

# Standing up for a Better Swansea

*Corporate Improvement Plan  
2013-17*



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## Introduction

The Welsh Government requires all Councils to publish their plans for improving what they do and how they do it. The purpose of this plan is to set out the Council's key priorities for improvement over the next four years; these are known as 'Improvement Objectives'.

The Plan also shows how the Council's Improvement Objectives contributes towards improving the wellbeing of people in Swansea as set out within the *One Swansea Plan*<sup>1</sup> and delivers the relevant Policy Commitments the Council adopted in July 2012.

The Council and its partners through the Local Service Board have a shared ambition and vision for Swansea:

### *Our Ambition for Swansea*

- Swansea is a unique city by the sea. It is a green, safe, caring and friendly city that values learning and its public services and we want it to stay that way.
- Swansea is a city that is passionate about its sport, history and culture and these are things worth celebrating.
- But we also want Swansea to be a healthier, fairer and more economically active place, a city that offers more for children and young people.
- We want to work together to make Swansea a better place and improve community wellbeing in a way that is democratic, involves everyone and does not compromise the needs of future generations.

Our vision is that Swansea will be a desirable place to live, work and visit that:

- Capitalises on the distinctive relationship between its vibrant urban areas and outstanding rural and coastal environments
- Supports a competitive and prosperous economy that acts as a focal point for the wider Swansea Bay City Region
- Is a thriving city centre destination that offers excellent shopping facilities and supports leisure and business opportunities, capitalising on its proximity to the waterfront
- Promotes sustainable, distinct communities, in both urban and rural locations, that benefit from sufficient good quality accommodation, supporting infrastructure, community facilities and opportunities for recreation
- Celebrates and conserves its unique natural heritage and cultural and historic environments

### *Population Outcomes*

To compliment this vision for Swansea as a place, these are the population (shared) outcomes that the Council and its partners through the Local Service Board want to focus on through the *One Swansea Plan*; the conditions we want for our communities:

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<sup>1</sup> The *One Swansea Plan* was a draft and had not been formally adopted by the Local Service Board at the time of writing June 2013.

- A. Children have a good start in life
- B. People learn successfully
- C. Young people and adults have good jobs
- D. People have a decent standard of living
- E. People are healthy, safe and independent
- F. People have good places to live and work

*Challenges*

The Local Service Board has identified the following challenges as the most important things to focus on through its *One Swansea Plan* in order to make progress towards the population outcomes.

<b>Population Outcome</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>A. Children Have a Good Start in Life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Low Birth Weight</li> <li>2. Domestic Abuse</li> <li>3. School Readiness</li> </ul>
<b>B. People Learn Successfully</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School Attendance</li> <li>2. School Achievement</li> <li>3. Adult Qualifications</li> </ul>
<b>C. Young People and Adults Have Good Jobs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Youth Unemployment</li> <li>2. Economic Inactivity</li> <li>3. Average Earnings</li> <li>4. Economic Performance</li> </ul>
<b>D. People Have a Decent Standard of Living</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child Poverty</li> <li>2. Household Income</li> <li>3. Personal Debt</li> </ul>
<b>E. People are Healthy, Safe and Independent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preventable Early Deaths</li> <li>2. Life Expectancy</li> <li>3. Older Peoples' Independence</li> <li>4. Crime</li> </ul>
<b>F. People Have Good Places to Live and Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Transport</li> <li>2. Carbon Emissions</li> <li>3. Water Quality</li> <li>4. Housing Quality</li> </ul>

*Policy Commitments*<sup>2</sup>

The Council adopted its Policy Commitments at Council on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012. The Policy Commitments are the key policy pledges that the Council has identified for delivery during this electoral cycle.

<b>Policy Commitments</b>
<b>1. Standing Up for Strong Council Finances</b>
<b>2. Standing Up for Council Democracy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards of conduct of elected representatives</li> </ul>
<b>3. Standing Up for A City of Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A City of Learning</li> <li>• Ambitious for Swansea</li> <li>• High Performing Schools</li> <li>• A Flying Healthy Start for all Our Children</li> <li>• A Future for Our Young People</li> </ul>
<b>4. Standing Up for Jobs and Regeneration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Creative Science City</li> <li>• A Healthy City Centre</li> <li>• Suburban Centres</li> <li>• Regeneration &amp; Anti-Poverty</li> <li>• Key Sectors</li> </ul>
<b>5. Standing Up for Strong Transport Links</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Transport</li> <li>• A Healthy, Greener Swansea</li> <li>• Public Transport</li> <li>• A Vibrant City Centre</li> <li>• Community Safety</li> </ul>
<b>6. Standing Up for High Quality Health and Social Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention, Not Failure</li> <li>• Localise Services</li> <li>• Working Together</li> <li>• Public Interest above Private Profit</li> <li>• Invest in Our People</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> The [Policy Commitments](#) were adopted by Council on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012

**Policy Commitments**

**7. Standing Up for Better Housing**

- Affordable Housing
- Putting People First
- Improving Housing Quality
- Empty Properties
- Community Regeneration

**8. Standing Up for the Best in Art, Culture and Sport**

- Cultural Capital of Wales
- City of Sport
- Creative City
- Dylan Thomas Centenary
- Heritage

**9. Standing Up for Stronger and Safer Communities**

- Community Action
- Young Citizenship
- Celebrate Diversity
- Promote Community Safety
- Anti-Social Behaviour

**10. Standing Up for a Better Environment and Better Planning**

- Valuing our Environment
- A 'Greener' Sustainable Swansea
- Value Our Parks and Open Spaces
- Greening our City
- Citizen and Community
- Engagement.

*Corporate Improvement Objectives and Performance Measures*

This Corporate Improvement Plan describes the Council's priorities for improvement, called 'Improvement Objectives'. The Council's Improvement Objectives delivers the relevant Policy Commitments the Council adopted in July 2012 and shows the Council's contribution towards improving the wellbeing of people in Swansea as set out within the *One Swansea Plan*.

The delivery of each Improvement Objective is evidenced through a number of performance measures. The performance measures are measures of how much the Council is doing, how well the Council is delivering its services and, where this is

measurable and the most appropriate measure of success, if people who use Council services are better off:

Improvement Objective	Performance Measures
<p><b>1. Provide support for children in the early years in Swansea so that they are ready for learning and make developmental progress.</b></p>	<p>1. % attendance at Flying Start Settings                      2. % Flying Start Children assessed at or above the developmental norm                      3. % of parents / carers that report a positive distance travelled (improvement) at the end of a Flying Start parenting programme.</p>
<p><b>2. To support improvement to school attendance and attainment of all learners aged 3 – 19 years so that each can achieve their potential</b></p>	<p>1. EDU/016 a and b - % attendance at primary and secondary schools.                      2. National Literacy Test                      3. EDU/017 - % pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold Inclusive of English/Welsh &amp; Maths</p>
<p><b>3. People are Safe, Well and supported to live independently (Child &amp; Family)</b></p>	<p>1. Number of children becoming looked after.                      2. Number of children looked after                      3. % of entry in Looked After Children (per 1000 pop 0-17 years).                      4. Rate of Looked After Children (per 1000 pop 0-17 years)                      5. SCC/010 - % of referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months                      6. Total number of children in need (open cases) in year.                      7. % of children on the Child Protection Register who have been de-registered and then re-registered.                      8. % of children who remain on the Child Protection Register for more than 1 year.                      9. % of children in mainstream Foster care placed with Foster Swansea.                      10. Number of children in residential care.                      11. % of children looked after in a family placement.</p>
<p><b>4. Develop partnerships, skills and infrastructure in order to attract and grow a knowledge based economy creating jobs grounded in key sectors.</b></p>	<p>1. BBMA1 - Increase in the number of projects with social benefit clauses (<i>Beyond Bricks and Mortar</i>) in their contracts.                      2. WWC1 - No. of people entering employment as a result of participation in the Workways project.                      3. % of applicants and third parties satisfied or very satisfied with the Planning application service.                      4. % of all major and minor applications with an economic imperative that are approved.</p>



Improvement Objective	Performance Measures
<b>5. Promote affordable credit and savings options and help people maximise their income and entitlements</b>	1. No. of staff / workers trained in Welfare Rights / Benefits advice appropriate to their role. 2. No. of Council staff making saving contributions to the Credit Union through payroll deduction. 3. No. of Council tenants joining the Credit Union. 4. % of eviction warrants for rent arrears raised against Council Tenants suspended due to support and financial assistance. 5. HHA/013 - % of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months.
<b>6. Help people adopt and develop healthy and sustainable lifestyles in order to improve health.</b>	1. % of 11 – 16 year olds attending 20 or more extra-curricular physical or sporting activities during the school year. 2. % of children who can swim by age 11. 3. General Practitioner (GP) Referrals - % & No. still active after 12 months and indicating that their health has improved 4. No. of growing spaces. 5. % of pupils identified in the Pupil Level Annual School Census who take up free school lunch – primary / secondary schools.
<b>7. People are Safe, Well and supported to live independently (Adult Services)</b>	1. % of cases where the risk (safeguarding vulnerable adults) has been managed 2. No. of people that are supported to be independent 3. SSA2 - The average number of working days taken from completion of the care plan and / or installation of aids / equipment. 4. No. / % of clients returning home following re-ablement
<b>8. Improve Housing and Housing supply in order to increase the availability of good quality, affordable housing</b>	1. No. of new affordable housing units provided / needed 2. HSG2 - No. of void (empty) Council homes 3. % of tenants staying in their Council tenancy for more than 2 years.
<b>9. Minimise waste and increase recycling through promotion, working with others and by targeting low participating areas</b>	1. WMT/004b - % of municipal waste sent to landfill. 2. WMT/009b - % of municipal waste being re-used, recycled and composted. 3. STS/006 - % of Fly tipping cleared within 5 working days

Table 1 on the next page below shows the links and dependencies between the *One Swansea Plan*, the Council's Policy Commitments and the Council's Improvement Objectives.

Table 1 – interdependencies between the outcomes and challenges outlined within the *One Swansea Plan*, the Council's Policy Commitments and the Improvement Objectives described within the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan.

One Swansea Plan		Corporate Improvement Plan		
Population Outcome	Shared Challenge	Policy Commitments	Improvement Objective	Performance Measures
<b>A. Children Have a Good Start in Life</b>	1. Low Birth Weight 2. Domestic Abuse <b>3. School Readiness</b>	<b>Para 6 - Standing up for a city of learning – A flying Healthy Start For All Our Children.</b>  <b>Para 9 - Standing Up for High Quality Health and Social Services – Prevention, Not Failure</b>	<b>1. Provide support for children in the early years in Swansea so that they are ready for learning and make developmental progress.</b>  <b>2. People are Safe, Well and supported to live independently (Child &amp; Family)</b>	1. % attendance at Flying Start Settings 2. % Flying Start Children assessed at or above the developmental norm 3. % of parents / carers that report a positive distance travelled (improvement) at the end of a Flying Start parenting programme.  1. Number of children becoming looked after. 2. Number of children looked after 3. % of entry in Looked After Children (per 1000 pop 0-17 years). 4. Rate of Looked After Children (per 1000 pop 0-17 years) 5. SCC/010 - % of referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months 6. Total number of children in need (open cases) in year. 7. % of children on the Child Protection Register who have been de-registered and then re-registered. 8. % of children who remain on the Child Protection Register for more than 1 year. 9. % of children in mainstream Foster care placed with Foster Swansea. 10. Number of children in residential care. 11. % of children looked after in a family placement.

Nb – **bold** represents direct correlations between the *One Swansea Plan* and the Corporate Improvement Plan.

One Swansea Plan		Corporate Improvement Plan		
Population Outcome	Shared Challenge	Policy Commitments	Improvement Objective	Performance Measures
<b>B. People Learn Successfully</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School Attendance</li> <li>2. School Achievement</li> <li>3. Adult Qualifications</li> </ol>	<b>Para 6 - Standing up for a city of learning – Ambitious for Swansea</b>	<b>3. To support improvement to school attendance and attainment of all learners aged 3 – 19 years so that each can achieve their potential</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. EDU/016 a and b - % attendance at primary and secondary schools.</li> <li>2. National Literacy Test</li> <li>3. EDU/017 - % pupils achieving the Level 2 threshold inclusive of English / Welsh &amp; Maths</li> </ol>
<b>C. Young People and Adults Have Good Jobs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Youth Unemployment</li> <li>2. Economic Inactivity</li> <li>3. Average Earnings</li> <li>4. Economic Performance</li> </ol>	<b>Para 7 - Standing Up for Jobs and Regeneration</b>	<b>4. Develop partnerships, skills and infrastructure in order to attract and grow a knowledge based economy creating jobs grounded in key sectors.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BBMA1 - Increase in the number of projects with social benefit clauses (Beyond Bricks and Mortar) in their contracts.</li> <li>2. WWC1 - No. of people entering employment as a result of participation in the Workways project.</li> <li>3. % of applicants and third parties satisfied or very satisfied with the Planning application service.</li> <li>4. % of all major and minor applications with an economic imperative that are approved.</li> </ol>
<b>D. People Have a Decent Standard of Living</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child Poverty</li> <li>2. Household Income</li> <li>3. Personal Debt</li> </ol>	<b>Para 7 - Standing Up for Jobs and Regeneration – Regeneration &amp; Anti-Poverty</b>	<b>5. Promote affordable credit and savings options and help people maximise their income and entitlements</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No. of staff / workers trained in Welfare Rights / Benefits advice appropriate to their role.</li> <li>2. No. of Council staff making saving contributions to the Credit Union through payroll deduction.</li> <li>3. No. of Council tenants joining the Credit Union.</li> <li>4. % of eviction warrants for rent arrears raised against Council Tenants suspended due to support and financial assistance.</li> <li>5. HHA/013 - % of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months.</li> </ol>

One Swansea Plan		Corporate Improvement Plan		
Population Outcome	Shared Challenge	Policy Commitments	Improvement Objective	Performance Measures
<b>E. People are Healthy, Safe and Independent</b>	<b>1. Preventable Early Deaths</b> <b>2. Life Expectancy</b> <b>3. Older Peoples' Independence</b> <b>4. Crime</b>	<b>Para 11 - Standing Up for the Best in the Arts, Culture &amp; Sport – City of Sport</b>	<b>6. Help people adopt and develop healthy and sustainable lifestyles in order to improve health.</b>	<b>1. % of 11 – 16 year olds attending 20 or more extra-curricular physical or sporting activities during the school year.</b> <b>2. % of children who can swim by age 11.</b> <b>3. General Practitioner (GP) Referrals - % &amp; No. still active after 12 months and indicating that their health has improved</b> <b>4. No. of growing spaces.</b> <b>5. % of pupils identified in Pupil Level Annual School Census who take up free school lunch – primary / secondary schools.</b>
		<b>Para 13 - Standing Up for a Better Environment and Better Planning – Value our Parks and Open Spaces</b>		
		<b>Para 9 - Standing Up for High Quality Health and Social Services – Prevention, Not Failure</b>	<b>7. People are Safe, Well and supported to live independently (Adult Services)</b>	

One Swansea Plan		Corporate Improvement Plan		
Population Outcome	Shared Challenge	Policy Commitments	Improvement Objective	Performance Measures
<b>F. People Have Good Places to Live and Work</b>	1. Public Transport 2. Carbon Emissions 3. Water Quality <b>4. Housing Quality</b>	<b>Para 10 - Standing Up for Better Housing</b>	<b>8. Improve Housing and Housing supply in order to increase the availability of good quality, affordable housing.</b>	1. No. of new affordable housing units provided / needed 2. HSG2 - No. of void (empty) Council homes 3. % of tenants staying in their Council tenancy for more than 2 years.
		<b>Para 13 - Standing Up for a Better Environment and Better Planning</b>	<b>9. Minimise waste and increase recycling through promotion, working with others and by targeting low participating areas</b>	1. WMT/004b - % of municipal waste sent to landfill 2. WMT/009b - % of municipal waste being re-used, recycled and composted. 3. STS/006 - % of Fly tipping cleared within 5 working days

### *Equalities*

In line with the Equality Act 2010 and new Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales, all public authorities must produce a Strategic Equality Plan containing set Equality Objectives.

