

Meeting of:	Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 18 March 2024
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet
Report Title:	Annual Delivery Plan Monitoring Report: Quarter 3 Performance 2023/24.
Purpose of Report:	To present quarter 3 performance results for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st December 2023 in delivering our 2023/24 Annual Delivery Plan commitments as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.
Report Owner:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning & Skills
Responsible Officer:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning & Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	The performance report applies to the whole authority. Quarterly performance reports covering the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives will be considered by Directorate Management Teams, the Strategic Insight Board, Strategic Leadership Team, all Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The performance report presents our progress at quarter 3 (1st April 2023 to 31st December 2023) towards achieving our Annual Delivery Plan (2023/24) commitments as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. • Due to current capacity challenges within the Corporate Performance Team, the format for this quarter's (Q3) Annual Delivery Plan Monitoring Report has been revised temporarily, to enable us to continue to provide elected members with an overview of progress in delivering our Annual Delivery Plan commitments as aligned to the remit of each Scrutiny Committee. • The presentation appended at Appendix A provides a summary of progress against our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2023/24 as aligned to the remit of the Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee. • The report seeks elected members' consideration of Q3 performance results and the proposed remedial actions to address areas of identified underperformance. Upon consideration, the Scrutiny Committee is recommended to refer their views and any recommendations to Cabinet for their consideration. 	

Recommendations

1. That Members consider Q3 performance results and progress towards achieving the Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24 commitments as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives within the remit of the Committee.
2. That Members consider the remedial actions to be taken to address areas of underperformance and to tackle the key challenges identified within the remit of the Committee, with their views and recommendations referred thereafter to Cabinet for their consideration and approval.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure the Council clearly demonstrates the progress being made towards achieving its commitments in the Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24 aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of Vale of Glamorgan citizens.
2. To ensure the Council is effectively assessing its performance in line with the requirement to meet our performance requirements as outlined in the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and reflecting the requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that it maximises its contribution to achieving the well-being goals for Wales.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Performance Management Framework is the mechanism through which our key priorities and targets are monitored and realised in order to secure continuous improvement and meet our performance requirements.
- 1.2 As part of the review of its Performance Management Framework, the Council has adopted a Corporate Plan (2020-25) which reflects the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and identifies 4 Well-being Objectives for the Council. We have also refined our performance reporting and monitoring approach to enable us to meet our new duties under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act which came into effect from 1st April 2021.
- 1.3 Our performance framework is aligned to our Corporate Plan to enable us to track our progress on well-being objectives (keep our performance under review) and demonstrate how the steps we intend to take will contribute to achieving multiple well-being objectives and in turn the national goals.
- 1.4 In line with these performance arrangements, Cabinet and Scrutiny Members will consider a high-level overview of performance in a presentation report format. The report is aligned to the remit of the Committee and reports progress against all four Well-being Objectives enabling members to look at the achievement of the Corporate Plan holistically. The report also highlights areas of improvement that may require greater scrutiny by members and enables Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees to flex their work programme to reflect any emerging performance issues that may require more intensive consideration. This reflects the changes requested by elected members on performance monitoring and aligns with the

13 Principles - Effective Scrutiny Action Plan. This approach will enable members to focus on upcoming priority areas and areas where further probing should be considered, alongside progress against the Annual Delivery Plan commitments.

- 1.5** Work will continue to further develop and enhance our performance monitoring and reporting arrangements in line with our duties as outlined in the WCFG (Wales) Act and the LG&E (Wales) Act with reference to the wider local government agenda. These discussions will continue to consider the best way to present information to elected members to facilitate scrutiny and identify and explore areas of interest.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** The presentation (**Appendix A**) outlines our performance for the period 1st April to 31st December 2023 against our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2023/24 as aligned to the remit of the Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2** Due to current capacity challenges within the Corporate Performance Team, the format for this quarter's (Q3) Annual Delivery Plan Monitoring Report has been revised temporarily to enable us to continue to provide elected members with an overview of progress in delivering our Annual Delivery Plan commitments as aligned to the remit of each Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3** The revised presentation structure provides members with:
- An overview of achievements specific to each scrutiny committee's remit across all 4 Well-being Objectives as applicable.
 - An overview of areas for improvement, emerging areas of development and activity and emerging areas of concern specific to each scrutiny committee's remit across all 4 well-being objectives.
- 2.4** We have also assessed progress in relation to our planned activities as outlined in our Annual Delivery Plan for 2023/24 using local performance and trend data where possible to support performance reporting. National benchmarking data remains limited due the removal of our national data obligations by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and Welsh Government (WG).
- 2.5** Elected Members are being asked to consider the Q3 performance results and the proposed remedial actions to address areas of identified underperformance. Upon consideration, the Scrutiny Committee is recommended to refer their views and any recommendations to Cabinet for their consideration.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Performance Management is an intrinsic part of corporate governance and integrated business planning which underpins the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and its Well-being Objectives and associated annual commitments in its Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24. Our Corporate Plan has been structured around the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, through the development of four Well-being Objectives. By aligning our Well-

being Outcomes in the Corporate Plan with the Well-being Goals of the Act, this will enable us to better evidence our contribution to the Goals.

