

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION
CABINET BOARD**

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT – G.NUTT

4TH DECEMBER 2014

SECTION C– MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION PERFORMANCE
INDICATORS FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2014/15**

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of performance during the 2nd Quarter of 2014/15.

On the 14th November 2013 the Corporate Improvement Plan six month progress report 2013/14 was presented to Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee. The report recommended that relevant scrutiny committees are updated on progress of the improvement priorities in the Corporate Improvement Plan that fall within their remit. This recommendation was endorsed by Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee and subsequent Cabinet Board.

Note: The relevant sections of the six month progress report for 2014/15 is attached as Appendix A. Improvement Objective 4, includes some improvement milestones that relate to areas within the remit of Social Care, Health & Housing, which will be reported to their Cabinet Board on 27th November 2014. The full half year progress report, which includes progress on all six of the Improvement Objectives will be reported to Policy & Resources Cabinet Board on 27th November 2014.

Part 1 of the report will highlight performance levels over the 2nd quarter of 2014/15 and will demonstrate comparatives between 2013/14 and newly collated data for the 2nd quarter of 2014/15. A key has been produced overleaf.

Performance Summary Key

□↑ Performance has improved

↔ Performance has remained the same

↓ Performance has deteriorated by less than 5%

↓↓ Performance has deteriorated in excess of 5%

Part 2 will include commentary on performance information in general.

Part 1 Performance Summary

Economic Development						
Indicator No.	Indicator Name	Accountable Manager	Outturn 13/14	Q2 (2013/14)	Q2 (2014/15)	Year on Year Q2 performance comparison
L(ED) 1	Number of jobs created as a result of financial support by the Local Authority	Robert Scourfield	255	120.5	56.5	↓↓
L(ED) 2	Number of new business start-ups enquiries assisted through Business Services.	Robert Scourfield	429	222	184	↓↓
L(ED) 3	Number of business enquiries resulting in advice, information or financial support being given to existing companies through Business Services team	Robert Scourfield	682	382	388	↑
Planning						
Indicator No.	Indicator Name	Head of Service	Outturn 13/14	Q2 (2013/14)	Q2 (2014/15)	Year on Year Q2 performance comparison
PLA/M001	Average time taken from receipt of application to validation of application	Nicola Pearce	30.1 days	30.2 days	28.07 days	↑
PLA/M002	Average time taken from receipt of application to date decision is issued	Nicola Pearce	87.6 days	81.7 days	77.58 days	↑
PLA/M003	Percentage of applications where the quality of the development has been improved (following negotiation by the case officer either at pre application stage or during the course of the application).	Nicola Pearce	36%	35.4%	29.80%	↓↓
PLA/M004	The percentage of major planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks	Nicola Pearce	23.1%	18.18%	26.67%	↑

Planning continued						
Indicator No.	Indicator Name	Head of Service	Outturn 13/14	Q2 (2013/14)	Q2 (2014/15)	Year on Year Q2 performance comparison
PLA/002 (SID)	The percentage of applications for development determined during the year that were approved	Nicola Pearce	95.5%	95.8%	97.22%	↑
PLA/004 b) (SID)	The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	Nicola Pearce	71.3%	72.5%	68%	↓↓
PLA/004 c) (SID)	The percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	Nicola Pearce	94%	93.5%	88.82%	↓↓
PLA/004 d) (SID)	The percentage of all other planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks.	Nicola Pearce	73.9%	72.7%	83.54%	↑
PLA/006(b) (PAM)/ (NSI)	The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all additional housing units provided during the year	Nicola Pearce	69	Reported annually		N/A
Building Control						
Indicator No.	Indicator Name	Head of Service	Outturn 13/14	Q2 (2013/14)	Q2 (2014/15)	Year on Year Q2 performance comparison
BCT/004 (SID)	Percentage of building control 'full plan' applications checked within 15 working days during the year	Nicola Pearce	98.1%	98.3%	100%	↑
BCT/007 (SID)	The percentage of 'full plan' applications approved first time.	Nicola Pearce	99%	99.1%	96.6% %	↓