The City & County of Swansea's Strategic Equality Plan (initially for the period 2012-2016) was formally adopted by the Council on 15 March 2012 and sets out how we will build on our previous Equality and Diversity Scheme and our arrangements for meeting the new legislative duties.

Our Equality Objectives (included within the Plan) are based on information from local, regional and national sources and highlight areas of inequality in service provision, service take-up or attainment for or by specific groups with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act.

These characteristics are

- **Age**
- **Disability**
- **Gender Re-assignment**
- **Marriage and Civil Partnership**
- **Pregnancy and Maternity**
- **Race**
- **Religion or Belief (including non-belief)**
- **Sex**
- **Sexual Orientation.**

Issues regarding **Welsh language** usage are dealt with under the Council's Welsh Language Scheme.

Each Equality Objective contains actions to achieve specific, measurable outcomes to reduce inequalities across all of the protected characteristics.

Table 2 on the next page shows the links between the Council's Improvement and the relevant Equality Objectives.

### *Sustainable Development*

Swansea Council is committed to sustainable development and a greener, more sustainable Swansea.

More information can be found on the Council's website: [www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk)

Table 2 – interdependencies Council's Improvement and relevant Equality Objectives.

Our Improvement Objectives	Strategic Equality Plan
<b>Provide support for children in the early years in Swansea so that they are ready for learning and make developmental progress</b>	<b>Equality Objective 14</b> - reduce the inequalities that exist in the health, education and economic outcomes for children living in poverty, by improving the outcomes of the poorest.
<b>People are Safe, Well and supported to live independently (Child &amp; Family)</b>	<b>Equality Objective 18</b> - Improve access to Social Services provision, ensuring that the service user's needs are at the centre of all planning and commissioning activities.
<b>Support improvement to school attendance and attainment of all learners aged 3 – 19 years so that each can achieve their potential</b>	<b>Equality Objective 10</b> - Maintain improving trends in assessment of boys and girls at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Close the performance gap between boys and girls. <b>Equality Objective 14</b> - Increase primary and secondary school attendance in target areas. Increase the average All Wales Reading Test scores for 6-7yr olds and 10-11 yr olds in target areas. Increase the proportion of 15-16 yr olds achieving Level 2 threshold including English, or Welsh and Maths.
<b>Develop partnerships, skills and infrastructure in order to attract and grow a knowledge based economy creating jobs grounded in key sectors.</b>	<b>Equality Objective 1</b> - Establish a focused Officer Group made up of representatives from Access to Services Team and Economic Regeneration and Planning Department in order to help address key equality issues arising from consultation on ongoing work programmes.
<b>Promote affordable credit and savings options and help people maximise their income and entitlements</b>	<b>Equality Objective 2</b> - Provide a welfare rights advice line 3 days per week to support staff from CCS and partner organisations to negotiate the significant changes to the benefits system resulting from Welfare Reform.

Our Improvement Objectives	Our Equality Objectives
<p><b>Help people adopt and develop healthy and sustainable lifestyles in order to improve health.</b></p>	<p><b>Equality Objective 17</b> - Encourage greater participation and improve access to cultural, leisure and sporting services/facilities.</p>
<p><b>People are Safe, Well and supported to live independently (Adult Services)</b></p>	<p><b>Equality Objective 18</b> - Improve access to Social Services provision, ensuring that the service user's needs are at the centre of all planning and commissioning activities.</p>
<p><b>Improve Housing and Housing supply in order to increase the availability of good quality, affordable housing.</b></p>	<p><b>Equality Objective 15</b> – Improve customer access to Housing services.</p>
<p><b>Minimise waste and increase recycling through promotion, working with others and by targeting low participating areas</b></p>	<p><b>Equality Objective 26</b> – Assisted waste collections for disabled people and older people.</p>



*Key Messages from the Improvement Plan Consultation 2013*

The following key messages summarise the findings from the consultation:

- The Council consulted on its working Improvement Objectives using two main methods:
  1. An internet based survey.
  2. Focus group meetings with particular user groups.
- The internet based consultation showed there was broad support for all the Council's working Improvement Objectives; between 57% and 94% agreed with the Improvement Objectives subsequently included within this Plan.
- The level of support given to each Improvement Objectives as being most agreed with from the internet consultation were as follows:

<b>Working Improvement Objectives</b>	<b>Strongly Agree or Agree</b>
1. Develop partnerships, skills and infrastructure in order to attract and grow a knowledge based economy creating jobs grounded in key sectors.	94%
2. Improve school attendance and attainment of all learners aged 3 to 19 years so each individual can reach their potential.	93%
3. Help people adopt and develop healthy and sustainable lifestyles in order to improve health.	89%
4. People are safe, well and supported to live independently.	86%
5. Provide support for children in early years in Swansea so they are ready for learning and make developmental progress.	84%

- The percentage of survey respondents who disagreed with the Council's proposed Improvement Objectives was very low, ranging from 0% (no disagreement) to just 7%.
- The percentage of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed with the working objectives ranged from between 4% to 36%.
- The Council also consulted with:
  1. The 50+ Network – a group aimed at older people having an effective voice on a wide range of participative and planning issues.
  2. Swansea Business Forum – a forum for the Council and business sectors to engage with each other.
  3. A group of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and who were also formerly looked after by the Council.

The key points coming out of this consultation process were as follows:

### **50+ Network Consultation**

- Debt counselling is important.
- Promote self-sufficiency.
- The impact of Welfare reform needs to be monitored.
- The Credit Union needs to be promoted to deal with the impact of Pay day loan companies.
- Prioritise introduction of living wage.
- Freeze council tax
- Evaluate and monitor success of initiatives dealing with poverty.
- Encourage economic growth.
- Increase job security.
- Improve local transport.
- Spend money held in reserve.
- Training and skills should be taught in schools.
- Fast track planning permission for affordable housing
- Don't cut sport / music in schools
- Free access to leisure centres needs to be promoted and advertised in bus shelters
- LAC family involvement in early stages when child identified as being at risk.
- The Council to provide as much residential and nursing homes as possible.
- Prioritise support for people to live in their own homes for as long as possible.
- Provide adaptations at the right time to enable people to stay safe at home.
- Better communication between departments, carers and cared for to alleviate problems and concerns.
- Need more of the right community staff who are on good wages and have the time needed to do their job.
- More nursery provision needed.
- Promote parental responsibility.
- Promote positive role models for children.
- Improve school attendance.
- Extend recycling collection to include more types of waste.
- Review charges for waste collections – large objects.
- Help disabled and elderly people deal with refuse collections / recycling.
- Target specific groups who do not recycle to encourage them to recycle.
- Make people aware of energy efficiency schemes.

### **Swansea Business Forum Consultation**

- Concentrate efforts on what the Council can affect and change.
- Work with others, including the private sector, to achieve objectives.
- Home care is not always the best option – residential care is sometimes necessary.
- More engagement is needed with the private sector on what educational assistance the University and business can offer school age children.
- Recycling centre's need to be open for longer hours to help working people.

### Young People (NEET / former LAC) focus group Consultation

- The 5 Improvement Objectives most agreed with by this group were:
  1. Provide support for children in early years in Swansea so they are ready for learning and make developmental progress.
  2. Improve housing and housing supply in order to increase the availability of good quality affordable housing and provide people with work and training opportunities.
  3. People are safe, well and supported to live independently.
  4. Improve school attendance and attainment of all learners aged 3 to 19 years so each individual can reach their potential.
  5. Target resources into the poorest areas of Swansea in order to help reduce the impact of poverty.
- More support needed for young people with tenancies and becoming independent.
- There needs to be more accommodation suited for young people.
- Early prevention and intervention were considered to be very important by the group.
- Reducing looked after children numbers has to be done safely.
- Management of care system needs improving and appropriate support provided whatever stage you were at.
- Managing the impact of welfare reform, providing debt and benefits advice and a Living Wage is important.
- Healthy food perceived as being too expensive.
- School attendance – young people as well as parents need to take responsibility.
- Although important, people should not be forced or coerced into adopting healthy lifestyles.

Most of the consultations responses correspond with or are dealt with by the Corporate Improvement Plan and no significant to changes to the plan were required as a result of the consultation. The working Improvement Objective relating to Carbon Reduction was not included within the Plan this year pending consideration being given to further developmental work. The outcome from the consultations was also issued to Heads of Service for their information and consideration.

#### *How will the Council meet its duty to Improve?*

The Council has a duty to put arrangements in place to secure continuous improvement. In discharging this duty, the Council must have regard to:

- Making progress towards community objectives.
- Improving the quality of services.
- Improving the availability of services.
- Improving fairness.
- Contributing to the sustainable development of an area.
- Improving the efficiency of services and functions.
- Innovation and change which contributes to improvement.

Each of the Council's priorities for improvement will deliver one or more of these aspects. This is detailed in the pages that follow.

*How did we select the Council's Improvement Objectives?*

The Council's Improvement Objectives were determined with due reference to the *One Swansea Plan* and the Council's Policy Commitments and in consultation with Council staff, elected Members and the general public. This involved an internet based survey and face-to-face consultations with representatives of various groups.

*Results Based Accountability*

The Corporate Improvement Plan was developed using the Results Based Accountability (RBA) method. Each Improvement Objective was developed and performance measures identified by answering the following questions:

1. **How can we measure how much do we do?**
2. **How can we measure if we are delivering services well?**
3. **How can we measure if our customers are better off?**
4. **What are the most important measures and how are we doing?**
5. **What works well now to improve?**
6. **What are we going to do to improve?**

The *One Swansea Plan* is primarily concerned with the community challenges that the Council and its partners through the Local Service Board are tackling together. The Corporate Improvement Plan on the other hand is mainly about performance accountability for the services delivered mostly by the Council. The Corporate Improvement Plan is largely about improving the Council's services to its direct customers or its contribution to the shared challenges outlined within the *One Swansea Plan*.

**A note on measuring service based 'outcomes'** – the Council has sought through its use of RBA to identify appropriate performance measures, particularly to determine '*is anyone better off?*'. There are some areas where this approach is quite straightforward and the 'outcome' is identified and measured. There is however a number of issues for consideration when trying to measure service based outcomes.

Firstly, it is difficult to measure the 'outcome' from some of the Council's services that are strategic and enabling and where performance affecting the end user is delivered by another agency or set of agencies working together. For example, while the Council has a role to play in the development of key sectors of the local economy, the Council largely achieves this through strategic frameworks, through its planning function and through working with others so that it is difficult to isolate and measure the Council's impact on the outcome; yet few would argue that the Council should not have a priority around developing the local economy.

Secondly, the complexity of some of the 'people' based services means that measuring outcomes and making provision and projections for incremental improvement is not necessarily straightforward. For example, while it might be desirable and possible to measure developmental progress of Flying Start children at age 2 and again at age 3, it is difficult to determine and predict benchmarks and incremental improvements each year when each different cohort of children measured is made up of different individual individuals with different starting points and needs.

Thirdly, some services have statutory direction and guidance in place which determines service priorities. For example, Councils' in Wales have statutory targets set by the Welsh Government for reducing landfill and increasing the recycling of waste. Failure to meet these statutory targets will result in payment of landfill tax and fines. This means that the Council's waste management services are designed to meet these statutory targets; the Council is therefore mainly concerned with how well it is doing in meeting these targets rather than any consideration of whether or not anyone is better off (although this is part of the strategy to convince people to recycle).

Fourthly, it is sometimes difficult to extrapolate the Council's impact delivering a service when the outcomes may not become apparent for some time, they may be affected by other factors outside of the Council's control or where the outcomes may be obvious and where measuring them may not be worthwhile. For example, the Council is aiming to increase the number of growing spaces and allotments so that people can grow their own fresh vegetables, providing them with a healthy pastime and healthy food while potentially saving them money. The impact of this policy on people's health may be difficult to measure in the short term and may be affected by other factors associated with people's lifestyles; yet few would argue that increasing the number of growing spaces will not have health and other benefits.

#### *How will we monitor and report progress?*

The performance measures included within this Plan will be monitored on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis at departmental meetings, at Corporate Improvement Board and by elected Members. The Council's Improvement Objectives will be reflected within service and departmental Business Plans. Performance will be evaluated using the latest available data. Consideration will be given to the story behind current performance and progress since the last reporting cycle. We will try and understand what are the causes of current performance so that we can do better. The Council will publish an Annual Review of Performance in 2014-15 accounting for its success delivering the Improvement Objectives outlined within this plan during 2013-14.

#### *Revisions to the Plan*

This plan contains new local performance measures and work will continue into 2013-14 to further refine and embed them into the Council's performance management systems. During this process and due to other external influences it may be necessary to add to, change or further refine the objectives, performance measures, projections and other content included within this plan. Any changes will be captured in the annual review of the Corporate Improvement Plan and revisions will be published.

