



Summary of Caerphilly County Borough Council's Annual Performance Report 2012/13



A greener place Man gwyrdach



Foreword
Council Leader
Cllr. Harry Andrews



As Leader of the Council, I am pleased to present a Summary of our Performance Report for 2012/13. This report reviews the council's improvement objectives identified last year and focuses on performance in key service areas.

We pride ourselves on delivering quality services to residents across the whole county borough, but this year has been particularly difficult for the organisation as we faced unprecedented pressures and dealt with a number of controversial issues.

Some of these issues have yet to be resolved, but we are keen to ensure that the council is not distracted from its commitment to deliver on our agreed Improvement Objectives.

While we are pleased that we are performing well in a number of key areas, we also recognise that there are some areas in need further improvement. I am confident that the council will be able to manage these issues successfully thanks to our excellent workforce and the ongoing support of members.

I would like to assure residents that we are moving forward as an organisation and our focus remains on delivering efficient and effective services to all sections of the community. Can I thank everyone who has been involved in the ongoing improvement process and I now look forward to seeing the organisation move on and achieve further positive results in the future

Cllr Harry Andrews
Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council

Dear reader,

This document is a summary of our Annual Performance Report so we can explain what we have achieved across our priorities (we call them Improvement Objectives) during 2012/13.

We have carried out a 'self-assessment' against our Improvement Objectives and the judgements we made were based upon whether the individual Improvement Objectives delivered the intended outcomes, in other words what difference did our activity make? This self-assessment was scrutinised at our Scrutiny Committees and validated at our Audit Committee at its meeting on 19th June 2013. The Wales Audit Office also tested our assessment during November 2013 and provided a written letter on their conclusions. Our Annual Performance Report is focussed on, but not limited to, the council's delivery of its Improvement Objectives. These are our short-term priorities. Our Improvement Objectives started in 2010/11 and were reviewed every year to check that they were still relevant to the public as the areas of improvement we needed to focus on. Our Improvement Objectives ran for three years and this 2012/13 Performance Report shows overall the final year of that three-year programme. Our new objectives for 2013/14 can be found at the Web address below under the heading of Council Performance.

For those who are interested, the full report can be found at our website <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk> under Council and Democracy on the left hand side of the menu. Within our full report we include information on how we have performed against our national indicators, our collaborations, budget information and other areas of performance highlighting what has gone well and where we need to do better. We hope you enjoy reading about how we are working to improve services for citizens.

Details on how to contact us on any aspects of our publication or its content can be found on page 19 of this summary.

Directorate of Corporate Services

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2012/13

**Nicole
Scammell**

Acting Director of
Corporate
Services



Corporate Services is made up of Human Resources, Legal & Democratic Services, Corporate Finance, Performance Management & Property Services, IT Services (including Communications and Customer First Centres) and Housing, we have up to 1100 Employees helping to support services and citizens in a wide range of ways.

It was a busy year for corporate services, our Human Resource Department worked with a range of partners to develop and expand the Caerphilly Apprenticeship and Traineeship Scheme. This is now called the Passport Scheme and was launched to help give people who are unemployed skills, experience and guide them into employment by a different range of avenues. The scheme has been very successful and opportunities are arising to develop further. There is much external interest in the scheme therefore collaboration is likely for the next phase.

Changes to Housing Benefits for council and other social landlords tenants is undertaking big changes due to the 'Welfare to Work' program. The UK government is reducing the amount of housing benefit some people can claim based on the size of the rented property and the people who live there. The UK government's Welfare Reform Act was approved in March 2012, one of the main changes relates to housing benefits. Many social housing tenants (who rent from the Council or Housing Association) saw a change to their housing benefit from April 2013, this also affects property allocations as tenants may look to change to homes with less bedrooms and this may not be compatible with our current housing stock. We are continuing to work with tenants and partners to make sure information and support is available to all those who need it.

Legal & Governance are actively involved in the collaboration agenda and as such will continue to play a full part with the Shared Legal Services Project for South East & Mid Wales. The forthcoming year will be a critical and demanding one, for Caerphilly and the 9 other Authorities involved, where important decisions will have to be made on the future of the collaboration.

We have further developed a robust corporate complaints process and now plan to use intelligence received to improve services by setting up a 'Listening and Learning' Group. We had planned to have this in place by the end of 2012/13, but it was delayed and did not take place until 1st April 2013, however we are now moving forward.

We carried out considerable work on analysing our Member scrutiny along with the Wales Audit Office and there is more about this work in our full report. We have implemented a Corporate Asset Management Strategy and although there has been some criticism from our auditors, as to the strategic nature of the plan (believing it is more operational in nature). The report acknowledges “there have been many changes in the way the Council has managed its assets over the past 18 months”. However, it suggests development of key areas, such as service asset management plans, has been slow”. We will be addressing this as we move forward.

Property Services has led in respect of Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF) Sports Development, which is a state of the art facility that will boast two 3rd Generation (3G) artificial playing surfaces to support both football and rugby. This will offer the local community, use of a world-class facility, which complements our efforts to encourage greater sporting participation across all age groups within the area. Completion is scheduled for Spring 2014.

Two Customer Services Centres opened in newly refurbished libraries in Bargoed and Risca, however Caerphilly library was due to open at the end of 2012, but has been delayed until November 2013. The delay was due to a new Council decision to purchase the premises rather than lease and in doing so we will save in excess of £5m over the duration of the lease period (35 years).

