

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016

**FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

9TH DECEMBER 2015

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3

**THE WAY AHEAD: THE
COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE
PLAN 2016-2020 FOR
CONSULTATION**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide scrutiny with the opportunity to consider the Council's proposed draft Corporate Plan for 2016-2020 prior to public consultation

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider and challenge the draft Corporate Plan;
- 2.2 Provide feedback to Cabinet on any proposed amendments to the draft Corporate Plan prior to Cabinet proceeding with its public consultation phase.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It is the intention of Cabinet to consult with the public and staff on the draft Corporate Plan and present the final Plan, along with the consultation feedback, to a meeting of the Council in March 2016.
- 3.2 However, at the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24th November 2015 it was agreed that the Finance & Scrutiny Committee should have the opportunity to undertake pre-scrutiny and influence the content of the proposed draft Corporate Plan prior to wider public consultation.
- 3.3 Attached as Appendix 1 to this covering report is an extract of the accompanying report of the Chief Executive in Discussion with the Leader of the Council to Cabinet which provides context and sets out the challenges in delivering the Plan. Attached as Appendix 2 is the proposed draft Corporate Plan itself for consideration by Members.

- 3.4 The Chief Executive will be in attendance at the meeting to respond to Members' queries..

APPENDIX 1

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

THE WAY AHEAD
THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2016-2020
FOR CONSULTATION

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER
OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN)

AUTHOR: Chris Bradshaw: 01443 424026

4. **CONTEXT**

4.1 The draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020 seeks to set the overall direction for the Council over the coming four years, describing its vision, purpose and ambition as local authority for the County Borough.

4.2 The Council's proposed vision is:

“For a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all”.

4.3 The Council's proposed purpose and the reason why it exists is: ***“to provide strong community leadership and effective services for the people of Rhondda Cynon Taf to enable them to fulfil their potential and prosper”.***

4.4 It is proposed that the Council is focused on the following three priorities:

1. People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone;

2. Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work;

3. Economy - Building a strong economy.

4.5 The new draft Corporate Plan will be a key part of the Council's budget and business planning process, and therefore it is essential that the draft Corporate Plan takes into account the fact that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and the wider public sector continue to face significant

financial challenges. Despite significant reductions to Government spending since 2010 and a return to economic growth, the financial environment for the Council, the wider public sector, and residents continues to be challenging. The position can be summarised as follows:

- Further spending cuts to come: Despite nearly £100 billion of spending cuts since 2010, the UK budget deficit still stands at around £90 billion meaning that austerity will continue.
- Increasing pressure on services: increasing demand on services is driven by a changing population. Rhondda Cynon Taf's population is relatively static but health and social services in particular are facing acute challenges due to the growth in older cohorts, as people live for longer.
- Wider financial pressure on households: from energy bills, housing costs, wage restraint, and benefit reforms.
- Increasing public expectations: with residents expecting better services and more prompt responses. This means that the Council must plan for the fact that spending reductions will affect all parts of the public sector to the end of the decade and that increasing levels of demand will not be met from simply doing more of what it is currently doing.
- The impact on the Council's finances – past and future. In Rhondda Cynon Taf, the impact of austerity has translated to the Council needing to save or generate £xm over the period 2011 – 2015, equivalent to x% of the Council's budget. Looking ahead, based on assumptions about future public spending and rising demand, the Council is forecasting the need for further savings of £x million in the latter half of the decade. In real terms, by the end of the decade, the council's total spending power will be nearly half of what it was at the start.

4.6 Knowing that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges in the years ahead, it has a responsibility to develop and agree a plan for meeting the challenge.

4.7 Despite austerity, the economy is now growing, with the Cardiff Capital City Region one of the fastest growing areas outside of London. This creates opportunities for the Council; for residents; and for business. In Rhondda Cynon Taf, the benefits are already being seen through reduced unemployment, falling numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, with more people on benefits moving into work. Despite, the recession more new homes were built in the County Borough in recent years than in all but two other local authorities across Wales. We are actively working with housing developers in areas such as Llanillid, Robertstown, Hirwaun, Tonyrefail, and Mwyndy to provide new homes and new jobs. Furthermore, the ten local authorities of South East Wales, Welsh Government and the UK Government are exploring the

opportunity for a £1 billion investment in boosting the local economy in the Cardiff Capital City Region that will benefit residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

