

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 18 September, 2017

Report of the Leader

Improvement Plan Part 2: Annual Review of Performance 2016/17 and Local Government Performance 2016/17

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the draft Improvement Plan Part 2: Annual Review of Performance 2016/17, which contains performance and improvement information for Improvement Objectives agreed in April 2016. The report also outlines the Council's performance in the Local Government Data Unit's annual bulletin of Local Government Performance for 2016/17.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet endorses the Improvement Plan Part 2: Annual Review of Performance 2016/17 and refers the Plan to Full Council on 27th September 2017 for approval.
2. That Cabinet notes the publication of the Local Government Data Unit Wales bulletin on Local Government Performance 2016/17 which ranks the Vale of Glamorgan Council as the highest performing local authority in Wales for the third year running.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure to publish an annual review of Council performance and ensure that action is taken to continually improve.
2. To apprise Members of the performance of the Vale of Glamorgan Council relative to other Welsh local authorities during 2016/17.

Background

2. The Council's Part 1 Improvement Plan for 2016/17 was agreed by Cabinet on 25th April 2016; this is required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. This Plan is forward looking, and set five Improvement Objectives for 2016/17.
3. The Local Government Data Unit Wales publishes an annual bulletin of Local Government Performance which outlines the performance of Welsh local authorities across a range of national indicators.

Relevant Issues and Options

4. The Part 2 Improvement Plan (attached at [Appendix 1](#)) is a document primarily looking back over 2016/17. It contains key performance information which helps demonstrate progress towards achievement of our Improvement Objectives. The Plan also reports our performance against a range of services as measured by national performance indicators collected and published annually by the Local Government Data Unit. It also provides an overview of our budget; what our residents and external regulators say about us and highlights our progress on strategic collaborative activities undertaken during the year. A copy of the Part 2 Improvement Plan is available online and in the Members' room.
5. The majority of the information contained within the Plan is informed by the quarterly and end of year Well-being Outcome performance reports which were discussed by all Scrutiny Committees throughout the year. The Part 2 Plan brings together this information in one report.
6. The above information will be used by the Wales Audit Office to assess the Council's capacity to improve, and therefore is of critical importance to the reputation of the Council and to inform how we as an organisation plan areas of focus for improvement in the coming years.
7. The Improvement Plan being presented to Members is substantially complete, although some further minor amendments may be required following updates to performance information provided by the Local Government Data Unit and from any final proofreading in readiness for Council's consideration of the Plan.
8. Based on our self-assessment, we have concluded that overall, the Council has been successful in achieving majority of the positive outcomes intended in our Improvement Objectives for 2016/17, despite challenging financial times and increasing demand for services.
9. Four out of five Improvement Objectives set for the year were judged to have been achieved. Objective 3, 'Raising overall standards of achievement' was judged to be partially achieved because whilst standards have improved overall, the standards achieved by children entitled to free schools meals do not yet meet those of other children in all key stages. All five Improvement Objectives, which reflect our Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes, remain long term strategic priorities for the Council and the success achieved in 2016/17 represents the start of what will be a long programme of initiatives to continually improve services for citizens of the Vale.
10. Below is a summary of our conclusions on the five Improvement Objectives for 2016/17.
11. **Objective 1: Reduce poverty and social exclusion.** Our conclusion is that on balance we have achieved the outcomes we set ourselves for 2016/17. We are increasing opportunities for digital inclusion across the Vale via a targeted approach and we can show that take up of these is increasing.
12. We are proactively supporting more residents in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) and via the Communities First, Flying Start and Supporting People programmes to retain their independence and move into work where appropriate through a diverse range of services. In addition, we are maximising opportunities to work jointly on these programmes leading to improved outcomes for customers and better targeting of resources. Customer satisfaction with support provided through the programmes remains positive.

