Numbers joined housing register within the last year who were already householders. LA data on households recently housed outside normal housing register or where entered register within last year.	Numbers joined register in last year.	764
16	MINUS Potential out- migrants unable to afford market housing	Census data/ HMA		0
17	PLUS in-migrants unable to afford market housing	Census data/ HMA		0
18	EQUALS Newly arising need	(13x14)+15+16+17		1057

[Stage 16 & 17 (In and out migrants) are assumed to be in balance].

SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE UNITS PER YEAR

	ELEMENT AND STEP IN CALCULATION	DATA SOURCES	NOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS	FIGURES
19	Net supply of social re-lets	Lettings/ voids system for LAs and HAs		697
20	PLUS supply of intermediate housing available for re-let or resale at sub market levels	LA and HA lettings/ voids system and data on resales of sub market LCHO or shared equity schemes.		20
21	EQUALS affordable supply	19+20		717
NET SHORTFALL OR SURPLUS				
22	Overall shortfall or surplus	12+18-21		532.2

All RSL – minus Homeless double count 10 years 0 for < 3%.
05/06 new build taken out of re-let – transferred to committed supply
10% re-let rate.

[Source: Provision of figures and calculations were jointly prepared by officers from Planning Policy and Housing Strategy].

APPENDIX 4

Calculating Off-Site Contributions

The Council's approach for calculating any off-site affordable contribution is based on the following principle:

- The off site contribution should be at least of equivalent value as the cost to the developer of providing on-site affordable housing - there should be no financial benefit to the developer for making an off-site provision.

APPENDIX 5

Calculating Financial Contributions/ Commuted Sums for Affordable Housing

The Council will consider accepting commuted sum payments in circumstances where an on-site contribution is not appropriate. This includes circumstance where units cannot be delivered off-site, or where the affordable housing contribution does not equate to a whole unit.

The Council's approach for calculating commuted sum payments is based on the following principles:

- The sum should be at least of equivalent value as the cost to the developer of providing on-site affordable housing - there should be no financial benefit to the developer for making a commuted sum contribution.
- The sum may include additional elements to cover the Council's costs in terms of finding alternative sites or houses.

A commuted sum payment should not be used as a means of lowering the affordable housing contribution. Any payment will be linked to the value of the units that will be built on site and not based on hypothetical units that the applicant has no intention of building. Any attempt to put forward hypothetical units will be seen as not making a reasonable contribution to the provision of affordable housing. Essentially, any 'Option 5' commuted sum contribution should not equate to less than what would be expected under an 'Option 1' contribution.

Option 2

On smaller sites the percentage target may mean that a whole affordable unit is not capable of being delivered. In these circumstances, the developer will pay a commuted sum that will contribute towards providing off-site affordable housing.

This calculation will be based on a commuted sum contribution of 30% of market value.

3 Unit Site – Example

A	£150,000
B	£150,000
C	£150,000
Total	£450,000

Affordable Housing Contribution

£450,000 multiplied by 20% (0.2) **£90,000**

Developer's Contribution

£90,000 multiplied by
30% (0.3) **£27,000**

In certain circumstance, the Council may require an additional contribution to cover the costs of finding alternative sites or houses. This will not be above 20% of the developer's affordable contribution and it will be confirmed at the start of the application whether this additional cost will be required.

Alternative Site/Unit Multiplier

£27,000

£27,000 multiplied by
20% (0.2)

£5,400

Total Contribution

£32,400

Option 5

A commuted sum contribution on sites of 5 units and above, which shall equate to not less than the sum of option 1, will only be implemented where justified. This calculation will be based on a commuted sum contribution of 60% of market value.

5 Unit Site – Example

A	£175,000
B	£175,000
C	£190,000
D	£200,000
E	£200,000
Total	£940,000

Affordable Housing Contribution

£940,000 multiplied by 20% (0.2)	£188,000
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Developer's Contribution

£188,000 multiplied by 60% (0.6)	£112,800
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In certain circumstance, the Council may require an additional contribution to cover the costs of finding alternative sites or houses. This will not be above 20% of the developer's affordable contribution and it will be confirmed at the start of the application whether this additional cost will be required.