- 3.2 Performance reporting is an important vehicle for showing our progress, not only in terms of impacts across the national well-being goals through achievement of our well-being objectives but also in terms of the changes and improvements made in our approach to integrated planning.
- 3.3 The five ways of working are a key consideration in our corporate Performance Management Framework ensuring that we continue to focus on working differently and in an inclusive way to challenge why, what and how we respond to our key performance challenges.

4. Climate Change and Nature implications

- 4.1 There are no direct climate change and nature related implications associated with this report. The Corporate Plan and Annual Delivery Plan incorporate our key commitments which aim to have a positive impact on climate change and nature overall. However, failure to deliver on these commitments could impact negatively on achievement of our Well-being Objectives and in turn our contribution to the national goals and on any external regulatory assessments of the Council.
- 4.2 The climate change and nature implications related to the Council's activities are outlined in Project Zero (our Climate Change/carbon reduction and nature programme) and identifies the mitigating actions we intend to take to minimise the adverse consequences of our activities. It also includes key measures and targets that are monitored and regularly reported to all stakeholders to enable us to demonstrate and track progress towards achieving our key climate change and nature related commitments enroute to achieving net zero carbon status by 2030.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1 There are no additional budgetary implications arising from this report, although underperformance in some areas may have a negative impact on external assessments of the Council and could put certain funding opportunities at risk.

Employment

- 5.2 There are no direct workforce related implications associated with this report. However, there are a number of issues contained within the performance report that if not effectively managed have the potential to impact on our staff establishment and performance overall. This may in turn impact adversely on achievement of key outcomes associated with the Corporate Plan.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that the Council keep its performance under review and consult and report on its performance in order to secure continuous improvement and meet its performance requirements.
- 5.4** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to set and publish annual Well-being Objectives that maximise its contribution to achieving the Well-being goals for Wales and report its progress in meeting these.

6. Background Papers

[Corporate Plan 2020-25](#)

[Annual Delivery Plan 2023-24](#)

ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN MONITORING REPORT 2023/24

QUARTER 3 - LEARNING & CULTURE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Links to latest corporate health reports/information to enable members to maintain oversight of issues that may impact on the work of the Council and their respective committees • [Q1 Corporate Risk Register 2023-24](#) • [Q2 Sickness Absence Report 2023-24](#) • [Q2 Insight Board Action Tracker 2023-24](#) • [Q3 Corporate Overview](#)

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

Objective 1: Work with and for our communities:

- Provided a range of participation opportunities to enable a greater number and diversity of young people to engage in decision making across the Council e.g. Young people participated in interview panels for Youth Service staff; Penarth Youth Action members facilitated the Cwrt-Y-Vil Muga official opening event, worked on accessibility to parks in the Penarth area and have linked with Ty Hafan Youth Advisory Board; Rights Ambassadors delivered a successful Super Ambassadors event for primary schools and a new group has been recruited and started their rights training; the Her Voice Wales group has continued to raise awareness of their campaign and have been instrumental in the Council's sign up to the Safe Places Scheme. The group has been shortlisted for the Youth Excellence Awards; Supported Pupil Voice initiatives through School Council Networks during the quarter.
- Newly established Individual Development Plans and Additional Learning Needs Panels are enabling more timely intervention and provision on ALN cases in line with statutory timescales.
- Supported Vale schools to apply for School of Sanctuary status. 14 schools have signed the pledge and 7 are currently progressing an application for School of Sanctuary status.
- Enhanced Welsh provision through delivery of the WESP including: Opened a new Welsh Speaking resource Base, further enhancing ALN Welsh provision; 101 Vale practitioners engaged in Welsh language professional learning to improve their practice in the classroom; Collaborated with the CSC and WJEC to develop an additional 7 new qualifications; All Vale schools are engaged with the Siarter Iaith / Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus framework; addressed recommendations from Estyn's inspection of the Learn Welsh programme.
- Enhanced digital infrastructure within schools to reflect requirements of the National Curriculum and the Council's implementation of the Hwb programme. In Q3, all new devices for SLA schools were enrolled on to Hwb MDM platform.
- Launched an innovative learning facility for schools at Cadoxton Primary school.