Corporate Health & Asset Management						
Indicator No.	Indicator Name	Accountable Manager	Outturn 13/14	Q2 (2013/14)	Q2 (2014/15)	Year on Year Q2 performance comparison
CAM/001a(i)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's building in condition category A – Good.	Simon Brennan	7.15%		Reported Annually	N/A
CAM/001a(ii)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's building in condition category B – Satisfactory.	Simon Brennan	41.17%		Reported Annually	N/A
CAM/001a(iii)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authority's building in condition category C – Poor.	Simon Brennan	42.23%		Reported Annually	N/A
CAM/001a (iv)	The percentage of the gross internal area of the local authorities buildings in condition category D – Bad	Simon Brennan	9.45%		Reported Annually	N/A
CAM/001b(i)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works priority level 1 – Urgent	Simon Brennan	15.16%		Reported Annually	N/A
CAM/001b(ii)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works priority level 2 – Essential	Simon Brennan	60.61%		Reported Annually	N/A
CAM/001b(iii)	The percentage of the total value of required maintenance for the local authority's buildings assigned to works priority level 3 – Desirable.	Simon Brennan	24.23%		Reported Annually	N/A

Part 2 Performance Commentary

Economic Development

L(ED) 1) – the performance output for this indicator has been affected by the fact that no loans have been offered to date. Changes in European Regulations meant that the loan fund had to be registered with the Financial Conduct Authority by 31st March 2014 (which has been met). We have now received confirmation that loan scheme can resume and this should impact on the figures reported by the end of the year. In addition, there are a number of approved applications that are still being processed and we anticipate that these outputs will reflect in the figure reported next quarter.

L(ED) 2) – business advisors now attend Job Centre Plus and this has resulted in referrals to the monthly Enterprise Club being significantly reduced. However, as enquiries from other sources are developed, it is anticipated that the target set for this indicator for 2014/15 will be achieved.

L(ED) 3) – the Business Development Team receives enquiries from existing businesses for support on a range of issues such as property, rates relief, local contract opportunities, tendering, events, etc. It is therefore, anticipated that the target set for this indicator for 2014/15 will be achieved.

Planning

PLA/M003 - The percentage of applications where the quality of the development has been improved - has dropped in comparison with the same quarter last year. Nevertheless, this figure is largely dependent on the nature of applications that are received during any quarter and, as a consequence, is subject to minor fluctuations throughout the year. This quarter resulted in 30% of applications requiring the intervention of Officers to improve proposals to make them more acceptable. This reduction in the overall number of applications requiring improvement can be attributed to the fact that the Department received a greater number of applications which were acceptable upon submission, and as such did not require negotiation.

PLA/004 c) - The percentage of householder planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks - remains high at close to 89% but falls short of the high standards set in recent years. The relatively poor Q1 performance has affected these cumulative figures, although the performance during Q2 (July-September), taken by itself, has improved from Q1 (up from 86.2% to 90.2%), demonstrating improvement in challenging times.

PLA/004 b) The percentage of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks dropped from 72.5% to 68%, which remains a consequence of the complexity of the type of application determined and pressures on staff resources, but is balanced by the significant increase in performance for ‘all other’ planning application - **PLA/004 d)** – which increased from 72.7% to 83.5%.

Overall, efforts will continue to ensure that Officers and applicants ‘front-load’ negotiations as part of our continuing commitment to delivering ‘Quality Development Quickly’, and thus reducing delays later in the process.

Affordable housing units provided (**PLA/006**) is an annual indicator and will be monitored over the quarter 4 period of 2014/15.

Building Control

100% of building control ‘full plan’ applications were checked within 15 working days (**BCT/004**) which is an improvement on previous year’s high performance levels. The number of full plan applications approved first time (**BCT/007**) dropped marginally from 99.1% but continues with a high performance level of 96.6%. The marginal drop in performance reported can be attributed to a reduction in the number of staff employed within the Building Control section as a result of contributions to the councils FFP.

Corporate Health & Asset Management

Local authority buildings conditions and maintenance are annual indicators and will be reported during the quarter 4 period of 2014/15

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the performance levels achieved.