We implemented a Citizen Engagement Strategy and held our bi-annual household survey, which provides us with the opportunity to ask citizens about our services. Although this should have taken place in February 2013, it was delayed until June 2013. The results from the last Household survey in 2011 showed that 78% of respondents were satisfied with the overall services the Council provides and in our most recent survey 2013 the satisfaction rates increased to 82% (see customer satisfaction page 92).

Following the outcome of the Housing Stock Transfer Ballot, the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is now a major flagship programme for the Council involving a budgeted spend of circa £200m between 2012 and 2019 and in excess of £800m over the life of the 30 year business plan. The delivery of the programme is a significant challenge and an opportunity to link housing and regeneration outcomes. The transformation of estates is one of the eight activity themes in the Council’s Regeneration Strategy “People, Business, Places”. The WHQS investment should be a catalyst to achieve wider objectives including new jobs and training opportunities for local people. Work has already begun in earnest to improve tenant participation; working groups have been created including tenants, cabinet members and officers but the new strategy will provide a framework to involve tenants in all areas of the housing service and throughout the borough.

A Public Interest Report by Wales Audit Office published in March 2013 has raised some concerns in respect of Corporate Governance that will need to be addressed during 2013/14.

Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2012/13

**Sandra
Aspinall**

Acting Deputy
Chief Executive
&
Director of
Education and
Lifelong Learning



The Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning, is responsible for the delivery of statutory education for children and young people, and provides support and guidance to families to provide opportunities for those children and young people to achieve within their schools and communities. The staff comprises of over 5000 people, working in a variety of roles such as schools, Additional Learning Needs, Education Finance, Adult Education, Youth Service and Library Services. In 2012/2013 we made good progress in certain areas such as

- Pupils' performance across the majority of indicators at all key stages continued to improve.
- A smooth transition was achieved as the School Improvement Services transferred to the newly established Education Achievement Service (EAS), in September 2012.
- The Local Authority and EAS work well together to ensure a seamless approach towards continued educational improvement.
- School attendance figures increased and the rate of exclusions continued to fall.
- Self-evaluation processes developed well. Directorate targets are challenging and appropriately focused.
- An in-depth strategic review of the Youth Service was undertaken to inform the strategic direction of the service.
- A new Adult Community Learning (ACL) 5-County partnership was formed and a Position Statement for 2013/16 agreed.
- The new Cwm Ifor Primary School was opened to specification and is regarded as an exemplar project.
- Welsh Government provided a fund of £3m to secure the former St. Ilan site for the development of a new Welsh medium school.
- We had a programme of reviews of our primary school accommodation, resulting in a reduction in our surplus places.
- The procurement and fit out of refurbished Library facilities and new builds completed in 2012/13 were all achieved on time and within budget including Abercarn Library and initial performance analysis highlights a 39% increase in book borrowing and 222% uplift in visits

What we did not go so well in 2012/2013 or where we would like to do better is to raise standards at key stage 3 and 4 and increase levels of attendance. We also want to develop a Youth Service Strategy and Operational Plan with a few to redesign and improving the youth service Establish a clear system for collating, analysing and sharing data across the Directorate to reduce barriers to learning and drive improvement

This year we received an ESTYN inspection and the Overall judgement was: Adequate: This means strengths outweigh areas for improvement. The local authority's education services for children and young people are judged as adequate because

- Overall standards are adequate. In 2011 at key stage 3, two thirds of secondary schools were below average and in key stages 3 and 4 there are too many schools in the bottom quarter for important performance indicators when compared to similar schools on the free-school-meal benchmarks;
- Caerphilly has not met its Welsh Government benchmark at key stage 3 in the last three years;
- Secondary schools have not been held consistently to account for their performance and, as a result, improvement in some schools has been too slow;
- Fixed-term exclusions from schools of five days or less have risen notably; and since the last inspection in 2009, there has been little progress in reducing the significant number of surplus places in both secondary and primary schools

However aspects of good progress were identified, such as;

- when the performance of Caerphilly schools is compared with that of similar schools in Wales, based on the percentage eligible for free school meals, performance is just above average in key stages 1 and 2;
- performance against the Welsh Government's benchmarks based on free-school-meal entitlement has improved at key stage 4 over the last four years and in 2011 the authority met the two main benchmarks for key stage 4;
- there are effective processes for the early identification of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) and appropriate support for their physical and learning needs; and
- Caerphilly is successfully reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Capacity to improve was judged: **Adequate** - The local authority is judged as having adequate prospects for improvement because:

- target-setting and self-evaluation are not consistently robust and challenging;
- corporate and statutory partnership planning processes are not aligned;
- progress against recommendations from previous inspections has been inconsistent; elected members have not acted quickly enough with regard to the secondary school modernisation strategy and do not challenge underperformance in schools robustly enough; and the Local Service Board (LSB) is yet to develop the capacity to hold others to account.

However:

- senior leadership within the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate is strong and is driving the improved challenge and support to schools;
- there is good practice where firm links to planning and appropriate focus on improving outcomes for learners are contributing to measurable improvement in standards;
- the director of education makes sure that appropriate links are made between projects and strategies at service level and those at strategic partnership level in order to add value to the directorate's work; and
- improved alignment of financial and educational outcomes data in planning and performance management is further strengthening the already effective financial management of education services.

The National Survey for Wales is a face-to-face survey of people across Wales where each year, 14,500 people aged 16 and over are asked for their opinions on a wide range of issues affecting them and their local area. Respondents answers were given on a scale of zero (extremely bad) to ten (extremely good) and it is pleasing to note that People in Caerphilly gave the highest rating for the state of education 7.0 with the lowest rating (6.1) and the Wales average of 6.4. We aim to build on this level of satisfaction with a range of improvement initiatives for 2013/2014.

