

Bringing It All Together

What do we mean by **Bringing it all Together**? This section is concerned with:

- Cross-cutting issues that relate to more than one of the five themes;
- Changes to our internal organisation that assists the Council's front-line services in delivering the five Community Plan themes.

The key purpose of this section is to focus in upon the changes made to the Council's internal organisation to improve services to the Council's citizens and customers. We are particularly determined to provide high quality, value for money services and be as good as the best councils in the country. Whilst progress is being made, there is still a gap between where we are now, and where we aim to be.

The Council has in the past been described as a traditional local council but with a few good examples of innovative service delivery. It is now demonstrating progress in becoming a contemporary public service organisation that is fit to meet the challenges of the 21st century and recognised as leading on a number of areas of innovative service delivery. Bringing about this change, creating an organisation that is actively empowered, devolved, entrepreneurial and innovative, requires the Council to involve its employees in a different way, encouraging them to improve every part of the Council and to make the decisions that will achieve this. This means we have to provide people at all levels with a real sense of individual responsibility.

We are proceeding with this change and are making good progress in a number of key areas, including:

- **Financial systems** – we are continuing the work to automate our systems and processes to support improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and also continuing to embed improvements in current and medium term financial monitoring arrangements;
- **Management control systems** – on-going improvements in the quality, quantity, relevance and robustness of performance data and its links with financial performance. However, further work is required to ensure that the Council's Performance Management Framework is fully embedded and support managers to interpret and act promptly upon the financial and performance data they receive;
- **Planning systems** – our strategic and service planning processes are improving through the development of the Community Plan and strategic partnerships, but many services still have scope for improvement and to make better use of the cross service opportunities available;

- **Human resource management** – the ongoing programme of significant investment in staff training and development and supporting HR information systems is fundamental if the Council is to continue to be a financially sound organisation and to be a leading Local Authority in the future;
- **Culture** – centralising and reengineering many of our support services along with the positive progress of the performance management framework. Nevertheless, in many services the culture is passive, process dominated and lacks an innovative entrepreneurial spirit. It is changing and we have a great many highly talented people working for the Council. We have to enable those people to fully develop and be able to use their abilities to the full.

To continue to build upon the progress to date and seize the opportunity to transform the future of the Council for its customers and employees, we have recently reviewed and updated our ambitious **Wales Programme for Improvement** to focus on tackling whole authority issues identified above, for example:

Better Customer Care - continuing to transform the way in which we undertake our business and deliver services to communities. We are in the second year of implementing a 3-year multi-channel approach that puts our customers first. We are improving our access channels so that our customers find it easy to do business with us.

Effective Partnership Working – strengthening the current strategic partnerships arrangements, simplifying the partnership framework and reducing the number of Partnerships, and also ensuring the partnerships focus on realistic and achievable priorities. This will be underpinned by the development of an effective scrutiny process for the Partnerships.

Communication – continuing to improve the way we communicate with other public services, the media and also within the Council.

Equalities and Sustainability - The Council has a clear commitment to both equalities and sustainability and there are good examples of our work in relation to both aspects across the Council. Policies and processes have been introduced to ensure they are implemented effectively and monitored regularly. Nevertheless, there continues to be considerable progress that needs to be made over the next few years.

Equalities – In order to meet Equalities Standards the Council is taking a positive and robust approach to Equalities that is essential if we are to deliver our aims of ensuring:

- **The delivery of inclusive services;**
- **Fair and equal access for all;**
- **Fair employment practices for all our existing and potential staff.**

The Council has taken a number of steps to achieve these aims and has:

- Improved our Impact Assessment process to include Social Justice;
- Produced Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes that include action plans to address the issues raised in our staff and public consultation and involvement process;
- Has committed itself to achievement of the Equality Improvement Framework;
- Has committed to developing a Single Equality Scheme to take in to account all equality strands;
- Works on a multi agency basis through the Multi Agency Diversity Forum and Migrant Workers Forum to address issues of discrimination;
- Set up a Staff Equality Forum to contribute to its equality priorities and objectives;
- Continued work to “mainstream” equalities throughout improvement and Performance Management processes.

Sustainable Development - The Local Government Act 2000 placed a duty on Local Authorities to ‘improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of each area and its inhabitants and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’.

The guidance makes the following statements to help shape our actions:

- Effectiveness is defined in terms of long term positive outcomes for communities and the avoidance of negative impacts;
- Efficiency is defined in terms of whole life-whole system costs and benefits;
- Economy is defined in terms of a broad conceptualisation, and sparing use of resources - favouring renewable, self – sustaining methods

The new Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 further enhances this duty by requiring Local Authorities to ‘make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions’ including ‘improving the exercise of it’s functions in terms of sustainability’ and so ‘contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the authority’s area’.

To assist local authorities in this challenging task, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) with support for the Welsh Assembly Government has developed the National Sustainability Framework for Wales. The WLGA has produced a series of Sustainability Framework documents for Welsh Local Authorities that cover most of the major services provided by Local Authorities. These Framework documents set out a clear set of guidelines, which will assist local authorities to identify opportunities to improve sustainability performance and provide a benchmark of ‘sustainable’ service provision.

Within Rhondda Cynon Taf, the Sustainable Development (SD) agenda is lead at strategic level by the Sustainable Development Forum, which is comprised of senior representatives from across the organisation.

The purpose of the SD Forum is to propose and develop appropriate policy and actions whilst reviewing best practice and understanding the implications of initiatives on individual service areas. The Forum has made a positive start, with reviews of sustainable procurement, energy

management, Green Dragon and recycling. A Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan approved by Cabinet, sets out a number of key actions to improve the Council's sustainability performance.

The SD service has also played a key role in a number of successful activities including:

- The Council's selection for the Changing Places – Changing Climate project, alongside only three other Welsh Councils. Whilst the primary focus of the project will be on how we adapt to a changing climate, the project will also include consideration of mitigation issues, such as carbon emission reduction. A Local Climates Impact Profile (LCLIP) has been undertaken which examined the effects of previous extreme weather events upon Rhondda Cynon Taf and its community and this information is now being used to inform future service improvements across the authority;
- The successful expansion of Green Dragon EMS accredited sites across the authority. Green Dragon EMS is an externally accredited initiative, which rewards organisations for demonstrating good environmental practice in their day-to-day activities.

Other Sustainable Development Actions are set out in different Themes within the Plan.