Appendices

Appendix A

List of Background Papers

File Ref. TA14/3

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2014-2017 – HALF
YEAR PROGRESS REPORT (1.04.14 TO 30.09.14)





IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 4

Support and invest in our town centres and communities to promote economic growth, regeneration and sustainability, maximise job opportunities and improve access to employment

RAG Status	Comments
Green	Overall we are on track to achieve the milestones for this improvement objective.

Regeneration - what we said we would:

- 1. Continue work on Harbourside by developing pedestrian links to improve accessibility to employment opportunities**

How are we doing? – We are in the process of formalising land ownership issues prior to submitting a planning application for the development of pedestrian links and a planning application has been submitted for the new NPT College campus and a proposed Business Park.

- 2. Begin work on the Baglan Link Bridge which will make Baglan Energy Park more accessible and enable local bus companies to provide a bus service to the site**

How are we doing? - Construction work has started on site and is due for completion March 2015.

- 3. Begin construction work to deliver the first phase of the Neath Town Centre redevelopment to improve the town centre for the community and visitors to the town**

How are we doing? - The first phase to include a new 600 space multi-storey car park, and 23,000 sq ft of new retail space is under construction and due for completion in August 2015.

4. Complete improvements in public areas in Port Talbot, Neath and Croeserw to enhance the environment for the community

How are we doing? - Initial works completed in Port Talbot and Croeserw, with additional work being undertaken in Lower Station Road, Port Talbot (due to be completed in June 2015). Also additional public realm works are being undertaken in Neath as part of the first Phase as mentioned in point 3 above.

5. Begin construction work, on the new Leisure Centre on Aberavon seafront

How are we doing? - Construction work is well advanced and the centre is due to open in December 2015.

6. Continue to drive forward regeneration projects in the Valleys to make enhancements to tourism, employment and public areas

How are we doing? - Regeneration projects in Pontardawe and Glynneath have been completed and a planning application has been submitted for the second phase at Sarn Helen.

7. Develop a comprehensive commuter cycle network to enable residents and visitors to access towns, employment centres and visitor attractions effectively and safely

How are we doing? - In partnership with the City and Council of Swansea we have introduced an integrated commuter route scheme covering the whole of Swansea Bay. This scheme has led to improved cycle signage in the County Borough, raising awareness to car/lorry drivers of cyclists and a full marketing programme is being implemented to raise awareness of the routes. This scheme so far has led to a 25% increase in cyclists on routes that have been measured.

8. Pursue the establishment of quality tourist accommodation and facilities at sites including Rheola

How are we doing? - The Rheola planning application is anticipated to be determined in November 2014.

9. Continue to renovate properties in the Council's two Renewal Areas- Neath East and Sandfields East & Aberavon. We aim to improve 75 properties

How are we doing? – Energy Company Obligation funding has been secured to support the renewal area energy upgrade works and currently 45 houses have been completed to date. A further 30 properties will be completed by year end.

Employment & Prosperity - what we said we would:

10. Continue to work with Welsh Government to test and explore opportunities to reduce the number of individuals in South West Wales who are economically inactive or unemployed by working in a joined up, client centred way

How are we doing? - As at 30th June 2014, the latest data indicates that more people (73.6%) of working age (16 to 64) were economically active, compared to 71.6%, as at 31st September 2013. As at 30th September 2014, 2.7% of working age people were claiming Job Seekers Allowance, again an improvement compared to 3.5% as at February 2014.

11. Help economically inactive people and those who are long-term unemployed to improve their chances of getting a job through the Workways project and to explore self-employment through the Council's Innov8 programme

How are we doing? - 5,007 (cumulative figures) people were engaged in the project, above the target of 4,450 for this period (1.04.14 to 30.09.14) and 2,505 (cumulative figures) people were in sustainable employment, above the target of 1,871 for this period. This project has been extended to 31st December 2014.