#### *Other business critical issues*

The Council has a number of other business critical concerns such as dealing with dog fouling and making improvements to highways maintenance, which will be addressed through service Business Plans and monitored through the Council's strategic programme.

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that there are significant differentials between communities in the City & County in terms of wealth, income, health and aspiration. The Policy Commitments Statement adopted by Council on 26th July identifies the intent to develop a 'Target Area' approach, "bringing together council departments, the NHS and other agencies, pooling resources and finance, to work together, across

boundaries to tackle the transgenerational causes of poverty and deprivation...". The Improvement Objectives outlined within this plan are universal, although their application will be entirely consistent with this targeted approach.

*How can you get involved and propose new Improvement Objectives during the year?*

The Council has created a partnership consultation database to enable residents to easily access consultations that are being conducted by, or on behalf of the City and County of Swansea Council and its partners. Here you can view the consultation, find out more details on how you can get involved in providing feedback. When a consultation is complete you will be able to download any relevant results/newsletters.

Please follow the link to access the Consultation Database: [Consultation Database](#)

Should you have any questions or queries about the Consultation Database, or you are experiencing trouble using it, please contact the Consultation Co-ordinator on 01792 636732 or fax 01792 637206 or e-mail [consultation@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@swansea.gov.uk)

You can also get involved through the Council's Scrutiny Boards, which are open to the public ([Scrutiny in Swansea](#)) or you can contact the Council's Access to Services Team to get involved on tel: 636907 or email [accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk)

If you wish to propose new Improvement Objectives for 2013-17, you can contact the Council at any time by: Email to [improvement@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:improvement@swansea.gov.uk) Telephone 01792 636852.

# Standing up for a Better Swansea

## *Corporate Improvement Plan 2013-17 – **Part 1 Executive Summary***

## Executive Summary – Improvement Objectives

**A. Provide support for children in the early years in Swansea so that they are ready for learning and make developmental progress.**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least maintain attendance levels at Flying Start settings.</li> <li>• Measure the distance parents / carers have travelled in how they perceive they have improved their parenting during the intervention.</li> <li>• Understand the % of Flying Start children assessed at or above their developmental norm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So that as many eligible children and their families as possible profit from the educational and social benefits of early years provision.</li> <li>• An important measure of the progress parents and professionals perceive they have made during the intervention in improving their parenting skills, children’s behaviour and self-esteem and confidence.</li> <li>• So that professionals working with the children and their families can respond appropriately to help children realise their potential with regard to the developmental norms.</li> </ul>

**B. Support improvement to school attendance and attainment of all learners aged 3 – 19 years so that each can achieve their potential.**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve school attendance.</li> <li>• Improve children’s literacy and reading skills.</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold inclusive of English / Welsh and Maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If children do not attend school regularly then they will not fulfil their educational potential.</li> <li>• To meet every learner’s need to be able to read, write and be numerate in order to achieve success in schools and beyond.</li> </ul>



**C. People are safe, well and supported to live independently (Child & Family Services).**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safely reduce the number of children becoming looked after.</li> <li>• Reduce the rate of re-referrals to Child &amp; Family Services and numbers of children in need requiring social services intervention.</li> <li>• Improve services to children and young people who may be at risk of becoming looked after.</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of children looked after in Swansea who are supported in a family placement and foster care instead of residential care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So that children only enter the looked after system when this is genuinely the best or only option to safeguard or promote their health or well-being.</li> <li>• To ensure that the most effective work carried out by Child &amp; Family Services is being done with children, young people and families who are most in need.</li> <li>• So that children avoid the necessity to come into care and are supported through safe and appropriate alternatives.</li> <li>• To achieve the right placement at the right time and achieve better outcomes for children.</li> </ul>

**D. Develop partnerships, skills and infrastructure in order to attract and grow a knowledge based economy creating jobs grounded in key sectors.**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the numbers of projects that have social benefit clauses and Beyond Bricks and Mortar in their contracts.</li> <li>• Increase the numbers of people entering employment as a result of participation in the Workways project.</li> <li>• Increase applicants and third parties satisfaction with the planning application service.</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of all major and minor applications with an economic imperative that are approved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To give the unemployed and economically inactive opportunities for work experience, training and employment.</li> <li>• To engage with the economically inactive and long term unemployed and to help support them back into employment.</li> <li>• A high quality planning service is important in giving developers and investors the confidence to invest in Swansea in order to develop key sectors of the local economy.</li> <li>• Successfully bring forward schemes that assist economic development.</li> </ul>

**E. Promote affordable credit and savings options and help people maximise their income and entitlements.**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train more Council staff / workers in Welfare Rights / Benefits advice appropriate to their role.</li> <li>• Increase the number of Council staff making saving contributions to the Credit Union</li> <li>• Encourage more Council tenants to join the Credit Union.</li> <li>• Decrease the percentage of warrants executed against Council tenants by offering support and financial assistance</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for 6 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So that there is more capacity and capability to help people and clients claim their benefit entitlements and maximise their income and deal with benefit related issues and problems concerning the introduction of Welfare Reform.</li> <li>• Help build the financial capability of the Credit Union and encourage more of the people of Swansea to join so that more people can access and benefit from sustainable and affordable credit and savings options.</li> <li>• Help tenants manage their money and pay their rent or bills promptly in a bid to prevent them falling into rent arrears and financial difficulties.</li> <li>• To help tenants who are faced with eviction as a result of rent arrears exacerbated by debt.</li> <li>• Help people maintain stability and security for their families, safeguard their health and well-being and prevent social exclusion while reducing the costs associated with providing Bed &amp; Breakfast and temporary accommodation.</li> </ul>

**F. Improve Housing and Housing supply in order to increase the availability of good quality, affordable housing.**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increase in the number of new affordable housing units.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To meet established need for affordable housing and contribute towards reducing homelessness and people having to continue to live in unsuitable and / or unaffordable accommodation.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of void (empty) Council homes</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of tenants staying in their Council tenancy for more than 2 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make the best use of its Housing stock so that it is as fully occupied as possible, helping to meet the need for affordable housing.</li> <li>• To make the best use of the housing stock and help tenants to sustain their tenancies and provide their families with more stability and cohesive communities in which to live.</li> </ul>
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**G. Help people adopt and develop healthy and sustainable lifestyles in order to improve health.**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the percentage of 11-16 year olds attending 20 or more extra curricular physical or sporting activities during the school year.</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of children who can swim at age 11</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of people referred to the Council by Health professionals to still be active after 12 months and indicating that their health has improved.</li> <li>• Increase the number of available growing spaces.</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of pupils identified in the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) who take up free school lunch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To sustain participation in physical or sporting activities outside of school and promote healthier lifestyles.</li> <li>• Children will be safer near water and will learn a life skill that will be fun and contribute towards adopting a healthy lifestyle.</li> <li>• To demonstrate that participants have adopted a healthier lifestyle.</li> <li>• To encourage people to grow their own food to help deal with rising food prices, encourage self-sufficiency, provide a healthy activity and promote healthier eating.</li> <li>• To assist learning and help secure the future well-being of school pupils.</li> </ul>

**H. People are safe, well and supported to live independently (Adult Services).**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the percentage of cases where the risk safeguarding vulnerable adults has been managed.</li> <li>• Increase the number and percentage of people that are supported to be independent.</li> <li>• Reduce the time taken to taken between the completion of the care plan and provision / installation of aids / equipment.</li> <li>• Help clients return home following a period of reablement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To foster a collective responsibility to safeguarding across all of our staff and increase resilience to cope with the increased demands from an ageing population.</li> <li>• To promote the independence, safety and dignity of service users.</li> <li>• To reduce the need for admission to hospital or residential care.</li> <li>• To provide high quality person-centred care and better outcomes for service users that is also more financially sustainable than long-term residential care.</li> </ul>

**I. Minimise waste and increase recycling through promotion, working with others and by targeting low participating areas.**

1. What do we want to achieve?	2. Why is this important?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the percentage of waste recycled and reduce the percentage of waste sent to landfill.</li> <li>• Increase the % of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To meet Welsh Government waste targets, avoid financial penalties and help contribute to protecting finite resources.</li> <li>• Improving arrangements for collecting and recycling waste should have a beneficial impact on reducing the incidents of fly tipping and should improve the speed with which incidents are dealt with.</li> </ul>

# Standing up for a Better Swansea

*Corporate Improvement Plan  
2013-17 – Part 2*

## **A. Provide support for children in the early years in Swansea so that they are ready for learning and make developmental progress.**

### **Why this is an Improvement Objective**

There is evidence to show that good early years care and education can have beneficial outcomes for children and their families.

#### **1. Early years provision**

- There is a great deal of research evidence<sup>3</sup> which points to the educational and social benefits for children and society, particularly for children from disadvantaged areas, of good quality provision in the early years.
- Research findings suggest that good early years care and education lead to improvements in children's language development, educational performance in mathematics and reading and a reduction in aggressive behaviour.
- Children who attend early years settings are more independent and concentrate on their play for longer and, on entry to school, are more co-operative and are better prepared for the challenges they meet.
- Research also demonstrates that the quality of the provision has a marked impact on the outcomes for children.
- Children who experience good quality provision at an early age are more likely to go on to attend higher education institutions and have well paid jobs.
- They are also less likely to be involved in crime and the use of drugs and fewer of them experience broken marriages.

#### **2. Flying Start**

- Flying Start is a multi-agency Programme aimed at improving outcomes for children under 4 in the identified most deprived target areas.
- Children and their families living in the targeted areas are eligible to access a menu of services, which include:
  - additional health visiting above core service/other health enhancing services;
  - parenting programmes and support via delivery of accredited group work programmes and/or 1-2-1 individual interventions;
  - language and play programme;
  - free quality part time childcare for all 2 year olds 2.5 hours a day, 5 days a week 42 weeks of the year.
- Swansea's model of delivery is centred around the establishment of dedicated Flying Start settings within primary schools ensuring the co-location of staff

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, [The Marmot Review](#) and the [Welsh Government Tackling Poverty Action Plan](#).

and achieving seamless provision into the Foundation Phase. As stated in the Interim Evaluation of Flying Start – SQW 2010:

*“multi-agency/joint working has significantly aided effectiveness and assisted in achieving the programme’s overall aims. It was seen not only to improve access to services through co-location and joint delivery but also to bring together and coordinate the necessary range of skills, knowledge and perspectives to enable the programme to identify and meet needs – providing tailored interventions and responses to ensure that the most appropriate services and support are in place.”*

- By 2015 the Flying Start initiative in Swansea will benefit 2,659 0-3 year olds living in the targeted areas with approximately 600 childcare places being provided for the 2 year olds.

**The Council’s contribution towards improvement**

- The Council is part of a multi-disciplinary approach to improving outcomes for children and their families involved in the Flying Start programme.
- The Council works to co-ordinate and bring together different skills and disciplines to develop tailored programmes to meet people’s individual needs.
- The Council has been integral to establishing and extending the Flying Start venues, managing the programme and delivering key aspects of the programme, for example, around parenting.
- The Council and its partners work to encourage as many eligible children to attend Flying Start settings as possible. Keeping attendance high will ensure that children reach their developmental potential and their families benefit as much as possible from improved parenting skills, self-esteem, confidence and improved children’s behaviour.

**A1. Attendance at Flying Start settings**

**Aim:** To at least maintain attendance at Flying Start settings.

**Measure:** % attendance at Flying Start settings.

Past Performance				Projection			
2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
-	-	-	79%	<b>80%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>80%</b>

**Why this is important:**

- Maintaining and gradually improving attendance at Flying Start settings is important so that as many eligible children and their families as possible profit from the educational and social benefits of early years provision.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- Attendance at Flying Start childcare settings is not compulsory; however it provides young children with the opportunity to enhance their development during the year leading up to their admission to Nursery.
- The main reason for non attendance is due to illnesses particularly those with an incubation period including Chicken Pox and Measles; school inset days and the summer holidays also impact on attendance at Flying Start settings.
- Attendance data is collated nationally; however the Welsh Government will not benchmark performance due to the variances in approaches across Wales.
- During the last year there has been a big reduction in unauthorised attendances. This was identified as an issue in many settings and addressed directly with all managers in the regular managers meetings so that good practice was shared and a consistent process adopted.
- The Welsh Government are content with the attendance levels at Flying Start settings in Swansea, which we believe can be attributed mainly to the model of dedicated settings achieving high quality provision as well as providing the base for the wider multi-disciplinary team to be co-located.
- Due to the expected factors that impact on pre-school attendance the future focus is to maintain the level of attendance achieved during 2012/13 and where possible make small advances to improve the performance which will be dependant on targeting persistent non attendees.

**What works well now:**

- The school based dedicated childcare settings with co-location of the wider multi-disciplinary team.
- Following up non-attendance with the family via a home visit by, for example, the Health Visitor.
- Following up the attendance data with a narrative of the story behind the data.
- Regular Childcare Managers Meetings to share good practice, identify issues that need to be addressed and achieve consistency.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Commence a pilot at the Flying Start settings using a multi-agency approach to focus on quality assurance.	To discuss any issues / concerns / improvements in the children attending the setting, including non-attendance, in order to improve the performance of children.
Monitor and support Flying Start	To identify and share good practice,



Settings through the Flying Start Link Teacher.	ensure consistency across settings and identify areas for development within individual settings in order to improve performance and attendance.
Consider how the parenting component of Flying Start can harness available expertise and resources.	To help tackle low attendance.

## A2. Improved Parenting

**Aim:** To measure the distance parents have travelled and how they (and professionals) perceive they have improved their parenting during the intervention.