2012/13 has been a successful year and good progress has been made across all areas of the Directorate. The Estyn inspection, together with the Youth Service Review and other internal audits, has informed future planning. Resources have been maximised to support improvements and there is a clear direction of travel.

Directorate of Environment

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2012/13

Sandra
Aspinall

Acting Deputy
Chief Executive



The Directorate of the Environment is responsible for providing statutory and local services such as the collection of waste, street cleaning, leisure services parks and countryside, catering, managing and maintaining our roads, transportation, planning and protecting the public interest through Environmental Health and Trading Standards. We employed up to 2600 staff and had a budget of £ 59.72 m.

For the year 2012/13 we have made some very positive progress and achievements that benefitted the communities that we serve. We also had some areas that did not go so well and will detail those in our summary.

Overall, and despite the ever increasing financial pressures put upon this directorate, through service rationalisation, sickness and vacancy management, improved partnership and collaborative working arrangements, stringent finance control and scrutiny, we continue to see improvements to our environment, its infrastructure, community facilities and service provision throughout our borough. Much of which, has only been achievable by encouraging wider community and citizen engagement.

Some of our key achievements for **Community and Leisure** were that the Waste Management Team won a prestigious award at the annual Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) service awards. They were crowned Best Service Team in 2012 as a result of continuous improvement. APSE is a local government body working with over 300 councils throughout the UK. These service awards recognise the delivery of excellence in frontline local government services. A Food Waste Award was also won at the Plant and Waste Recycling Show Awards (PAWRS) 2012 along with a Silver award at the Zero Waste Awards 2012.

17 members of the Refuse & Cleansing team have become the first in Wales to be awarded with a Sustainable Resource Management qualification, several of whom have been employed through the pioneering Caerphilly PASSPORT programme. The Waste Management service also has 11 apprentices working towards obtaining qualifications.

We continue to consistently exceed Welsh Government's recycling targets thanks to our streamlined collection process and proactive approach to encourage greater participation and thanks to the excellent efforts of our residents who participate in our recycling scheme.

During the summer of 2012, we further promoted the Caerphilly StreetPride initiative and took to the streets of the county borough with a series of high-profile campaigns to help tackle environmental issues including dog fouling, littering, cigarette ends and fly-tipping.

There have been a record number of visits to our Leisure Centres which links in with our aim, to get more people, more active, more often! There has been a significant increase in Smartcard membership, which is a quicker, easier way to access facilities at your local leisure centre and library. Sport Caerphilly did an excellent job in engaging schools in participating in the National School Sport Wales (NSSW) Programme. We are the leading local authority for the highest level of NSSW registrations.

Sport Caerphilly has also developed and implemented a sporting programme aimed at enhancing the skills of Caerphilly county borough's 'more able and talented' school pupils and the Olympic Torch came to Caerphilly in May 2012, bringing with it Olympic spirit, festivities and an extensive legacy programme.

Schools, community groups, businesses and individuals across the county borough were encouraged to show they have pride in their place by entering Pride In Your Place awards 2012. This was organised by the council to acknowledge the effort and innovation of those who help make our area cleaner, safer and greener and a better place to live, work and visit.

More than 50 schools from across Caerphilly county borough have signed up to take part in the Battery Recycling Scheme due to start in 2013, involving over 17,500 pupils and Groundwork Caerphilly in partnership with the council, manage a new social enterprise called Furniture Revival who rely on donations from the public and arrange collection of unwanted household items from residents which are then refurbished and reused.

Bereavement Services achieved a 'Bronze' status in the annual best value review of the service against the rights and targets outlined within the 'Charter for the Bereaved', which is promoted by the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management.

An extension to Abercarn Cemetery was opened which will serve the local community for at least the next 40 years.

Parks Services launched a new more efficient and effective booking facility for rugby, football, cricket and bowls.

Green Flag status has been retained at 3 locations (Morgan Jones Park, Waunfawr Park, The Wern, Nelson). The Green Flag Award Scheme recognises and rewards the best green spaces in the country. We have also installed an outdoor gym at the Showfield in Blackwood, which is the first of its kind within the county borough. Similar sites have sprung up across the UK as part of the Olympic legacy.

In September 2012 Caerphilly Town was awarded a prestigious Silver Gilt Award at the Wales in Bloom competition. The competition recognises the work of communities and towns who help to make Wales a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

Some key items that did not go so well for **Community and Leisure** were:

The Sustainable Waste Management Grant has been cut which will inevitably result in difficulty to provide the same level of front-line services.

The Authority is running out of burial land at key locations and the development of new cemetery space is somewhat limiting, we are therefore, facing an uncertain future and ability to cope with the demand for bereavement services.

Investment demands to our ageing Leisure facilities is required at a time when resource pressures have been increasing.

The number of Pupils able to swim 25 metres is still below the National average and needs to be a priority focus area.

Some of our key achievements in **Engineering** were leading the way in Wales with a £1 million plan to repair its road network following problems caused by the winter freeze. In total, 41 separate schemes across a range of communities were completed.

The £14million scheme to improve the road network around the new hospital development Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr in Ystrad Mynach was completed and the Highway Improvements help to tackle congestion and improve traffic flow, between the A469 and the A472.