Bringing It All Together

The remainder of this section sets out:

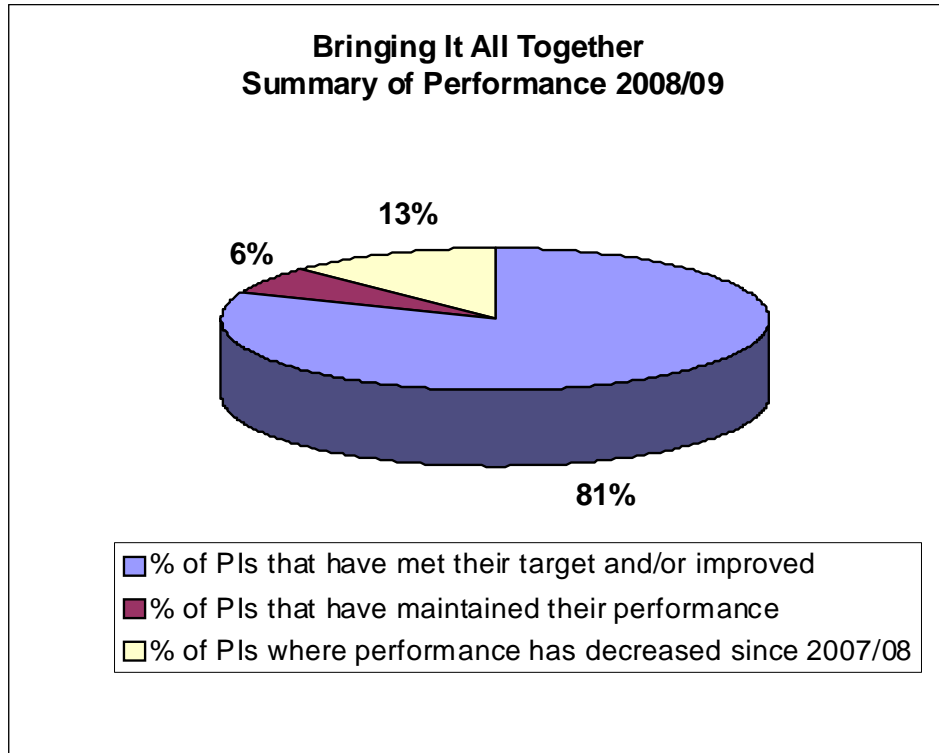
- How we have improved **Bringing It All Together** in 2008/09;
- How our Key Performance Indicators and other measures are contributing to achieving the Community Plan Goals;
- Which of the service areas have been subject to a Regulatory Inspection and the outcomes from the Inspection;
- How consultation with local people has helped to improve **Bringing It All Together**;
- The Improvement Actions that have been identified as critical to the delivery of the Council's Improvement Priorities in 2009/10.

The key measures of success within the theme and progress against these measures are included in the Performance Indicator tables in Appendix 2.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Managing our Performance

In **Bringing It All Together** there are currently 50 Performance indicators that measure our performance. The Chart below indicates the extent to which the Council met its targets and/or improved its performance against 32 indicators where trend information is available.



What all our performance measures are telling us about our progress in 2008/09

This theme is principally concerned with how we deal with local people and how our management and other internal processes support service delivery and improvement across the Council.

Performance in this theme has improved since last year with 81% (26) of indicators meeting target and/or improving and a further 6% (2) of indicators maintaining performance. However 13% (4) of indicators are declining.

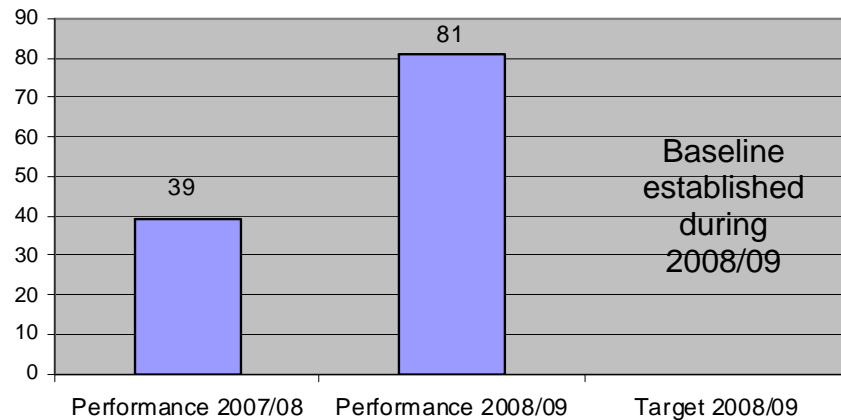
Our improvements include extending the number of services available to our customers online and the number of land searches carried out within 5 working days. We are also improving at ensuring the ethnicity and disabilities of employees are appropriately recorded and reflected within our management information systems.

However, we need to improve those areas in which performance is declining, including recovery of Council Tax outstanding. Within the organisation, we need to reduce the number of major injuries to our staff whilst at work.

The Charts below illustrate the progress of the measures which have been identified as Key Performance Indicators in the delivery of the Community Theme.

Our Key Performance Indicators

% of ODPM priority services available - range of services, top 65 content and transactional website



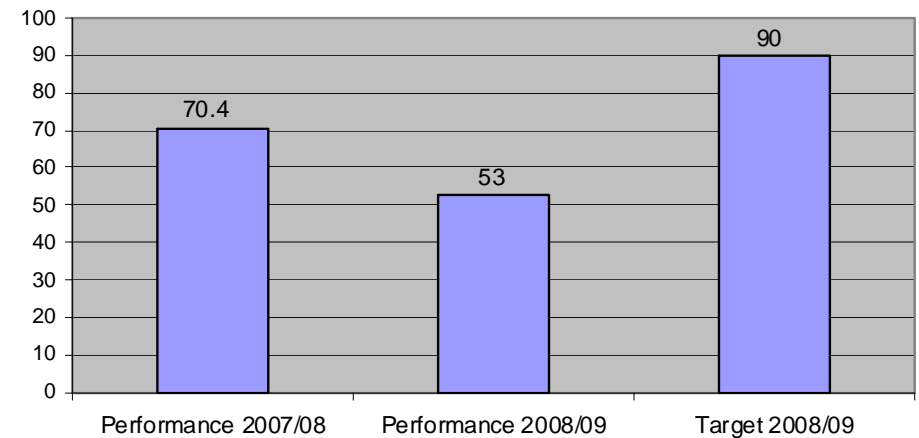
Performance as measured by the revised definition was 81%. This apparent increase was due to enhanced website functionality including the reporting online of problems with street lighting, missed bins, requesting recycling bags and also applying for Council jobs.

This indicator enables us to benchmark with other Councils and measure how we are performing against the Top 65 services as recommended by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

(LCSC307)

Note: This PI replaces measure (local A63a) set out in last year's Improvement Plan 'Service information available online'.

Contact Centre Service - Average queue time (daytime services)



This Indicator reflects a 2-centre average queue time. Performance has improved by 17 seconds compared to 2007/08 and this is primarily due to the effective use of multi-skilled resources against demand trends.

