

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013-2014

**CORPORATE SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

8TH OCTOBER 2013

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

Agenda Item No. 4

**EXCEPTION REPORT – COUNCIL
PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30 JUNE
2013 (QUARTER 1)**

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 23rd September 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 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 30th June 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 23rd September 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 As agreed by Council at its meeting held on 26 June 2013, the number of Improvement Priorities for the Council has been rationalised from 8 to 7 and the area of 'Better Customer Contact' is now being managed at an operational level rather than as a self standing improvement priority. Rather than leave the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee without a WPI Action Plan within its remit for scrutiny it was agreed at the last meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 17th July 2013 to transfer responsibility for the Physical Regeneration of Our Communities Action Plan from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee and the detailed action plan is attached as Appendix A.

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

8th OCTOBER 2013

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Item: EXCEPTION REPORT – COUNCIL PERFORMANCE (QUARTER 1)

Background Papers

Report of the Group Director, Corporate Services “Council Performance Report - 30TH June 2013 (Quarter 1)” – presented to Cabinet Performance and Resources Committee 23rd September 2013).

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

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Briefing Paper

Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee 8th October 2013

Council Performance Report 30th June 2013 (Quarter 1)

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

1. Financial Performance

a) Revenue Budgets:

	Budget as at 30th June 2013/14	Actual as at 30th June 2013/14	Variance Over (Under)
	£M	£M	£M
Corporate Services	5.612	5.575	(0.037)
Chief Executive's Division	2.461	2.444	(0.017)
Total	8.073	8.019	(0.054)

Key Revenue Issues:

- Overall spend for the Group and Division is £54k under budget as at quarter one
- No significant budget variances to report

b) Capital Budgets:

	Budget As At 30th June	1st Quarter Actual	% of Total Budget spent in 1st quarter
	£M	£M	
Corporate Services	2.149	0.106	4.9%
Chief Executive's Division	5.648	0.587	10.4%
Total	7.797	0.693	8.9%

Key Capital Issues:

- No significant issues to report

c) Treasury Management

	Budget as at 30th June 2013/14	Actual as at 30th June 2013/14	Variance Over (Under)
	£M	£M	£M
Capital Financing	6.070	6.070	0

Key Treasury Management Issues

- The Council operated in line with the approved Prudential Indicators.
- Total dividend payments received to date in respect of the £3M originally invested with Heritable Bank PLC (in administration) now totals £2.829M.