Alternative Site/Unit Multiplier

	£112,800
£112,800 multiplied by 20% (0.2)	£22,560
Total Contribution	£135,360

APPENDIX 6

Glossary of Terms

Affordable Housing - Affordable Housing need is addressed by two main categories of housing provided with private and/or public subsidy: Social Rented or Intermediate. **Social Rented Housing** is housing available to rent at affordable, below market prices. It is owned and managed by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and can be subsidised by the Government through the provision of Social Housing Grant (SHG). **Intermediate Housing** is an option for people whose income may be insufficient to raise a mortgage to buy a suitable home for themselves but who can afford a mortgage.

Authority, The – The Council as a whole.

Condition (Planning) – Requirement imposed on the granting of planning permission in order to ensure the effective and proper implementation of any given development. It must be complied with for a development to be legal.

Market Value – The estimated amount for which an asset should exchange on the date of valuation between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's length transaction after proper marketing wherein the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion

Developer Contributions – See planning obligations.

Development Plan – document that sets out the strategic and detailed planning policies for a local authority area, designed to achieve particular aims and objectives. After going through legally-required processes, it is adopted and becomes the plan against which development proposals in an area are assessed. Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 gives this plan a special status: it states that in order for planning proposals to be approved, they must accord with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, giving rise to a plan-led system. The current development plan is called a Unitary Development Plan. Over time these will be replaced with new Local Development Plans.

Housing Market Survey – study to assess the effect of recent housing market changes on the conclusions drawn by the Neath Port Talbot Housing Needs Study 2001.

Housing Needs Survey – survey that assesses the level and type of housing need within the County Borough in relation to changes in the population (migration, births, deaths etc..) and the existing housing stock. One of its primary functions is to highlight the level of affordable housing need.

Housing Officers – Officers from the Housing Strategy Department.

Housing Register – list of people who want to move into or between homes owned by the Council and participating housing associations. It includes both homeless people and those presently housed in dwellings unsuitable for their needs.

Local Housing Market Assessment Guide, March 2006 - document published by WAG which sets out how Local Authorities can understand the nature and level of housing demand and need in their local housing markets.

Local Planning Authority (LPA) – the County Borough’s Planning Policy Team (which prepares the Development Plan) and the Development Control Team (which interprets planning guidance and assesses planning applications) together with the Council’s development control committee.

Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement - Interim statement of national planning policy that allows for changes and additions to Planning Policy Wales in advance of a complete revision of it.

Opinion Research Services (ORS) – a spin-out company of the University of Wales Swansea that specialises in applied social research.

Planning Obligation – commitment made by a developer under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act to undertake certain actions (on- or off-site) necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. It may take the form of a unilateral undertaking or an agreement (‘Section 106 agreement’) with the LPA, becomes part of the planning permission and is legally binding

on successive landowners. Collectively, the benefits sought and secured are known as ‘developer contributions’

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) – document produced by the Welsh Assembly Government setting out national planning policies.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL) – landlord that owns or manages social housing and is registered with and regulated by the Welsh Assembly Government. A RSL ensures the future occupancy of affordable housing is controlled and managed effectively. Most RSLs are independent non-profit making Housing Associations.

Section 106 agreement – see Planning Obligations

Social Housing Grant (SHG) – capital grant provided by the Welsh Assembly Government to Registered Social Landlords to develop Affordable Housing.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) – non-statutory piece of guidance produced by the Local Planning Authority which expands upon certain policies and proposals set out in the Development Plan.

Technical Advice Note (Wales) [TAN] – document produced by the Welsh Assembly Government providing additional technical advice on key aspects of national Planning Policy set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW).

Tenure Neutral – Affordable housing that meets the definitions set out in PPW and the UDP, but irrespective of whether intended for purchase or rent.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP) – see Development Plan, above.

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