**Measure:** Average % of distance travelled perceived by a) parents b) professionals involved in Flying Start parenting programmes

	Baseline Data					Projection							
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17				
<b>Parents</b>													
Self esteem and confidence	30.1 %	30.1 %	20.7 %	15%	12.8%	<b>To be replaced with % of parents / carers that report a positive distance travelled (improvement) at the end of a Flying Start parenting programme.</b>							
Parenting skills	28.4 %	26%	26%	10%	11.5%								
Children's behaviour	11%	25%	21%	15%	9.1%								
<b>Professionals</b>													
Self esteem and confidence	57%	46%	50%	72%	37%								
Parenting skills	42.2 %	40%	32%	88%	32.2%								
Children's behaviour	41.1 %	39%	32%	82%	25.1%								

### Why this is important:

- Understanding the progress parents perceive they have made improving their parenting skills, children's behaviour, self-esteem and confidence is an important measure of the improvements they have made during the intervention.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- The Parenting element of Flying Start aims to provide strategies not to manage behaviour but to better enable parents/carers to understand the unmet need driving the behaviour.
- While the majority of the referrals focus on behaviour management, evaluation shows that parents identify improved self esteem and confidence as the most significant change.
- Parents reflected on how they were often given advice from professionals about the 'best way to do things' that made them feel "that if I didn't do it that way then I would be a bad parent"; they reported that this added to the feeling of failing.
- Parents repeatedly stated that they had recognised that they often did not feel "good enough".
- Many went on to add that the way programmes were facilitated allowed them to problem solve within the group; they were not given the answers and they felt more in control of decisions.
- The tables on the previous page show past performance and the distance travelled in 3 areas: Self Esteem and Confidence, Parenting skills and Children's behaviour.
- The following should be taken into consideration:
  - Parents usually identified their resilience as being far higher than that identified by professionals.
  - When parents were asked to reflect back on their original scoring at the end of service they generally identified that they had scored themselves as functioning higher than they possibly were and in reality their resilience was lower.
- For example; In 2011 -12, parents generally identified their starting point as far higher than in previous years but the end scores were similar to previous years; therefore the distance travelled scores appear lower.
- This could be explained because the service adopted a more preventative focus and gained success engaging service users early before concerns for family functioning moved into crisis.
- The early closure of Genesis 2 funding has reduced real capacity within the Parenting team; however the team has had additional posts in Flying Start to address the expansion programme.
- New guidance from the Welsh Government will influence the delivery of programmes from the end of 2013 onwards.

**What works well now:**

- A variety of programmes delivered by the parenting team and partners offering service users support that can be tailored to meet the needs of individual families.
- Ensuring that staff have access to training that provides them with the skills, knowledge and tools to support families effectively.
- Multi-agency planning meetings in each Flying Start setting to share good practice, solve problems and plan future delivery

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Commence a pilot at the Flying Start settings using a multi-agency approach to focus on quality assurance.	To discuss any issues / concerns / improvements in the children attending the setting in order to improve the performance of children
Commence parenting programmes earlier at the ante natal period.	To improve outcomes by ensuring that the family has access to support from pre-birth through to transition into school.
Review the distance travelled tools measuring improvements to parental skills, confidence and child care.	To bring consistency across Prevention and Early Intervention and respond to Flying Start Guidance in terms of measuring performance and improving outcomes.
Embed the multi-agency approach in the Flying Start expansion programme and review and build upon the joint planning meetings.	To help improve outcomes for families and their children.
Change the name from 'Parenting Team' to 'Family Partnership Team' and changing job titles from 'Parenting Development Officers' to 'Family Facilitators'.	To respond to feedback from service users that being invited to a 'parenting' programme' implies that they are considered to be bad parents and help break down barriers of engagement with families.

### A3. Flying Start children at or above the developmental norm

**Aim:** To help Flying Start children realise their potential with regard to the developmental norm.

**Measure:** % of Flying Start children assessed at or above their developmental norm.

	Past Performance				Projection			
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12 <sup>4</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Age 2	-	-	43.78%	38.97%	In future we will not necessarily expect a year on year improvement since each cohort of children from year to year is made up of different children with different individual needs.			
Age 3	-	-	53.57%	61.42%				

#### Why this is important:

- It is important that children's development during their earliest years is assessed at suitable points so that professionals working with children and their families can respond appropriately to help improve outcomes.

#### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- In line with Welsh Government Flying Start strategic guidance, all Flying Start eligible children have a robust developmental assessment at 2 years and 3 years as a minimum. This demonstrates the child's actual developmental against what it should be for that age.
- For the financial year 2011/12 there is not a full compliment of data for the SOGS (Schedule of Growing Skills) developmental assessment so complete data is only available from 2012/13.
- The developmental norms in 2012/13 have increased from 38.97% at 2 years to 61.42% at 3 years. At 2 years 33.46% of children were more than 1 standard deviation below developmental norm. However, by 3 years this had decreased to 19.29%.
- In future we will not necessarily expect a year on year improvement since each cohort of children from year to year is made up of different children with different individual needs.
- The Welsh Government intends to procure the development of an all Wales Early Years Development Assessment Framework from birth to seven years of age; this may impact on the ability to compare data from one year to the next.

<sup>4</sup> 2011/12 result is based upon incomplete data from the Schedule of Growing Skills developmental assessment

**What works well now:**

- The integration of services within Flying Start has demonstrated the effectiveness in improving performance. All children within Flying Start have their SOGS assessment at 2 years and again at 3 years.
- After completion of the SOGS at age 2 years any concerns/objectives/actions with individual children are reiterated to the Child Care Manager of the specific Flying Start setting the child attends.
- There are then regular discussions held with the Health Visitor and Child Care Manager to discuss progress. The Health Visitor and Child Care Manager being co-located aids this communication, which is pivotal in striving to improve the child's developmental attainment.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Commence a pilot at the Flying Start settings using a multi-agency approach to focus on quality assurance.	To discuss any issues / concerns / improvements in the children attending the setting in order to improve the performance of children.
Instigate regular meetings to ensure the SOGS data is robust.	So that any discrepancies / anomalies are identified early and an action plan formulated accordingly.
Commence Parenting programmes earlier at the ante natal period.	To enable a more robust proactive service delivery in line with the Marmot Review findings that the earlier the intervention then the greater the impact is made.
Further develop the information and data on the improvement journey over the coming 12 months, which will be the key focus for the new Flying Start Link Teacher.	To explore the viability of introducing a consistent approach and comparable data relating to the On Entry Assessment to the Foundation Phase.

## **B. Support improvement to school attendance and attainment of all learners aged 3 – 19 years so that each can achieve their potential.**

### **Why this is an Improvement Objective**

There are key issues that have implications for the need to improve school attendance and attainment.

#### **1. School attendance:**

- There is a strong link which shows that children who attend school regularly improve their chances of raising their attainment and achieving their full potential.
- There was an improvement in Swansea's attendance figures for both Primary and Secondary phases in 2011-12 academic year. However, the national ranking for Primary attendance slipped.
- As a result, schools with low attendance have been targeted for support by the Education Welfare Service and the school's local authority link adviser.
- Nationally, all local authorities have entered into dialogue with the Schools Standard Unit on attendance with analysis and actions being provided for each authority.

#### **2. Educational attainment:**

- There has been good improvement in achievement and attainment in Swansea over the last 5 years but deprivation factors will continue to affect performance unless the focus on improvement is sustained.
- Ensuring children and young people have good literacy (and numeracy) skills is key to their chances of success.

### **The Council's contribution towards improvement**

- Children and young people need the best circumstances and chances to achieve a full and rounded education in order to reach their potential. Failure to ensure this can lead to children and young people leaving school without recognised qualifications, which can see them drift into anti-social behaviour, become unemployed with poor prospects and fall into poverty.
- The first step to avoid this is to ensure that children and young people attend school regularly in the first place and that they have the necessary support and conditions at home in order to succeed.
- Once in school, children should be engaged using effective teaching and learning practices aimed at improving literacy and numeracy skills.
- These actions will help to reduce the number of young people who leave schools with no qualifications, or with poor qualifications, and increase the

number who go on to further education, employment or training, helping to break the cycle of social exclusion and poverty

## B1. School Attendance

**Aim:** To see an increase in school attendance

**Measure: (EDU/016 a and b)** % of pupil attendance in a) primary b) secondary schools

	Past performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Primary	92.4%	92.33%	92.93%	93.3%	93.5%	<b>93.7%</b>	<b>93.9%</b>	<b>94.1%</b>	<b>94.3%</b>
Secondary	90.7%	90.6%	91%	92%	92.2%	<b>92.4%</b>	<b>92.6%</b>	<b>92.8%</b>	<b>93.0%</b>

### Why this is important:

- If children do not attend school regularly then they will not fulfil their educational potential.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- Achieving improvement in school attendance is difficult given the complex factors and responsibilities involved. Improvement can only be achieved through hard work on the part of schools, well developed systems and support from parents/carers.
- Improvements are often small in percentage terms and can easily be affected by things like people taking their children out of school for holidays, or events such as a measles outbreak.
- In recent years there has been a real emphasis on improving school attendance at a national, local authority and school level. There has been a much greater emphasis on analysis of data and comparative performance. In 2011-2012 Swansea showed good improvements in both Primary and Secondary attendance. This is in a context in which Welsh authorities as a whole are showing improvement.
- Swansea secondary schools show a positive trend in attendance over the past five years whereas primary schools, over the same period, show a relatively flat trend. Swansea's relative position in comparison with Welsh authorities for 2011-12 is 15th for secondary attendance and 17th for primary attendance.
- The overall figures mask considerable variation in performance between schools, particularly in the primary phase. Secondary schools in particular now have dedicated attendance teams to help improve attendance.
- Across both primary and secondary phases good practice is shared amongst schools and practitioners, for example, at Improving Attendance seminars.

- The Welsh Government has, over the past two years, produced detailed analysis of attendance data at a national, local authority and school level in the Attendance Analysis Framework which it intends to produce on an annual basis.
- The Welsh Government also introduced revised codes for school attendance in 2010 (June) which has supported a better understanding of the school attendance codes throughout Wales resulting in greater consistency between schools and local authorities. School attendance is now one of the elements contributing to a school's national performance banding.
- In summary, there is a greater focus on attendance now at all levels together and this is combined with the availability of more sophisticated data and analysis enabling schools and local authority support services to target and plan more effectively.
- However, looking ahead to 2015/16, the projection may be influenced by considerations which include: possible budget reductions / external funding cuts which could impact on performance; possible future changes to Welsh Government policy on school attendance which may also have a bearing on future performance; for example, a reduction in the availability of school transport would be likely to have a negative impact on attendance.

**What works well now:**

- For attendance to improve it needs to be a clear focus and priority within schools.
- Schools need to have effective systems and to be clear about what they do to improve attendance.
- Sharing good practice is an important tool for improvement and schools must target resources onto improving attendance. The authority has increased the focus on improving attendance over the last three years through headteacher meetings and good practice seminars.
- Good relationships between the school, parent and pupil and close working with other agencies are also important as is a structured support and approach to improving school attendance i.e. evaluation and review of data, the development of a workplan through to prosecution as a last resort.
- Guidance for schools issued on new Attendance Codes to ensure correct recording
- Targeted work by Education Welfare Officers and project workers to support schools and pupils with attendance issues.



**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Work with schools to embed a more structured approach to improving school attendance	To help improve school attendance.
Encourage more sharing of good practice between schools	
Reviewing systems and the support given to schools showing low / flat attendance trends, in the lowest quartiles (primary schools) of benchmark groups.	

**B2. Improving literacy**

**Aim:** To see an increase in children's literacy rates

**Measure:** National Literacy Test

Past performance					Projection			
All Wales Reading Test (to 2013-14 academic year)								
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
97.6	98.2	98.8	99.4	99.6				
National Literacy Test (from 2013-14 academic year)								
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
				starts	To be determined			

**Why this is important:**

- Increasing the number of pupils who achieve good reading scores at age 11 will contribute to meeting every learner's need to be able to read, write and be numerate in order to achieve success in schools and beyond.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- There has been a sustained focus in Swansea on improving Literacy and Numeracy since the end of the 1990s as a response to concerns about the performance of Swansea pupils and the link between deprivation and low literacy levels.
- A pupil's reading score at the end of primary schooling (at age 11) is a good indicator of how well the pupil is able to access the curriculum in secondary

school and their prospects for achievement at age 16 (when compulsory schooling ends).

- The All Wales Reading Tests (in English and Welsh) were originally developed from scratch in response to requests from schools in Swansea and in other Welsh authorities.
- As a result of the focus over time on reading, the reading scores at age 11 from the All Wales Reading Tests show a rising trend in Swansea in which improvement has gone from 97.6 in 2008-09 to 99.6 in 2012-13.
- The All Wales Reading Test in year 2 (age 7) shows that the average standardised age score is typically around 93-95 in most years. In 2011-12, the average score was around 93. This year group had 13% of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) support, which partly explains the apparently low result. The average standardised age score for the All Wales Reading Tests (AWRT) in year 7 (age 11) is 97-99 and by this age, EAL pupils have more or less caught up with other pupils, and thus have less effect on the result.
- In the last three years Swansea has developed a new local school-based literacy strategy, the 8 Reading Behaviours, which is proving to be very effective; the strategy aims to provide pupils with all the skills needed to be a fluent reader.
- There are also complementary strategies for improving Early Oracy (talking), improving writing and helping pupils who are just below the expected level of performance to 'catch-up'.
- These strategies are weighted to provide a greater level of support to schools and pupils in the target areas of high deprivation and the School Effectiveness Grant funding is being focused by schools on literacy (and numeracy). All these strategies seek to engage and improve the performance of boys.
- The Welsh Government has recently introduced a new Literacy (& Numeracy) Framework which shifts the focus of what is tested away from 'English' to literacy.
- There will be new annual national literacy (and numeracy) tests from 2013 for all pupils so a new baseline to measure success will be set in summer 2013; therefore, no comparisons with other local authorities can be undertaken. Additional work on Early Oracy and writing also continues.

**What works well now:**

- The authority is adopting the new Welsh Government's Literacy Framework and embedding the effective local school-based literacy strategy – the 8 Reading Behaviours - and other strategies across all schools to help drive up literacy standards.
- There are also more regional literacy and numeracy reviews for targeted schools and Swansea is using funding effectively to prioritise schools.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Target resources to need e.g. to schools with the highest level of overall concern, to areas/schools where literacy and numeracy are at a significantly low level, to pupils with greatest need within schools	So that every child and young person has the opportunity to be literate, to access the curriculum and go on to achieve their potential.
Train teachers and support staff on literacy and numeracy strategies	
Share effective practice on improving skills and performance across schools and authorities.	

**B3. Improving attainment**

**Aim:** To see an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold inclusive of English / Welsh and Maths

**Measure: (EDU/017)** % of pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold inclusive of English / Welsh and Maths

Past Performance (Welsh Government stats)				Projection				
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
49.2%	52.1%	53.2%	54.6% WG published result for 2012	<b>55%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>60%</b>

**Why this is important:**

- The Council would like to provide pupils with opportunities in schools which help them to improve the basic skills that every learner needs so that all pupils are able to read, write and be numerate.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- There has been a sustained focus in Swansea on improving Literacy and Numeracy since the end of the 1990s as a response to concerns about the performance of Swansea pupils and the link between deprivation and low literacy levels.
- In 2007 the 'Level 2 Threshold Inclusive of English/Welsh and Maths' was introduced and has become the best indicator of how pupils have improved

their literacy and numeracy skills by age 16. (Note: the 'Level 2 Threshold' is 5 GCSEs or their equivalents achieved at grades A\*-C.)

