

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013 - 2014

**CORPORATE SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

10 DECEMBER 2013

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

Agenda Item No. 4

**EXCEPTION REPORT – COUNCIL
PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30TH
SEPTEMBER 2013 (QUARTER 2)**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Exceptions agreed by the meeting of 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 18th November 2013.

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 This process ensures that 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 and Chief Executive's Division for the period to 30th September 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 18th November 2013, 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 those 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 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Item: EXCEPTION REPORT – COUNCIL PERFORMANCE (QUARTER 2)

Background Papers

Report of the Group Director, Corporate Services “Council Performance Report - 30 September 2013 (Quarter 2)” – presented to Cabinet Performance and Resources Committee 18th November 2013.

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

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Appendix 1

Briefing Paper

Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee
10th December 2013

Council Performance Report 30th September 2013 (Quarter 2)

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

1. Financial Performance

a) Revenue Budgets:

	Budget as at 30th September 2013/14	Projected Actual as at 30th September 2013/14	Variance Over (Under)
	£M	£M	£M
Corporate Services	22.475	22.339	(0.136)
Chief Executives	9.852	9.783	(0.069)
Total	32.327	32.122	(0.205)

Key Revenue Issues:

- Overall spend for the Group and Division is projected to be £0.205M under budget as at quarter two
- Financial Services (£0.103M underspend)
- Regeneration & Planning (£0.043M underspend)

b) Capital Budgets:

	Budget As At 30th September	2nd Quarter Actual	% of Total Budget spent in 2nd quarter
	£M	£M	
Corporate Services	2.149	0.129	6.0%
Chief Executives	6.079	2.103	34.6%
Total	8.228	2.232	27.1%

Key Capital Issues:

- New Welsh Government Renewal Areas Grant Approval reflected in the programme.

c) Treasury Management

	Budget as at 30th September 2013/14	Projected Actual as at 30th September 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.

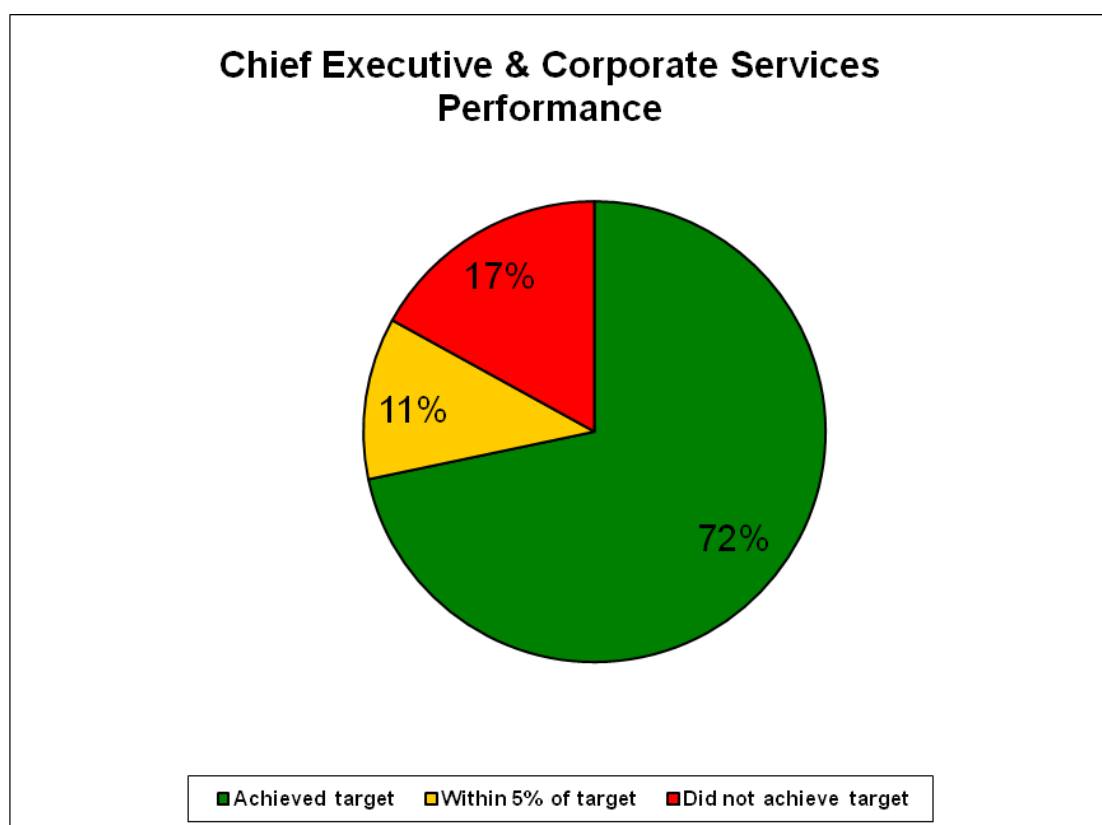
2. Wales Programme For Improvement

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	53	
Achieved Quarter 2 Target	38	72%
Within 5% of Quarter 2 Target	6	11%
Did Not Achieve Quarter 2 Target	9	17%

