

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013-2014

**CORPORATE SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

10TH APRIL 2014

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

Agenda Item No. 5

**EXCEPTION REPORT – COUNCIL
PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31ST
DECEMBER 2013 (QUARTER 3)**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Exceptions agreed by the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny. The exceptions are drawn from the data presented to the Cabinet Performance and Resources Committee that met on the 19th March 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- 2.1 Note the content of this report.
- 2.2 Scrutinise and comment on the information provided.
- 2.3 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth, any matters contained in the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On the 29th June, 2005 Council endorsed the recommendation made by Scrutiny to create a Performance Management Coordinator role to bring added value to an already existing high quality of finance and performance information.
- 3.2 The Coordinator's role is to enable a sifting or prioritising exercise to be carried out to ensure that Members receive detailed reports on an exception basis on issues that require attention.
- 3.3 This process allows the Coordinator to coordinate capital and revenue budget monitoring and performance management information and WPI action plans in consultation with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny to ensure that scrutiny is presented with relevant and timely information

- 3.4 All Members still have access to the detailed financial and performance reports presented to the Cabinet Performance and Resources Committee and will still be able to raise issues at the Scrutiny Committees, if not covered by the exception report.

4 EXCEPTION REPORT

- 4.1 The Exception report provides Members of this Scrutiny Committee with financial and performance management information for the Corporate Services Group for the period to 31st December 2013 and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.2 The report is based on the data set out in the report considered by the Cabinet Performance and Resources Committee on the 19th March 2014, to which all Members have access. If Members wish to raise any matter contained therein and not covered by the exception report they are requested to contact the Scrutiny Team prior to the meeting, in order that Officers may prepare a definitive response.
- 4.3 In addition, attached as Appendix A is the detailed action plan for the Wales Programme for Improvement priority which lies within the remit of this Service Scrutiny Committee ie Regeneration of Our Communities – Physical Regeneration.

5. KEY QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS

- 5.1 Are Members in agreement with the exceptions highlighted in the report?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10TH APRIL 2014

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Item: EXCEPTION REPORT – COUNCIL PERFORMANCE (QUARTER 3)

Background Papers

Report of the Group Director, Corporate Services “Council Performance Report - 31st December 2013 (Quarter 3)” – presented to Cabinet Performance and Resources Committee 19th March 2014).

Officer to contact: Mrs A Edwards – Tel. No: 01443 424102

Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

10th April 2014

Council Performance Report 31st December 2013 (Quarter 3)

In respect of Corporate Services and the Chief Executive's Division:

1. Financial Performance

a) Revenue Budgets:

	Budget as at 31st December 2013/14	Projected Actual as at 31st December 2013/14	Variance Over (Under)
	£M	£M	£M
Corporate Services	22.508	22.358	(0.150)
Chief Executives	9.852	9.792	(0.060)
Total	32.360	32.150	(0.210)

Key Revenue Issues:

- Overall spend for the Group and Division is projected to be £0.210M under budget as at quarter three
- Financial Services (£0.108M underspend)
- Regeneration & Planning (£0.046M underspend)

b) Capital Budgets:

	Budget As At 31st December	3rd Quarter Actual	% of Total Budget spent in 3rd quarter
	£M	£M	
Corporate Services	2.391	1.451	60.7%
Chief Executives	6.049	2.919	48.3%
Total	8.440	4.370	51.8%

Key Capital Issues:

- Welsh Government Regional Collaboration Fund reflected in the programme.

c) Treasury Management

	Budget as at 31st December 2013/14	Projected Actual as at 31st December 2013/14	Variance Over (Under)
	£M	£M	£M
Capital Financing	24.261	24.261	0

Key Treasury Management Issues

- The Council continues to operate in line with the approved Prudential Indicators.