Objective 2: Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth:

- Established a forum comprising schools and other key stakeholders to develop approaches to ensure sufficiency and sustainability of provision to meet needs of children and young people with Additional Learning Needs.
- Work undertaken as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund has contributed to positive outcomes in Q3 including: the POD is operational and offering a one-stop-shop advice service on a range of topics including support for long-term unemployed, support for people with learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergence to help them achieve their full potential; 153 people registered on CELT+ with 33 being supported by a employment mentor and 20 successfully securing a job; Strive continues to successfully engage young people in school (40 this quarter); 14 young people are undertaking work via the quickstart scheme.
- Strong progress has been made in our work with schools and partners to embed the Whole – School Approach to Mental Health and Emotional Well-being, with 90.6% of schools on board with the approach. Of these (86.8%) are progressing an implementation plan in response to their self evaluation.
- Welsh Government figures show Vale of Glamorgan as the top performing LA in Wales in engagement of 16-24 year olds. To date, figures for youth engagement achieved are currently 187 against a profile of 135. The Youth Job Club and 50+ Job Club continue to be very successful following a revised approach to further enhance focus on key areas. Engagements for 25+ also remain positive with 384 achieved against a profile of 315 to date.
- As of Q3, 47 schools have engaged with regional professional learning opportunities via the Central South Consortium (CSC). 244 practitioners have engaged in professional learning related to curriculum; 209 individuals have engaged in Governor training; 133 practitioners have engaged in professional learning to develop Welsh Language provision.
- Working with schools, we have further enhanced our approach to minimising pupil exclusions and improving attendance e.g. persistent absence and emotionally based school avoidance initiatives.



WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

Objective 3: Support People at home and in their community:

- Worked in partnership to promote and support childcare and early years settings to achieve Gold Standard Healthy Snack Award accreditation as part of Move More Eat Well agenda.
- Promoted our assets as community learning spaces which offer a wide range of opportunities, informed by extensive engagement at taster and other events to ensure curriculum offered meets local needs.
- Progressed a rolling programme of safeguarding Self-Evaluation Reviews (SER) schools visits, refreshed training and developed critical incident guidance to support schools and key partners to safeguard and promote wellbeing of learners.
- Effective multi-agency partnership working underpinned by a commitment to tackle the impact of poverty on educational attainment has contributed to improved pupil attendance in the Pencoedtre Learning Community cluster of schools.
- Continued to deliver effective interventions for young people at risk of homelessness, focusing on support at an earlier stage thereby reducing long-term referrals. 8 young people were supported, and a further 12 families supported to reduce risk of family breakdown.
- The period dignity project has been a real success this year. Training and resources have been rolled out to all schools this quarter with additional activities planned for the final quarter.
- All libraries continued to work with partners to diversify our offer, building on our role as community hubs. During Q3, a wide range of new activities have included a Jigsaw Club and Breastfeeding Club in Barry Library, a French Conversation class in Llantwit Library, Rhoose Library hosting a monthly Menopause Group, Cowbridge Library hosting two successful author talks with Huw Thomas and Louise Mumford. Llantwit Library hosted the Electoral Services dept. who advised people on their voting rights and many more.

Objective 4: Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment:

- Updated current Employer Requirements for future developments to ensure progression within our designs are meeting the Net Zero Carbon targets.
- Working with all teams across the Vale, including eco schools and Project Zero board to implement a decarbonisation framework in all schools.
- Decarbonisation sub group of the School Investment Operational Board has shortlisted a number of schools for development projects e.g. maximising green spaces in schools, planting tree/ wild grass, bird boxes and energy audits to help meet carbon reduction challenges and these are being progressed.
- The Sustainable Communities for Learning team are currently working with schools and community partners to develop innovative practices that respond effectively to nature and climate emergencies e.g. bat surveys, discussions on active travel routes to schools and plans for green spaces.
- Continued to work across Arts Development, the Pavilion and our libraries to encourage awareness through delivering environmentally aware events, activities and workshops that encourage local schools, library users and communities to participate and engage with the Net Zero Carbon agenda e.g. 'At a Loss' exhibition, 'How Green is our Vale' and talks by journalists and conservationists.
- Progressing a review of existing Learning & Skills building estate with a focus on enhancing our assets to meet net zero carbon targets.



AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT: SERVICE PLAN ACTIVITY

Objective 1: Work with and for our communities:

- Conclusions from benchmarking work on the special school funding formula model will now be considered by the Budget Forum, Headteachers to inform the next stage of the review.
- Continued collaboration with schools, the School Budget Forum and governing bodies to support the management of school budgets. There are currently 29 schools with surplus and 24 schools with deficit budgets. Of the 29 schools with surplus budgets in 2023/24, 27 are showing deficit budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26. Of the 24 schools with deficit budgets in 2023/24, only Stanwell is back into a surplus budget in 2024/25; the other 23 schools have non-recoverable deficits.
- Progress work to improve web content and the accessibility of information about our schools and education services.
- Progress opportunities to enhance and develop business intelligence analytics to streamline service interventions.

Objective 3: Support people at home and in their community:

- Continue to promote homelessness support and provision with secondary schools, since seeing a drop in referrals to the service to ensure that we can continue to identify and deliver effective interventions for young people at risk of homelessness.
- Progress work on identifying potential income opportunities for the Arts Service and Arts Central Gallery to ensure its sustainability.
- Review of the Anti-bullying policy will commence on publication of the Welsh Government Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment Action Plan.

Objective 2: Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth:

- Continue to progress work on the expansion of Ysgol y Deri and St Richard Gwyn school building subject to planning decision. Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) Application required further testing in relation to St Richard Gwyn, and work will commence following conclusion in February 2024.
- Despite some delays, it is anticipated that remaining the Sustainable Communities for Learning projects will be delivered by the end of 2024 in line with the end of Band B programme.

Objective 4: Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment:

- Progress work to update current Employer Requirements for future developments to ensure progression within our designs are meeting the net zero carbon targets.



EMERGING AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT & ACTIVITY

Objective 1: Work with and for our communities:

- Support schools reporting a deficit budget position to develop balanced recovery plans.
- Continue to maximise our customer insight through consultation to shape our development and delivery of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme ensuring stakeholders have opportunities to input.

Objective 3: Support people at home and in their community:

- Work with Improvement Partners and schools to utilise the children and young people's wellbeing survey data to support improvement work in schools
- Progress implementation of the refreshed Move More Eat Well Plan in partnership with health and other key stakeholders.
- Continue to review the operation and sustainability of the Arts Service and maximise opportunities for income generation.
- Further develop our 'child friendly' policies.
- Embed our Social and Emotional Mental Health Strategy in a more holistic way across all aspects of our work to ensure that we effectively put it into practice.
- Well-being remains a long-term priority going forward. There is a need to focus on further training and support for school-based staff to increase their confidence in supporting learners with their health and well-being.

Objective 2: Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth:

- Reviewing progress of school based counselling service and therapy provision for Primary Schools give rising demand.
- Addressing ongoing capacity issues in meeting the requirements of the ALNET Act, including provision for Welsh speakers. Focusing on streamlining our ALN processes to address demand and manage expectations.
- Progress collaborations with schools to enable them maximise their use of technology in delivering the curriculum.
- Further embedding our focus on attendance following the launch of our attendance campaign to minimise days lost due to unauthorised absences.
- Continue utilising Children & Communities Grant funding to develop and maintain projects which support the mental health and well-being of children and families, in light of growing need.

Objective 4: Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment:

- Progress work with schools and community partners to develop and implement innovative practice/initiatives that effectively respond to the climate and nature emergencies.
- Progress emerging projects to decarbonise the Learning & Skills building estate via the Decarbonisation sub-group of the School Investment Operational Board.



EMERGING AREAS OF CONCERN

Objective 1: Work with and for our communities:

- There are challenges around the inclusivity of our engagement activities especially 'seldom heard' groups (those with protected characteristics/intersectionality) to shape and inform service design and development.
- There are recruitment and retention challenges in some service areas such as the youth service. Recruitment challenges across some schools, especially in relation to meeting our requirements for Welsh medium or provision for specialist areas i.e. ALNCOs.
- Financial challenges linked to uncertainty of funding over the coming year, especially when a number of our services are dependent on grant funding.

Objective 3: Support people at home and in their community:

- Growing demand for social, emotional and mental health services outstrips our resources and capacity to meet needs.

Objective 2: Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth:

- There is a need to continue to work with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service to address challenges with driving school improvement.
- Whole School Approach Grant (WSA) funding was not increased as projected by Welsh Government and has in fact been reduced, therefore hindering plans to extend the school counselling service.
- Attendance continues to remain an area of concern across certain schools and clusters of schools. Attendance rates have dipped slightly during September 2023 compared to the same period last year. Secondary attendance continues to remain an area of focus.

Objective 4: Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment:

- Ongoing supply issues and the escalating cost of materials continue to have an impact on the deliverability of remaining projects within Band B of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme and will be the subject of consideration when developing the rolling Programme going forward.
- Across the Vale of Glamorgan's school estate there are a number of Victorian schools that also have listed status. This impacts on the extent to which we can refurbish/retrofit these buildings to a carbon net zero in operation status.