44 highway developments (relating to residential housing estates) were adopted in 2012/13 with an asset value of over £2.6m.

Partnership arrangements secured the new development of the Pengam Park & Ride facilities (officially opened on 6th June 2013).

Our Winter Maintenance Plan was reviewed and further integration with service areas across the council was made. Another severe winter period was experienced and this was successfully dealt with. However, it put financial pressures on the authority.

The council agreed its Flood Management Strategy and is continuing to achieve its Flood Management Plans by the targets set by Welsh Government (WG). £80k has been awarded to the Council from the South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta) to progress the design of a new rail station for Crumlin.

Service requests for Highways for the year were up 16.6%. This was noticeable for salt bins and attending to potholes. This was as a consequence of the severe weather experienced. Similarly, requests to deal with; ice/snow on footway/carriageway was significantly higher and for sandbags / flooding due to adverse weather conditions.

The council's Highway Asset Management Plan was used to back up a Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI) funding bid. It identified many challenges the council faces regarding its highway maintenance management. The LGBI funding approved by WG has released £2.8m of highway works for the authority, with schemes spread around the borough.

National Standards cycle training was been delivered to 8 primary schools and 2 secondary schools.

However some areas for concern are that the budget setting for highway maintenance is not keeping pace with the deterioration of the highway asset, as detailed in the Council's Highway Asset Management Plan. In addition, resourcing of highway inspections and 'paint to patch' for potholes have not been effective this year due to resourcing difficulties. Collaboration with neighbouring authorities stalled due to change in emphasis by the Welsh Government (WG).

Some key successes for **Regeneration and Planning** include the historic former cinema in Risca re-opened its doors as an impressive new Library and Customer Service Centre having undergone a £2.25million transformation.

Newbridge Town Centre is currently undergoing an exciting transformation, as a result of the council securing a multi-million pound funding package. Regeneration work will help breathe new life into the town centre with the introduction of wider, safer pavements; better road surfaces; and new public spaces - using natural paving materials, high quality street furniture and distinctive community-led artwork. New traffic calming measures will help slow traffic speeds and create a safer pedestrian environment.

The future is looking bright for Bargoed thanks to a number of exciting schemes that are helping to breathe new life into the town centre. Work is progressing well on a new multi-million pound retail development boasting a major Morrisons store due to open in December 2013 as well as a number of smaller retail outlets. CCBC has also agreed exciting plans to fund a £6million cinema and retail development in Bargoed town centre and work started in April 2012 on a new integrated health and social care centre on the Lawn Industrial Estate in Rhymney.

Within **Countryside** and our priority to promote **sustainability**, two of our attractive country parks have been awarded prestigious Green Flags. Parc Cwm Darran near Deri and Cwmcarn Forest are the latest sites in the Caerphilly area to win the much sought after accolade. Oakdale & Penmaen Community Woodland celebrated scooping this year's 'Pride in Your Place' award for their exemplary green achievements. Cwmcarn Forest and Visitor Centre (a haven for people and wildlife), is also now recognised as a centre of excellence for mountain biking with a 15 km cross-country trail and challenging downhill sections.

A new walking route featuring the colourful cartoon creations of much-loved Valleys cartoonist Gren was launched in Hengoed. The 'Gren Way Walk' was developed in memory of popular Welsh cartoonist Grenfell Jones and the route features Gren's quirky characters fixed to landmarks around his home village. Work began on an 'off the grid' farmhouse at Manmoel – a unique project, delivered by the Council's planners and sustainable development staff as well as external utility companies. The scheme has been short listed for a Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI Wales) award.

Enhanced promotions, regenerated and improved facilities and increased variety of activities at the Winding House Museum and Heritage Centre, the [Blackwood Miners Institute](#) and Llancaiach Fawr Manor House, continues to see increasing use and interests from the public with visitors numbers exceeding their targets.

Throughout the year, we organised and delivered a progressive, extensive and successful events program that enabled much community engagement, citizen participation and raised the profile of our area. Some of the major events were; The Big Cheese in Caerphilly, the Open Air Cinema in Bargoed, Proms in the Park, Tour of Britain Cycle Race (Caerphilly). As a result of the community events, local businesses information is starting to show improvements to their activities. Also, a good example of post hosting the Tour of Britain, was the set up of a new social enterprise called Rainbow, who now provides budget cycling solutions to our citizens.

Despite the weak economic situation, the occupancy levels of the Council owned Commercial Property Portfolio (Industrial units, office pavilions and serviced offices) fell slightly below our target of 95% and was reported to be 91%. However, economic predictions indicate that this is likely to improve and targeted marketing is in place to improve performance (occupancy).

Planning applications reduced considerably, also reflecting the economic climate. Despite this, we did not see any improvement in the percentage of planning application determined within set timeframes.

Within **Public Protection**, our inspection regimes (shops and businesses), continues to be a high priority as they are aimed at protecting consumers and helping responsible businesses. Through cyclical inspections, everything from estate agents and garages to Internet companies and theatres, we are ensuring that their trading practices, advertising and pricing comply with the law. We continue to maintain, through intervention, high levels of rectification where significant breaches occur for both Trading Standards (97%) and Animal Health (100%)

However we did not meet our end of year targets for the percentage of medium-risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection or alternative enforcement activity, that were inspected subject to alternative enforcement for: Trading Standards (Result 54% against a Target of 100%) and Animal Health (Result 86% against a Target of 100%). This was due to a reduction in staffing levels and the need to re-direct resources in response to the "Horsemeat" incident and a major Animal Health investigation during the year.