- Since the 'Level 2 Inclusive' first became a national indicator in 2008, Swansea's improving performance and place in the national rankings have been good and well above the expected level which shows that the focus on literacy (and numeracy) over the last 15 years has been effective. In 2011/12 Swansea was placed 8th out of all the Welsh authorities with a result of 54.6% compared to 51.1% for Wales.
- For literacy the English results are positive as Swansea came 6th in the national comparison of GCSE A\*-C grades in Wales and for Maths there has been an upward trend in pupils achieving A\* - C over the past 5 years which has been consistently above the Wales average.
- In 2012, the summer reading tests saw many year groups with average scores just over 100, with a general pattern of slightly higher results for older year groups. For year 8, the average was 102. Boys' average scores were typically about 3 points below girls, but with larger gaps shown in younger year groups and smaller gaps for older year groups. These tests showed that the Literacy strategy is effective with significant improvement recorded by targeted pupils.
- There have been strategies for improving literacy since the end of the 1990s and in the last three years Swansea has developed a new local school-based literacy strategy, the 8 Reading Behaviour, which is proving to be very effective.
- The strategy aims to provide pupils with all the skills needed to be a fluent reader. There are also complementary strategies for improving Early Oracy (talking), improving writing and helping pupils who are just below the expected level of performance to 'catch-up'. All strategies seek to engage and improve the performance of boys.
- These strategies are weighted to provide a greater level of support to schools and pupils in the target areas of high deprivation. The School Effectiveness Grant funding is being focused by schools on literacy (and numeracy).
- The Welsh Government has recently introduced a new Literacy (& Numeracy) Framework which shifts the focus of what is tested away from 'English' to literacy.
- There will be new annual national literacy (and numeracy) tests from 2013 for all pupils so a new baseline to measure success will be set in summer 2013.
- The authority will continue the phased roll-out of the school based Literacy Strategy in order to help improve literacy and educational attainment. This roll out is directed by the Cluster Headteacher group.

**What works well now:**

- The authority is adopting the new Welsh Government's Literacy Framework and embedding the effective local school-based literacy strategy – the 8 Reading Behaviours - and other strategies across all schools to help drive up literacy standards.
- There are also more regional literacy and numeracy reviews for targeted schools and Swansea is using funding effectively to prioritise schools.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Target resources to need e.g. to schools with the highest level of overall concern, to areas/schools where literacy and numeracy are at a significantly low level, to pupils with greatest need within schools	So that every child and young person has the opportunity to be literate, to access the curriculum and go on to achieve their potential.
Train teachers and support staff on literacy and numeracy strategies	
Share effective practice on improving skills and performance across schools and authorities.	

## C. People are safe, well and supported to live independently (Child & Family Services)

### Why this is an Improvement Objective

There are key issues that have implications for the need to improve children's social services.

#### 1. Socio-economic characteristics:

- Swansea has the second highest overall population of the 22 Welsh Unitary Authorities. The overall population of children and young people (0-17 years) in Swansea is 46,808, which is approximately 20% of the total population.
- This population is growing fast and is projected to rise:
  - by 3% between 2011 and 2015;
  - by 10% between 2011 and 2020, and
  - by 19% between 2011 and 2030
- This growth is projected to be higher in Swansea than rest of Wales. Swansea has 12% of its local areas in the 10% most deprived in Wales, and 25% of Swansea's local areas are among the 20% most deprived in Wales, experiencing high levels of child poverty and the harsh social and economic conditions.
- These demographic, social and economic changes will lead to significantly increased demand for all children and young people services, including children's social care over the coming years.
- Corporate Director (Social Services) recently commissioned Institute of Public Care (IPC) to review children's services in Swansea and a report has recently been produced: Review of the demand for and Use of Resources in Children's Services (May 2013). The recent review comparing Swansea's existing strategy for children in needs services against current research and best practice, which includes the following key areas:
  - Safely reducing entry into care
  - Improving outcomes for looked after children
  - Safely reducing the time that looked after children are accommodated
- Overall the review concluded that Swansea has been:
  - Highly successful at reducing the rate of referrals and re-referrals to Children's Social Care.
  - Successful at managing the rate of children in need.
  - Successful at keeping the number of Children on the Child Protection Register relatively low and steady when elsewhere in the UK, these numbers have been growing significantly.

- Successful in supporting looked after children to find a range of stable, including permanent, placements.
- Less successful at reducing the number of looked after children and young people looked after.
- A 'light touch' comparison of research and best practice with Swansea's strategy and current service configuration suggested to the reviewers that the authority had the right strategic focus and, for the most part, the right systems and services in place **with the exception possibly of the area concerned with safely reducing entry into the looked after system**, which now needs to be the focus of the next stage of the improvement journey.
- The review suggested six areas for consideration by Swansea Council and partners.
  - Area One:** Continue to make progress in key areas of the existing strategy to ensure best possible outcomes for children in need in Swansea
  - Area Two:** Monitor the impact of population growth and welfare reform on future demand
  - Area Three:** Promote and support effective interventions with children and families below the threshold for Children' Social Care
  - Area Four:** Develop services for children and young people on the cusp of care
  - Area Five:** Improve access to resources for looked after children and care leavers, and to support this by undertaking a more detailed analysis of spend by all partners on looked after children
  - (Area Six).**

### The Council's contribution towards improvement

- The Council respects the rights of all children, as expressed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and seek to promote all the things that children and young people need to make sure they are healthy, happy and safe.
- The Council wants to achieve the best possible outcomes for children in need and children looked after in terms of each realising their full potential and the best possible life journey.
- The Council in acting as corporate parents wants to improve the health and enhance the well being of all children looked after.
- The Council want children to become responsible citizens, and to fulfil the goals and ambitions they have for themselves and ultimately provide good parenting to their own children.
- The Council wants all children to enjoy learning and to benefit from the experience.
- The Council wants children to experience a positive set of relationships, and to feel valued and loved for who they are.

## C1. Reducing children in need coming into care

**Aim:** To reduce the number of children in need who then are coming into care.

**Measure:** Number / % of children becoming looked after per 10,000 child population

	Past Performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Number of children becoming LAC</b>	170	268	193	161	221	<b>190</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>% of entry in LAC (per 10000 pop 0-17)</b>	37.4	59.01	42.80	35.39	47.21	<b>40.7</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>

### Why this is important:

- The Council want all children to be healthy and to achieve well being.
- The Council wants to support children in need locally where possible, as close to their home where we can support them to access services likely to lead to the best outcomes.
- Children should only enter the looked after system when this is genuinely the best or only option to safeguard or promote their health and wellbeing.
- In Swansea, we will achieve this by providing the highest quality and range of services to children and families and for which the Council is responsible and accountable.
- The term 'looked after' is applied to a child for whom the Local Authority is providing care and accommodation, either by a Court Order or in agreement with the child's parent or guardian.
- Some children with disabilities are also classed as looked after; for example when they receive either a specialist placement or regular short breaks requiring statutory support.
- A relatively small number of children who have entered into the looked after system is accessing a considerable proportion of the Council's resources.
- Since demand for looked after services is frequently subject to such severe and sudden fluctuations, it is essential to have, not only an evidence based strategy but also senior managers equipped with an updated and detailed knowledge about the nature of demand in order to respond pro-actively to managing the numbers and turning the curve.



**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- Children continue to need to be looked after away from their natural families. We need to fully understand the profile of children looked after and the reasons behind their presenting need.
- Many factors contribute to a child needing to be looked after, such as abuse, neglect, conflict, poverty, emotional or behavioural difficulties, family substance misuse and family breakdown or domestic violence.
- The priority is always to ensure the child is safe and protected and to ensure that a plan for permanence is agreed at the earliest opportunity.
- Overall the rate of looked after children is high in Swansea, although not as high as some comparator authorities.
- Our aim is to reduce the rate of entry into the looked after care system and this will require working closely with partners to ensure that root causes of children needing to become looked after, such as child poverty, substance misuse and domestic violence are being actively tackled in a coordinated approach.

**What works well now:**

- There is already a strategic approach ensuring the best possible outcomes for children in Swansea. We have through the **4 Site Model**, a strategic change programme of joint working with partners aimed at coordinating efforts to meet needs of children in Swansea.
- We are currently providing a range of high quality services aimed at managing demand for Child & Family Services in Swansea.
- Early intervention and prevention systems are in place to reduce the risk of children entering the care system but they are not yet fully embedded in Swansea.
- Signs of Safety is a skills model aimed at improving social worker's practice, focusing on the strengths of the child, and what already works well in families, to help build up support available to children and resilience in families.
- The recent IPC review concluded that it is important to have effective services and approaches (such as Team Around the Family - an early intervention and preventative service, stopping issues spiralling out of control ) in order to intervene successfully with families who have additional needs.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Continue to monitor the effectiveness of current strategy.	To improve outcomes for children looked after and safely reduce the need for children to become looked after.
Safely reduce the length of time that looked after children need to be accommodated, away from their local area.	
Provide placements for children looked after where appropriate closer to home.	

**C2. Reducing re-referrals and Children in Need requiring Social Services intervention**

**Aim:** To reduce impact of population growth and welfare reforms on demand and the numbers of children in need, including looked after children services, over the next 2-10 years.

**Measures:** Rate of re-referrals received.  
Total number of children in need requiring social services intervention within Swansea.

	Past Performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
SCC/010 Rate of Re-referrals	33.9	40.8	34.8	30.9	27.8	<b>26.5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>
Total No. of Children in need (open cases) in year	4586	3164	3504	4719	4921	<b>Reduced Number</b>			

**Why this is important:**

- We aim to ensure that the most effective work by social services is being carried out with the children, young people and families who are most in need.
- This will require improvements to working practices across the whole welfare and education system. It is crucial that partner agencies continue to work together effectively and that plans and services focused on prevention and early intervention are put in place as soon as possible to reduce the occasions where a social services intervention is required in support of a child's well being.

- In Swansea there is a growing diversity of culture, ethnicity and religion. In all our work with children and families we must promote their diversity and cultural differences, religion and racial identity.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- Although the number of referrals to Children's Social Care Services has fluctuated quite significantly in Swansea over the three years to 2012 and has declined overall. This is a reflection of a managed trend linked to work supported by Prof. Thorpe and Dr. Suzanne Regan within Swansea's Children and Young People Programme and the 4 Site Model aimed at preventing exclusion of children.
- Overall the level of contacts, consultations and referrals to Child & Family Services has remained high. Indeed the rate of referrals to Child and Family Services in Swansea per 10,000 population in 2012 was still higher than the Wales Average.
- As part of the work with partners to coordinate a response to children in need, the number and rate of re-referrals has fallen steadily up to 2013.
- Overall the number of children in need has increased to more than the Wales average and by over 30% in the 3 years to 2012; however Swansea has a rate per 10000 population that is similar to other comparable authorities.
- The number of children in need with a disability in Swansea also appears to be just above the Wales average.
- However there are significant trends to consider within the population of children whose needs are required to be considered by the Council. We need to monitor the impacts of welfare reforms on child poverty and families.
- The role of Child and Family Services and the Children and Young People Programme has been centred on the development of the 4 Site Model, which coordinates efforts such as promoting inclusion, managing front door access to Child & Family Service, Team Around the Family and promoting permanent placements for looked after children.
- Promoting Inclusion aims to encourage work with children to help them remain at home, within their schools, through community based approaches to provide support to children at risk of exclusion.

**What works well now:**

- We have remodelled the front door access arrangements to Child & Family Services to work effectively in managing contacts, referrals as well as consultations with other professionals concerned with child welfare.
- Children and young people receive a good and timely assessment of their needs.

- There are many examples of good preventative work and creative use of resources to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people through new approaches, such as solutions focused support planning in which social workers help children and families to agree support plans with their own strategies to managing problems at home.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Align social services 'front door' with wider range of family support services and Foster Swansea.	To extend the range of options available to children and families.
Develop the interface with the regional Integrated Family Support Team and with early intervention and prevention services, such as Team Around the Family (TAF) provided via Children and Young People programme.	With a view to diverting children from the need for statutory social services provision and in particular recourse to LAC services.
Monitor the impact of welfare reform by targeting families who we know will be hardest hit.	To offer more advice and support at an early stage to help maximise their income.

**C3. Support for services and systems operating at just below the threshold for children's social care**

**Aim:** To reduce demand for children's services for children in need and children looked after (Number and rate of looked after children) by targeting family support within a whole system approach.

**Measures:** Number of children looked after.  
Rate of looked after children per 1000 population 0-17 years.

	Past performance					Approx. Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>No of children looked after</b>	413	558	580	554	588	<b>563</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>488</b>
<b>Rate of LAC (per 10000 population 0-17)</b>	-	123	128	123	125	<b>122</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>102</b>

**Why this is important:**

- A child may be at risk of becoming looked after as a result of temporary or permanent problems facing their parents, as a result of abuse or neglect of the child or because of the child's behaviour, or where a child has no one to care for them.
- The Council will work in partnership with parents in meeting children's needs by focusing on their strengths and finding own solutions.
- We will work with parents and extended family members in order to enable them to meet their children's needs including their need for protection.
- There is strong evidence of the positive impact of targeted family support services and effective whole-systems such as Team around the Family (a preventative model aimed at stopping issues spiralling out of control and the need for social services intervention).
- When children cannot be looked after by their parents it is crucially important that we identify the next best alternative, such as a family and friends carer, or a matched placement with foster carer or through adoption.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- We are improving the take up and impact of services designed to reduce entry into care and/or to promote a swift return home (by need type and age).
- The children may be entering care temporarily or permanently following child protection proceedings and we would expect a child to be starting a placement with a foster family or residential care placement with a plan for permanence in place.
- Swansea's trend, in relation to the number and rate of looked after children, is very different to other comparable local authorities. Whilst the overall number to 2012 remained high but stable, other local authorities have experienced very significant changes. The number of looked after children in Wales has increased by 24% over the last 5 years to 2011/12, and the Wales average rate was 92 in 2012.
- The headlines in relation to the number of looked after children and young people in Swansea to 2012 are as follows:
  - The overall number of looked after children fell slightly from 2011 to 2012.
  - This trend is very different to most of the other comparator authorities, where the overall number of looked after children increased fairly significantly during this period of time; only Plymouth has seen a significant decrease in numbers.
  - In the year to 2012, Swansea's looked after population 'bulged' in relation to 10-15 year olds and also 0-4 year olds. This is a similar pattern to all-Wales and is likely to have a complicated set of underpinning reasons, which may include the 'Baby P Effect', the Southwark Judgement; impact of the

economic downturn; and an earlier 'bulge' of children who became looked after several years ago now working their way through the system.