In 2009/10, this indicator will again change as we are now able to separately report the average queue time from the contact centre to the switchboard.

(LCSC101)

Note: This indicator replaces 'Calls answered in less than 90 seconds' (A58 a&b) in last year's Improvement Plan.

Achieving our Service Objectives

In the Improvement Plan for 2008/09 we set out a number of objectives and performance targets to guide our work. Set out below is an update of our progress to date.

Putting Citizens First Improved Public Engagement			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Provide effective and efficient co-ordination of research, consultation and general information use within the Council & with partners	ASPC070801 Develop an approach for a shared knowledge management/performance management resource to inform the Community Strategy, partnership strategies and Local Service Agreement	A project brief to develop a shared knowledge management/performance management resource to inform the Community Strategy, partnership strategies and Local Service Agreement has been developed.	
	ASPC070802 Develop a new Council Consultation Strategy, introducing best practice standards	Initial research undertaken on best practice in order to develop a new Consultation Strategy in 2009/10. This year thirty- eight surveys have been undertaken online.	
	ASPC070803 Coordinate consultation activity	Consultation framework established promoting collaborative consultations to prevent public survey overload	
	ASPC070804 Promote the sharing of consultation outcomes	Promoted outcomes of consultation activity. Made consultation results available online and encouraged services to use and share results to inform service delivery.	
	ASPC070805 Manage the Council's Citizens Panel and take forward recommendations from the Action Plan to improve and update the panel	Encouraged new Citizens Panel membership through proactive use of recommended recruitment methods e.g. through Council Open Days and PACT meetings	Feedback questionnaires for each consultation e.g. 71% of people think that their views have been taken into account
	ASPC070806 Encourage consultation with a wide range of people in the community by using innovative methods to reach different groups of people	To encourage a cross-section of varied local community consultation activity, a project brief has been prepared identifying traditional and innovative consultation methods e.g. social networking websites; Facebook.	85.7% think the consultation was impartial
	ASPC070807 Undertake consultations with young people in schools, their parents and the wider community to support the E3 schools agenda	Nineteen Comprehensive schools have been consulted with on the E3 schools agenda. Reports and analysis now being undertaken	19 Comprehensive Schools consulted
	ASPC070808 Support service consultations, including; Extending Entitlement; Customer Care; Pontypridd Survey, Budget Consultation 2009/10	Supported service consultations throughout 2008/09 including Extending Entitlement; Customer Care; Pontypridd Survey, Budget Consultation.	
To further develop the use of Local Service Area Forums to actively engage the public in service development and to make the Strategic Partnerships more accountable to local people, by delivering local priorities as well as national policy objectives	ASPC070809 Provide feedback to Area Forum Members on the Alcohol debate	Provided feedback to Area Forum Members on the Alcohol debate via an annual newsletter	
	ASPC070810 Introduce a second series of Area Forums as part of the consultation process for the new Community Strategy.	The consultation process for the Community Strategy will take place in the Autumn of 2009 and will include various consultation methods, including the use of public forums where appropriate. Due to the change in focus the anticipated measures for this action are no longer relevant.	

Putting Citizens First			
Customer Care - Making it easier to do Business with the Council			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Further improve Customer Services by improving the way local people can conduct their business with the Council	ACSC070801 Launch the new One4All Centre in Ty Bronwydd, Porth in July 2008	New One4All Centre opened in Ty Bronwydd, Porth in August 2008.	
	ACSC070802 Consult with elected Members on One4All Centre growth in line with wider Estates Review	Following consultation with elected Members, capital funding approved for 2 new partner-shared One4All Centres at Mountain Ash and Talbot Green. Tender notice underway for Mountain Ash development.	
	ACSC070803 Develop One4All Centre of Excellence model to provide and accommodate all relevant Council customer facing services through the front office.	Developed One4All centres of excellence model by increasing the range of services and realigning reception functionality.	
	ACSC070804 Decommission RCT Homes Face to Face services	Fully decommissioned RCT Homes Face to Face services through collaborative working, including Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) of two full time staff to reduce income gap arising from stock transfer.	
	ACSC070805 Establish and run the inaugural 'Putting Customers First' Conference	Ensured that 'Putting Customers First' was represented and promoted at Corporate Public Events. In addition, undertaken public consultation on customer service plans for the years 2009/10 - 2011/12. Results have been analysed and summarised to inform service provision and standards based on customer opinion.	
	ACSC070806 Continue outreach and mobile activity through local supermarkets	Continued outreach and mobile activity at local supermarkets (Asda, Tesco and Somerfield) and recent Council Open Days (Ystrad, Aberdare and Llantrisant) and summer events e.g. the Big Bite and Rhondda Housing Open Day	9 outreach activities
	ACSC070807 Integrate 2 x switchboards into contact centre	Successfully integrated Ty Elai and Bronwydd switchboards into the Ty Elai Contact Centre.	
	ACSC070808 Deliver a 30 second average service response time for Lifeline and Out of Hours contacts	Delivered a prompt contact service response time for 'Out of Hours' and 'Lifeline' assisting our more vulnerable clients	Average wait time for calls to : Lifeline - 9 seconds Out of Hours - 18 seconds
	ACSC070809 Maintain 90 second 'day time' average centre response	Improved the 'day time' average contact centre response time by 37 seconds (Target < 90 seconds)	Average Calls answered in 53 Seconds
	ACSC070810 Maintain 90% 'first point resolution' contact centre response	Through evidence obtained through Customer Satisfaction Surveys, we have maintained a high level 'first point resolution' contact centre response time, exceeding the set target of 85%	92% Customer queries resolved at 1st Point of contact
	ACSC070811 Introduce 'Caller Line' Identification to provide a more personalised service.	Provided a more prompt, personalised service through the introduction of 'Caller Line' Identification to assist advisors in identifying customer details.	
	ACSC070812 Increase the number of customer satisfaction surveys	Increased the number of Customer Satisfaction Surveys (Face to Face and Contact Centre users) from one to three per year. Results have provided a better understanding of community need and service patterns, and will help inform targeted service delivery.	3 User Satisfaction Surveys
	ACSC070813 Utilise call recording systems for staff development to ensure call quality remains high	Utilised call recording systems to ensure consistency in call quality, to assist staff development and to inform Investors in People (IIP) development plans.	
	ACSC070814 Establish new customer satisfaction baseline	New customer satisfaction baseline data has been established and surveys form part of the SOCITM benchmarking comparisons (with twenty-two Welsh Local Authorities).	
	ACSC070815 Improve the Council's Website search facility	Improved the Council's Website 'search' facility through the provision of a 'Google' search function resulting in improved response times and more 'search' outcomes.	