Our target of inspecting 100% of high-risk food businesses to assess food hygiene and safety was achieved during 12/13. 4 businesses were prosecuted for food hygiene offences during 2012/13. The implementation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme continues and it is hoped that the scheme, which introduces mandatory display of hygiene ratings in November 2013, will assist in improving hygiene standards within food businesses. Underage sale test purchases were carried out to determine business' compliance with the Sun bed regulations and additionally, several illegal-tattooing investigations were undertaken.

The Caerphilly Youth Forum were recognised with an Ash Wales Award for our work with them to introduce Smoke Free Signs in all county borough enclosed children's play areas in our parks. In an extension of this project approximately two thirds of schools now have 'Young Lungs at Play' smoke free zones, complete with signage.

Our Registration Service operate the Tell Us Once scheme which is a voluntary service offering bereaved families the opportunity to notify a number of local and central government departments when they register a death. Nationally take up is around 64%, whereas in Caerphilly 95% of clients take-up the service. Our index of births and deaths dating back to 1837 are mainly paper based and in November we began a project to digitise these. In creating a searchable database, the project will save staff time, but it is also hoped to make this available to the general public online during 2013/14.

The Catering Service was the first Local Authority catering service to achieve Welsh Government's "Appetite for Life" nutritional standards in all its school sites. The Service was also recognised with the Local Authority Catering Association Wales Award for Catering Management Team of the Year. The service also achieved the Investors In People standard, the Assessor noting "Exceptionally strong team working, high energy levels, self managed, upbeat and practical support shown for team members. " The essential support provided by the Meals Direct meals on wheels service to some of the most vulnerable people in our community came to the fore during the disruption caused by the winter weather. Through the combined efforts of a number of services we were able to keep the service going to ensure the supply of good quality, nutritionally balanced meals

The Community Safety CCTV system was upgraded with older cameras replaced for new 360° dome style cameras in several towns and villages. Cameras were replaced in Bargoed, Blackwood, Newbridge, Abertridwr and Gilfach, and the opening of the new Park & Ride facility at Pengam Train Station also had CCTV cameras installed. The newer style cameras offer better quality images for crime reduction and greater manoeuvrability. The CCTV Control Room software system was also upgraded to maintain the effectiveness of the camera infrastructure operating across the county borough.

Directorate of Social Services

Director's Statement of Overall Performance for 2012/13

Dave Street

Interim Director
Social Services



Despite the difficult economic climate, the Directorate of Social Services delivered a balanced budget. For 2012/2013 this was achieved through robust budget management and the successful implementation of a range of savings and efficiencies, which have not impacted adversely on front-line services. Demographic change and the associated increasing demand is now placing significant pressure on services and the financial implications of this will need to be carefully managed in the coming years, by the implementation of a significant transformation agenda.

In December 2012, the Directorate was the subject of an inspection by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). The focus of the inspection was on the role and responsibilities of the Director of Social Services and how well the arrangements in each local authority supported the Director to do their job. Overall the Inspection report was very positive, and both the Council and the Directorate were satisfied with its findings.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill will provide the core legislative framework for social services and social care in Wales. The main aim of the Bill is to transform the way social services are delivered throughout Wales, primarily through promoting people's independence and giving them a stronger voice and more control. In addition, the Bill will seek to strengthen collaboration between organisations and provide a framework for the integration of key services. The Bill will hopefully help this Directorate to respond to the significant challenges that face social services by providing the framework through which we can begin the process of change.

The delivery of the Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Social Services integration programme was a key priority for the Directorate in 2012/13. Unfortunately in 2013, as the programme progressed, it became apparent that the overall financial position of both local authorities had changed since the beginning of the programme. The decision to terminate the programme in its current form was a difficult one to make for both local authorities, however it was a necessary one in order to safeguard current and future levels of service. Although working with our colleagues in Blaenau Gwent will not proceed as planned, we are mindful that services will need to be transformed to meet increasing demand and expectations, and where there is a robust business case which indicates that a collaborative arrangement would be beneficial this will be explored. The coming years will be critical for the social care sector and we will not achieve the changes needed without the continued commitment of everyone involved. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff, carers and elected members for their dedication and determination over the past year in striving to improve our services. Your support has been invaluable.

PERFORMANCE OF OUR IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2012/2013

Our Objective - Ensure the citizens of Caerphilly understand why, when and how to engage with us (IO1)

Our overall assessment -  **Unsuccessful**

We put the building blocks in place to meet the improvements we set ourselves, but we were slow in doing so and therefore did not affect any change in the reporting year 2012/13. We expect to see the impact of our actions more fully in 2013/14 as progress was made during the summer of 2013.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- A new complaints procedure was rolled out for the public
- The adoption of a new Citizen Engagement Strategy
- The commissioning of the 2013 Household Survey
- We created a new Consultation Database that allows the public and partners to see what we are consulting on, why and to how to know what we are doing with the results.

Because we put the above improvements in place during 2012/2013 we were not able to assess whether this has made a difference yet, but will do during the course of 2013/14

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- Many of our actions were delayed during 2012 /13 to drive forward the council's Citizen Engagement agenda and progress was slow.
- The Household Survey was due to take place in February but was delayed and took place during June 2013.
- We are pleased with the results of the survey (82% of respondents satisfied) but still class this objective as unsuccessful because evidence of impact was not available during the reporting year (2012/13).
- We need to review at the end of 2013/14 to see if the building blocks that were put in place are now working and effective.