- Recently the numbers of children and young people becoming looked after in Swansea has risen again to 227 in the year to March 2013 and by about 50% compared to the previous year.

**What works well now:**

- The Council has recruited and retained social workers who continue to develop their experience, skills and knowledge to develop their depth of practice with children and families.
- Building relationships with children and families and communities through locality team and multi agency working.
- Remodelled a range of services to support children and families.
- Bringing placements for children closer to their home area to promote links with their families where appropriate and to improve access to services.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
With partners ensure the promoting inclusion programme services (such as Team Around the Family) and activities are targeted at children who are at risk of becoming a child in need, placed on child protection register or entering looked after system.	To improve outcomes and reduce the demand for children's services for children in need and children looked after.

#### C4. Developing services to respond even better to children and young people on the cusp of care

**Aim:** To improve services to children and young people who may be at risk of becoming looked after

**Measures:** (Child Protection)

% of children on CPR who have been de-registered and then re-registered.

% children who remain on the CPR for more than 1 Year.

	Past performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
% of children on CPR who have been de-registered and then re-registered	7%	7%	11%	5%	16%	<b>12%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3.75%</b>
% children who remain of the CPR for > 1 Year	25%	24%	18%	23%	14%	<b>21%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>17.25%</b>

##### Why this is important:

- Our priority will always be to avoid the necessity of children having to come into care and we will always look for safe and appropriate alternatives.
- In Swansea we believe that children do best in family placements and it is our responsibility to ensure that we secure care for children within a family home and whenever this is possible within the local area.
- The next best alternative to the child's own family or extended family is foster care.
- The Council contributes a significant amount of resources to supporting a relatively small number of looked after children through supported placement and managed care.
- There is strong evidence of the positive impact of targeted family support services and effective whole system approaches that supports children regardless of professional or organisational boundaries.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- A child may be at risk of entering care temporarily or permanently following child protection proceedings.
- In Swansea, the number and rate of children on the child protection register has remained very stable. The number of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) in Swansea has hovered around the 200-250 mark for a number of years to March 2013; the rate is similar to other comparable authorities while other areas have experience more dramatic changes following Baby Peter case in 2008/09.

**What works well now:**

- Working with the Council's Corporate Legal team to ensure that public law outline arrangements are followed to achieve more case closures through permanent care arrangements.
- Changes within Social Services' Service Quality Unit have improved quality and timeliness of Child Protection conferences and Reviews, ensuring quality of Child Protection plans which are then acted upon in support of child and family.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Continue to develop legal support to teams in implementing new public law arrangements.	To achieve more timely case closures for children on protection register.
Streamlining multi-agency panels for discussing complex cases and targeting resources.	To safely divert children from recourse to looked after services by best ensuring use of services for children on the cusp of care.



## C5. Improving access to resources for looked after children and care leavers

**Aim:** To improve access to resources for children looked after and care leavers, and to support this by undertaking a more detailed analysis of spend by all partners on looked after children

**Measures:** % children looked after in Swansea who are supported in a family placement, versus residential care (balance of care)

At year end	Past performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
% of children in Mainstream Foster Care placed with Foster Swansea	n/a	49%	45%	50%	53%	<b>55%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>62.5%</b>
No. of children in residential care	n/a	43	46	55	62	<b>60</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>43</b>
% children looked after in a family placement	n/a	92%	92%	89%	88%	<b>89%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>92%</b>

### Why this is important:

- Many children looked after are at greater risk of social exclusion than other children of a similar age.
- Having the right placement in the right place, at the right time, is a vital factor in improving the stability of placements for looked after children, which in turn is a critical success factor in relation to better outcomes for children who are looked after.
- Securing sufficient placements and accommodation that meets the needs of children who are looked after is a vital step in delivering improved outcomes for this vulnerable group.
- The Council are responsible as corporate parents for looked after children.
- The Council expects that each looked after child will be registered with a local G.P., dentist and optician and regularly checked to make sure they remain healthy.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- We are improving the take up and impact of services designed to support children and families and to reduce recourse to care and, where possible to promote a swift return home.
- We would expect a child to be starting a placement in with a foster family or residential care placement with a plan for permanence in place.
- Swansea has invested in a remodelled Foster Swansea, and recruited additional foster carers who are effectively supported and rewarded for their efforts.
- Some children with complex needs may require a residential placement to meet their needs for a therapeutic environment, or a specialist service to meet very specific educational or disability needs or legal requirements.

**What works well now:**

- We are ensuring that children in care have good quality foster care placements close to home by increasing the number of mainstream foster carers (Foster Swansea).
- By increasing the number of local foster care placements able to meet a range of needs through additional family and friends, therapeutic and short break carers.
- We are working with foster carers to ensure that they are well trained, supported and rewarded for their work in achieving positive outcomes with children they look after.
- Through regional commissioning we are ensuring that suitable placements are cost effective, and achieving high quality standards.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Review structures to best coordinate efforts in achieving permanency for children looked after.	To help children looked after achieve permanency and provide better outcomes for children at the earliest opportunity.
Increase the number of children looked after who achieve permanence through adoption, special guardianship orders or placement with family and friends.	
Develop and improve a wider range of children looked after placements at lower cost and high quality.	
Ensure that placements and supporting services provide adequate support for young people who may be at risk of offending and care leavers.	

## **D. Develop partnerships, skills and infrastructure in order to attract and grow a knowledge based economy creating jobs grounded in key sectors.**

### **Why this is an Improvement Objective**

Swansea has some fundamental economic issues that it needs to deal with. The Council has a role in increasing social benefits from regeneration projects and setting the strategic planning framework to enable economic growth.

#### **1. Economy and Labour Market<sup>5</sup>:**

- Swansea has significant economic potential but faces a number of critical challenges to its future economic growth.
- The analysis undertaken as part of the Regional Economic Regeneration Strategy identifies Swansea's key role within the City Region, but illustrates that a number of structural weaknesses have to be overcome in order to drive new prosperity.
- Fundamental issues such as low productivity, high unemployment, economic inactivity, and deficiencies in skills are amongst the core concerns.
- Economic Activity and Employment Rates in Swansea are below the equivalent Wales and UK figures. Unemployment rates (survey-based) in Swansea are above Wales and UK rates, although claimant rates are lower.
- Other labour market statistics reinforce Swansea's role within the South West Wales sub-region and its position as a service sector-focussed economy with a high proportion of public sector jobs.

#### **2. Competitive Place Making:**

- The Council recognises that it has to collaborate with its partners in the private sector, government, academia and third sector to overcome Swansea's challenges and to drive growth within the region.
- This includes working jointly on a variety of initiatives and projects including the ambition of creating a distinctive place with competitive infrastructure that supports investment in high value knowledge based sectors.
- The Council's performance in its role as Planning Authority and also how it maximises employment and skills opportunities from large infrastructure projects are therefore central to the competitive place making challenge.

### **The Council's contribution towards improvement**

- Maximising the impact of regeneration projects through offering and facilitating linked training and work placements is an important way in which

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<sup>5</sup> Swansea Local Service Board (2012) *Strategic Needs Assessment*

the City & County of Swansea can prepare citizens for the challenges that lie ahead.

- The City & County of Swansea is participating in two major schemes to help achieve this: Workways and Beyond Bricks and Mortar.
- The Beyond Bricks & Mortar (BB&M) scheme helps local businesses become part of the regeneration programme through the use of clauses in contracts that will provide social benefits in the form of opportunities for the long term unemployed and economically inactive.
- The Workways project involves Swansea working with three other local authorities within the region to engage with the economically inactive and long term unemployed and to help support them back into employment.
- Workways will provide tailored support to those taking part assessing their needs and putting them in touch with appropriate employers (Nb – The Workways project as at 2013/14 is subject to review by the Welsh Government).
- The economic wellbeing and regeneration of the City & County depends in part on the development of large projects, be they retail, housing or industrial.
- This is both in terms of the economic benefits of the finished development if it's commercial, and the employment & trade generated by the construction process.
- There needs to be a successful partnership of developer and local planning authority in bringing forward schemes to the planning approval stage that assist economic development.

## D1. Increasing projects with social benefit clauses

**Aim:** To increase the numbers of projects that have social benefit clauses and Beyond Bricks and Mortar in their contracts.

**Measure: (BBMA1)** Increase in the number of projects with social benefit clauses & Beyond Bricks and Mortar in their contracts.

Past Performance				Projection			
2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
-	9	12	17	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>

### Why this is important:

- The Council would like to increase the number of regeneration projects with social benefit clauses in their contracts through the Beyond Bricks and Mortar initiative so that they can be used to give the unemployed and economically inactive opportunities for work experience, training and employment.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- Since placing social benefit clauses within specific regeneration contracts became Council policy it has taken time to embed the initiative within the culture and practices of the Council.
- There are macro economic influences, which the Council has little control over that also dictates whether or not finance will be made available and projects will come to fruition.

**What works well now:**

- Beyond Bricks & Mortar exists to ensure that money spent on public sector projects achieves social benefits for people and communities above and beyond the scope of what is actually being purchased.
- The scheme enjoys the support of public sector procurement colleagues who help identify suitable projects and provide an ambassadorial role with contractors and other public sector bodies explaining the process and its aims to project sponsors.
- Experience has also provided efficiencies in determining the scale and scope of clauses to be inserted within contracts and the flexibility and expertise to maximise opportunity.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Increase awareness and understanding of the aims of Beyond Bricks and Mortar scheme and social benefit clauses.	So that any fears may be allayed, especially with project sponsors, in order to encourage participation in the scheme.
Increase networks within the private sector and with those that engage with beneficiaries.	To help ensure that the number of employment and training opportunities is increased and that there will be sufficient numbers of people who will be aware of them and ready to take them up.
Support more service based contracts within the Beyond Bricks and Mortar scheme.	To increase the range of opportunities that the Council can offer to include office and people focussed occupations, such as caring.
Explore involvement in shared apprenticeship schemes.	So that short term contracts can play a bigger role in an individual's development through training, work experience and employment opportunities.

## D2. People entering employment

**Aim:** To increase the numbers of people entering employment as a result of participation in the Workways project.

**Measure: (WWC1)** The number of people entering employment as a result of participation in the Workways project.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
-	-	-	201	287	<b>280</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>400</b>

### Why this is important:

- The Workways project involves Swansea Council working with three other local authorities within the region to engage with the economically inactive and long term unemployed and to help support them back into employment.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- Workways provides a blend of support that is proven to help people who are not working get back into employment and stay employed.
- The approach is one where the client's needs are recognised and placed at the forefront of an action plan aimed at making the return to the workplace much easier.
- Since its inception, Workways within Swansea has undergone a number of structural changes before reaching its present size and range of activities. Chief of these has been the introduction of a team dedicated to finding job opportunities.
- For a number of reasons this has been smaller than what is required but the critical mass of the project is now set to increase.

### What works well now:

- Other schemes working with people refer their clients to Workways when it is felt that they are ready to consider employment.
- Awareness of the activities of the Swansea team ensures a good supply of new project participants.
- The Project's capacity to remove barriers for those desiring to return to work and provide temporary job opportunities as part of an individual's preparation in returning to permanent employment provides individuals with confidence and demonstrates to the employer the right attitude and aptitude within a potentially future employee.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Increase the size of the Employment Liaison team to that of the Workways mentoring team.	This will increase the project's presence within the business community, increase the number and range of job opportunities available to those returning to work, often for the first time in many years, and the number of jobs secured for project clients.
Work with the Welsh Government as part of a pilot project that will seek to streamline efforts.	To gain more referrals and clarity for businesses on how they can play their part in a wider effort to fight poverty.

**D3. Satisfaction with Planning Service**

**Aim:** To increase the % of applicants and third parties satisfied or very satisfied with the Planning application service.

**Measure:** % of applicants and third parties satisfied or very satisfied with the Planning application service.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
88%	84%	87%	90%	93%	<b>93%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>

**Why this is important:**

- Improved satisfaction is an important measure of the quality of the Planning service; a high quality planning service is important in giving developers and investors the confidence to invest in Swansea in order to develop key sectors of the local economy.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- The Council is responsible for the processing and determination of applications for planning permission within the City & County.
- It is an important responsibility which affects the environment, Swansea residents and developers.
- It is one of the Council's aims to provide this service in a timely and professional fashion; a good measure of this is the satisfaction levels of users of the service.
- This measure is derived from a 100% post planning decision survey of applicants, agents & interested parties.

- Over the last years the Planning Service has worked with its users to improve the service.
- To this end, the contact with developers & interested parties has been improved, with a professional pre-application service being provided to developers & drop-in surgeries for householders.
- It is anticipated that the in-hand ICT based business improvement measures will add speed to the current in-depth professional service, thus increasing satisfaction.
- However, as the current levels of satisfaction with the service are high, the scope for improvement is small; but the Council needs to maintain this good performance.

**What works well now:**

- The professional level of competence of officers who negotiate with applicants and their agents.
- The level of good sound technical and administrative advice given by the administration & technical officers to developers and their agents when making and viewing applications.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Increase the accessibility of the Council's professional officers to developers, their agents and interested parties, both during the processing of applications and during informal inquiries.	To improve both the speed and quality of planning determinations and further improve customer satisfaction.
Improve web based information and procedures that will be introduced as part of the use of new information & communication technology.	To enable the Planning service to further improve customer satisfaction through better and earlier informed discussion with service users.



#### D4. Planning applications with an economic imperative

**Aim:** To increase the % of all major and minor applications with an economic imperative that are approved.

**Measure:** The % of all major and minor applications with an economic imperative that are approved.

Past Performance				Projection				
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
-	-	-	-	86.8%	87%	88%	89%	90%

**Why this is important:**

- This measure reflects the success of negotiations between the Authority and the developer in bringing forward schemes to the planning approval stage that assist economic development.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- The economic wellbeing and regeneration of the City & County depends in part on the development of large projects, be they retail, housing or industrial.
- This is both in terms of the economic benefits of the finished development if it's commercial, and the employment & trade generated by the construction process.
- The improvements will arise from the actions identified in D3 in the continued improvement of the service.