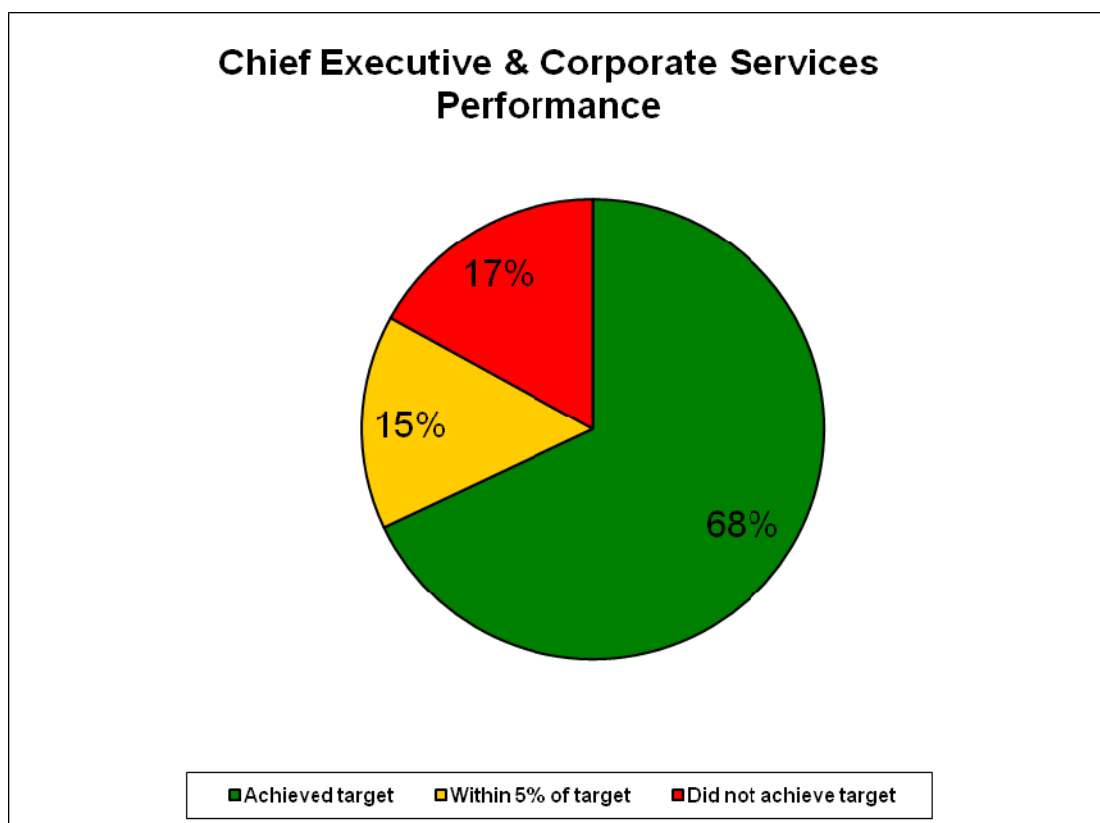
2. Wales Programme For Improvement

Action Plans for Review:

- Physical Regeneration - 'Town centre enhancement; helping the private sector bring land back to productive use and supporting local business to benefit the local economy'

Full Action Plan attached at Appendix A.

3. Operational Performance



Total number of Indicators with data available	54	
Achieved Quarter 3 Target	37	68%
Within 5% of Quarter 3 Target	8	15%
Did Not Achieve Quarter 3 Target	9	17%

Key Performance Issues:

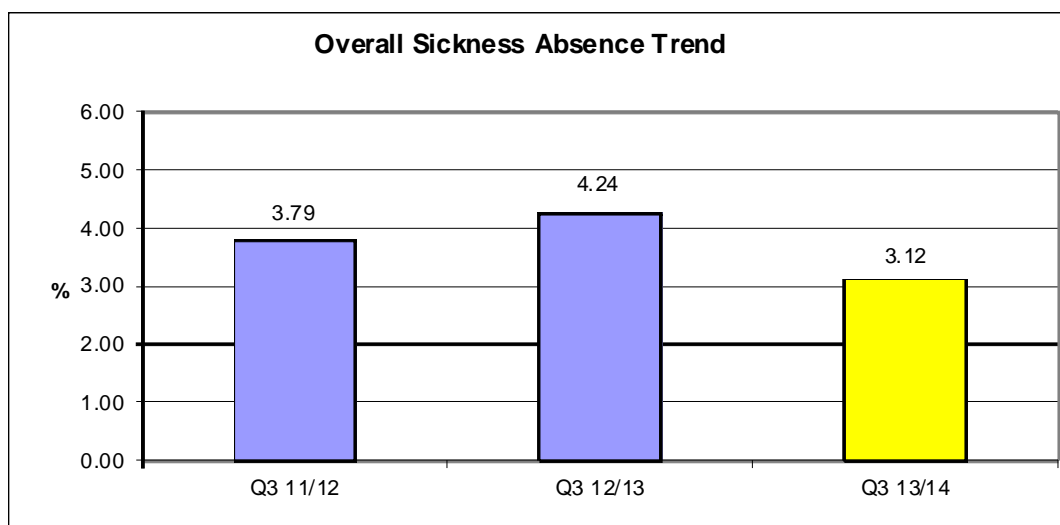
Positive Performance	Exceptions
<p>Amount of floor area (square metres) made available to bring back into use in Aberdare and Pontypridd town centres through grant support programmes direct to businesses (funded by the Council and/or Welsh Government) - 3320 square metres brought back into use up to quarter 3 compared to a target of 1890 square metres</p>	<p>% Helpdesk calls answered - Quarter 3 performance was 80.4% compared to a target of 85.0%. Performance has fallen slightly short of target for quarter 3, directly due to realignment of resources to manage the Education ICT Transformation Programme, but the service demonstrates a positive uplift from quarter 2 with the aim of achieving the last quarter target</p>
<p>Number of jobs created in Aberdare and Pontypridd Town Centres through grant support programmes direct to businesses (funded by the Council and/or Welsh Government) - 37 jobs created compared to a target of 26 up to quarter 3</p>	<p>Average Queue Time for Contact Centre Services (seconds) / Daytime service – Actual performance for quarter 3 was 109.9 seconds compared to a target of 50 seconds. Quarter 1 saw an uplift in Waste related calls of 24% . Quarter 2 saw this demand returning to normal and as a result of this and staff recruitment, the target was attained for quarter 3 with actual performance at 31 seconds for this quarter. However performance for the whole year to date, April to December 2013, was not attained</p>
<p>% of Council Tax due for the financial year which was received by the Authority - Quarter 3 was 85.4% against a target of 84.0%</p>	<p>% of appeals determined that upheld the authority's decision in relation to planning application decisions and enforcement notices - Quarter 3 performance was 52.8% against a target of 70%. This indicator measures the outcome of appeals taken to the Planning Inspector after being refused by the Council. Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee are in the process of establishing a working group to examine the appeal decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate, the emerging themes and the relationship between the success rate at appeal and decisions made at the Development Control Committee</p>
<p>% of total planning applications determined within 8 weeks - Quarter 3 was 71.5% compared to a target of 66.0%</p>	<p>% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from 100 largest non-domestic Council buildings - Quarter 3 performance was 2.8% compared to a target of 4.0%. Performance at quarter 3 has been negatively affected by weather correction of the data - CO2 reduction based on actual data is 6.56% at quarter 3</p>
<p>Resolution - % Out of hours emergency contacts – Quarter 3 was 97.0% compared to a target of 80.0%</p>	<p>% of standard searches returned within 5 working days – Quarter 3 performance was 87.3% compared to a target of 95.0%. A temporary reduction in staffing capacity during the autumn months impacted on performance. Performance improved during November and December when 100% of searches were returned within 5 working days</p>
<p>% Enquiries resolved at first point of contact based on customer view - Face to Face – Quarter 3 was 97.0% compared to a target of 95.0%</p>	

4. Health Check Info

Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71,144 physical visits to Museums (compared to 88,975 in Q3 2012/13)
Bringing It All Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86.46% invoice payments made within 10 working days (as per 'Prompt Payment Times' initiative) – compared to 82.52% in Q3 2012/13 • 628 Benefit Fraud Investigations completed compared to 446 in the same period last year • 118 Prosecutions and Sanctions made for Benefit Fraud - 140 in the same period last year • £1,031,528 Housing Benefit overpayments recovered compared to £1,107,098 in Q3 2012/13
Bringing It All Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 550 Land Searches carried out within 10 working days (99.82%) – 33 more than carried out over the same period in 2012/13 (517). 481 returned within 5 working days (87.30%) between April and December 2013 • 48.97% of all Council Tax payments are made by direct debit, an increase from 52,320 to 53,738 payments (47.89% of payments made by direct debit in the same period in 2012/13) • 875 planning applications decided (19 Major, 220 Minor, 422 Householder, 3 subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and 211 other). 899 Planning applications decided during the same period in 2012/13 • 789 applications in total have been approved in the financial year (90.17%), compared to 753 (83.76%) in Q3 2012/13