Our Objective – Make Caerphilly a safer place to live (IO2)

Our overall assessment - 😊 **Successful**

Our performance shows improving trends against the outcomes we wanted to achieve. For example, between 2009 and 2013 there was an 11% increase in the number of respondents who felt we were dealing with anti-social behaviour in partnership with the police. Also incidents of anti social behaviour, which were reported to the police, declined by over 30% in 2012/13 compared to 2011/12.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour' (ASB) reduced to 31% in recorded ASB and an 11% reduction in Overall Crime, compared to 2011/12.
- The Street Pride initiative increased the number of fixed penalty notices for littering and dog fouling.
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) using our 4 Strikes process was maintained at 99%.
- The Victims Champion service was enhanced with the Victim Support worker trained in Mediation Services to assist victims and witnesses.
- The Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership (SCCSP) funded Caerphilly Care & Repair to provide safety equipment to 29 vulnerable victims.
- Project Bernie commenced on 8th March 2013 and ran for six weeks to address the problem of deliberate grass fires.

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- Due to regulatory changes, we were unable to maintain the same level of underage test purchases undertaken for alcohol, as in previous years.
- All of the community safety work programmes that we prioritised and addressed in the past 3 years have shown positive changes to the way we work with our partners, citizens and wider communities, however the challenge now is to maintain/sustain appropriate levels of partnership activity to continue improvements when resources, including external funding, are fully expected to decrease.

Our Objective – Sustain the range of employment opportunities for residents (IO3)

Our overall assessment - 😊 **Successful**

Most of the activities listed in the action plan continued from 2011/12 and progress made was positive in each case. Notable successes are our European Union funded projects aimed at improving the skills of citizens in the job market and also the Council's Apprenticeship and Trainee Scheme

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- We helped create 139 new jobs and safeguard 1130 jobs through grant assistance
- We created other apprenticeship/training opportunities for 132 people.
- Genesis 2, Bridges into Work, Working Skills for Adults and Essential Skills in the Workplace have all provided an important support mechanism to help people gain and sustain employment.
- GO2 My Town project has developed an online portal for businesses in Bargoed and Rhymney to offer services online. We have carried out training, development and web building services and sourcing equipment to help retailers compete on line. We offered the same service across five other towns in 2012/13

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- Despite our best efforts, the local economy has not seen any significant improvements this last year, but it appears to have been generally sustained.
- Our biggest challenges are clearly identifying all the groups in perceived need of help and fully engaging with those that can or could be helped.
- The local economy remains in a fragile state, but there are a number of important successes and ongoing activities, which are having a positive impact. This will be built on during 2013, when we develop proposals for the next round of EU funding (2014-20).

Our Objective – Improve the skills level for children and young people (IO4)

Our overall assessment - 😊 **Partially Successful**

Although all actions within our action plan were fully completed and positive progress took place during the year the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) increased in 2012/13 to 5.9% from 4.5% in 2011/12 and our ESTYN inspection judged us to be adequate.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- There has been continued progress reported on the Key Stage 3 Core Subject Indicator (English, Welsh and Math) rising from 62.4% to 68.4%, raising the ranking of Caerphilly in Wales to 18th.
- At Key Stage 4 the Core Subject Indicator has risen from 41.8% to 43%. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+ at the end of Key Stage 2 Assessments in English improved by 2% from 82% to 84% and by almost 2% for Welsh and over 2 % in Maths.
- Although the number of young people who were NEET increased in 2012, the actions we took were recognised in our ESTYN report which noted we were improving in reducing the figure going forward into 2013.

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- With regards to the gender gap between boys and girls, indicators show that the gap has not reduced as much as planned. However the data is consistent with the group of pupils who were assessed. We have now established a process to track pupil performance to identify significant differences in pupil performance and set targets more appropriately.
- The Education Achievement Service (EAS) will provide support and challenge to all schools with regards to appropriate target setting, pupil tracking and performance monitoring. The ESTYN inspection made two recommendations relevant to this area; to improve outcomes for learners especially at key stages 3 and to strengthen the level of challenge to our secondary schools. These are a key focus for the authority as well as raising standards and improving results, especially in Key Stage 3 and 4. We will work to close the gender gap and continue to implement our strategy for reducing the number of young people reporting as NEET.

Our Objective – Promote the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle (IO5)

Our overall assessment - 😊 **Successful**

We have increased participation in sport and active recreation and our evidence shows that more adults and children are being more active in a number of key areas. The number of visits to leisure centres rose to almost 1.3 million visits, which was an increase of 11% between 2011/12 and 2012/13.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- Leisure Centre memberships are the highest ever recorded in Caerphilly and are now in excess of 100,000 members.
- More than 27,000 free swim visits by children were made to our swimming pools. This exceeded target for 2012/13.
- Visits to Sports Caerphilly activities also rose to more than 78,000 single visits, 3,000 more than the target for the year.
- Multiple visits to Sports Caerphilly activities exceeded target by 19%, with almost 221,000 visits.
- Sports Caerphilly trained in excess of 1,600 employees and volunteers during 2012/13. This was more than planned, and nearly 300 more than last year.
- To promote the Change4Life message and Healthy Start philosophy we continue to deliver road shows, training and publicity events across the county borough, but especially in our most deprived communities.
- There were over 29,000 more visitors to Cwmcarn Forest Drive than in 2011/12.
- We set up a new intensive school swimming programme, and will be working hard to ensure that all schools participate in the new Aqua Passport Scheme during 2013/14.