5 HOW WILL THE COUNCIL 'MEET THE CHALLENGE'?

- 5.1 Most people living in Rhondda Cynon Taf use only universal services. For these residents, the Council's role is to 'provide the essential services well' and maintain the environment for a thriving County Borough - disposing of waste; keeping streets clean; providing excellent customer service; allowing people to transact in more convenient ways; resolving issues promptly and ensuring the County Borough has the infrastructure to continue its success – good schools, education, training, jobs, housing and transport. The Council will work to ensure that all residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf can benefit from the opportunities of growth.
- 5.2 However, some residents will need targeted support to allow them to benefit from this success. As such, the Council will continue to work with other parts of the public sector to identify those residents at risk of missing out and provide the right interventions at the right time. 'Helping people to help themselves' will reduce dependence on services and on the ever diminishing resources available. We want to help communities to do more themselves and give them more control over local services and community facilities.
- 5.3 Whilst, the Council is in a position of reducing budgets and levels of service provision, it is responsible for planning and providing much of the infrastructure that keeps the County Borough working and moving. The financial climate, and the challenges it presents, mean that we need to find significant savings. We are committed to doing this in a way that avoids creating problems for future generations. We will have a particular focus on supporting initiatives that stimulate economic growth and create jobs in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Regeneration revitalises communities and provides residents and businesses with places to live and work. The Council's focus will be to 'Build a Sustainable County Borough'.
- 5.4 Furthermore, growing the local Council Tax base and generating more income makes the Council less reliant on Government funding and helps to offset the impact of service cuts. Income maximisation through growth and regeneration also generates resources for investment in future infrastructure - roads and transport infrastructure, housing and schools.
- 5.5 Rhondda Cynon Taf's approach to meeting the financial challenge has focused on Members' commitment that the Council 'lives within its means', and that it is wrong to spend more than we can afford, or to

pass on financial problems to the next generation. This means we have to make difficult decisions now and focus on our priorities and manage our budgets. The majority of savings made to date have been through back office efficiencies. The Council has focused on cutting bureaucracy by cutting the number of senior managers; cutting Cabinet Member allowances; and cutting spending on the back office – which now cost £xm less a year than in 2012. This has meant that the Council has avoided budget overspends and in year cuts seen in other local authorities and has created headroom to reinvest – in infrastructure, regeneration, and school places.

5.6 This focus will continue and the Council will seek to:

- Reduce its office accommodation floorspace by 20% by 2020, further reducing back office costs;
- Invest in new IT to enable staff to work more flexibly across a range of locations, allowing them to be closer to the residents they work with;
- Continue to increase energy efficiency measures for the Council, including carbon reduction across services and renewable energy schemes for our own land and property.
- Become a smaller, more efficient organisation, working as one, with a reduced budget, fewer employees and fewer services provided directly by the Council;
- Collaborate more with other public services, the community and voluntary sector and businesses to find common and jointly owned solutions;
- Work with suppliers and contracted service providers to reduce the costs of supplies and service;
- Create a more business-like footing with the community and voluntary sector through better, more coordinated commissioning by the Council.

5.7 As the Council focuses on the challenges ahead, it does so from a firm financial position. Over the coming few years, the Council will redesign services and deliver them differently through a range of models and providers. The Council does not have a rigid view about how services should be designed and delivered – its concern is primarily with service quality and value for money for the taxpayer. The Council will continue to develop a mixed economy of providers from across the public, private and voluntary sectors through a variety of delivery models - in-house, outsourced, Joint Ventures, Social Enterprises, Mutual – that are appropriate to the service.

5.8 The Council's new draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020 sets out the Council's approach to 'meeting the challenge' by:

- Providing essential services well;
- Helping people and communities help themselves;
- Building a Sustainable County Borough;
- Living within our means.

5.9 The draft Corporate Plan also includes measures and targets which will be used to monitor the delivery of the Corporate Plan. It is proposed that progress in delivering the Plan is monitored by Cabinet and Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

5.10 Welsh Government is currently consulting on Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act that focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act will make public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place the following seven well-being goals:

1. **A prosperous Wales** - An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
2. **A resilient Wales** - A nation which maintains and enhances a bio-diverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
3. **A healthier Wales** - A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
4. **A more equal Wales** - A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
5. **A Wales of cohesive communities** - Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
6. **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language** - A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

7. **A globally responsible Wales** - A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

- 5.11 This draft Corporate Plan's vision, priorities and principles support the seven Well-being Goals and the Goals will be incorporated within the Council's action plans that deliver on the Council's three priorities. The Act proposes that the Council, by 31 March 2017, must set well-being objectives that maximise its contribution to achieving the well-being goals. In doing so, the Council will be expected to take all reasonable steps to meet those well-being objectives. The requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act will be incorporated within this draft Corporate Plan when Welsh Government has completed its consultation and set the requirements for local authorities.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Areas of investment identified in the plan, as well as the consideration of tough decisions ahead, will be subject to Equalities Impact Assessments as subsequent budget proposals and other strategic decisions are brought forward during the course of the Plan.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 This draft Corporate Plan has been informed by the extensive budget consultation throughout 2015, and has sought to bring together the outcomes from the consultation to shape the Council's vision, purpose and priorities. The draft Corporate Plan is presented to Cabinet as a draft so that the Plan along with the 2016/17 budget proposals can be consulted upon together over the coming months with a wide range of stakeholders, including staff engagement. Consultation on the budget and feedback received from the community will influence investment areas outlined in the Plan. It is proposed that the Corporate Plan is approved by Council in conjunction with the approval of the 2016/17 budget in March 2016.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 The draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020 will be set within the context of the budget setting process for 2016/17. Any investments set out in the Plan will be considered in the 2016/17 budget proposals to ensure that spending priorities are aligned, where appropriate, with the Plan.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Cabinet has responsibility for the overall strategic direction of the Council and for formulating the Corporate Plan.