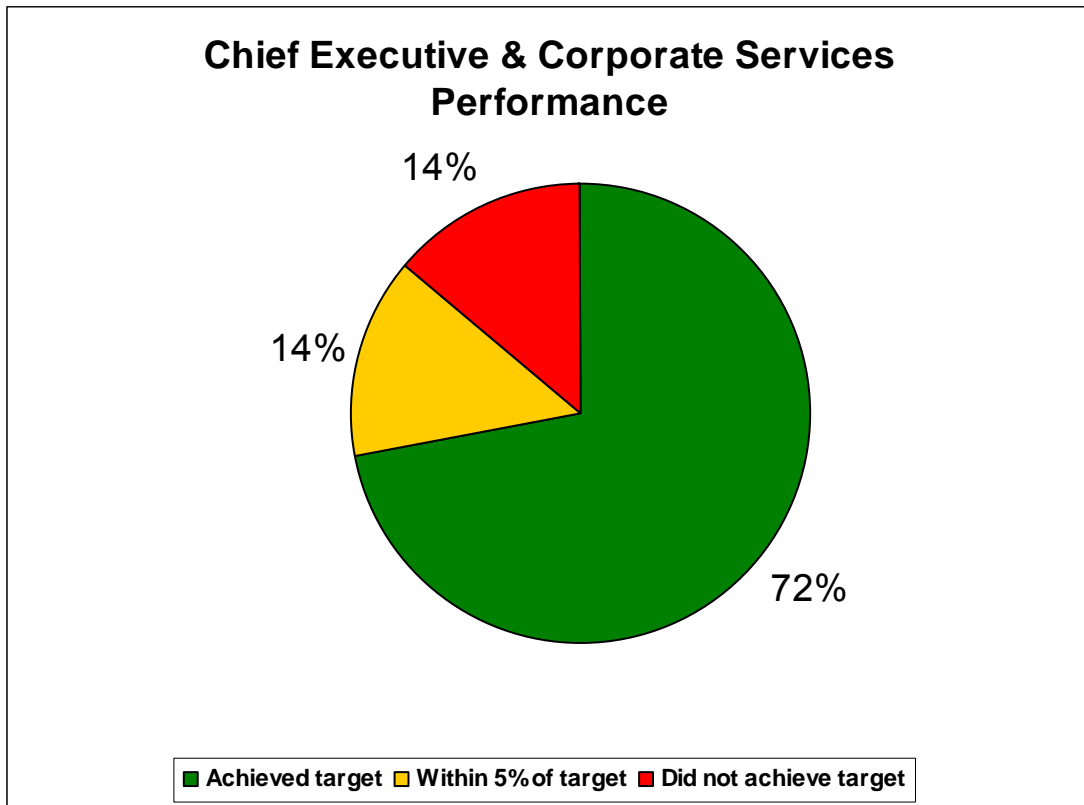
2. Wales Programme For Improvement

Action Plan 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. A first quarter performance summary can be found on page 6.

3. Operational Performance



Total number of Indicators with data available	50	
Achieved Quarter 1 Target	36	72%
Within 5% of Quarter 1 Target	7	14%
Did Not Achieve Quarter 1 Target	7	14%

Key Performance Issues:

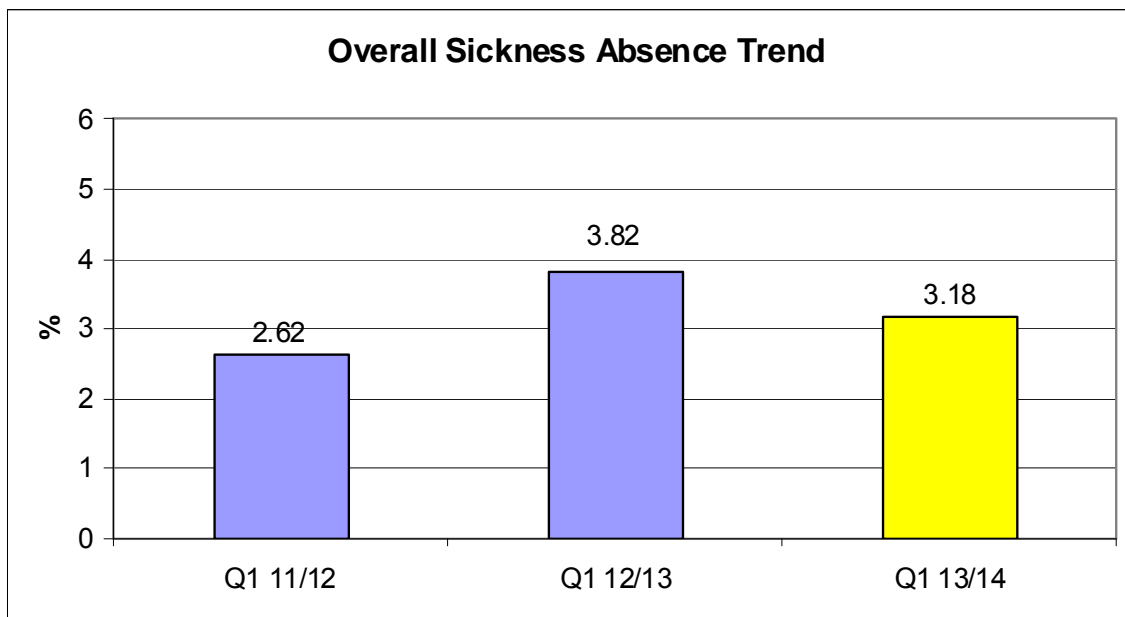
	Positive Performance	Exceptions
Corporate Services	% Undisputed Invoices Paid in 10 days (All Postcodes) - Actual performance for Quarter 1 was 85.94% against a target of 78.00%	% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from 100 largest non domestic Council buildings - Actual performance for Quarter 1 was 0.15% against an original target of 4.00%. Carbon emissions across our top 100 properties have remained similar to the corresponding quarter in the previous year. This may be due to a very cold April/May. We will continue to closely monitor emissions in quarter 2 to establish ongoing trends whilst continuing work to reduce emissions across our whole building stock
	% of total planning applications determined within 8 weeks - Actual performance for Quarter 1 was 68.36% compared to a target of 66.00%	% of minor planning applications determined during the year within 8 weeks - Actual performance for Quarter 1 was 49.1% against an original target of 54.0%. The primary reason for this occurrence has been the need to give prioritised attention to applications that had already exceeded the 8 week targeted timescale. Between April and June 2013, of the 57 applications determined, 28 were determined within 8 weeks and 29 took longer. The majority of these older applications were dealt with in May, as both April and June were above target (with 59% and 63% respectively)
	Average Queue time Lifeline – seconds - Actual performance for Quarter 1 was 6.4 seconds against a target of 30 seconds	Contact Centre Services - Average Queue Time (seconds) - Daytime service - Actual performance for Quarter 1 was 204.8 seconds against an original target of 50 seconds. The average queue time lengthened during quarter 1 compared to performance in 2012/13. This was due to increased calls to the Contact Centre primarily in relation to waste collection services