Putting Citizens First			
Customer Care - Making it easier to do Business with the Council			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Further improve Customer Services by improving the way local people can conduct their business with the Council	ACSC070816 Review and refresh the Council's Website homepage	Integrated Community, Council, Business, Tourism and Events into one 'umbrella' website. Additional developments include a new Home and Landing page, and improved navigational structure i.e. REPORT IT ; BOOK IT; PAY IT , etc.	
	ACSC070817 Implement new e-recruitment application	Support HR to launch a new online E-Recruitment system, allowing applicants to apply online to Council vacancies, register to receive text alerts and bulletins on jobs of interest.	
	ACSC070818 Implement range of new online transactions including e-Recruitment, Streetcare processes and payments	Implemented a range of new online transactions including Streetcare, processes and payments e.g. REPORT IT (Street lighting; abandoned vehicles) ; FIND IT (Refuse collection days; Leisure centres), PAY IT (Council Tax; Business rates); BOOK IT (Bulky item collection; Library books).	
	ACSC070819 Pilot local information searches e.g. Registrar	Piloted local information searches on website. Facility now available to search for births, deaths and marriage indexes	
	ACSC070820 Pilot self service Kiosks for payments	A self-service kiosk for payments has been sited and is currently being piloted at Bronwydd One4All Centre.	

Working Together to Deliver - Locally			
The Constitution - Developing a Framework to Support the Business of the Council			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Further embed the Constitution within the Council, supporting Officers and Members in their understanding of how various functions are discharged	AFMA070801 Review and update the Procedure Rules to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' in supporting the changing needs of the Council's functions.	The Councils Corporate Procedure Rules and the Financial Procedure Rules were reviewed and updated and are scheduled to go to Councils Annual General Meeting in 2009	Annual update and review of Procedure Rules
	AFMA070802 Provide a targeted programme of training & development around the Procedure Rules and Scheme of Delegation, to aide Officers and Members in fulfilling their responsibilities.	An ongoing programme of one-to-one and group training & development sessions on 'Procedure Rules' and 'Scheme of Delegation' have been held during the year	158 Officers & Members attending training sessions
	AFMA070803 Automate the administration of the Council's Scheme of Delegation arrangements and in doing so, empower designated officers to effectively manage the delivery of this framework.	The work to administer the Scheme of Delegation through the Human Resources 'Vision' system was re-prioritised in 2008/09 due to implementation of key modules within the system. A revised target date will be set in 2009/10.	
	AFMA070804 Enhance the awareness of the Councils Procedure Rules by reporting progress updates to the Councils Audit Committee.	Improved awareness of the Council's Procedure rules through the submission of updates to the Councils Audit Committee.	2 Audit committee updates
	AFMA070805 Improve officer understanding of the Procedure rules, designated representatives to communicate progress updates via Senior Management Team.	To aid officer understanding, Procedure Rules updates have been fed into the Corporate Services Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis throughout the year (as part of the Council's Financial reporting requirements (S151).	4 updates produced and reported to Senior Management Team (Target: At least two updates to be produced)
	AFMA070806 Explore opportunities to further exploit the Council's Intranet Site as a method of communication and awareness raising.	Exploring opportunities to further exploit the Councils intranet site as a method of communication and awareness raising has now become a priority for 2009/10.	

Working Together to Deliver - Regionally & Nationally Partnerships - Streamlining to Work Together Better			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Establish improved working arrangements to enable partners to deliver better services together over and above those that would have been delivered by individual partners	ASPC070811 Produce new Community Strategy and integral 3-year action plan, in accordance with WAG guidance and framework for review and update.	A Draft Community Strategy was originally presented to the Local Service Board (LSB) in November and has since been updated. The strategy and associated measures have been agreed by the LSB and will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in September 2009.	
	ASPC070812 Deliver an improved, co-ordinated planning and delivery structure, which clearly aligns the Local Service Board and Strategic Partnerships, to reflect the desired focus upon a reduced number of priorities.	The Local Delivery Agreement that supports the Community Strategy has been completed and approved by the LSB and WAG in July.	
	ASPC070814 Develop a Local Service Agreement by April 2010, focused on outcomes, identifying a small number of priorities with clear actions, milestones and timelines that is owned by all key partners	The draft Local Delivery Agreement was be considered by the Local Service Board and agreed by WAG in July see above	

World Class Workforce			
Job Evaluation - Developing an appropriate pay and grading structure for the Council and comply with the requirements of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Develop an appropriate pay and grading structure that will meet the Council's obligation under the Single Status agreement	ACHR070801 Implement an appropriate Pay and Grading structure across the Council, as a result of completing the Job Evaluation review.	Work is continuing to deliver the new pay and grading structure . It is anticipated the new structure will be in place following the Job Evaluation exercise and Equal Pay settlement.	

World Class Workforce People Development - Promoting Alignment between competence at individual and organisational levels, and the Council's service aims and priorities			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Recruiting, retaining the best quality, right quantity and most flexible people to deliver service requirements and to provide a workforce that represents the community it serves	ACHR070802 Deliver Health Promotion events across the Council in order to meet the challenges of the WAGs Corporate Health Standard, with the aim of improving the health of the workforce and reducing sickness absence.	Delivered four Health promotion events across the Council: - No smoking - Stress Management (32 out of a possible 40 spaces attended) - Migraine awareness - Know Your Numbers, in conjunction with the Blood Pressure Association (95 attendees)	
	ACHR070803 Implement new e.recruitment system	Launched a new online e-Recruitment system in November 2008, with over 18,000 hits within the first two months	83% of job applications received online (Target 70%)
	ACHR070804 Rollout of new 'online system' recruitment system to all managers	Manuals to support the rollout of the E-Recruitment system have been developed, and Manager training and support has been provided as required.	
Create a fairer and more socially inclusive society within Rhondda Cynon Taf	ACHR070805 Introduce effective monitoring of the actions within the Single Equality Plan	Met with Wales Local Government Association (WLGA) to discuss Single Equality Plan. Consulting with Managers to take the plan forward. Further development expected in 2009/10.	
	ACHR070806 Deliver the relevant standards contained within the Equality Improvement Framework	A report on the standards within the Equality Improvement Framework has been agreed, and a project plan is in development.	
	ACHR070807 Produce an annual report on the results of Equalities Impact assessments, and record actions taken to address adverse impact	Equality Impact Assessment still under review. Reporting to Senior Management Team will commence in the latter part of 2009/10.	
	ACHR070808 Introduce annual employment monitoring to identify barriers to employment and recommend solutions	Employment monitoring will be developed in 2009 utilising the new e-recruitment system to provide information that will assist in establishing barriers to employment.	
	ACHR070809 Continue to mainstream equality throughout the Council, raising staff awareness through training	Equalities awareness training delivered. Staff Equalities Forum established to discuss and debate equality issues and increase and promote awareness	158 staff received equality awareness training 87 staff received disability, gender or race awareness training.
	ACHR070810 Review the Social Justice Scheme and it's associated action plan	Currently reviewing the existing Social Justice Scheme.	
	ACHR070811 Increase the number of Play Pod activities across the County Borough	Increased the number of Play Pod activities bringing mobile play provision to locations in RCT where there are currently none. Registration and attendance rates were affected by bad weather but despite this, the activities were well attended.	Increased Play Pod Activities to 9 (6 in 2007) 455 Children registered (484 in 2007) 1,131 Children attending (1,190 in 2007) 93% Satisfaction with Play Pod activity
	ACHR070812 Continue to hold 'Maximising Opportunities' events which assist local people to maximise their income, develop career opportunities and access education benefits.	Held 'Maximising Opportunities' event to assist local people in maximising their income, advise on career opportunities, managing money and accessing education benefits.	One 'Maximising Opportunity' Event held
	ACHR070813 Continue to distribute Money Management booklets as part of the 'Maximising Opportunities' Project	Distributed Money Management booklets as part of the 'Maximising Opportunities' Project through planned events e.g. Council Open days and also distributed via One4All centres	750 'Money Management' booklets distributed
	ACHR070814 Continue the 'Intergenerational Project' linking and encouraging young people to engage with and learn more about the older generation and visa versa.	Continued the 'Intergenerational Project' aimed at schools to engage and learn more about the older generation. Pontypridd High School was the pilot, followed by sessions in other schools. The project has now been completed and a report is being prepared.	
ACHR070815 Develop a Social Inclusion Learning project to mainstream social justice throughout the Council (over two years)	The Social Inclusion Learning Project to mainstream social justice is on hold pending redevelopment of Social Justice Strategy in 2009/10.		