Key Performance Issues:

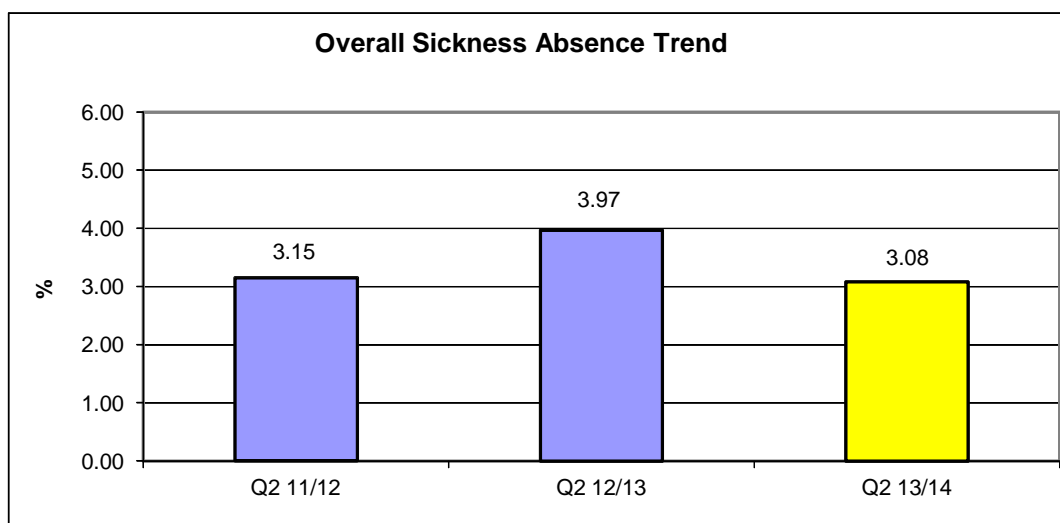
Positive Performance	Exceptions
<p>Amount of floor area (square metres) made available to bring back into use in Aberdare and Pontypridd town centres through grant support programmes direct to businesses (funded by the Council and/or Welsh Government) - 2868 square metres compared to a target of 1890 square metres</p>	<p>% of standard searches returned within 5 working days – Quarter 2 performance was 89.76% compared to a target of 95.00%. A temporary reduction in staffing capacity during the summer months impacted on performance. It is anticipated that performance will improve as the year progresses</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) - 32 jobs created compared to a target of 26 for quarter 2</p>	<p>Average Queue Time for Contact Centre Services (seconds) / Daytime service – Actual performance for quarter 2 was 138 seconds compared to a target of 50 seconds. The target has not been achieved primarily due to continued high demand; however the average queue time has improved compared to quarter 1 where performance stood at 204.8 seconds. Resources have been realigned to meet increased demand and performance is anticipated to improve further as the year progresses</p>
<p>% Undisputed Invoices Paid in 10 days (All Postcodes) - Quarter 2 was 84.5% against a target of 78.0%</p>	<p>% of appeals determined that upheld the authority's decision in relation to planning application decisions and enforcement notices - Quarter 2 performance was 52.2% against a target of 70%. This indicator measures the outcome of appeals taken to the Planning Inspector after being refused by the Council. The Planning Service studies the outcome of each appeal decision, which often can be finely balanced between parties, and takes forward any lessons learnt. Of the 23 planning appeals made to date, the Inspector agreed with the Council in 12 cases</p>
<p>% Enquiries resolved at first point of contact based on customer view - Face to Face – Quarter 2 was 98.00% compared to a target of 95.00%</p>	<p>% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from 100 largest non-domestic Council buildings - Quarter 2 performance was 2.76% compared to a target of 4.0%. Performance has improved markedly compared to the position reported in quarter 1 (0.2%). Work will continue in this area to strive for further reductions as the year progresses</p>
<p>Resolution - % Out of hours emergency telephone contacts – Quarter 2 was 97.4% compared to a target of 80.0%</p>	<p>Number of complaints to an Ombudsman classified as maladministration - 2 complaints upheld by Ombudsman compared to a target of 0 (zero)</p>