**What works well now:**

- The pre-application guidance given to developers and their agents, together with the negotiations that take place with developers during the processing of applications gives rise to the high level of approval of these types of applications.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Facilitate an increase in the approval rate of major and minor planning applications that have an economic imperative through improvements to the service identified	To further increase applicants' and interested parties' satisfaction.
Publish design guides for large scale & small scale residential development.	To enable developers and their agents to prepare schemes that they know will be looked upon favourably by the Council, increasing satisfaction.

## E. Promote affordable credit and savings options and help people maximise their income and entitlements.

### Why this is an Improvement Objective

There are trends and future risks that may impact on people having access to a decent standard of living in Swansea.

#### 1. Worklessness, income and debt<sup>6</sup>

- Over the longer term (2007 to 2011), estimates suggest that the percentage of children living in workless households in Swansea has increased, from 21.1% to 24.4%, with a slower rate of increase for Wales (up from 18.4 to 18.6%) and the UK (up from 15.3% to 15.9%).
- The headline Gross Disposable Household Income per head indices (where UK=100) measures the amount of money that households have available for spending or saving after deducting expenditure associated with income. The figures suggest that Swansea is narrowing the gap with the UK, albeit slowly, with the index value increasing from 86.9 in 2006 to 88.4 in 2010. Over the same period, the Wales figure fell marginally – from 87.9 to 87.7. However, the Swansea average figures mask the income inequality that exists within the locality.
- The total number of new personal insolvency cases by calendar year in Swansea has increased from 477 in 2007 to 612 in 2010, with the latest 2011 figures reporting a lower figure (530). This is in line with the general trend in the numbers of new cases in England and Wales, which have plateaued in 2009/10 and fallen in 2011.
- The rate of total individual insolvencies per 10,000 adults in Swansea fell to 28.1 in 2011, having followed a generally increasing recent trend from 23.1 in 2007 to a peak of 32.7 reached in 2010.

#### 2. Welfare Reforms

- The Westminster Government welfare reforms commenced in April 2013, which could have a significant impact on worklessness, income and debt levels.
- Among the key changes is the under-occupancy charges, which will see housing benefit reduced for those which the government decides are under-occupying their homes.
- On top of that Council Tax Benefit has been abolished to be replaced by Council Tax Support. Later in 2013 further changes will take place, including the introduction of the Universal Credit - a single payment of all benefits to which a person is entitled direct into their bank account.
- There is a risk that changes to the administration and payment of the new benefits could cause an increase in debt levels. The introduction of the Universal Credit in particular may cause significant problems for households

<sup>6</sup> Swansea Local Service Board (2012) *Strategic Needs Assessment*

with little or no budgeting or money management skills, which could lead to an increase in rent arrears and homelessness.

### **3. Managing debt**

- There is likely to be a significant increase in the demand for benefit and debt advice at a time when resources for advice provision within the public and third sector is already stretched.
- There is a risk that the growth of Pay Day Loan companies, high interest lenders and opportunistic buyers could leave vulnerable families with debt problems.
- The Council is promoting the local Credit Union - a financial co-operative that can offer accessible savings and access to low cost credit – as a sustainable alternative to Pay Day Loan companies and high interest lenders in a bid to help prevent people falling into debt.

### **The Council's contribution towards improvement**

- Increasing the number of Council staff and support workers trained in Welfare Rights advice appropriate to their role means that there is more capacity and capability to help people and clients claim their benefit entitlements and maximise their income and deal with benefit related issues and problems concerning the introduction of Welfare Reform.
- Increasing the number of Council staff making savings contributions to the Credit Union will help build the financial capability of the Credit Union and encourage more of the people of Swansea to join so that more people can access and benefit from sustainable and affordable credit and savings options.
- Increasing the number of Council tenants joining the Credit Union will help them adapt to the welfare reforms and manage their money and pay their rent or bills promptly in a bid to prevent them falling into rent arrears and financial difficulties.
- Providing ongoing financial advice and support is a means to avoid tenants being faced with eviction as a result of rent arrears due to debt.
- Helping to prevent debt and homelessness will help people maintain stability and security for their families, safeguard their health and well-being and prevent social exclusion, as well as reducing the costs associated with temporary and Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

## E1. Staff trained in Welfare Rights and Benefits Advice

**Aim:** To train more Council staff / workers in Welfare Rights / Benefits advice appropriate to their role

**Measure:** Number of staff / workers trained in Welfare Rights / Benefits advice appropriate to their role.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
313	195	282	538	600	<b>650</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>

### Why this is important:

- Training more Council staff and support workers in Welfare Rights advice appropriate to their role means that there is more capacity and capability to help people and clients claim their benefit entitlements and maximise their income and deal with benefit related issues and problems concerning the introduction of Welfare Reform.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- The Council provides a range of specialist support to assist front line workers to achieve its statutory and policy aims in respect of anti-poverty and social inclusion objectives; this includes Welfare Rights advice and training for staff and support workers to help them deal with related enquiries from the public and their clients.
- More staff within the Council and its partner organisations will need to become “benefit aware”, particularly to help cope with the changes associated with Welfare Reform and the predicted extra demand for training and advice as the funding from other advice providers comes to an end.
- Almost 13,000 people have been in contact with the Council between March and May 2013 seeking advice and information about the Welfare changes in the four days after Easter.
- The Council will seek to train a wider group of staff / support workers so that the Council has more time to deal with the more complex advice cases. The amount of courses offered and the number of people trained will eventually reach saturation point in line with the Council’s capacity and available resources to deliver advice and training.
- The introduction of ‘mandatory reconsideration’ means that there may be less appeals going to tribunal, allowing the Council to take on more appointments for advice / training.

**What works well now:**

- Providing training to help social workers / support workers identify Welfare Rights issues earlier on is beneficial, particularly in preventing problems escalating.
- Supporting staff to implement what they have learned from the training sessions is important to reinforce learning and provide a better service to clients.
- Promoting the availability of training, such as through mailing lists, is important to raise awareness and encourage staff to take up available training.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Raise awareness of the availability of Welfare Rights training and advice for Council staff and support workers.	To encourage more staff to be trained to support their clients.
Provide more training courses to help Council staff / support workers.	To identify and deal with benefit issues earlier on, which will help resolve issues for clients before problems escalate.
Support staff implementing what they have learned from the Welfare Rights training sessions	So that they are effective as can be when supporting their clients.
Review the delivery of the Welfare Rights service following the provision of additional training for staff and support workers.	To ensure that resources are properly targeted and used in the most effective way for the benefit of clients.

## E2. Council staff making saving contributions to the Credit Union

**Aim:** To increase the number of Council staff making saving contributions to the Credit Union

**Measure:** Number of Council staff making saving contributions to the Credit Union.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
-	-	-	53	56	<b>250</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>550</b>

### Why this is important:

- Increasing the number of Council staff making savings contributions to the Credit Union will help build the financial capability of the Credit Union and encourage more of the people of Swansea to join so that more people can access and benefit from sustainable and affordable credit and savings options.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- The local Credit Union is a financial co-operative, which means that it is owned by its members.
- Unlike a high street bank they have no external share-holders and profits are instead returned to their members.
- Credit unions can offer accessible savings and access to low cost credit with built in loan protection and life savings cover (with conditions).
- Historically, awareness of the Credit Union amongst Council staff and the people of Swansea has been relatively low and the current location of the Credit Union offices in Swansea is outside of the main shopping area.
- The Council adopted a statement of Policy in March 2013 to work in partnership with the local Credit Union and other partner organisations to put in place better and more sustainable loan facilities and support services for the people of Swansea, particularly to discourage the activities of pay day loan companies, high interest lenders and opportunistic buyers who can often leave families in dire living circumstances and trapped in a dangerous cycle of debt.

### What works well now:

- The Council's Policy Commitments adopted in July 2012 and the statement of Policy adopted in March 2013 reflected the Council's commitment to promote the Credit Union in order to provide sustainable loan and credit options for the people of Swansea.

- All of the Council's Cabinet have become members of the Credit Union; promoting the Credit Union and making it easier to join should encourage more staff and public to become members.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Promote the Credit Union to Council staff through different channels, including the Council's internal communications mechanisms, the Swansea Leader and Trade Unions	To encourage more Council staff to sign up and join the Credit Union.
Break the association Council staff may have of the Credit Union as being only for those experiencing poverty or hardship so that they see it as an option for them to join.	
Make it easier for Council staff to sign up to the Credit Union at the Council's Contact Centre or through payroll deductions to encourage membership.	
Provide re-assurance to Council staff that the Credit Union is regulated by the FSA (Financial Services Authority) and all monies saved are covered by the FSCS (Financial Services Compensation Scheme) so that they are confident to join.	

**E3. Council tenants joining the Credit Union**

**Aim:** To encourage more Council tenants to join the Credit Union

**Measure:** Number of Council tenants joining the Credit Union.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
-	-	-	-	-	Establish baseline	To confirm	To confirm	To confirm

**Why this is important:**

- Increasing the number of Council tenants joining the Credit Union will help them manage their money and pay their rent or bills promptly in a bid to prevent them falling into rent arrears and financial difficulties.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- Swansea's Credit Union is a financial co-operative, which means that it is owned by its members. Unlike a high street bank they have no external shareholders and profits are instead returned to their members.
- Credit unions can offer accessible savings and access to low cost credit with built in loan protection and life savings cover (with conditions).
- A range of accounts will be offered to support Council tenants in preparation for some of the major changes to benefits being introduced this year.
- From April 2013, over 2,000 local authority tenants in Swansea had their Housing Benefit reduced if they have one or more spare bedrooms. These tenants will now have to pay the shortfall. Council tenant rent arrears were £850,187 at the end of 2012/13 compared to £805,058 in 2011/12 with an additional 127 tenancies in arrears. This increase is attributed to the influence of the general economic climate. Looking ahead the impact of this and other issues, such as Welfare Reform, will need to be closely monitored.
- Swansea's Credit Union will offer to help families manage their money and to pay their rent or bills promptly in a bid to prevent people falling into financial difficulties.
- The Council adopted a statement of Policy in March 2013 to work in partnership with the local Credit Union and other partner organisations to put in place better and more sustainable loan facilities and support services for the people of Swansea, particularly to discourage the activities of pay day loan companies, high interest lenders and opportunistic buyers who could leave vulnerable families with debt problems.
- Council tenants joining the scheme will be provided with a rent account, a savings account and a budgeting account.
- After the tenant has paid into these accounts the Credit Union will make direct rent payments on their behalf on the due date.
- A pre-paid card will then be credited with money that is left over and can be used like a debit card.
- The benefits of this scheme are that there are no bank charges, along with the re-assurance that essential bills are paid.
- Tenants who join the scheme will also have access to all the other services provided by the Credit Union, such as savings schemes and affordable loans.
- Since it is a new scheme, the Council will pilot the approach during 2013-14 with a view of establishing baselines and projections for forthcoming years.



**What works well now:**

- A New Tenancy Officer was in place by 1st April 2013 who, whenever possible, will attend new tenancy signings and promote the Credit Union.
- The Credit Union has and will be publicised through the Council's District Housing Offices and information packs will be sent to new and existing tenants.
- The Council's Housing service will be authorised agents to confirm proof of income / Identification etc. for tenants joining the Credit Union, which will help speed up the process.
- Other Council departments have been briefed and provided with information packs on the Welfare Reform changes and the Credit Union.
- Training is being provided to front line staff within Housing to ensure that the whole service is on board with promoting the Credit Union.
- Information packs are also being given to the third sector e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau, Shelter, local solicitors etc in order to promote the Credit Union.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Continue to encourage both new and existing Council tenants to join the Credit Union and open accounts.	So that tenants have a means to manage their finances and pay their rent or bills promptly.
Continue to produce and distribute information packs on the Credit Union to District Housing Offices, other Council departments and the third sector partners.	To raise awareness and understanding of the Credit Union and encourage more Council tenants to join.
Continue to brief key Council staff on the Credit Union.	To ensure that they are aware of the Credit Union and that they encourage tenants to join and open accounts.

## E4. Suspended Warrants for Eviction

**Aim:** To decrease the percentage of warrants executed against Council tenants by offering support and financial assistance

**Measure:** % of eviction warrants for rent arrears raised against Council Tenants suspended due to support and financial assistance

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
50.86%	49.81%	53.84%	48.38%	49%	<b>49.5%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>51%</b>

### Why this is important:

- Providing ongoing financial advice and support will help tenants who are faced with eviction as a result of rent arrears exacerbated by debt.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- Welfare Reforms will have a significant impact on rent arrears cases across Swansea. 2,350 Council tenants will be affected by the under occupancy charges.
- The Council's Housing service has provided advice and information on the implications of the under occupancy charges to these 2,500 tenants.
- Prior to April 1st 2013 1,800 tenants received full housing benefit and were not paying any rent.
- An increased volume of tenants going into rent arrears will impact on resources, cause more pressure, entail more time dealing with new arrears cases and less time available for earlier intervention.
- There could be a knock on effect of increased court proceedings, which the Council will seek to minimise and reduce. It is inevitable therefore that there will be an increase in the number of tenants facing eviction.
- We have already seen an impact on increasing arrears and consequently evictions as a result of the general economic climate.
- There is a risk that the introduction of Universal Credit – payment of the housing element to be paid directly to the tenant - will have a serious affect on the number of rent arrears cases and performance levels.
- Council tenant rent arrears were £850,187 at the end of 2012/13 compared to £805,058 in 2011/12 with an additional 127 tenancies in arrears. This increase is attributed to the influence of the general economic climate.

- Looking ahead it is inevitable that the impact of universal credit, other aspects of Welfare Reform and more general economic issues will need to be closely monitored.
- The Council is working with the Swansea Credit Union to encourage tenants to join and provide them with accounts to help them manage their money, pay their bills and rent on time and avoid getting into financial difficulties.

**What works well now:**

- The Council's Housing staff are offering assistance with completing the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) forms, which will help Council tenants top up their Housing Benefit for a limited time.
- The Council's rent arrears procedures have been changed to account for those tenants who will be affected by the under occupancy charges giving them an extended time to pay rent arrears.
- Support will be provided to those Council tenants where the shortfall is purely down to the introduction of the under occupancy charges and who have previously not had any issues relating to arrears providing they demonstrate that they wish to downsize.
- The introduction within the Rents Team of a Financial Inclusion Officer and more recently a New Tenancy Officer will help tenants with the support and advice they might need in relation to Welfare Reform and managing their arrears.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Continuing to provide Council tenants with assistance to complete Discretionary Housing Payment forms.	So that tenants can top up their Housing Benefit and avoid debt.
Work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions in relation to the introduction of Universal Credit	Where there is a risk that direct payments of the Housing element paid directly to tenants could have a serious affect on rent arrears and performance levels.
Refer tenants who have debt problems to the Housing Service Financial Inclusion Officer, Tenancy Support Unit, etc for financial help and assistance.	To help ensure bills and rent is paid on time and that tenants are able to manage their money and avoid getting into financial difficulties.
Continue to encourage new Council tenants to join the Credit Union and open accounts	

## E5. Preventing Homelessness

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for 6 months.