Better Value for the Public Purse			
Medium Term Financial Planning - Delivering Value for Money Improvements in the services provided by the Council			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Further develop the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements to drive service improvement and efficiency	AFMA070807 Establish a revised Performance Management Framework within the Council that incorporates increased accountability, integration and simplification of existing processes	A revised framework of plans have been established as part of the Council's interim service planning arrangements for 2009-12 including agreement of key principles for enhancing accountability arrangements. Further work required to bring the Performance Management Framework to life to support service improvement will be undertaken in 2009/10.	
	AFMA070808 Deliver workforce development and planning arrangements across the Council	Commenced two trials to develop workforce planning arrangements (and integrate with service planning arrangements for 2009-12). In addition, a workforce planning group with cross-Council membership has been established, to drive the roll out of this area of work across the Council.	
	AFMA070809 Undertake a review of all community and office assets	Completed the review of office assets and presented findings to Senior Officers. Work on the community asset review will continue during 2009/10.	
	AFMA070810 Monitor the agreed specific key service improvement projects that reflect Council priorities.	Arrangements introduced to identify and deliver service improvement projects. These projects are currently being delivered (for the impacts to start to be realised in 2009/10).	
	AFMA070811 Update, manage and monitor the delivery of the Council's Medium term Financial Plan for the period 2008/09 through to 2010/11.	The council's financial management arrangements have supported the delivery of a balanced budget for 2008/09 together with updating the medium term outlook on a regular basis throughout 2008/09.	Delivered a balanced revenue budget and maintained the General Reserve balance at the recommended level
	AFMA070812 Co-ordinate and support the delivery of net efficiency gains in line with Council priorities and the Welsh Assembly Government annual efficiency target.	Co-ordinated and supported the delivery of net efficiency gains in line with Council priorities and the Welsh Assembly Government annual efficiency target. Details of efficiency gains are currently being compiled.	Achieved Welsh Assembly Government Annual Efficiency Target
	AFMA070813 Progress the Shared Services Agenda, exploring further opportunities for joint working.	The Council continues to be a key player in the shared service agenda particularly in the South East Wales, always ensuring that this Councils' best interests are paramount particularly regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of its services. To this end, regular reporting will continue to be made to Cabinet as further progress is made through 2009/10	Engagement with 9 local authorities within South East Wales.
	AFMA070814 Proactively seek further opportunities to engage with stakeholders to set the Council's future Budget	Phase 1 & 2 of the 2009/10 Budget Consultation completed, through focus groups, roadshows, an online survey, and customer views collected at leisure centres and libraries. Consultation report submitted to Cabinet for consideration as part of the budget setting process. Phase 3 feedback due in September 2009.	

Better Value for the Public Purse			
Medium Term Financial Planning-Delivering Value for Money Improvements in the services provided by the Council			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Making better use of resources to sustain and improve services	ACAM070813 Produce a revised energy management policy	Produced a revised Energy Management Policy in consultation with stakeholders.	Unable to provide evidenced measures to support reduction in energy/water reduction
	ACAM070814 Establish a ring fenced Invest to Save fund	Established a ring fenced "Invest to Save" Fund, identifying investment areas for energy saving initiatives. Outcomes of these initiatives will be monitored over the forthcoming year.	
	ACAM070815 Deliver regular awareness and motivation campaigns of Energy and Water Management to staff and wider community	The first Energy Awareness Day, entitled "Rhondda Cynon Taf – Really Cool Thinking", was held in April 2008, informing the public, local businesses, Schools and people from within the Authority about key areas of Energy Management.	
	ACAM070816 Promote benefits of energy and water management	Promoted benefits of energy and water management through the establishment and regular meeting of an Energy Working Group and developing links with the Sustainable Development Forum.	
	ACAM070817 Implement Site Managers/Caretakers 2-year training programme in controlling energy	Implemented a 2-year Site Managers/Caretakers training programme to assist in the control of energy usage. This activity will continue in 2009/10.	
	ACAM070818 Develop a monitoring system to record carbon management information	Developed a monitoring system to record carbon management information and energy saving initiatives that have been implemented. Further work is being progressed to develop reports to demonstrate energy and carbon emission reductions and cost savings as a result of initiatives.	11.72% reduction in carbon emissions EEF002a
	ACAM070819 Design and populate energy and water management web site	Developed an energy and water management website to give advice to RCT staff on how to effectively and efficiently manage energy and water through the prudent use of our resources.	Website launched
	ACAM070820 Commence the planned programme of Energy surveys	Commenced a programme of Energy surveys concentrating on the top forty highest carbon emitting Council sites. A prioritised plan is being established for remaining sites over the next financial year.	
	ACAM070821 Produce Energy Performance Certificates to comply with changing legislation	Produced Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) for a small number of properties that have changed ownership. EPCs rate the energy efficiency of a building from 'A' to 'G' and are required by law when a property is built, sold or rented. Commenced programme of Display Energy Certificates (DECs). DECs show the actual energy usage of a building and are required for larger public buildings.	
ACAM070822 Devise a generic design brief for energy efficiency best practice standards into design and refurbishments	In consultation with the Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales (CLAW), devised a generic design brief for energy efficiency best practice standards in design and refurbishment. Further consultation on this brief will take place in 2009/10.	Completed Generic Design Brief	