4. Health Check Info

Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47,434 physical visits to Museums (compared to 61,248 in Q2 2012/13)
Bringing It All Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 84.49% invoice payments made within 10 working days (as per 'Prompt Payment Times' initiative) – compared to 82.85% in Q2 2012/13 • 356 Benefit Fraud Investigations completed compared to 301 in the same period last year • 71 Prosecutions and Sanctions made for Benefit Fraud - 89 in the same period last year • £679,921 Housing Benefit overpayments recovered compared to £786,360 in Q2 2012/13
Bringing It All Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 381 Land Searches carried out within 10 working days (100%) – compared to 344 carried out over the same period in 2012/13. 342 returned within 5 working days (89.76%) • 49.28% of all Council Tax payments are made by direct debit, an increase from 52,432 to 54,025 payments (48.04% of payments made by direct debit in the same period in 2012/13) • 578 planning applications received (13 Major, 135 Minor, 294 Householder, 2 subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and 134 other). 603 Planning applications received during the same period in 2012/13 • 516 applications in total have been approved in the financial year (89.29%), compared to 497 (82.4%) in Q2 2012/13

5. Supplementary Performance Info:

People Matter	Sickness Absence	% Total	% <28 days	% >28 days	% Staff Turnover
	Total (Headcount 957)	3.08%	1.20%	1.88%	3.45%
	Chief Executive (Headcount 63)	3.22%	1.37%	1.85%	3.96%
	Regeneration and Planning (Headcount 93)	2.67%	1.47%	1.20%	5.38%
	Human Resources (Headcount 122)	2.03%	0.74%	1.29%	1.64%
	Corporate Estates (Headcount 90)	2.87%	1.61%	1.26%	3.33%
	Finance (Headcount 317)	3.06%	1.08%	1.98%	3.15%
	Customer Care & IT (Headcount 190)	4.08%	1.35%	2.73%	3.16%
	Legal (Headcount 55)	4.24%	1.59%	2.65%	5.45%
	Procurement (Headcount 27)	0.30%	0.06%	0.24%	0.00%
Occupational Health Activities (from the 1st April to 30th September 2013):					
No. of appointments		Of the 387 appointments attended, 200 were with physiotherapists (51.68%), 76 were with nursing staff (19.64%), 93 with counselling (24.03%), 16 with medical officer visits (4.13%) and 2 with technicians (0.52%)			



Note

Briefing paper summarises information presented to Cabinet Performance And Resources Committee on the 18th November 2013.

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 2 Performance Summary:

Progress has been positive this quarter, with steps towards a coordinated developer and agents' forum being completed. At a meeting in July, housing developers welcomed the Council's constructive approach to those involved in the development industry. The aim of this work is to reduce the barriers to housing development in the Borough to benefit the local economy. The consultation for the Community Infrastructure Levy was undertaken and further productive engagement with the development industry completed to take this forward.

Business support arrangements have been remodelled and are now being tested and further developed. This is providing a more rounded and coordinated approach to business which is currently being well received. The Business Club has had a number of well supported events which have been very well received by businesses in RCT. Progress has been made, in conjunction with Neath Port Talbot CBC, with the developer of the £300M windfarm development in terms of local supply chains and employment opportunities, in advance of the contractor appointment.

Following the significant milestone of the completion of the streetworks in Pontypridd during Q1, improvements to large buildings are on site in both Aberdare and Pontypridd, continuing the private property enhancements already completed.

Work to ensure that European funds are available to support the economy is progressing through the development of a senior officer group within the Council and collaborative work on a regional basis.


Jane Cook (Director of Regeneration and Planning) - September 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)				For information only, no target set. Data reported annually in October
Me02a - The rate of births (start ups) of small / medium enterprises (Local)				For information only, no target set. Data reported annually in December
Me02b - The rate of deaths (closures) of small / medium enterprises (Local)				For information only, no target set. Data reported annually in December
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)		37.00		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)		35.00		Performance against target is best evaluated at year end
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	70.00			The performance indicator and definition is currently under review to improve its meaningfulness. It is anticipated that an up dated indicator will be reported later in the year
Me08 - No. of suppliers attending local development workshops	200.00	155.00		Due to the nature, type and volume of tenders conducted during this period, there was less scope to hold supplier events during this period. 2 supplier events were held during quarter 2 with 47 suppliers attending. Further workshop events are planned to be held during the next quarter and it is anticipated there will be an increase in the number of suppliers attending.
Me09 - No. of local businesses that submitted bids / tenders for Council contracts		162.00		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		Closed	This action has been addressed within the 2012/13 Annual Delivery Report. The economic regeneration element was incorporated into the assessment of the Physical Regeneration improvement priority action plan that was reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16-10-13, with the whole Annual Delivery Report reported to Council on 30-10-13
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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	➔	On Target	
M01iv - Examination of Draft Charging Schedule - Feb 14	➔	On Target	
M01v - Report to Cabinet (including the inspectors report) and recommendations for implementing the CIL - Mar 14	➔	On Target	
M01vi - Implementation of the CIL - From Apr 14	➔	On Target	
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	➔	On Target	
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	➖	
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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 Out 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	32.00	–	
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	2868.00	–	

[*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	➔	On Target	
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	➔	On Target	
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.
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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	●	On Target	
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