13. By proactively supporting tenants affected by Welfare Reform through a range of services, 227 tenancies are still running equating to a 96% success rate. 100% of these tenants now have access to a bank account/credit union as a consequence of the support provided. There was a reduction in rent arrears from 1.06% in 2015/6 to 0.84% in 2016/17 as a result of proactive support to tenants and this has ensured that the Vale remains one of the best performing housing providers in the UK in respect of rent arrears.
14. Take up of learning opportunities by priority learners is increasing and the success rate has improved to 96% for the 2015/16 academic year from 86% in the previous year. We continue to promote opportunities in line with our commitment to reduce poverty and social exclusion.
15. Despite facing significant challenges, we worked in partnership to successfully prevent homelessness in nearly 70% of households.
16. Through the proactive work of the Vale's Community Energy Advisor, we are tackling fuel poverty through a wide range of services. During the year approximately £5k of savings was made by Vale residents following the advice of the Community Energy Advisor.
17. **Objective 2: Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment.** Our conclusion is that on balance we have achieved the outcomes we set ourselves for 2016/17. We collected nearly £7 million of developer financial contributions during the year in comparison to approximately £20 million across Wales as a whole for the same period and this is being used to provide or enhance infrastructure, education and community facilities for the benefit of Vale residents.
18. Through various initiatives including those backed by government grants, we continue to increase investment in our town centres. This has contributed to sustaining the vitality of our main town centres in the face of a nationally difficult picture for retail centres, offering businesses, residents and visitors an improved environment. Our recent Public Opinion survey (2017), rated the Vale's town centres positively: Barry Holton Road (61.4%), Barry High Street (74.4%), Penarth (95.6%), Cowbridge (97.7%), Llantwit Major (90.3%). These results were an improvement on the previous survey (2015).
19. Despite a decline in the average vacancy rate in the Vale's main town centres, when compared to the UK's average town centre vacancy rate and that of neighbouring councils, our performance remains positive with the best performing town centre being one where the Council has intervened to the largest degree, Holton Road, Barry.
20. We continue to maximise opportunities to increase the Vale's attractiveness as a visitor and tourism destination, working in partnership at both regional and local levels. According to the STEAM research, visitor numbers increased to 3.97 million in 2016, a 0.2% increase on the previous year. The total economic impact of the tourism in the Vale was £221.60M, an increase of 0.9% on the previous year. Our successful annual events programme contributed to the increase in tourism visits.
21. In addition to delivering various transport schemes during the year, we remain on track to deliver an integrated network active travel map for the Vale of Glamorgan in line with Welsh Government timescales. This will provide residents and visitors with the information they need to travel efficiently and safely and provide increased opportunities for active travel. In our latest Public Opinion Survey, over 90% of respondents were satisfied with accessibility of public transport in the Vale.