Better Value for the Public Purse			
Medium Term Financial Planning - Delivering Value for Money Improvements in the services provided by the Council			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Continue to promote and develop a sustainable future for Rhondda Cynon Taf with a service emphasis on the environment and its improvement	ASUS070801 Develop a corporate sustainable development policy	A corporate Sustainable Development policy has been developed and is awaiting endorsement.	7 corporate Sustainable development actions where progress has been made
	ASUS070802 Develop group action plans targeting energy management, waste management and sustainable procurement	Group action plans have not yet been developed and are contained within the Sustainable Development Forum Action Plan awaiting endorsement.	New corporate Sustainable Development policy developed and adopted
	ASUS070803 Research, promote, advise and deliver best practice in terms of environmental sustainability	Promoted and advised on best practice for environmental sustainability within the Council. The Sustainable Development team have advised on 7 plans and projects to promote best practice including the Local Development Plan; Waste Treatment Plant project; Convergence Plan and the 14-19 Years Strategy.	Delivered 13 sustainable development training events
	ASUS070804 Deliver training related to climate change and other sustainable development related issues to council staff and elected members	Delivered training events to raise awareness of sustainable development issues. These have included Climate Change, Education for Sustainable Development and Energy Awareness.	
	ASUS070805 Embed sustainable development principles into project planning and the development of key strategies	In line with WAG guidance, the sustainable development team will be consulted as new national strategies and projects are developed to ensure Sustainable Development principles are embedded at the planning stage.	5 green dragon accredited premises
	ASUS070806 Incorporate Sustainable Development into job descriptions and performance frameworks	Incorporated sustainable development into the Council's competency framework which is used during recruitment and selection and individual appraisal processes in the Council.	24 business plans including a sustainable development appraisal
	ASUS070807 Provide training to improve the environmental management of premises	Delivered Green Dragon training at 5 Council premises to raise awareness and improve environmental management.	30 sites reporting on energy management
	ASUS070808 Improve the accountability of services regarding energy management and their carbon footprint	Collaboration with the Energy Team has resulted in a successful project that has expanded alternative fuel awareness and energy efficiency among five schools that received Heads of the Valley funding for Photovoltaic Cells. The Sustainable Development Team has undertaken awareness raising sessions in the five schools and promoted the actions that can be taken by teachers and pupils to improve energy efficiency.	
	ASUS070809 Improve information for the Council's Internet site	Completed the planning stages to improve the information available on the Council's Internet site. Information has been evaluated for its use to members of the public and Council employees and will be uploaded in 2009/10.	
	ASUS070810 Work with key partners to improve the councils forward planning as related to climate change	Worked with the WLGA and University of Glamorgan to rollout the WAG sponsored BACLIAT (Business Area Climate Impact Assessment Tool) programme. This national programme, for which the Council manages one of the Welsh pilots, aims to ensure Councils can deliver services in the new reality of Climate Change.	Climate change project implemented with support of key partners

Better Value for the Public Purse			
Medium Term Financial Planning-Delivering Value for Money Improvements in the services provided by the Council			
Objective	Action	Update	Measures
Further implement Sustainable Procurement Policies and provide appropriate support and leadership to implement across the Council, with particular emphasis on supporting, encouraging and developing local SMEs	APRO070801 Encourage local suppliers to register on the Council Strategic Procurement System	Encouraged local suppliers to register on the Council Strategic Procurement system.	2,998 suppliers registered on the Council Strategic Procurement System
	APRO070802 Advertise contract opportunities on the Welsh national Buy4Wales Procurement Website	Contract opportunities are being advertised in accordance with agreed policy of advertising via the Buy4Wales website	23 contracts advertised via Buy4Wales website, with a value in excess of £313m.
	APRO070803 Attend meetings of the Business Club and similar forums to assist local suppliers in the tendering process	Procurement representatives have attended events to assist, advise and support local suppliers on their own procurement processes and also to advise on how to complete and submit competitive tenders for Council related business.	67.66% Council expenditure to 'local' suppliers using post codes CF, NP & SA (59.76% in 2007/08)
	APRO070804 Arrange workshops, meetings, seminars, surgeries and training	Held regular open and service specific workshops for staff to ensure consistent procurement procedures are being utilised. Content includes: Contract Procedure Rules, E-Procurement and Purchasing Card training	
	APRO070805 Support the Economic regeneration Strategy "Spending Public Money Locally" priority.	Supported the Economic Regeneration Strategy initiative 'Spending Public Money Locally'.	

The Outcomes from Regulatory Inspections during the year

In the last twelve months there have been no inspections within this theme.

Regulatory Inspections due in the new financial year

No regulatory inspections are due in the next financial year.

How Consultation has helped to improve services to local people

The following consultation was undertaken in 2008/09 relating to services that contribute to **Bringing it All Together**. Following the consultation results, each service identified improvements actions in their service business plans for next year.

Customer Care

The service undertakes ongoing customer satisfaction surveys of users. In addition, every 3 years a wider baseline survey is undertaken to inform service planning (incorporating preference and potential future appetite for service delivery channels).

(i) Customer Care Survey (3 - year insight)

During 2008/09, the service ran a Customer Preference/Needs Survey to provide an insight into Customer preferences. Key findings include:

- The telephone remains the preferred method of contact at 62%;
- Customers prefer face-to-face contact for some enquiries within reasonable travel distances;
- Customers identified some appetite for the use of electronic services as methods of future contact;
- 99% of customers wish to correspond with the Council in English as their preferred language choice.

The service's 3 year Customer Care Plan responds to this by providing: -

- A dedicated 24/7 contact centre with improved response times and wide range of services;
- Four One4aLL (One Stop Shop) centres, with plans to expand to six. These offer a wide range of Council and Partner services at one point of contact with specialists on hand. On average these centres are currently within 5.6 miles and 9.6 minutes drive time of any Household in the County Borough;
- Improved website with increased content and transactional opportunities 24/7;

- The % of Welsh speaking staff within the centres matches the % local population (over 3 years of age) that speak, read or write Welsh at 12%.

We are monitoring unit costs of service provision through each contact method for benchmarking purposes, to inform future service planning and to encourage users towards less expensive self-service methods where appropriate e.g. for less complex transactions.