10 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.

- 10.1 This report proposes a new set of corporate priorities and performance targets which will drive the work of the Council between 2016/17 and 2020/21.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The Cabinet are recommended to approve the draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020 for consultation.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

Draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020

Contact Officer

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER
OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN)**

**Item: THE WAY AHEAD
THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2016-2020
FOR CONSULTATION**

Background Papers:

Draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE WAY AHEAD

THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2016-2020

DRAFT SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION

The Way Ahead for Rhondda Cynon Taf

The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020

Introduction by the Leader of the Council

Our 2016-2020 Corporate Plan explains the way ahead for the Council at a time when local government nationally is going through enormous change, with the likelihood of the Council being abolished and a new Council, serving a wider area, being created in 2020, and during this period receiving ever reducing budgets. All parts of the public sector face the same challenge of reduced budgets and increasing demand for services. The scale of this challenge is huge. For Rhondda Cynon Taf, it means that we'll have significantly less spending power at the end of the decade than we had at the beginning. This makes the need for change, in both how the Council operates and how public services are provided, an absolute necessity.

We have done what we can to maintain services up to this point. Without more radical action the rising costs in social care alone, (which is clearly some of our most vital work) mean that we, along with other Councils, will face serious financial challenges.

Change can sometimes be controversial and difficult for people to accept, particularly when it affects things they hold dear. However, there is no alternative but to do things differently and it provides the opportunity for us all to ensure that we are doing the very best that we can for our customers.

With a decreasing budget, we know that the Council will shrink in size, employing fewer people over the coming years. The relationship between the Council, its partners, providers and citizens needs to adapt; but what does this mean? It means we are open to new ways of doing things and we are not fixated by the status quo. By 2020, those public services that people need will continue to be there. What will have changed is whether or not those providing them work for the Council. Public sector; private sector; voluntary sector; a combination: we need to be concerned less about the "who" and the "how" (who provides the service and how it is provided) and concentrate on ensuring that each and every service is necessary; meets the needs of residents and provides value for money. Throughout this journey we will continue to ensure that the people and communities we serve are the central focus of our services by giving them a voice and control in reaching their own outcomes and managing their own well being wherever possible.

In achieving these goals, I must emphasise that our approach is not to outsource services. We want citizens to have control over their own lives wherever this is possible and when we need to we will seek to commission the best possible services whether they are provided "in-house" or by external providers. Our primary focus is to ensure that services are of good quality, represent value for money and achieve the outcomes residents need.

If we don't change our approach then the demand upon local services will continue to rise. Demand is driven by a growing population of younger and older people.

Managing the rising demand for services requires a step change in the Council's approach to early intervention and prevention, working across the public sector and supporting our residents to prevent problems rather than just treating the symptoms.

In some cases, it may be that residents will be required to pay more for certain services as the Council prioritises its resources. The communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf will be invited to become more involved in the design and delivery of those services. Inevitably, with less money, the Council will have to withdraw from some activities but we will work with community groups to encourage more resident participation in local issues to help fill the gap. You may have already heard about "RCT Together" and how communities are already taking the opportunity to maintain local services and facilities.

The emphasis is upon us, the Council, releasing more of the control that we have traditionally held, collaborating increasingly with partners and enabling citizens to be active and to achieve more for themselves. Our role will be to create the environment for a thriving County Borough so that people can get on with their lives, but recognising that a relatively small number of people will need targeted support.

We have to face up to the challenge of changing the way the Council works and have a plan for dealing with it. This will mean taking tough decisions which not everyone will agree with. Done in the right way, change can be positive. It drives innovation; it opens new doors; it connects people; it allows people to embrace new technologies and it can make life simpler and more fulfilling.

Despite, the likelihood of continued public sector austerity until 2020, the Council is looking to the future through the growth and regeneration of the County Borough's infrastructure. Millions of pounds are being invested in schools, new housing, our principal towns and our transport networks. It will also play a lead role in the Capital Region City Deal that has the potential for a £1bn investment that seeks to create thousands of jobs and business opportunities and provide people with the chance to acquire new skills and to secure jobs across the region.

This economic growth will drive prosperity and bring opportunities to residents; businesses; and the Council so that people can live their own lives. A growing economy will also allow the Council to generate more income to fund services; keep Council Tax down; support businesses and invest in the infrastructure needs of the County Borough.

I hope this Council Plan helps you understand how the Council is approaching the challenges and opportunities of the next four years. Most importantly please let us know what matters to you; please tell us about your ideas for the Council and your vision of the future of the County Borough.

Cllr Andrew Morgan

Leader of the Council

Vision

The Council's vision is:

“For a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all”.

