



FULL COUNCIL REPORT

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| Date Written | 15 th September 2016 |
| Report Author | Ewan McWilliams |
| Service Area | People & Performance |
| Exempt/Non Exempt | Non Exempt |
| Committee Date | 5 th October 2016 |

To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

Annual Performance Report 2015/16

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The overall delivery of our corporate priorities is adequate, where strengths outweigh areas for improvement. It is adequate because six of the seven corporate priorities report adequate or good judgements, with only one reporting unsatisfactory performance due to the distance from the Welsh average.
- 1.2 The overall improvement in the national strategic indicators Merthyr Tydfil was ranked equal 10th with 14 national strategic indicators above the Wales median. In addition, 68 per cent (19) of the 28 national strategic indicators either show improvement or maintaining their performance during 2015/16.
- 1.3 The latest Annual Improvement Report for Merthyr Tydfil incorporates the Corporate Assessment and was issued in August 2016. The report concluded that, during 2015/16: "The Council is strengthening its management arrangements and making progress in its priority areas, but there is scope to further embed financial and performance management arrangements".

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) THAT

- 2.1 The Annual Performance Report 2015/16 be approved.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Currently, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires local authorities to:
- Publish their plans for improvement which must include a set of improvement objectives (this is our Corporate Plan); and
 - Publish an assessment of performance relating to their plans and improvement objectives (this is our Annual Performance Report).
- 3.2 This report provides a summary evaluation of the current position of our corporate priorities at the 31 March 2016. The Annual Performance Report is available via the Background Papers link and the agreed version and associated appendices will be made available for download on the Council's website.
- 3.3 Elected Member and officers reflected on the evaluations in the Annual Performance Report prior to consideration by Cabinet on 05 October 2016.
- 3.4 Council is required to publish its Annual Performance Report on or before the 31 October 2016.

4.0 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT SUMMARY 2015.16

- 4.1 The Annual Performance Report provides an overall assessment of council performance during 2015/16. This report is organised in sections to cover the following elements of work:
- The Corporate Plan 2013 – 2017
 - The statutory indicators of the Welsh Government to evaluate performance
 - The conclusions from audit and inspection work from our external regulators
- 4.2 A summary statement from each of the above sections is highlighted here, with a more complete picture presented in the Annual Performance Report background paper.

CORPORATE PLAN

- 4.3 The overall position for the delivery of our corporate priorities is **adequate**, where strengths outweighed areas for improvement. This is because six of the seven corporate priorities are good and adequate, with only one priority area being unsatisfactory.

Key Messages

- 4.4 The local authority approach to building capacity in schools; enabling schools to take responsibility and accountability for driving on school improvement is proving successful in raising standards. The improvements in pupil attainment mean that our pupils have moved significantly closer to Welsh average.
- 4.5 Performance is improving for adults who can live independently and adults in residential care. To continue having a positive impact, the Council needs to focus

efforts to ensure that support is available and accessible to individuals within their community.

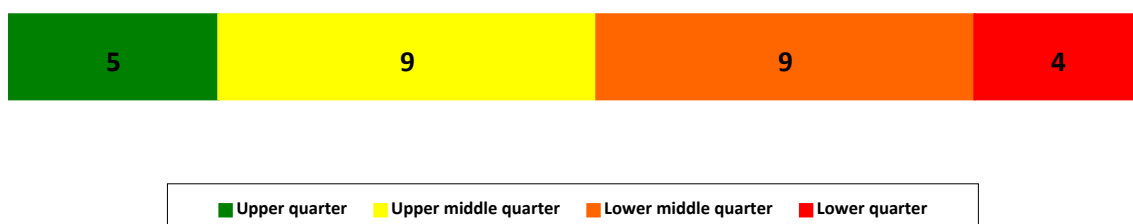
- 4.6 Outcomes for children and young people shows improvement, with significant reductions to the proportions of children in need, children on the Child Protection Register and children looked after by the local authority; though proportions of children in need remain high when compared within Wales.
- 4.7 Active lifestyles outcomes remained above the Wales median in the range of recently updated indicators against a declining performance. Although there was a steady reduction with the rate of visits to leisure centres across Merthyr Tydfil, we are currently ranked 8 in Wales.
- 4.8 There continues to be positive improvement within the business demography of Merthyr Tydfil, with an increase in active enterprises and the 3-year business survival rates continue to improve to now be on par with business survivability rates in Wales. The percentage of the working age population claiming Jobseekers Allowance in Merthyr Tydfil marginally increased to 3.0%; however, the key message is that from March 2012 to March 2016 performance has improved.
- 4.9 The percentage of the working age population in employment has decreased; remaining below the Wales average. There has also been little change to the percentage of working age population with no qualifications, which remains above the Wales average. However, where the local authority has more direct action, there has been a positive improvement in the percentage of 16 to 18 year olds not in education, employment or training.
- 4.10 The local authority is making significant progress delivering on our planned improvements in waste services; achieving our highest ever recycling rates and above the national target. There were improvements to the cleanliness of the environment and fly tipping clearances. In addition, we brought an increasing proportion of empty homes into use during the year. Energy consumption has reduced significantly, this has the additional benefit of reducing the costs to run street lighting, which reduced by 61 percent from the baseline in 2012/13.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC INDICATORS