12. Provide an effective and supportive service through our Business Development Team to local businesses to help them prosper creating more jobs and business start ups

How are we doing? - There were 388 business enquiries resulting in advice, information or financial support being given to existing companies. This output is on track to deliver the year end forecast of 430. We assisted 184 new business start-up enquiries and this output has already achieved the year end forecast. We have assisted 16 new start ups through the Innov8 programme and this output is on track to deliver the year end forecast of 28. 56.5 jobs have been created as a result of financial support by the Council and it is anticipated that year end forecast of 176 will be achieved.

13. Identify contracts for local companies and job and training opportunities for local people within major developments in the County Borough

How are we doing? -

- **Trem y Mor Respite Centre, Aberavon (value £4m)** - outputs achieved: four local companies secured contracts to provide materials/supplies; 47 people secured work on site, including 15 new job opportunities; two pathway apprenticeships completed; two apprenticeship training weeks completed.; 197 training weeks completed and all outputs agreed at the tender stage were achieved.
- **Neath Town Centre Redevelopment (Value £9.1m)** - outputs achieved to date: 22 local companies introduced to main contractor; five local companies secured contracts to provide materials/supplies; two local sub contractors secured M&E and Cladding contracts; 90 people secured work on site; there was one apprentice and one trainee work placement. The project is on track to achieve all outputs identified at the tender stage.

14. Provide opportunities for accessing training and employment, and support for businesses, in the community at the Croeserw Enterprise Centre

How are we doing? - We have established 30 training courses established, with over 150 participants gaining formal accreditation.

In partnership, we said we would:

1. Continue to monitor progress made by NPT Homes to ensure they meet the Council's promise to bring all former council housing up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and to regenerate communities

How are we doing? – NPT Homes are on track to deliver this milestone and good progress continues to be made with the programme having completed the following works since transfer: 4,286 kitchens; 3,901 bathrooms; 3,698 heating system installations; 2,670 rewires; 880 roof replacements; 1,544 window and door installations. The fifth NPT Homes half yearly progress report is due to go to Social Care Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee on the 27th November 2014.

2. Continue to offer the “Housing to Homes” interest free loans to encourage landlords, developers and home owners to renovate empty houses that have fallen into disrepair and aim to support ten homes to be available for use

How are we doing? - 12 units have been brought back into the housing market this financial year, with approximately 10 further applications at various stages including application and on site.

3. Work with our housing partners to deliver affordable housing, through the Social Housing Grant (including Smaller Properties programme and revenue funded schemes), Vibrant & Viable Places programme and the Welsh Housing Partnership; whilst continuing to explore other and innovative funding solutions

How are we doing? - We are still on target for the delivery of 77 properties however one site is subject to matters outside our control and has an ‘amber’ status. The current housing market and financial climate is impacting negatively on the delivery of affordable housing through Section 106.

4. Develop projects and programmes to maximise the impact of the next round of European Funding

How are we doing? – The European and External Funding team are supporting the development of the following projects: NEETs, Neath and Port Talbot integrated strategies; Workways; Social Enterprise support; Swansea Bay City Region

Economic Regeneration Strategy; and Regional Technical Assistance proposal. *Note: the 2014 – 2020 ESF funds are not yet approved. WEF0 proposed launch date is 20th November 2014.*

5. Prioritise the allocation of Discretionary Housing Payment Grants to those in greatest need to prevent hardship

How are we doing? – To date we have made 568 awards totalling £252,000.

6. Continue to fund benefits advice services, including maintaining the Council’s Welfare Rights Unit, so that people are accessing the benefits to which they are entitled

How are we doing? - The welfare rights unit assisted and supported 108 people to successfully appeal benefit decisions that have cut or removed the benefits that they are entitled to. A comprehensive report will be going to Policy and Resources Cabinet Board meeting on 27th November 2014.

7. Complete the three pilot projects that we have set up with the assistance of European funding, to improve access to advice and support services for people with low incomes and recommend next steps to the Local Service Board

How are we doing? - The three pilot projects have been completed and evaluated and all have achieved their planned outcomes.