The Council's Purpose and Priorities

The Council's purpose and the reason why it exists is: ***“to provide strong community leadership and effective services for the people of Rhondda Cynon Taf to enable them to fulfil their potential and prosper”.***

The Council is focused on the following three priorities:

- 1. People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone;***
- 2. Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work;***
- 3. Economy - Building a strong economy.***

In order to meet our purpose, to make progress in delivering these priorities and respond to the significant financial challenges we face the Council has to operate in a different way. It has set itself the following four principles which apply to all three priorities and everything we do. The Council will:

- **Provide essential services well** – In the coming years there will be less money available and we will have to make sure we spend it where the need is greatest. Our role is to make sure local people get good outcomes from their services. We understand that it is the quality of the service that matters to local people, not who provides it.
- **Help people and communities help themselves** – The Council is at its most effective when it is helping people to live successful lives as independently as possible and when it is helping communities to help themselves. We believe that if you give power to local people you get better results and achieve better value. We want to help communities to do more themselves and give them more control over local services such as schools, libraries and other community facilities. We know that RCT's army of volunteers already make a huge difference to thousands of people's everyday lives in their neighbourhoods, towns and villages. We want to work more closely with RCT's voluntary and community sector to stimulate innovation and encourage communities to step forward and take on new roles in providing local services and solutions.
- **Build a Sustainable County Borough** – the Council is responsible for planning and providing much of the infrastructure that keeps the County Borough working and moving. The financial climate, and the challenges it presents, mean that we need to find significant savings. We are committed to doing this in a way that

avoids creating problems for future generations. We will have a particular focus on supporting initiatives that stimulate economic growth and create jobs in RCT.

- **Live within our means** – We believe that it is wrong to spend more than we can afford, or to pass on financial problems to the next generation. This means we have to make difficult decisions now and focus on our priorities and manage our budgets. Every pound spent on running the Council is a pound that is not spent on front-line services. There is a cost associated with running any organisation, but we will continue to minimise that cost. We will do everything we can to be as efficient as possible, reduce the Council's running costs and get the best value from our assets.

In preparing this draft Corporate Plan, the Council has taken account of the **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**. Welsh Government is currently consulting on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The Act focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It will make public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven Well-being Goals:

1. **A prosperous Wales**
2. **A resilient Wales**
3. **A healthier Wales**
4. **A more equal Wales**
5. **A Wales of cohesive communities**
6. **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language**
7. **A globally responsible Wales.**

This draft Corporate Plan's vision, priorities and principles support the seven Well-being Goals and the Goals will be incorporated within the Council's action plans that deliver on the Council's three priorities. The Act proposes that the Council, by 31 March 2017, must set well-being objectives that maximise its contribution to achieving the well-being goals. In doing so, the Council will be expected to take all reasonable steps to meet those well-being objectives. The requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act will be incorporated within this draft Corporate Plan when Welsh Government has completed its consultation and set the requirements for local authorities.

The next four years in Rhondda Cynon Taf: challenge and opportunity

Council budgets will undoubtedly face further reductions until the end of the decade:

- Effective forward financial planning has meant that the Council has managed the past three years of budget reductions and sought to reduce the significance of their impact on the majority of local services, achieving nearly 60% of savings through efficiencies;

- Our approach has benefitted residents through lower than the Welsh average Council Tax bills and the avoidance of short-term, in year, arbitrary cuts across all services;
- However, despite a growing economy, the UK is still running a significant budget deficit which means that public spending will continue to be reduced by the new UK Government.

Demand on local services continues to rise. The demand is driven by a changing profile of the population, with the number of people aged over 65 rising by at least 8% in the past three years.

As a result the Council faces a possible budget gap of £80 million between 2016 and 2020. This is in addition to the £76 million budget gap the Council has dealt with between 2011 and 2016.

At the same time, residents are facing greater financial pressures from increasing energy bills, housing costs, continued wage restraint and benefit reforms.

At the same time expectations of the Council and local services are increasing driven by advances in customer services, including greater flexibility to transact online. People expect better services and more prompt responses from the Council.

However, despite the challenges, there are big opportunities.

The communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf have suffered from the global economic downturn, but the signs are that the UK economic growth in London is now starting to reach the rest of the country. Economic growth is essential to drive prosperity, reduce reliance on the public sector and to bring opportunities to residents; businesses; and the Council, which should include reduced unemployment and an increase in the number of people on benefits moving into work. To support this growth the Council will work with the other local authorities in the Cardiff Capital City Region to provide innovative ways to support businesses; work with the Jobcentre to enable other organisations to implement new skills and employment programmes; and invest in the infrastructure needs of the County Borough.

Most residents will benefit from this opportunity without direct intervention from the Council and our role is to maintain the environment for a thriving County Borough so that people can get on with their lives. However, a relatively small number of people will need short-term, targeted help to ensure they can maximise their opportunities. This will include support to develop new skills and help to overcome barriers to employment.

The new £1 billion City Deal for the Cardiff Capital City Region, which includes Rhondda Cynon Taf, will increase economic growth in the County Borough. This new approach to regenerating a regional city and its surrounding area has already seen the various public sector agencies in cities such as Glasgow and Manchester work together to pool resources and expertise to provide more integrated services. This coming together as combined authorities has increased borrowing powers and investment in local infrastructure which has spanned more than one council area, thereby jointly managing major reform programmes.