22. We can demonstrate improved occupancy in the Council's three business centres (BSC, CEC and VEC). Both the BSC and the CEC achieved 100% occupancy in 2016/17. Refurbishment of the VEC was undertaken in year to improve occupancy rates and this is proving successful with occupancy already up to 80%.
23. We are positively engaging with communities in the Vale to map their assets and support them in applying for match funding to extend and improve their local facilities. The take up of community mapping is increasing.
24. **Objective 3: Raising overall standards of achievement.** Our conclusion is that this Objective has been partially achieved because whilst standards have improved overall, we recognise that the standards achieved by children entitled to free school meals do not yet meet those of other children in all key stages and this remains a key focus for improvement and a priority for Council in the long term as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2016-20.
25. Outcomes in GSCE mathematics improved from 50% in the 2014/15 academic year to 74.1% in the 2015/16 academic year. In relation to English, pupil attainment dipped by 2.87 percentage points from 76.7% to 73.83%.
26. Our performance in relation to pupils in receipt of free school meals has seen a 14% improvement in attainments at the level 2 threshold in English, Welsh First Language and Maths between the academic years 2014/15 and 2015/16.
27. In terms of narrowing the gap, during 2015/16 (academic year 2014/15) the attainment gap between FSM and non-FSM for the level 2 threshold was 39.93% which by 2016/17 (academic year 2015/16) reduced to 27.73%. Where the attainment gap has widened it is because the outcomes for those not entitled to FSM have improved at a greater rate.
28. Attainment levels for Vale Additional Learning Needs pupils show that these pupils are achieving higher outcomes when compared with the rest of Wales in almost all performance indicators at all key stages during the 2015/16 academic year.
29. All 8 schools inspected this year were judged to be at least "good" for both current performance and prospects for improvement by Estyn improving on the 80% achieved last year. A consistent focus on improving standards, clear communication and strong leadership has contributed to this improvement.
30. The number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Vale schools has continued to reduce for the 9th consecutive year and now stands at 1.6%. However, there is a need to further reduce the levels of Year 13 NEETs and we continue to work in partnership to promote learning, training and employment opportunities. This continues to be a priority for the Council.
31. **Objective 4: In relation to, 'Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles',** based on our good progress to date, our conclusion is that we have achieved our intended outcomes for 2016/17.
32. We have successfully implemented our Vale Sport and Physical Activity Plan for 2016/17 with more than 292 organisations contributing to increased participation in leisure and physical activity: 1,174 training opportunities were taken up by individuals from more than 80 organisations through the workforce development programme; 1,019 participants in the, 'Girls on the Move' project; 1,667 children and young people participated in the Vale Competitions and Festivals programme; 522 disabled club members and 630 disability sports session members attended 50 inclusive and

disability specific opportunities; over 1,000 children accessed school Learn to Swim sessions in our leisure centres.

33. We have proactively worked with partners and our communities to improve local facilities and community spaces in order to increase opportunities for participating in leisure and sporting activities. According to our latest Public Opinion Survey (2017), nearly 90% of residents reported satisfaction with leisure services in the Vale compared to 83% in the previous survey.
34. More adults are participating in physical activity in the Vale according to our latest Public Opinion Survey (2017). Participation amongst children and young people has also increased (since 2013) by 8%, with 52% of 7-16 year olds in the Vale now participating in sport or physical activity on at least three occasions per week, the third highest in Wales, according to the most recent Sport Wales Survey (2015/16).
35. We continue to improve accessibility and quality of information on adult social services and family support and childcare services, following the successful launch of the DEWIS Cymru information portal and there is an ongoing campaign to promote the resource to residents and professionals.
36. We can demonstrate positive progress on a range of actions to encourage healthier lifestyles in the Vale in partnership through the Cardiff & Vale Health and Well-being Board. Via Communities First and Flying Start community based initiatives we are proactively targeting our healthy eating interventions to ensure better outcomes.
37. As a result of targeted delivery, 83.8% of individuals who entered substance misuse treatment successfully completed the treatment compared to 76.6% last year. In 61% of clients there was a reported improvement in the quality of life following treatment.
38. **Objective 5: Deliver the Council's transformational programme, 'Reshaping Services' to meet the future needs of citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan, within the context of unprecedented financial challenges.** Our conclusion is that on balance we have achieved our intended outcomes for 2016/17.
39. The Council's Reshaping Service Programme is underpinned by robust programme management and governance arrangements, established project teams, the staff charter and management development programme and an effective programme of communications and engagement work.
40. The strong progress made by services across the Council in tranche 2 projects contributed to 86% of the savings target (of £3.052 million) associated with the Reshaping Services programme for 2016/17 being achieved.
41. During the year, the programme demonstrated the way in which a range of alternative models for service delivery could be adopted to meet the individual circumstances of customers and the service. Examples include the approved business case to create a trading company for catering services following a detailed appraisal of a range of alternative models. The nature of the individual services also led to an internal transformation model for Visible Services & Transport being identified as the most appropriate route to deliver transformational change. The Council also sought to embrace working relationships with emerging new organisations during the year, for example, in identifying that the internal Meals on Wheels service was no longer financially viable, customers were signposted to a range of alternatives, including a new social enterprise, The Food Shed.
42. Through various arrangements to deliver services such as the Shared Regulatory Service and community library services, we are ensuring the resilience and future

sustainability of priority Council services for Vale residents in a challenging financial climate.