- **Project one**, the Multi Agency Hub at Pontardawe - the Policy & Resources Cabinet Board (16th October) received the evaluation report for this pilot and approved the recommendation to extend the project for a further 12 months and for a number of follow up actions to be undertaken.
- **Project two**, the dedicated advice line set up in the Council’s Corporate Contact Centre - a report will be presented to Policy & Resources Cabinet Board (27th November) on the evaluation with a list of recommendations, including extended the pilot to the end of March.
- **Project three**, one stop help for people actively seeking work through joint working between the library service and the Jobcentre - the Policy & Resources Cabinet Board (16th October) received the evaluation of the pilot and approved the recommendation to endorse the continuation of the partnership arrangements and to report back to Members on the

outcome of discussions between Job Centre Plus and the Library Service re: availability of financial resources to support the work.

8. Deliver on the Strategic Aims of the Regional Economic Development Strategy to enhance the long-term prospects of our City Region economy, its businesses and communities and monitor the delivery via a newly developed performance management framework

How are we doing? - Work is continuing to develop a Performance Management Framework to monitor the delivery of the strategic aims of the strategy.

9. Work towards linking strategic employment sites by establishing priority bus corridors between key towns within the City Region

How are we doing? - Construction of the Baglan Energy Park Link Bridge continues as part of the Port Talbot to Swansea bus corridor (completion March 2015), through Harbourside and Fabian Way Strategic Sites. Work continues to develop on other schemes in liaison with the Regional Transport Forum.

10. Work with community transport operators to enhance and integrate their services to support local communities and ensure the schemes meet the transport targets as set out in the Service Level Agreements with the Council

How are we doing? - All targets as set out in Service Level Agreements have been met. There have been regular meetings with both Community Transport schemes and Shopmobility, to encourage closer working and combined bids, to improve future funding prospects. To date, an Regional Development Plan bid has been submitted and a project proposal put forward to Pen-y-Cymoedd Community Fund.

11. Redevelop Port Talbot Parkway Station, to improve access, parking and facilities for customers

How are we doing? - On target for completion in Spring 2015.

12. Implement the Vibrant and Viable Places Regeneration Framework to combine support for people and places, and encourage partnership working by the public, private and third sector

How are we doing? - First scheme at Green Park on site, 34 homes to be delivered by November 2015.

13. Develop key sites and premises across the County Borough to encourage economic growth Sites include: Harbourside, Coed Darcy Urban Village and Swansea University's new Bay Campus

How are we doing? - All sites under various stages of advanced construction.

14. Enable the establishment of caravan site facilities at Margam Park in partnership with the Camping and Caravanning Club to enhance visitor numbers to the County Borough

How are we doing? – A planning application has been submitted.

15. Make the most of community investment by working in partnership with developers/organisations who are delivering substantial investment programmes, to encourage and monitor training and job opportunities for local people, and local supply chain activity

How are we doing?

- **Residential Care Homes (Grwp Gwalia) - Value £3.7m, Moor Road** - contract completed. 18 companies introduced to main contractors; seven contracts awarded to local companies; 300 persons secured employment on site; four apprentices completed training weeks on site; eight trainee/temporary job opportunities/work placements. There were no set targets for this contract.
- **Caewern Home** – work on site to commence in October 2014...To date, 13 companies have been introduced to main contractors and four contracts awarded to local companies.

- **Welsh Housing Quality Standards (NPT Homes)** - 31 people have secured jobs with sub-contractors; eight apprentices secured placements with sub contractors and 25 people have been provided with temporary job opportunities.
- **New Leisure Centre (Aberavon)** – to date 80 companies have been introduced to main contractors; three contracts awarded to local companies and 11 people have secured jobs on-site.
- **Swansea University** - 450 companies have been introduced to main contractors; 40 local companies secured contracts; 33 job opportunities created; more than 50 individuals completed 1000 trainee weeks and the canteen facilities are being run by NPT COASTAL projects – providing jobs and training to those looking to get back into employment.
- Further projects due to commence shortly: **Vibrant & Viable Places Funded Projects** - Green Park Industrial Estate (Coastal Housing), Renewal Areas (Aberavon) and **Briton Ferry Health Centre (Deryn Properties Ltd)**.