Although the Council's budget will reduce further, it will oversee the allocation of around £400 million of taxpayer funding by the end of the decade. The Council will ensure that these resources are prioritised effectively, in accordance with the priorities of residents; that statutory duties are met; and that decision making is transparent and represents value for money.

This Corporate Plan sets out Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's approach to meeting the challenges and maximising the opportunities of the next four years.

In delivering its priorities, how will Rhondda Cynon Taf respond to challenges and opportunities?

Redesigned local services – integrated and efficient

- Local Government and local public services will look very different by 2020. With financial pressures and local government reorganisation, public sector agencies will become more integrated in their approach. They will pool resources, share staff and assets and develop joint solutions to manage demand and thereby provide quality services;
- For residents this approach will mean easier access to support and the services they need without having to negotiate with different agencies;
- For the Council, it will reduce bureaucracy and create efficiencies, with increased collaboration driving innovation in the way services are designed and delivered. We have already done this effectively in a number of areas:
 - through the creation of the Joint Education School Improvement Service. This has brought together educational advisors from across five local authorities to support schools to improve educational outcomes;
 - through the implementation of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to improve child and adult protection and provide a single point for all referrals regarding concerns for a child/young person or adult.

The Council will...

- Oversee a significant change in its approach to early intervention and prevention as a means of managing demand for social care services, with a focus on promoting people's independence;
- Work with Local Service Board partners, which include the NHS and police, to pilot a targeted multi-agency approach towards 'place-based commissioning' and the targeting of resources to areas of greatest need;
- Implement a range of European Social Fund employment programmes across the County Borough in partnership with Job Centre Plus, Careers Wales, Welsh Government, Communities First, and private and voluntary sector organisations.

More involved and resilient communities...

- Greater community participation, engagement and involvement, through the RCT Together Community Participation Programme, will be an essential part of the change the Council will seek to achieve over the next four years. The

Council will work with residents to increase self-sufficiency, reduce reliance on statutory services and make the best possible use of community strengths to tailor services to need;

- The Council's vision is to develop a new relationship with residents that enable them to be independent and resilient and to take on greater responsibility for their local communities. This is not about the Council shifting its responsibility – it is about recognising that residents want to be more involved in what happens in their community.

The Council will...

- Implement its RCT Together Community Participation Programme to achieve its vision of greater community collaboration and resilience;
- Build stronger partnerships with community groups;
- Co-ordinate and improve the support it gives to communities.

Health and Social Care services will be personalised and integrated, with more people supported to live longer in their own homes...

- By 2020 social care services for adults will be remodelled to focus on minimising intervention and maximising independence, with a greater emphasis on early intervention. This approach, working with housing, health services and other partners, will enable more people to stay independent and live for longer in their own homes;
- To better manage the huge costs of A&E and hospital admissions, we will work towards social care commissioning becoming fully integrated with health services, such as primary and community care thereby improving the experience of those using health and social care services;
- More young people with complex disabilities will stay in Rhondda Cynon Taf, where they grew up, and live in their own homes, with education and training opportunities helping them to grow in independence;
- People with mental health issues will receive support in the community to help them stay well, get a job and remain active, with support focused on helping people with their whole life, not simply providing a diagnosis;
- Rhondda Cynon Taf's residents will be some of the most active and healthy in South Wales, benefitting from improved leisure facilities and making use of the County Borough's parks and open spaces.

The Council will...

- Implement its vision for adult social care, which is focused on providing personalised, integrated care with more residents being supported to live in their own homes;
- Increase the number of social care clients that receive direct payments to enable them to make personal choices to manage their own needs;
- Focus on the provision of effective telecare, housing adaptations and community support to achieve this;
- Prioritise investment in improving the physical fitness facilities at the Council's leisure centres and work with local sports clubs and community groups to increase participation in sport and leisure.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's schools will be amongst the best in the country, and with all children achieving the best they can...

- In 2020, Rhondda Cynon Taf will have primary, middle and secondary schools that are amongst the best in the country, with the quality of education being a reason for many people choosing to live in the County Borough;
- The attainment and progress of children in Rhondda Cynon Taf schools will continue to exceed the Welsh Government benchmarks and the progress of the most disadvantaged pupils will be accelerated.

The Council will...

- Continue to invest in improving school buildings and facilities, to ensure the County Borough's pupils have the learning environment fit for the 21st Century;
- Continue to work in partnership with all schools to raise standards and close the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. The focus will be on improving the quality of leadership and teaching through effective school to school support.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's children and young people will receive a great start in life...

- The Council will continue to ensure a great start in life for every child and that young people are well prepared for adulthood;
- Safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable young people will continue to be effective and robust, with greater interface between statutory services, for example the health service and the police working together to identify and support young people who might be at risk.

The Council will...