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- Our customer profiling information tells us that 'teen users' are an under-represented group across our leisure centres. We will work with our Youth Forum to introduce further incentive schemes to attract more 'teen' users.
- The exercise referral service experienced an increasing number of cases with more complex health issues, which take much longer instructor time. This means we were unable to deal with as many cases as planned, or as we have done in previous years. This service is funded by WG and funds are limited, meaning fewer cases can be dealt with due to limited instructor time.
- Primary School meals only achieved a 38.5% take-up. This has been negatively affected by our commitment to the Appetite for Life scheme. Healthier menu choices, the cornerstone of Appetite for Life, are not as popular with children; meaning less children want school meals. We are working to increase our meal numbers by promoting the health benefits of school meals to parents and pupils.
- We missed our target for the number of free swim sessions for adults aged 60 years+. However, we still increased the number of adult free swims in 2012/13 (41,871 compared to 2011/12 (40,788). We plan to carry out further initiatives to ensure we meet our target for the future.

Our Objective – Improve the timeliness and quality of assessment of clients needs (IO6)

Our overall assessment - 😊 **Successful**

Positive progress has taken place over the last twelve months. A notable example being that we had more than half the number of clients waiting for an assessment (60 clients) at the end of March 2013 than were waiting (127 clients) in March 2012.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- At the end of March 2013 only 3 people were awaiting Day Care for more than 28 days, although we had planned to have no one awaiting for day care more than 28 days by the year-end.
- We recruited additional agency staff to tackle the backlog of assessments, so we have reduced the number of service users waiting for an assessment, from 127 service users in 2011/12, to 60 services users at the end of 2012/13. Although significant improvements have been made over the year we need to continue to monitor this as the demand for services increases.
- We promote Self Directed Support, which means giving service users control over their own care budget and the services they need to improve their lives. We have now introduced a flat hourly rate for care services, which makes it easier for the service user to understand and manage their budget.

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- One area below the target was the percentage of assessments started on time. Out of 7,307 assessments, 5,323 were started on time (72.8%). Areas of concern lie within Mental Health Older People, Occupational Therapy, Physical Disability Sensory Impairment and the Substance Misuse team. Some of this can be attributed to the fact that Mental Health legislation (called the Measure) was introduced in June 2012 and this has had a big impact on the service due to the lack of clarification in the role of the care co-ordinator within health, the implementation of the Measure and the change in practice and documentation.
- Evidence from our audits clearly shows that service users are engaged in the assessment process and that their wishes, opinions and the outcomes they wish to achieve are discussed and recorded. However, there were occasional cases where there was an over-reliance on family and next of kin for information.
- We need to better identify Carers. Our audits show that people, who appeared to be undertaking frequent care tasks, are not being identified as a carer. Improvements within this area are required to ensure that carers are offered an assessment in their own right. The quality of our assessments will continue to be a priority for us in 2013/14.

Our Objective – Agencies and partners work together to safeguard children and young people (IO7)

Our overall assessment - 😊 **Successful**

Our focus this year has been the rollout of the Team Around the Family (TAF) service. Our evaluations show that users of the TAF service believe it is making a difference to their lives. Overall 91% of parents/carers involved with the TAF service felt listened to during the process and 81% of parents/carers felt that TAF had made a difference to their lives during 2012/13.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- The Team Around the Family (TAF) has made steady progress over the last year. Our feedback about the service tells us that we are achieving a number of positive outcomes for families within the county borough.
- The TAF model continues to develop based on the lessons learnt from the feedback we receive. We are raising awareness of the service it provides with professionals such as; the voluntary sector play workers, housing services and families accessing the family engagement project.

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- 21 of the 23 actions have been achieved and implemented, however 2 actions were not completed and this was as a result of the decision for CCBC not to proceed with the integration of Social Services with Blaneau Gwent. This means opportunities for further collaboration subject to review.
- The integration of the TAF model and another model called ISCAN (Integrated Services for Children with Additional Needs) are being explored to share learning.
- We need to continue to improve our feedback response rate, including feedback from families, lead professionals and referrers, so that we can more effectively evaluate the service provided. We have reviewed our current methods and will make changes to how we get feedback in 2013/14.
- We want to meet with the referred family within a week of receiving a referral, resulting in a more timely initial response. However due to the availability of the necessary lead professional, delays in accessing the support can sometimes leave families frustrated. This information has been passed to the Children and Young People's Partnership and will be used to inform future service improvements.

Our Objective – Reduce our carbon footprint and improve our sustainability (IO8)

Our overall assessment - 😊 **Successful**

Our performance shows improving trends against the issues we addressed during the year. Through the implementation of various projects funded by the Local Authority Energy Fund (LAEF) we have accumulated lifetime carbon savings in excess of 1,500 tonnes per year.

What did we do well and what difference did it make?

- The LAEF scheme provided £75,000 to further improve street lighting controls, to provide better energy consumption and minimise emission levels.
- We built 3 new Primary Schools, which benefit from more modern construction materials and technologies.
- Feasibility studies were undertaken to assess opportunities for hydroelectric schemes. Conclusions will be reached in 2013/14.
- We have helped reduce the impact of fuel poverty on households in Caerphilly by taking advantage of successful funding bids to tackle properties in specific areas of the borough. **We** successfully bid for a project at Fochriw, where around 300 properties will benefit from external wall insulation, gas and condensing boilers. The estimated value of the works is £2.5 million and will be funded by the WG.
- The Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) provided in excess of £1.2 million, including work to 311 loft insulations; 276 condensing boiler installations and 1,161 external wall insulation systems.
- Internally our staff changed to 191 new fuel-efficient vehicles and there were 291 people registered on our cycle to work scheme.