43. In the budget survey for 2016/17, residents largely supported the Council's approach to reshaping its services in order to make the required savings going forward.
44. In the recent Public Opinion survey (2017), 92% of Vale residents reported satisfaction with the services provided by the Council.
45. Service user consultation is an important element in delivering successful transformational change. A variety of examples can be seen from the past year. These include the ongoing consultation with headteachers via a forum relating to changes in Additional Learning Needs. Service users and their families were also consulted as part of the process for developing alternative arrangements for the service providing respite care to adults with learning disabilities.

Local Government Performance Bulletin 2016/17

46. Each year, the Local Government Data Unit publishes local authority performance information on a range of services, highlighting areas where there have been notable changes in the overall level of performance. This makes it possible to compare the performance of the 22 Welsh local authorities across those services.
47. Pages 76-87 of the Improvement Plan ([Appendix 1](#)) details how we performed against the 2016/17 national performance dataset in comparison with the previous year and with other local authorities in Wales.
48. Overall we are performing well in performance indicators across all service areas and for the past three years we have been the top performing Council in Wales in relation to the national indicator set.
49. We collected and reported data on 31 national performance indicators in 2016/17. Of these 28 have data that can be compared with the previous year which show that:
 - 46.4% (13) improved
 - 10.7% (3) achieved the best possible performance
 - 35.7% (10) declined
 - Performance remained static in 17.8% (5) of indicators
 - The areas we performed best (ranked 1st in Wales) were in ensuring that all special education needs statements (including and excluding exceptions) were issued within the required timescales and that no looked after children left compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification.
 - There are a number of areas where we need to make improvements in order to move out of the bottom quartile. These areas include: improving roads in poor condition; increasing number of food establishments that are compliant with food hygiene standards; increasing visits to sports and leisure centres; increasing the number of affordable housing units provided; and clearing reported incidents of fly tipping more quickly.
 - The Vale performed better than the Welsh average in 64.3% (18) of comparable indicators for 2016/17. When compared against the South East Wales Region, the Vale performed better in 64.3% (18) of comparable indicators for the same period.

50. Much of this data and analysis is considered in the Local Government Data Unit Wales performance bulletin 2016/17 attached at [Appendix 2](#). The report looks at a range of indicators and assesses the performance of individual authorities. A copy of the Local Government Performance Bulletin ([Appendix 2](#)) is available online and in the Members' room. A copy has also been published on the Council's Staffnet.
51. Key highlights from this data include:
52. In total 3 (10.7%) indicators achieved the best possible performance in 2016/17, which is one less than the previous year. Of these all three continued to maintain their best possible performance (either 100% or 0%) when compared to the previous year.
53. 46.4% (13) indicators showed an improvement (based on their PI value) during 2016/17 compared to last year, three of which are showing an improvement in performance compared to 2015/16 that were previously in decline.
54. 10 indicators (35.7%) showed a decline in performance, which has remained static when compared to the previous year. Two of the 10 measures continued to show a decline in 2016/17. These indicators include: EDU/006ii (% pupils assessed by LA receiving Teacher Assessment in Welsh at KS3) which has seen a slight reduction of 0.4% compared to previous year and LCL/001b (number of visits to Libraries per 1,000 population) which has seen a reduction of 450 visits compared to the previous year.
55. 5 indicators during 2016/17 have shown no change in their performance when compared to 2015/16. Three of these indicators have continued to maintain best possible performance. These relate to EDU/002ii (percentage of pupils in Local Authority Care who leave compulsory education, training or work-based learning without an approved external qualification), EDU/015a (percentage of final statements of SEN issued within 26 weeks including exceptions) and EDU/015b (percentage of final statements of SEN issued within 26 weeks excluding exceptions).
56. There are 6 indicators that had previously shown improvement in 2015/16 (based on their PI value) that are now showing a decline in their performance for 2016/17. These relate to:
 - EDU/011, average point score for pupils aged 15 in schools maintained by the local authority.
 - PSR/004, percentage of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months that were returned to occupation through direct action by the local authority.
 - PLA/006b, number of additional affordable units provided as a percentage of all housing units.
 - STS/006, percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days.
 - STS/005b, percentage of highways inspected of a high/acceptable standard of cleanliness.
 - THS/007, percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a concessionary bus pass.
57. A breakdown of our performance in quartiles when compared to Wales is as follows:
 - 46.4% (13) indicators were in the upper quartile of performance for 2016/17, compared to 69% (18) of indicators that were reported in the upper quartile for their performance in 2015/16.