4. Health Check Information

Prosperity	£37.0m spent by the Council with local businesses, supporting the 'Spending Public Money Locally' regeneration initiative (£37.9m spent in the same period in 2012/13)
Bringing It All Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85.94% invoice payments made within 10 working days (as per 'Prompt Payment Times' initiative) – compared to 81.86% in Q1 2012/13 • 176 Benefit Fraud Investigations completed compared to 140 in the same period last year • 32 Prosecutions and Sanctions made for Benefit Fraud - 35 in the same period last year • £311,147 Housing Benefit overpayments recovered compared to £340,701.92 in Q1 2012/13
Bringing It All Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 176 Land Searches carried out within 10 working days (100%) – compared to 198 carried out over the same period in 2012/13. 162 returned within 5 working days (92.05%) • 49.19% of all Council Tax payments are made by direct debit, an increase from 52,277 to 53,852 payments (48% of payments made by direct debit in the same period in 2012/13) • 275 planning applications received (5 Major, 57 Minor, 146 Householder, 2 subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and 65 other). 288 Planning applications received during the same period in 2012/13 • 244 applications in total have been approved in the financial year (88.73%), compared to 240 (83%) in Q1 2012/13

5. Supplementary Performance Information

People Matter	Sickness Absence	% Total	% <28 days	% >28 days	% Staff Turnover
	Total (Headcount 903)	3.18%	1.23%	1.95%	1.99%
	Chief Executive (Headcount 39)	0.54%	0.54%	0.00%	2.56%
	Regeneration and Planning (Headcount 94)	2.20%	1.37%	0.83%	3.19%
	Human Resources (Headcount 109)	2.05%	0.82%	1.23%	0.92%
	Corporate Estates (Headcount 88)	3.75%	1.55%	2.20%	2.27%
	Finance (Headcount 311)	2.38%	1.11%	1.27%	0.96%
	Customer Care & IT (Headcount 182)	5.11%	1.54%	3.57%	2.75%
	Legal (Headcount 54)	5.62%	1.92%	3.70%	5.56%
	Procurement (Headcount 26)	4.48%	0.13%	4.35%	0.00%
Occupational Health Activities (from the 1st April to 30th June 2013):					
No. of appointments	Of the 198 appointments attended, 99 with physiotherapists (50.0%), 45 were with nursing staff (22.7%), 42 with counselling (21.2%) and 12 with medical officer visits (6.1%)				



Note

Briefing paper summarises information presented to Cabinet Performance And Resources Committee on the 23rd September 2013.

Corporate Services Scrutiny Agenda - 8th October 2013.
Wales Programme for Improvement

Appendix 3e(i)

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 1 Performance Summary:

This first quarter has seen some significant milestones on physical regeneration delivery, principally the completion of the Pontypridd public realm project (subject to snagging). This scheme has seen a marked transformation of the streets within the town centre. The regeneration project continues with the Townscape Enhancement Scheme and 2 further schemes have been approved in the quarter, Bank Chambers, a very large building in the centre of the town, and one on Gelliwasted Road. The Council has worked with traders and the Town Council to continue to support the delivery of initiatives which included the May family fun day this quarter. Footfall in the town continues to rise in sharp contrast to many other high streets in the UK.

In Aberdare the regeneration scheme also continues with the public realm having been completed. One Townscape Enhancement Scheme and one Townscape Heritage Initiative project were approved this quarter, with 3 property schemes being completed. A trader led initiative, the Yababerdare Event, was supported with the Council working closely with traders to deliver.

The jobs created by these schemes and the business grants projects continue to be delivered and the targets have been exceeded this quarter.

Progress on the development of the Community Infrastructure Levy hit a further milestone this quarter. Cabinet approved the draft charging schedule for consultation.

Jane Cook (Director of Regeneration and Planning) - June 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)		18.00		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)		15.00		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	70.32	↓	
Me08 - No. of suppliers attending local development workshops	100.00	108.00	+	
Me09 - No. of local businesses that submitted bids / tenders for Council contracts		132.00		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	⊖	On Target	
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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	➔	On Target	
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	2586.00	■	

[*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	➔	On Target	
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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