5. Supplementary Performance Info:

People Matter	Sickness Absence	% Total	% <28 days	% >28 days	% Staff Turnover
	Total (Headcount 956)	3.12%	1.19%	1.93%	3.97%
	Chief Executive (Headcount 61)	3.76%	1.36%	2.40%	6.56%
	Regeneration and Planning (Headcount 96)	3.25%	1.45%	1.80%	6.25%
	Human Resources (Headcount 122)	1.97%	0.81%	1.16%	2.46%
	Corporate Estates (Headcount 90)	2.26%	1.32%	0.94%	4.44%
	Finance (Headcount 309)	3.34%	1.04%	2.30%	3.56%
	Customer Care & IT (Headcount 197)	3.74%	1.45%	2.29%	3.55%
	Legal (Headcount 55)	3.89%	1.48%	2.41%	5.45%
	Procurement (Headcount 26)	0.59%	0.42%	0.17%	0.00%
Occupational Health Activities (from the 1st April to 31st December 2013):					
No. of appointments	Of the 560 appointments attended, 273 (48.7%) were with physiotherapists, 116 (20.7%) were with nursing staff, 146 (26.1%) with counselling, 23 (4.1%) with medical officer visits and 2 with technicians (0.4%)				



Note

Briefing paper summarises information presented to Cabinet Performance And Resources Committee on the 19th March 2014.

Wales Programme for Improvement**Physical Regeneration 2013/14 Action Plan - Town centre enhancement; helping the private sector bring land back to productive use and supporting local business to benefit the local economy****What we aim to achieve:**

Our town centres are a focus for our communities as places to live, work and shop. We need to help create the right environment and promote our area as an attractive location to live, invest and do business. To do this will mean working with stakeholders, investors and funding organisations to support improvement in our towns. Supporting business to start up, grow and win contracts is a key part of this

Quarter 3 Performance Summary:

4 further Business Club events have been held this quarter namely Super Fast Cymru information joint event with BT, Global Entrepreneurial Week, joint event with Ladies Business Alliance, Meet the buyer joint event with RCT Procurement and Welsh Government and What the Dickens Christmas joint event with Elevate Cymru. Over 100 businesses attended the events. The feedback shows that business clearly welcomes the support these events offer, both in terms of the subject matter and networking opportunities.

This quarter saw the Council endorse some significant work which has been completed collaboratively on a regional level. The 10 South East Wales Local Authorities have collectively prepared a Regional Strategic Framework which sets out how Councils can collaboratively influence and facilitate economic benefits for the area. This work has also been built on by the development of a Regional European Funding Prospectus which gives clear focus to the development of new projects for the new round of European Funding. Both of these were reported to the Council's Cabinet on 18th November 2013 and were fully endorsed. Both regional and local work is now therefore continuing to develop projects which will support regional economic growth.

The Lido restoration project reached a key stage this quarter with the completion of the detailed design. This has allowed the process of appointing a contractor to start in December with an appointment due to be made next quarter.

It had been intended to look at the potential for a Business Improvement District in the Borough by the end of the year. This was accelerated and completed on 18th November 2013 when the Cabinet agreed to the submission of an application to the Welsh Government for funding. This was all linked to the very significant collaborative work completed during this quarter to develop a substantial application, with partners, for the Welsh Government's Regeneration Investment Fund; Vibrant and Viable Places. The initial Vibrant and Viable Places application had been successful in September and this quarter saw the second stage application approved by Cabinet on 18th November 2013 for submission later that month. Next quarter will see whether this has also been successful.

On 25th October 2013 the UK government issued new guidance on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This happened following the Rhondda Cynon Taf consultation on the proposed CIL charges and just before the results and proposed changes were due to be reported to Cabinet, then Council. The main change was the CIL implementation deadline and therefore the revised completion dates for this work will not be problematic.

The development of the Annual Delivery Report for the Council allowed the reporting of the regeneration activities undertaken in 2012/3 to be reported within the Council's overall performance reporting system, rather than as a separate report to Cabinet. The need for a stand alone report has therefore been superseded.