- Continue to support families with an integrated range of services throughout a child's early years. This will include health, education and social care and focus primarily upon areas of greatest need through the Flying Start Programme and Families First. This will help to ensure that children get the best start to life;
- Where children may be at risk, maintain a multi-agency response that brings together different professionals to share information quickly and effectively, respond appropriately thereby reducing the need for re-referrals?;
- Further develop the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and to use the information gathered to identify issues that may impede the development of a successful childhood. It will realign existing services to promote effective outcomes to unmet need;
- Work with families to intervene early where issues arise and commission effective family support arrangements to keep families together, where it is safe and in the best interests of the children to do.
- Put in place a greater choice of high quality local placements available for children who cannot remain at home, by increasing the number of Rhondda Cynon Taf foster carers.

There will be a broad offer of skills and employment programmes for all ages...

- The Council will appropriately monitor and support the development of the County Borough's young people and, through a range of European Social Fund Programmes work with the Jobcentre, skills providers and other partners to provide a range of programmes aimed at supporting people into work and enabling them to progress whilst in employment.

The Council will...

- Continue to work with schools to track young people at risk of becoming 'NEET' and work with partners to ensure a broad skills offer for young people, encompassing a range of options including apprenticeships and employment opportunities;
- Work with Jobcentre Plus, Communities First, Welsh Government, careers Wales, Coleg Y Cymoedd and other European Social Fund Programmes operating across the region to reduce unemployment, with a focus on supporting vulnerable and hard to reach people into work; developing career pathways into higher level jobs in the care sector; and maximising retail and construction opportunities that derive from regeneration activity across the region.

DRAFT SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION

Rhondda Cynon Taf's local environment will be clean and attractive, with well-maintained roads and pavements, flowing traffic, increased recycling and less waste sent to landfill...

- Rhondda Cynon Taf's streets will be kept clean and tidy, benefitting from increased enforcement action against littering and dog fouling;
- the County Borough's roads and pavements will be in a good condition, with the Council recognising that this has consistently been the top priority for residents ;
- Residents will recycle more of their household waste, with less waste being sent to landfill.

The Council will...

- Maintain a clean County Borough by improving cleansing routes and ensuring that town centre and residential areas are regularly reviewed to ensure a consistent standard of cleanliness;
- Invest a further £20 million in road, highways infrastructure and pavement networks over the next four years, on top of the £35 million in additional investment since 2011;
- Further remodel its waste and recycling service, making it easier for residents to recycle more which will benefit the environment and save the Council money in collection and disposal costs.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's parks and green spaces will continue to be valued by residents...

- Resident feedback consistently shows that Rhondda Cynon Taf's parks and green spaces are amongst its biggest assets;
- The Council recognises this, and will continue to ensure that the County Borough's parks and green spaces are looked after.

The Council will...

- Develop more innovative ways of maintaining its parks and green spaces, including working in partnership with community groups and focusing on using parks to achieve wider public health priorities for the residents of the County Borough.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will be amongst the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion, and residents feeling safe...

- Rhondda Cynon Taf will continue to be one of Wales's safest areas, with effective working between the Council and police driving further reductions in crime rates;
- Community cohesion in Rhondda Cynon Taf will remain high, with people from different backgrounds getting on well together.

The Council will...

- Work with communities and partners to achieve long-term sustained reductions in crime, building on reductions achieved between 20x and 20y. The aim is to further reduce all crimes including the '7 Key Neighbourhood Crime Types' - Burglary, Violence with Injury, Robbery, Theft from Person, Criminal Damage, Theft of Motor Vehicle and Theft From Motor Vehicle;
- Work with Safer Communities partners to implement new 2014 Anti-Social Behaviour legislation to prevent and deter anti-social behaviour and reduce repeat victimisation
- Work in partnership to reduce the under-reporting of hate crime;
- Continue to strengthen the effectiveness of the partnership approach to preventing domestic violence through coordinating service provision to help those at high risk of repeat victimisation.

Residents will see a responsible approach to regeneration, with new homes being built and job opportunities created...

- The new multi million pound Capital Region City Deal for Cardiff and South East Wales creates the opportunity for significant investment across the region, including Rhondda Cynon Taf. Over the next ten years there will be improvements to commercial infrastructure, the transport network, housing, all of which will create employment opportunities;
- Rhondda Cynon Taf will go through a significant period of regeneration over the next decade and beyond, with major housing schemes being planned and implemented in areas such as Llanillid, Robertstown, Hirwaun, Tonyrefail, and Mwyndy, Pontyclun;
- We want our larger town centres to be vibrant and enticing with a strong offer which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities. The town centres will benefit from investment to ensure an attractive environment for local businesses, shoppers and residents.

The Council will...

- By 2020, deliver, more than x0,000 new homes and provide for up to x,000 new jobs by working with the private sector through its Local Development Plan
- Identify a future 'pipeline' of regeneration sites, to build the new homes that residents need. This will include making better use of the Council's entire commercial property and land portfolio to promote coordinated business and housing growth;
- Actively engage with Cardiff County Council and the other south east Wales Council's over the next 10 years to maximise the benefits to the region and the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf of the new Capital Region City Deal for Cardiff and South East Wales;
- Promote key employment sites in the County Borough, such as Treforest Industrial Estate. It will support improvement in the infrastructure and assist current and new employers that wish to expand or relocate to the area;

- The larger town centres of Aberdare, Llantrisant/Talbot Green, Pontypridd and Treorchy will see significant investment through Welsh Government, private sector and Council funding to improve access infrastructure. We will continue to work with business and local communities to ensure that the town centres benefit from growth, with a tailored package of support to help them adapt successfully to a changing world.