(ii) WAG Baseline Survey

The All Wales Citizen Access Position Statement (CAPS) survey has been completed. This 'baseline' study was led by Rhondda Cynon Taf and formally submitted to WAG in September 2009 by the Chairs of Customer Focus Wales (North and South Wales Groups that represent 22 local authorities in regard to Customer service functions).

The purpose of the study was to identify customer access service provision and take up across all service delivery channels within Wales. The report will inform WAGs emerging Access Transformation Programme which will include key projects that address the strategic recommendations within the report. Rhondda Cynon Taf will continue to support and influence these projects to the benefit of our Customers.

(iii) Service Delivery Channels - Specific 'User' Consultation

Each of our service delivery channels run frequent customer satisfaction surveys throughout the year, and report on performance as a key Indicator.

One4All' One Stop Shops

- Customer Satisfaction/Exit surveys were run quarterly at each of our one-stop-shops.
- 99% of Customers were satisfied with the service they received at the Centres.
- 98% of customer were happy that their enquiry was resolved at first point of contact
- Customers continue to use the One-stop-shops for Council & Partnership Surgeries such as DWP, Age Concern, Citizens Advice Bureau

Contact Centre

- Customer Satisfaction surveys were run 3 times during 2008/09 and results were positive.
- 98% of Customers were Satisfied with the service they received from the telephony Contact Centre (Daytime and Out-of-Hours)
- 91% felt that their enquiry was resolved at first point of contact (Daytime Centre)

Website

As part of an all Wales Web Initiative (22 LAs) we can now report and measure monthly Customer Satisfaction, which is produced consistently by SOCITM. Early results have been positive and indicate...

- 81% of Customers were satisfied with the service and information they receive from the Council Website. Website satisfaction throughout the UK tends to be lower than other channels due to the width of information provided. Nationally 80% tends to be the benchmark for satisfaction rates (SOCITM trends)
- The Council's Website is ranked highly in website conformance standards (i.e. accessibility, equalities etc) as the Council forms part of a UK survey conducted by "Site Morse" which tests our compliance. The site is ranked 3rd in Wales, and upper quartile in the UK.

Plans for 2009/10 Consultation

Customer Care

Information on customers' preferences will be utilised to further improve our understanding of service delivery channel preference for types of transaction. The service can then ensure optimisation of resources to best meet demand.

We will continue to consult our customers across our service delivery channels to ensure continued customer satisfaction with any services we provide.

Plans for 2009/10 Improvement

How we plan to address our Improvement Priorities in 2009/10 and how our progress will be measured is set out below.

Key Priority: MANAGING OUR ASSETS - Equipping ourselves for the future

What we are trying to achieve: To rationalise the number of Operational Buildings used by the Council and improve the quality and utilisation of the retained portfolio.

Measure	08/09 Data	09/10 target	All Wales Data	
			Quartile	Ranking
Reduction of operational buildings within the office accommodation portfolio.	49	45		
As a result of reducing the number of buildings, % reduction in the annual running costs for office accommodation.	£5.31M	£4.95M		
Reduction of the average space allocated to each employee located within office accommodation.	11.5M ² /pp	11M ² /pp		
% Reduction In Carbon Dioxide emissions from the 30 highest emitting sites within the whole property portfolio.	3%	3% (480 tonnes)		
Critical Improvement Actions				
The production of Service Asset Management Plans (SAMPs) for each Service Group in support of the Corporate Asset Management Plan.				
Roll out a 3yr programme of investment for planned maintenance projects.				
Relocate staff and rationalise the office accommodation.				
Delivery of key energy efficiency projects from within the 'invest to save' fund.				
Develop and adopt standard guidelines for the occupation and maintenance of buildings.				

Key Priority: BETTER CUSTOMER CONTACT 'Putting Customers First'

What we are trying to achieve: Customers can easily access our services, when they need to, through the appropriate channel i.e. face to face, by telephone or via the Internet

Measure	08/09 Data	09/10 Target	Welsh Average 2008/09 Benchmark
Accessible Services Local One4aLL centres - Average distance from any household in RCT (miles)		<10 Miles	12.25 miles
Quality Services Customer Satisfaction			
Contact Centre	99%	>97%	91.5%
One4aLL Centres	99%	>97%	95.48%
Website/e-access	81%	>75%	71.7%
% Enquiries Resolved at first point of contact			
Contact Centre	92%	>90%	82%
One4aLL Centres	95%	>90%	91.5%
Website/e-access	74%	>70%	73.5%
Timely services - Average Waiting Times			
Contact Centre (day)	54 secs	<60 secs	
Emergency 24 x 7	13.6 secs	<20 secs	
One4aLL Centres	5.07 secs	<8 secs	10.8 mins
Website Availability	99.50%	>99%	99.2%

Critical Improvement Actions

Increase services that can be accessed via the Contact Centre - Reduce range of Key contact numbers

Increase One4aLL Centres by locality and range of services that can be accessed to ensure they are "true" Centres of Excellence

Increase the number of Self Service options that are available via the RCT website

Implement improved, single Website for Council that is more transactional and personalised

Establish one consistent brand for all channels that aids customer awareness and take- up.

Ensure Customer Care Service is independently accredited for quality by attaining Standards appropriate to Service:

- Investors in People (IiP) • Telecare Standard (Lifeline) • Charter Mark (Centres of Excellence)

Key Priority: BETTER CUSTOMER CONTACT 'Putting Customers First'

What we are trying to achieve: Support 'one and done' resolution of enquiries through a single customer record. Collect information once, use numerous times to the benefit of our customers. Exploit customer information that provides insight to needs and preferences.

Measure

Evidence of improvements in response to customer feedback.

Agreed Council wide Information Management Strategy and Action Plan.

Other project based actions will be monitored against the more detailed outcomes stated in their respective project briefs or plans e.g. Tell us Once.

Critical Improvement Actions

Build on current customer record to enable data transfer through various systems e.g. at time of bereavement (Life episode related)

Assess opportunity to pilot "Tell us Once"

Develop Best Practice Information Management Strategy and Action Plan for Council

Enhance Customer Feedback Scheme to identify trends and service improvement and efficiency opportunities

What we are trying to achieve: Ensure Customer Care arrangements are as cost effective and sustainable as possible (value benchmarked and income generating through collaborative use of assets). Develop an approach to "channel shift" and manage "customer drift" between self-service, telephone and face-to-face. Ensure Customer Care leads, where appropriate, and pro-actively supports wider Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP) Programme.

Measure

Customer Care Service Efficiencies attained.

Benchmarked as competitive service delivery costs.

Other project based actions will be monitored against the more detailed outcomes stated in their respective project briefs or plans e.g. Administration Review implementation.