Jane Cook (Director of Regeneration and Planning) - December 2013

Key Priority: Regeneration of Our Communities - Physical Regeneration

Lead Officer: Jane Cook - Director of Regeneration and Planning

Outcome 1: Encourage and facilitate investment (including European funding) in Rhondda Cynon Taf to strengthen the economy and create jobs

Measures

Title	Target	Actual	RAG	Comment
Me01 - No. of businesses in the County Borough (Local)		5030.00		For information only, no target set.
Me02a - The rate of births (start ups) of small / medium enterprises (Local)		10%		505 new business start ups. Calendar year data published 1 year in arrears (2012)
Me02b - The rate of deaths (closures) of small / medium enterprises (Local)		11%		555 business closures. Calendar year data published 1 year in arrears (2012)
Me03 - Amount of new floor space permitted and/or developed in major commercial developments in RCT per annum				For information only, no target set. Data reported at year end.
Me04 - No. of jobs created through grant support programmes direct to businesses (funded by the Council and / or Welsh Government - excluding jobs created through the Pontypridd and Aberdare regeneration projects)		60.00		Performance against target is best evaluated at year end
Me05 - No. of businesses supported through direct grant programmes (funded by the Council and/or Welsh Government)		57.00		Performance against target is best evaluated at year end. Q1 data for this indicator has been amended from 15 to 12 following a review of the indicator definition, when a decision was made not to include businesses supported under the Townscape Enhancement Project
Me06 - No. of people employed as a result of Community Benefits into major authority contracts				Baseline year, no target set. Data reported at year end
Me07 - % creditor payments to local business using post codes CF, SA, NP (YTD)		70.36		This performance indicator has been revised and recalculated to better reflect the level of spend with local businesses by removing some categories of spend which are less relevant, for example direct payments. This year will now provide baseline data to inform future target setting.
Me08 - No. of suppliers attending local development workshops	300.00	290.00	⬆️	
Me09 - No. of local businesses that submitted bids / tenders for Council contracts		186.00		New indicator. Baseline year, no target set.

Critical Improvement Action 1 - Report the impact that the economic regeneration activities undertaken during 2012/13 have had (including town centre related activities)

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - Produce a report for Cabinet setting out the key economic regeneration activities undertaken throughout 2012/13 together with the impact they had / starting to have - Sep 13	⬆️	Complete	Information related to this report was incorporated into the Draft Annual Delivery report presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16th October 2013 and Council on 30th October 2013.
.			

Critical Improvement Action 2 - Support the development of Rhondda Cynon Taf as a location for investment and business growth

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - Progress the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) ¹ through the statutory consultation stage to support growth in Rhondda Cynon Taf: M01i - Report to Cabinet setting out the draft charging schedule - Jun 13	➔	Complete	
M01ii - Consultation on Draft Charging Schedule - Jun 13 to Aug 13	➔	Complete	
M01iii - Submission of Draft Charging Schedule for examination - Dec 13	⬇️	Target Missed	In October UK Government put the implementation deadline for CIL back one year from April 2014 to April 2015. The timing of the new guidance has resulted in delays to Cabinet and Council consideration. Revised delivery date March 2014.
M01iv - Examination of Draft Charging Schedule - Feb 14	⬇️	Not on target	As above, revised delivery date October 2014
M01v - Report to Cabinet (including the inspectors report) and recommendations for implementing the CIL - Mar 14	⬇️	Not on target	As above, revised delivery date October 2014.
M01vi - Implementation of the CIL - From Apr 14	⬇️	Not on target	As above, revised delivery date December 2014.
M02 - Expand the bi-annual developer forum arrangements to include Planning Agents - Mar 14	➔	On Target	
M03 - Through engagement with Business Club members, review Business Club services to support improved business networking and encourage better trading opportunities - Jan 14	➔	On Target	
M04 - Deliver a programme of extensive support (via the creation of a Business Enquiry Service) to local businesses to better understand specific needs, and facilitate the delivery of support, from Council services and/or a range of partners e.g. Business in Focus - From Jul 13	➔	On Target	
M05 - Provide a range of support to new business start ups to improve their opportunities to survive & grow (includes gaining a better understanding of key reasons for business 'deaths' to inform how the Council can further support new 'start ups) - Mar 14	➔	On Target	

Critical Improvement Action 3 - Introduce arrangements to enable the Council to take maximum advantage of the next round of European funding (to commence from January 2014)

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - Develop a corporate officer working group that will provide guidance on emerging programmes and advise on governance arrangements for projects - Mar 14	➔	Complete	
M02 - Report proposed funding applications (including those regionally based) to Cabinet for review and if deemed appropriate, approval and submission to the external funding body for consideration - ongoing	➔	On Target	

[*1] Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new Levy that local authorities can choose to charge to new developments in their area. The finance generated from the CIL will be used to fund the provision of new or improved infrastructure that will support new development in the region

Critical Improvement Action 4 - In collaboration with Welsh Government and business support agencies, provide opportunities that enable local businesses to prepare and submit robust bids and tenders

Title	Overall Status	RAG	Comment
M01 - Hold Meet the Buyers Events and Supplier Development Days to help local businesses become better prepared to submit bids / tenders for Council contracts being let - from Jun 13	On Target	➖	
.			