Customer services will be intuitive and flexible, with increased user satisfaction...

- By 2020 the majority of customer interaction with the Council will be via the web and other self-service channels which will be quicker and more flexible;
- Customers will experience a consistently high quality personalised service, focussed on achieving the fast and effective resolution of queries and requests. Customer services will be intuitive, recognising the interests of users and sign-posting them to other services they might require;
- Resolution of issues raised at the first point of contact with the Council will achieve a level of over x0% and satisfaction with the services people receive will consistently exceed x0%.

The Council will...

- Invest in its website and make it easier for residents to undertake transactions online via a mobile device – such as paying Council Tax, booking a fitness class, ordering a library book, renewing a parking permit, reporting a problem, and finding out what is going on locally;

Work in a way that makes the best and most sustainable use of our limited and decreasing resources, always looking at alternative ways of doing things, to limit the impact on the Council taxpayer

- Rhondda Cynon Taf Council will be competitive with all Welsh councils for expenditure per head of population as it keeps its costs under control;
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Council will continue to be in the lowest 10% of Welsh Councils for administrative expenditure per head as it keeps its administrative costs to a minimum;
- Council Tax increases will be maintained at or below the Welsh average for the next 4 years.

The Council will...

- Reduce its office accommodation floorspace by 20% by 2020, further reducing back office costs;
- Invest in new IT to enable staff to work more flexibly across a range of locations, allowing them to be closer to the residents they work with;
- Continue to increase energy efficiency measures for the Council, including carbon reduction across services and renewable energy schemes for our own land and property.
- Become a smaller, more efficient organisation, working as one, with a reduced budget, fewer employees and fewer services provided directly by the Council;

- Collaborate more with other public services, the community and voluntary sector and businesses to find common and jointly owned solutions
- Work with suppliers and contracted service providers to reduce the costs of supplies and service;
- Create a more business-like footing with the community and voluntary sector through better, more coordinated commissioning by the Council.

Delivering our Vision, Purpose and Priorities – indicators for success

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council has set the following three priorities of:

- 1. *People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone;***
- 2. *Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work;***
- 3. *Economy - Building a strong economy.***

A range of indicators will be used to measure progress against these priorities of the Corporate Plan and are set out below. Progress will be reported to the Council's Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee each quarter, providing public challenge and scrutiny.

Detailed management plans will be put into place to translate these priorities and the challenges and opportunities set out in this plan into action. The performance of each service area will be reported on the Council's website each quarter and key service delivery successes and challenges will also be reported to the respective Service Scrutiny Committees.

The Measures of Success in Delivering the Corporate Plan

The Council, working with local, regional and national partners, will strive to deliver the following targets in respect of the measures associated with the Council's three priorities of People, Place and Economy. An additional set of measures that focus on the Council "Living within its means" are also included and will be monitored regularly.

People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
Rate of older people (aged 65 or over) supported in the Community per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March	94.7	67.3	95.0		Top Quartile	
% of reablement clients who felt they had been helped to remain independent	94.40	N/A	95.00		N/A	
% of older people reporting they can do what matters to them	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	New indicator for 2015/16
Rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over	9.44	4.83	4.7		Above Wales Average	Target has been set to meet the current Wales average and reflects the maturing partnership arrangements in place for 2015/16
Rate of older people (aged 65 or over) whom the authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March	24.46	18.85	23		Above Wales Average	
% of clients with a care plan at 31 March whose care plans should have been reviewed that were reviewed during the year	73.2	80.0	80.0		Top Quartile	
% of clients choosing their own service providers through Direct Payments	13.02	N/A	13.5		N/A	Target has been set based on trend data since 2013

People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
Total children starting to be looked after during the year to 31 March	215	93	reduce		Below Wales Average	
% of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year	5.8	9.0	6		Top Quartile	
% of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the Social Worker	74.7	78.0	75.0		Above Wales Average	Target is based on building on the improvements in actual performance experienced during 2014/15
% of first placements of looked after children during the year that began with a care plan in place	97.4	N/A	99.5		Top Quartile	Target is based on a commitment to improve performance in relation to this indicator
% of children's initial assessments carried out within 7 working days	60.1	N/A	65.0		N/A	Target is based on building on the improvements made in actual performance experienced during 2014/15. However we have to balance this by acknowledging the impact of the level of change anticipated during 2015/16 with both the implementation of MASH & the wider service remodelling

Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
% of residents satisfied with the County Borough as a place to live	NCA	N/A	NCA		90	Data not currently available - to be developed from future Residents Surveys
% of residents satisfied with our parks and open spaces for leisure, enjoyment & sport	NCA	N/A	NCA		75	
Police Recorded incidents of antisocial behaviour	7,238	N/A	NCA	NCA	NCA	Data currently included for indicative purposes only. If this measure is to be considered for inclusion, data would require more work to clarify the definition, source and integrity
% [& No.] of vulnerable/repeat victims of anti-social behaviour that are no longer experiencing anti-social behaviour / feel safer as a result of intervention	82.0 [49]	N/A	80		N/A	This target is already challenging and actions aim to maintain good performance rather than seek improvement
% of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness	99.7	96.9	95		Top Quartile	
% of reported fly tipping incidents on relevant land cleared within 5 working days	97.72	93.05	95		Top Quartile	
% of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/ or recycling, including source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way	53.82	56.24	58		64% by 2019/20	National target set to achieve 58% recycling by the end of 2015/16
% of residents satisfied with repairs to roads and pavements						
% of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-	9.3	11.9	10		Above Wales	

Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
principal (C) roads that are in overall poor condition					Average	
% of adults who reported meeting physical activity guidelines in the past week	27	30			?	
A measure that captures comprehensive volunteering data is being investigated	NCA	N/A	NCA			Future Generation Act measures currently being considered as part of consultation
% of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months	95.0	65.4	88.0		Top Quartile	Targets have been set below last years performance as there is some uncertainty around the operational impact of the new homelessness legislation that came into force on 26th April 2015

Economy - Building a strong economy

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
% of economically active people, ie 16 and over, who are unemployed	7.2	6.8			Wales Average	
% of people aged 18-24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	4.8	3.4	N/A		Wales Average	Data published monthly (August figure included)
No/% Economically Active people in RCT	109,200 72.1	74.4	N/A		Wales Average	
% of 16 year olds leaving school who are known not to be in education, training or employment	3.9	3.1	3.9		Wales Average	Ambition of at least maintaining improvement of 2014/15
% of 18 year olds leaving school who are known not to be in education, training or employment	5.9	4.9	6		Wales Average	
% of schools inspected by Estyn that were judged, at the time on current performance as being at least 'Good' on a 3 yr rolling basis	54.2	61.0	56.5		100	This indicator is currently under review and will probably be replaced in the future
% of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year who achieved L2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh (first language) and Maths	50.5	55.5	55		Above Wales Average	Target calculated by considering an aggregated target agreed by CSC and schools, the B measure of the Family Fischer Trust estimate, and actual RCT past and All Wales performance data.

Economy - Building a strong economy

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
% of pupils entitled to FSM, aged 16, achieving Level 2 Threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh (first language) and Mathematics	25.5	27.8	30		Above Wales Average	As above
% difference between pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and Non-FSM who were assessed at the end of Foundation Phase, aged 7, who achieved the expected outcome in the FPI	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	New Indicator 2015/16
% difference between pupils eligible for Free School Meals and Non-FSM who were assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, aged 11, who achieved level 4 or above in the CSI	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	New Indicator 2015/16
Average capped points score for pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority	336.5	N/A	346		N/A	As above
% of pupils in local authority care and in any local authority maintained school aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August who leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification	0.0	1.2	6.5		Top Quartile	The ability of the current cohort have been evaluated and it is anticipated that 2 out of 31 will not achieve as they refuse to engage
% of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19	69.6	59.5	75.0		Top Quartile	

Economy - Building a strong economy

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
Stock of VAT registered enterprises in the Borough	5,210	N/A				
The rate of VAT registered enterprise births (start ups) of small and medium sized enterprises	15.1 785	12.6				
The rate of VAT registered enterprise deaths (closures) of small and medium sized enterprises	9.2 480	9.1				
Footfall - Average weekly number of visitors to Pontypridd (Calendar Year)	63,909	N/A			10% increase on 2014	
Footfall - Average weekly number of visitors to Aberdare (Calendar Year)	20,609	N/A			10% increase on 2014	
Footfall - Average weekly number of visitors to Treorchy (Calendar Year)	17,510	N/A			10% increase on 2014	
No of additional housing units provided during the year	386	N/A			NCA	Two different parts of the numerator
No. of new affordable homes delivered	127	N/A	100		NCA	Reported in Quarter 4

Living within our means – where services are delivered efficiently to achieve value for money for the taxpayer

Performance Measure	2014/15 RCT Data	2014/15 Welsh Average	2015/16 RCT Target	2016/17 RCT Target tbc	2020 RCT Target tbc	Comments
Gross expenditure on Council Tax Benefit and Administration per head of population	9	12			lowest 10% in Wales	
Level of Council Tax increase	4.50	4.23		Below Wales Average aggregated over 4 years	Below Wales Average aggregated over 4 years	
% of customer interaction via the web and mobile devices					75%	
% of payments receipted via Customer Care that are self served via website and/or touchtone or kiosks	70	N/A	70			
% enquiries resolved at first point of contact based on customer view - One4aLL centres	96					
% of enquiries resolved at first point of contact based on customer view - telephone, daytime service	98					
% enquiries resolved at first point of contact based on customer view - website/e-access	70					
Level of office accommodation floor space across Council					20%	