Critical Improvement Actions

Establish annual Efficiency Plan with clear aim to sustain below average unit costs

Establish channel take-up analysis

Challenge and evolve Workforce Planning that aligns to service take-up

Challenge and agree position on future integration with Registrars, Consumer Advice, PSSOs and Libraries (in line with Asset Management Plans)

Lead and/or support MTFP Projects

Support the development of Service Standards and lead on reducing Council generated un-necessary contact for our customers (known as Avoidable Contact - a National Indicator in England)

Expand further collaborative working to the benefit of customers and the organisation

Re-assess options for Centre 6 (Talbot Green)

Key Priority: MAXIMISING PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES - Doing more for local communities by working together

What we are trying to achieve: To strengthen local public sector leadership to tackle service delivery challenges from a citizen perspective, that can only be addressed by working in partnership

Measure

The Local Delivery Agreement (an agreement between the Local Service Board and the Welsh Assembly Government on what we are going to achieve together) sets out a range of measures that will be used to monitor our progress against our 6 chosen projects. This will be undertaken annually

The Community Strategy has a range of performance measures that will be monitored annually, to assess progress being made against our longer term ambitions.

Critical Improvement Actions

Produce new Community Strategy and integral 3-year action plan in accordance with WAG guidance and framework and publish by 31 March 2010.

Deliver an improved, co-ordinated planning and delivery structure, which clearly aligns the Local Service Board and Strategic Partnerships and specifies accountabilities for the delivery of the ambitions of the new Community Strategy.

Work with the Strategic Partnerships to develop a coordinated, consistent approach to measuring the outcomes achieved by each partnership and the collective progress made towards the delivery of Community Strategy ambitions by September 2010

Develop systems to monitor Local Delivery Agreement, to be in place by April 2010

Introduce enhanced Joint Scrutiny Arrangements of the statutory partnerships, in particular, Health Social Care & Well-being; Community Safety and Fframwaith.

Develop a shared partnership knowledge management system, which enables us to share intelligence efficiently and effectively.

Adapt the KAFKA approach to Citizen Focused Challenge and Improvement, and apply it to further improvement areas within RCT

Integrate the Communities First Programme with the Strategic Planning Framework.

Key Priority: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING - Living within our means

What we are trying to achieve:

- Continued focus on stability and sustainability in terms of our finances through an effective financial management framework
- Allocating scarce resources effectively – ultimately to the benefit of residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf

Measure

Budgetary Control Performance

Budgetary control reporting

Achievement of WAG 'Making The Connections' targets

Critical Improvement Actions

Preparation and maintenance of a rolling 3 year financial strategy (both revenue and capital)

Effective reporting and evidencing of efficiency gains

What we are trying to achieve:

- Ensure the correct staff mix and numbers are in place to deliver quality services
- Maximise productivity opportunities within the workforce
- Manage staff costs effectively given the labour intensive nature of Local Government

Measure

Workforce plans in place across Services that integrate with business plans

Workforce monitoring / reporting

New Pay & Grading Structure in place

Critical Improvement Actions

Implement a new pay and grading structure that provides a sustainable basis for service delivery into the medium term

Implement and embed effective workforce planning arrangements across all services

Key Priority: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING - Living within our means

What we are trying to achieve:

- Whilst short and medium term efficiency proposals are part of the development of our rolling 3 year financial strategy, longer term, more strategic projects must also be considered as part of future service delivery plans

Measure

Actual funding support / capacity generated

Critical Improvement Actions

Support services, through the establishment of a comprehensive framework, to deliver robust business cases for Key Strategic Projects (that is, longer term projects)

Establish opportunities for business development and innovation across Services

Maximise funding opportunities to complement core resources where a clear risk / benefit assessment has been undertaken

What we are trying to achieve:

- Whilst the MTFP strategy can set out the frameworks in terms of financial and performance management, critical to the future success of the Council will be the acceptance of accountability / responsibility for delivery

Measure

Reduction in volatility of budget and performance indicators across Services

Critical Improvement Actions

Strengthen performance management arrangements across all services

Ensure high levels of officer accountability (financial and performance) across all areas

Establish an effective communication / engagement strategy (priority focus on active engagement externally and internally to maximise potential for the delivery of efficiency gains)

Key Priority: COMMUNICATION - Raising awareness and keeping people informed

What we are trying to achieve:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To create a better understanding between the Council and the people it serves - To introduce ways to ensure key messages and information reaches the audiences where it can have greatest impact. 	
Measure	09/10 Target
Number of detailed, high profile marketing campaigns to be delivered during the year	6
Number of Council Buildings visited to 'spot-check' range/standard of publications available.	15
Tracking public opinion through Citizen's Panel, surveys to be developed post April 2010	
Critical Improvement Actions	
To support the production of the new Community Strategy and lead the consultation. – In readiness for publication by 31 March 2010.	
Develop and agree a Marketing & Promotion Plan by December 2009 with the involvement of internal stakeholders in support of the Council's 3 Year WPI Action Plan Priorities.	
Further development of Open Government.	
Explore opportunities to develop and encourage Citizen Engagement, possibly via Roadshows; Public Opinion Surveys; Enhanced Use of Citizen's Panel	
Work with Corporate ICT to enhance the use of internet as a means of communication.	
Better use of Council Assets as sources of information – One4Alls / Community Schools / Libraries etc	

What we are trying to achieve: To enhance the authority's reputation and image				
Measure	08/09 Data	09/10 target	All Wales Data	
			Quartile	Ranking
Number of informative press releases a month that define and promote a core, key message.	95	110		
Critical Improvement Actions				
To develop strong working relationships with media partners.				
Introduction of 'mystery shoppers' campaign to test quality of Council services.				
Delivery of Strategic Events Programme, i.e. events that are key in promoting the Council and play a key role in Council priorities such as Ponty's Big Weekend				
Install upgraded Newsflash (media release management system) and improve utilisation by Sept 2009.				

Key Priority: COMMUNICATION - Raising awareness and keeping people informed

What we are trying to achieve: To build a strong corporate identity	
Measure	
Number of audits completed to test compliance with Corporate Identity Standards	This indicator will be used in 2009/10 once programme of audits introduced
Critical Improvement Actions	
Produce Corporate Communications & Marketing Manual as a guide for all staff when considering any marketing or communications campaign - by April 2010	
Integrate Corporate ID Manual, that incorporates disability equality guidelines, within 'Communications & Marketing' manual by March 2010	

What we are trying to achieve: To improve and maintain strong two way communication throughout the Council	
Measure	09/10 Target
% of staff responding to staff feedback survey	30%
Critical Improvement Actions	
Enhance 'Inform' intranet site to encourage greater usage and benefit	
Continue development of 'Inform' Newsletter	
Research best practice for communicating with staff.	
Work with ICT to extend the availability of the Intranet – for example via dumb terminals at selected locations	