Critical Improvement Action 5 - Maximise the community benefits potential of relevant new contracts

Title	Overall Status	RAG	Comment
M01 - Evaluate the economic impact of work in Rhondda Cynon Taf arising from Abercynon/Ynysboeth/Cwmbach Schools, by using the Welsh Government's Community Benefits Measurement tool and report findings to the Corporate Management Team - Mar 14	On Target	➖	
M02 - Undertake a pilot of using Community Benefits clauses for projects less than £2m and report findings to the Corporate Management Team - Mar 14	On Target	➖	

Key Priority: Regeneration of Our Communities - Physical Regeneration

Lead Officer: Jane Cook - Director of Regeneration & Planning

Outcome 2: Sustainable Town Centres which contribute to the economy of the Borough

Measures

Title	Target	Actual	RAG	Comment
Me01 - Number of vacant retail premises in established towns and settlements				For information only, no target set. Data reported annually
Me02 - Number of jobs created in Aberdare and Pontypridd Town Centres through grant support programmes direct to businesses (funded by the Council and/or Welsh Government) [*1]	26.00	37.00	–	
Me03 - Amount of floor area (square metres) made available to bring back into use in Aberdare and Pontypridd town centres through grant support programmes direct to businesses (funded by the Council and/or Welsh Government)	1890.00	3320.00	–	

[*1] Data relates to cumulative position over the whole length of the scheme which commenced in 2010/11

Critical Improvement Action 1 - Delivery of the Pontypridd Town Centre regeneration project through enhancement of the public realm (funded from the Welsh Government through the European Regional Development Fund and Targeted Match Funding, alongside Council and private sector contributions)

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - Complete public realm enhancements (in Taff Street, Market Street, High Street, Church Street, Mill Street and surrounding areas including the fountain at Penuel Square - subject to on-going snagging) - May 13	–	Complete	
M02 - Deliver a programme of Townscape Enhancement projects for 2013/14 aimed at improving the physical condition of business premises/bringing floor space back into use/supporting businesses to develop - Ongoing	–	On Target	
M03 - Develop and deliver joint initiatives with businesses and stakeholders in Pontypridd Town Centre that will help encourage and attract business investment and sustain existing businesses - Ongoing	–	On Target	

Critical Improvement Action 2 - Delivery of the regeneration of Pontypridd Lido Business Case to bring the grade II listed building back into economic use

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - Agree and introduce a programme of community educational and volunteering activities to help local communities benefit from the opportunities presented by the development of the Lido project - Aug 13	➔	Complete	
M02 - Progress arrangements to complete the design and tender process for the construction works - Mar 14	➔	Complete	
M03 - Complete the Lido restoration - Sep 15	➔	On Target	

Critical Improvement Action 3 - Delivery of the Aberdare Town Centre Regeneration Project through enhancement of the public realm (funded from the Welsh Government through the European Regional Development Fund, Heads of the Valley programme and targeted match funding. The remainder of the funding package is provided by the Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Cadw and the private sector)

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - Deliver a programme of Townscape Enhancement/Heritage projects for 2013/14 aimed at improving the physical condition of business premises/bringing floor space back into use/supporting businesses to develop - Dec 13	➔	Complete	
M02 - Develop and deliver joint initiatives with businesses and stakeholders in Aberdare Town Centre that will help encourage and attract business investment and sustain existing businesses - Ongoing	➔	On Target	

Critical Improvement Action 4 - Explore funding opportunities (via the Welsh European Funding Office - WEFO) for the regeneration of Mountain Ash and Treorchy Town Centres

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - If invited by WEFO, submit business cases. Further actions to be incorporated into the action plan following notification from WEFO of the way forward			No invitation to submit business case from WEFO.
.			

Critical Improvement Action 5 - Investigate the feasibility of establishing a Business Improvement District in Rhondda Cynon Taf

Title	RAG	Overall Status	Comment
M01 - Prepare a report for Cabinet exploring the potential to establish a BID within Rhondda Cynon Taf - Mar 14	●	Complete	
.			