- 4.11 Merthyr Tydfil was ranked equal 10th with 14 national strategic indicators above the Wales median. In addition, 68 per cent (19) of the 28¹ national strategic indicators either show improvement or maintaining their performance during 2015/16.

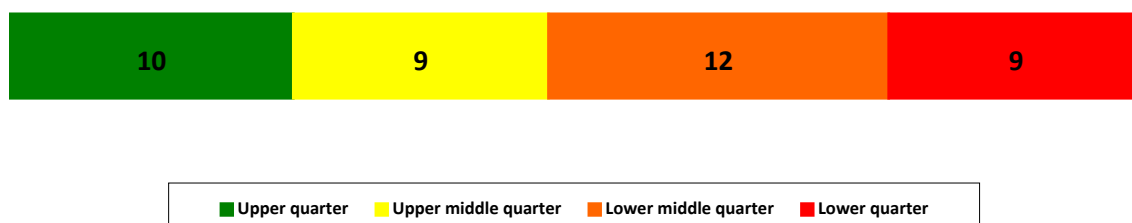
¹ Excludes EDU/006ii and HHA/013, see Annual Performance Report page 18 for details

The quarter position for the national strategic indicators



- 4.12 By extending our understanding of performance to include the wider set of measures, combining the national strategic indicators and the public accountability measures, Merthyr Tydfil ranks 11th in Wales.

The quarter position for the national indicators



EXTERNAL AUDITORS

- 4.13 Each year, the Wales Audit Office reports on how well each council is planning for improvement and delivering their services. The latest Annual Improvement Report for Merthyr Tydfil incorporates the Corporate Assessment and was issued in August 2016. The report concluded that, during 2015/16:

"The Council is strengthening its management arrangements and making progress in its priority areas, but there is scope to further embed financial and performance management arrangements"

Performance

- The Council is improving its education and waste services performance, but further improvements in social services are necessary to meet future challenges

Use of resources

- The Council is strengthening its financial management arrangements and is improving the services provided by its Human Resources function but there remains scope to further develop arrangements for budget monitoring and workforce planning

Governance

- The Council is developing its arrangements for improvement planning and self-evaluation, but there are weaknesses in the Council's arrangements for responding to external regulatory reports

4.14 The Auditor General makes the following proposal for improvement:

The Council strengthens its arrangements for responding to external regulatory reports, by:

- Clarifying its process for dealing with reports that are received; and
- Clarifying the role of committees when receiving reports, and ensuring there is appropriate challenge and clear monitoring of the Council's progress in addressing any recommendations.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

5.1 Any specific financial implications to achieve progress against the outcomes of the Corporate Plan will be reflected in existing budgets. Any potential financial implications for future years will be addressed as part of the budget setting and challenge process.

5.0 SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT SUMMARY

5.1 The Single Integrated Plan & Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed and the proposal positively impacts on all aspects of the Corporate Plan and Single Integrated Plan because it supports a discussion on improvement.

6.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time. The form can be accessed on the Council's website/intranet via the 'Equality Impact Assessment' link.

GARETH CHAPMAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COUNCILLOR PHIL WILLIAMS
CABINET MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE
AND CORPORATE SERVICES

| BACKGROUND PAPERS | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Title of Document(s) | Document(s) Date | Document Location |
| Annual Performance Report Report appendices | 31 March 2016 31 March 2016 | Background Papers link |
| Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution? | No | |

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.