- 17.9% (5) indicators were in the upper middle quartile (2nd) during 2016/17 compared with 15% (4) of indicators in 2015/16.
- The percentage of indicators in the lower middle quartile position has increased from 7.7% (2) in 2015/16 to 17.9% (5) of indicators during 2016/17.
- The percentage of indicators in the bottom quartile has increased from 7.7% (2) indicators to 17.9% (5) indicators.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

58. In determining its priorities the Council has been mindful of the economic situation locally and nationally and taken into account legislation changes and government policy. Our Improvement Objectives are set out in the Corporate Plan 2016-20 and Service Plans either have resources committed to their achievement (Medium Term Financial Plan and annual budget review) or the likely prospect of such resources being made available in the period of the plan.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

59. Sustainability issues, reflecting the Sustainable Development principle introduced by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, have been taken into account as part of the process for selecting our Improvement Objectives.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

60. The Improvement Plan Part 2: Annual Review of Council Performance is a statutory duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, along with a duty to continually improve.

Crime and Disorder Implications

61. Activities to improve community safety are included in the Corporate Plan and one of the Well-being Outcomes is 'An Inclusive and Safe Vale' with a supporting objective 'providing decent homes and safe communities'. The Council's Performance Management Framework supports the delivery of actions associated with these objectives.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

62. 'An Inclusive and Safe Vale' is one of the Well-being Outcomes in the Corporate Plan with a supporting objective 'reducing poverty and social exclusion'. There is also a Well-being Outcome 'An Aspirational and culturally vibrant Vale' with a supporting action 'valuing culture and diversity'. The Council's Performance Management Framework supports the delivery of actions associated with these objectives.
63. A scoping for Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the process for selecting the Improvement Objectives. A summary document provides members of the public with an opportunity to become aware of the Council's performance and will be produced bilingually.

Corporate/Service Objectives

64. Improvement Objectives are a priority for the Council and are reflected with the Corporate Plan 2016-20.
65. The Corporate Plan 2016-20 reflects the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and identifies 4 Well-being Outcomes and 8 Objectives for the Council. These promote improvements in the economic, social and cultural well-being of residents in the Vale of Glamorgan which in turn will contribute to achieving the Well-being goals for Wales.
66. The Council's Performance Management Framework supports the delivery of all of the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and Objectives (including its Improvement Objectives).

Policy Framework and Budget

67. The Improvement Plan forms a part of the Council's approved Policy Framework and is required to be agreed by Full Council.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

68. Elected Members and Corporate Management Team were involved in the selection of Improvement Objectives for 2016/17. We also consulted our key partners, local businesses and the public as part of the process and their views informed the final Objectives.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

69. All. In view of the timetable set by legislation and informed by the publication date of the relevant national benchmarking data, it has not been possible for all Scrutiny Committees to consider the report prior to Cabinet and Full Council. It must be noted that the majority of information contained within the Improvement Plan has previously been reported to all Scrutiny Committees as part of quarterly and end of year performance reporting for 2016/17.

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer

Julia Archampong, Corporate Performance Manager

Officers Consulted

All relevant officers have been consulted on the contents of this report including:
Corporate Management Team
Head of Performance & Development
OM Performance & Policy
Heads of Service

Responsible Officer: Rob Thomas, Managing Director