What did not go so well and where do we want to do better?

- As part of our sustainability and carbon reduction programme, we did not undertake a planned staff survey (due to a reduction in staff resources) that would have given us information on: the level of understanding of sustainable development of our staff and the percentage of staff who travel to work on their own in a car. This had no immediate impact on what we are currently doing, but could have helped inform our planning processes.
- The authority commissioned an independent report on its use of fleet vehicles, which identified 7 key recommendations that could aid improvement and we will be looking at how we can use these recommendations to improve further in the future.
- Reducing our carbon footprint and improving our sustainability, is intrinsic to everything that we do. Much work will therefore continue to be done/considered in our planning processes and service delivery across the whole authority.

National Performance Indicators

Each year we are required to report national performance information about our key services to the Welsh Government (WG). The Welsh Government uses this information to gauge how well local authorities are performing nationally. These national measures are called National Strategic Indicators and Public Accountability Measures. These measures cover the main areas of Government Policy, Social Services, Education and the Environment. The following summary shows how Caerphilly performed against these indicators, how we compared to the other 21 local authorities in Wales and whether we achieved the standards (targets) we set ourselves against these indicators for the year.

How do we compare?

	How did we perform when comparing 2012/13 to 2011/12?				How did we perform compared to Wales?			How did we perform against our Targets?		
	Improved	Declined	Maintained	Non-comparable	Upper Quartile	Middle	Lower Quartile	Met Target	Missed Target	No target set
Corporate Services	2	1				2	1	2	1	
Education	8	2	1	1	2	3	7	9	3	
Environment	5			4	3	6		5	3	1
Social Services	9	7	1	3	8	7	5	14	6	
Total - Caerphilly	24	10	2	8	13	18	13	30	13	1

On a national picture the council's performance against other local authorities in Wales, using the Welsh Government's National Strategic Indicators and Public Accountability Measures has been mixed. Of the 44 indicators used to create the national picture 24 improved upon 2011/12 results, 2 maintained the maximum performance level of 100%, and 10 declined. Eight of the indicators could not be compared to the previous year because, for example, of amendments to data measurement made by WG.

Below is a breakdown of the higher and lower performers of indicators but for more detailed information please see on web http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/pdf/Council_Democracy/Performance_Report_2012-2013_AppendixB.pdf

Thirteen of the indicators are in the '**Upper Quartile**' in Wales (meaning they are in the top 25% in Wales). Best (1st) in Wales performance includes:

- The percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks **including** exceptions
- The percentage of final statements of special education needs issued within 26 weeks **excluding** exceptions
- The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) supported in the community per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31st March
- The percentage of adult clients who are supported in the community during the year
- The percentage of children looked after at 31st March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during the period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31st March.
- The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19.
- The percentage of first placements of looked after children during the year that began with a care plan in place.

Eighteen of the indicators are in the '**Middle Quartiles**' (meaning they are in the middle 50% in Wales) and these include:

- The percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (10th in Wales)
- The percentage of A,B & C roads that are in overall poor condition (8th in Wales)
- The percentage of food establishments, which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards (11th in Wales)
- The percentage of carers of adults who were offered an assessment of review of their needs in their own right during the year (13th in Wales)
- The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have a pathway plan in place (11th in Wales)

Thirteen of the indicators are in the '**Lower Quartile**' (meaning they are in the bottom 25% in Wales) and these include:

- The percentage of pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved the L2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and maths. (19th in Wales)
- The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of key stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the core subject indicator, as determined by teacher assessment. (18th in Wales)
- Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools (18th in Wales)
- Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools (19th in Wales)
- The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over (20th in Wales)
- The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed (18th in Wales)
- The percentage of initial assessments that took place during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the Social Worker (20th in Wales)
- The average external qualifications points score for 16 year old looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting (20th in Wales)

Budgets 2012/13

One of our main future pressures is that central government is cutting expenditure and this will in turn reduce the money Welsh Government has available to allocate to public services. With indications that Welsh Government may protect health, transport and schools, this will mean there will be fewer resources available for Welsh Government to give to local government, with indications of future yearly settlements from Welsh Government being reduced. As 70% of the councils funding comes from Welsh Government (30% is raised from council tax and business rates) any reduction could have a significant impact. One of the pressures is due to the 'pledge' where Welsh Government requires Local Government funding to protect certain areas such as Social Services and Schools. This means that any cuts will fall to the services outside of these areas, namely the Environment, Corporate services, Libraries, Leisure and non schools education spend. However it is important to note that the Council managed it's budgets well coming in under budget for 2012/2013. There is more information on our budget management by Directorate in our full Performance Report which can be found on our website www.caerphilly.gov.uk or in Libraries and Council Receptions and in our Medium Term Financial Plan which is also found on the web address above.

How to contact us



We welcome your views and opinions on the content of our performance reports and the priorities that we set each year, so that we can continue to provide meaningful information that helps inform you of the service focus, ensuring that we are indeed working on the things that are important to making a difference to you, our citizens and our communities.

Please contact us by: Email: PMU@caerphilly.gov.uk OR by Web link - [Caerphilly County Borough Council - Improvement Objectives Feedback](#)

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This document is also available in different languages and formats upon request. Further information can also be found on our website: www.caerphilly.gov.uk