**Measure: (HHA/013)** % of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
23.3%	29.1%	29.4%	35.2%	49.3%	<b>35%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>40%</b>

### Why this is important:

- Preventing homelessness will help people maintain stability and security for their families, safeguard their health and well-being and prevent social exclusion while reducing the costs associated with providing Bed & Breakfast and temporary accommodation.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- The Council works to prevent homelessness whenever possible. The Council does this by helping people to remain in their current accommodation in the long term or until someone is able to find somewhere else to live.
- The Council, for example, talks with relatives and friends about letting someone stay in their accommodation until they can find somewhere more suitable and dealing with notices to leave and possession action by landlords or mortgage lenders, among other actions.
- Performance preventing homelessness for 6 months or more for people has consistently improved since 2007/08 with the result for 2012/13 at 49.3% being the best to date. However, even with an increase of 14.1% on last years performance, our improvement would only move us from 19th to 17th based upon 2011/12 results.
- The Welsh Government has proposed changes to the Homelessness Legislation in Wales and Councils are currently being consulted on the effects these could have on the service.
- Based on the current definition and calculation it is projected that the Council will prevent homelessness for 6 months in 40% of presented homeless households by 2016-17, although the impact of Welfare Reform means that this figure is uncertain at the time of writing.
- Although 40% is less than the 49.3% achieved in 2012-13, prevention activities will continue to be the focus and actual numbers of homeless preventions are expected to increase. Homeless applications are however increasing at a faster rate. This, in purely percentage terms, restricts our ability to prevent homelessness.

- Welfare Reform could have a significant impact on homelessness across Swansea. 2,500 Council tenants will be affected by the under occupancy charge.
- There is also a risk that the proposed future introduction of Universal Credit - Direct payments of the Housing element to be paid directly to the tenant – could increase households in rent arrears with an associated impact on homelessness levels.
- The Council’s Housing service has provided advice and information on the implications of the under-occupation charge to these 2,500 tenants.

**What works well now:**

- Having clear and shared systems in place and maintaining good working relationships with other housing providers improves the Council’s ability to help prevent homelessness for clients.
- Likewise, early intervention in preventing homelessness increases the chances of keeping someone in their home or finding them suitable alternative accommodation.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Continue to build and facilitate good working relationships with social housing providers and others, such as the Swansea Bond Board.	To improve the opportunity for clients to avoid homelessness and get rented accommodation.
Continue to operate a generic referral system used for all support and accommodation providers.	To offer a greater pool of housing options to people threatened with homelessness.
Officially launch a website developed around services offered by the Councils Housing Options service.	To increase awareness of and access to the services offered by the Council to prevent homelessness.
Continue to operate a Gateway system to other housing providers in place.	To provide direct access to hostels for people who are potentially homeless.
Continue to give housing and homelessness advice and get involved earlier.	To try and prevent clients losing their home.
Continue to operate “Choice Advisor”, which gives people an indication of their chances of securing a Council property.	To allow the Council to provide better advice to people on other available Housing options.

<p>Work to prevent people going into debt, financial difficulties and rent arrears and being threatened with homelessness that might arise as a result of the introduction of Welfare Reform (See E1 to E4 listed previously).</p>	<p>To help ensure bills and rent is paid on time and that people are able to manage their money and avoid getting into financial and housing difficulties.</p>
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## **F. Improve Housing and Housing supply in order to increase the availability of good quality, affordable housing.**

### **Why this is an Improvement Objective**

There are key trends that have implications for the need to improve housing and housing supply, particularly affordable housing.

#### **1. Demographic changes<sup>7</sup>:**

- Swansea's population now stands at 238,700 (mid-2011) and has experienced ten consecutive years of growth since 2001.
- Swansea is projected to grow by 18.3% (42,000) between 2008 and 2033, the second highest growth rate in Wales.
- The number of households in Swansea increased by around 9,000 (+10%) between 2001 and 2011, with the largest growth in single-person Households.
- Swansea's older population (all aged 65+) has increased by 2,100 (+5.2%), indicative of an increasingly ageing population.

#### **2. Economic activity and employment:**

- Economic Activity and Employment Rates in Swansea are below the equivalent Wales and UK figures.
- Unemployment rates (survey-based) in Swansea are above Wales and UK rates, although claimant rates are lower.

#### **3. Housing conditions:**

- Nationally, housing conditions are implicated in up to 50,000 deaths and around 0.5 million illnesses requiring medical attention each year across the UK.
- Poor housing conditions are suffered disproportionately by low income households and older persons.
- The improvement and modernisation of the Council's 13,600 houses and flats up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is a key policy aim of the Council.
- The WHQS represents a reasonable definition of quality for existing social housing and looks to improve not just the physical condition of homes but also the level of internal amenities, the wider environment in which the homes are located and how the stock is managed.

<sup>7</sup> Swansea Local Service Board (2012) *Strategic Needs Assessment*

## The Council's contribution towards improvement

- There is not enough affordable housing in Swansea to meet demand and so providing more will meet this established need and contribute towards reducing homelessness and people having to continue to live in unsuitable and / or unaffordable accommodation.
- The Council wants to reduce the number of empty Council homes and make the best use of its housing stock and so that it is as fully occupied as possible.
- Reducing the number of empty Council homes is helped if tenants are able to sustain their tenancies, providing their families with more stability and cohesive communities in which to live.

## F1. Affordable Housing

**Aim:** To see an increase in the number of new affordable housing units

**Measure:** Number of new affordable housing units provided / needed

Past performance - provided					Projection – what is needed (cumulative total)			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
299	124	104	297	50	<b>1,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>

### Why this is important:

- There is not enough affordable housing in Swansea to meet demand and so helping to provide more will meet this established need and contribute towards reducing homelessness and people having to continue to live in unsuitable and / or unaffordable accommodation.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- There is a shortage of affordable housing across the City & County and this is a key issue facing residents at the present time.
- The new affordable housing units provided in the table above are obtained from the statistical return to the Welsh Government provided by the Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), which include permanent dwellings created by new construction, increase in dwellings through conversion or improvement and Housing units which have been transferred to the RSLs from developers as part of Section 106 agreements. This figure also includes Mortgage rescues and any other unit which has transferred into the Affordable Housing stock.



- The cost of buying and renting a house at market value is greater than many on low incomes can afford and consequently intervention in the housing market is needed to provide affordable housing by other means.
- The current economic recession and banking crisis have disrupted the housing market.
- Falling house prices and the inability, particularly of first time buyers, to secure mortgages have resulted in a dramatic downturn in private sector construction activity, starts and the submission of planning applications for new residential developments.
- At the same time, there has been a reduction in the available Social Housing Grant from the Welsh Government, which is used to provide additional affordable housing.
- Economic uncertainty makes it difficult to predict levels of affordable housing required in the longer term but there is still a high need for affordable housing in Swansea that is unmet.
- The drop to 50 units in 2012-13 was the result of fewer flats being developed during that period.
- Projections of what is likely to be provided are dependant on factors outside of the direct control of the Council, i.e. Social Housing Grant level, housing market activity etc. In previous years approximately 150 units per year have been completed which is significantly less than what is required.
- Based on current demand, it is likely that 550 units per annum will be needed over the next 13 years. It is unlikely however that this will be fully met given the volatility of the economy and this figure may change over time.
- The Council has an enabling function for delivering affordable housing through its planning and strategic housing functions.
- The Council works to provide evidence of housing need and affordable housing requirements within the City & County of Swansea.
- The Council negotiates with developers through its planning functions (including the use of Section 106 agreements) for the inclusion of affordable housing on sites within areas where a demonstrable lack of such housing exists.
- The Council is also proactive in working to reduce the number of empty properties in Swansea and in identifying schemes to secure Social Housing Grant (SHG) for Registered Social Landlords to provide affordable housing.

**What works well now:**

- The lack of affordable housing is a national problem and the Council will need to look to continue to work with the Welsh Government and others to examine more innovative ways to increase the number of affordable houses.
- A Housing Market Assessment has recently identified the gap between the supply and demand for affordable Housing.
- The Authority has been successful in the past in applying for additional funds made available by the Welsh Government to deliver more Affordable Housing and it will continue to apply for such additional funding as and when it is made available.
- The Welsh Government has recently revealed plans to inject further funding into new social housing and wants to build 7,500 homes by 2016.
- The Authority has also submitted a considerable number of schemes to the Welsh Government that could potentially be funded by its new Revenue Grant (Housing Bond Scheme).
- The Council's Stronger & Safer Communities Scrutiny Board has been looking at the way the Council enables the delivery of new units of affordable housing. It is anticipated that the Board will publish its recommendations in mid 2013.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Continue partnership arrangements with Registered Social Landlords.	To develop new sources of affordable accommodation for households unable to meet the market cost of housing in Swansea.
Continue where appropriate to use Section 106 agreements.	To secure or enhance affordable housing provision.
Continue to maximise SHG investment levels into the City & County of Swansea.	To enable the development of more affordable housing.
Contribute to an agreed Local Development Plan threshold & target.	To maximise the provision of Affordable Housing on future developments based on the Viability Study & Local Housing Market Assessment.
Take into account the Council's Stronger & Safer Communities Scrutiny Board recommendations from their inquiry panel into the provision of affordable housing in Swansea.	With the intention of increasing the supply of affordable housing.

## F2. Empty Council homes

**Aim:** To reduce the number of void (empty) Council homes.

**Measure:** (HSG2) Number of void (empty) Council homes.

Past performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
383	286	251	221	278	<b>255</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>225</b>

### Why this is important:

- The Council wants to make the best use of its Housing stock so that it is as fully occupied as possible. This is especially important in Swansea when there is a lack of affordable housing to meet established housing need.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- Historically the numbers of void (empty) Council properties has been higher than current figures due to unpopular stock and areas and the ease with which it was possible for people to obtain a mortgage, buy their property through the Right To Buy scheme or access the private rented sector.
- In order to address the high number of voids, the Council made changes to the way in which it prepares empty properties in 2004. The net effect of these changes along with an increased demand for council properties has seen a gradual reduction in the number of void Council properties over time.
- During 2012/13 voids increased, primarily as a result of more end of tenancies due for example to an increase in the number of: tenants transferring to other Council accommodation, tenancies ending on the death of the tenants, and tenancies ending due to domestic violence. Other factors such as the current structure of the service also affect the number of voids; however a Systems Thinking Review has begun to address some of these issues.
- During quarters 1 to 3 of 2012/13, the number of end of tenancies increased by 211 (20%) compared with 2011/12, and although the lettings rate has increased when comparing the same period, it did not keep pace with the end of tenancy rate. However, during quarter 4 the gap has closed with slightly more lettings than end of tenancies.
- Whilst the Council is meeting the turnaround target time for works and external contractors are meeting their contractual obligations, the increased numbers and demand has resulted in additional resources being recruited by the Council and the voids contractors have committed to complete higher numbers of voids. The benefit from these actions is starting to be seen with improved performance during November and December 2012.

- Although in recent years (apart from 2012/13) there has been a significant reduction in the level of voids, with the lowest number attained 221 (this represents 1.6% of the stock), at the end of March 2012, maintaining this number was always going to be very challenging. There is great uncertainty as to how Welfare Reform is going to effect the movement of tenants and therefore void levels. Future predictions of void numbers have to be considered within this context.
- A natural slowing down of the decrease in voids is to be expected considering the large decrease of recent years (the period 2008/09-2011/12 saw a 42% reduction). There is however cause for optimism with the new working practices borne out of the Systems Thinking Review being embedded during 2013 and the planned improvements to the structure of the Council's Corporate Building & Property Services also due to be implemented during 2013.
- It is therefore suggested that a steady small year on year reduction would be more realistic and achievable during the next few years. A reduction of 10 voids per year to a level of 225 would represent an overall reduction of 19.7% by 2016/17.

**What works well now:**

- It has been established that the use of key safes are beneficial. For example, 130 key safes have been purchased and the majority are in use. These are proving to be very effective in terms of enabling a number of tasks to be undertaken simultaneously.
- An additional 50 safes are to be purchased to further improve voids turnaround. Although detailed monitoring has not been carried out, it is clear that this initiative is leading to a quicker turnaround time.
- A multi-task clearance, garden and cleaning has been fully up and running since April 2013 and is proving to be successful.
- Flexibility in the procedures dealing with the ending of tenancies is continuing and following an analysis of this experiment, and some successes, this is now operating across all District Housing Offices.
- Accompanied viewings during the repairs process – this is being tried in a number of areas and is proving to be very successful; this will also be rolled out and new procedures implemented in due course.
- There is less demand for some property types and areas. This is being addressed by marketing of properties, e.g. utilising the Swansea housing website for advertising properties and use of Homeswapper.
- This has already proven successful in the letting of some low demand houses at Townhill. Low demand properties are being advertised on a weekly basis at Housing Options.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Promote home moves via Homeswapper (mutual exchanges).	The number of transfers within the stock may increase as tenants look to downsize due to Welfare Reform.
Implement actions to help Council tenants to sustain their tenancy, including: tighter controls on tenancy conditions on tenants looking to transfer; more options for furniture packs; signposting new tenants for goods and services, e.g. Credit Union, charitable organisations, social enterprises, etc.	To try to stem the tenancy turnover rate.
Implement an improved structure including the possible setting up of a dedicated voids team.	To help reduce the number of empty Council homes.
Embed experiments borne out of the Systems Thinking Review by removing unnecessary processes and putting the consideration of tenants at the heart of the voids system.	To help reduce the number of empty Council homes.
Improve marketing and coordination of low demand properties such as the use of swansea.housing website, Homeswapper (Immediately Available Homes), Housing Options.	As an outlet for advertising properties and reducing the number of empty Council homes.
Regularly review the Housing Register and improve the quality of information to prospective tenants about the property and area.	Reduce the number of refusals of offers of housing.
Improve the quality of Council properties, e.g., cleaning, redecoration/vouchers; better quality doors, and through working towards achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.	To encourage tenants to maintain their tenancy and reduce the number of empty Council homes.

### F3. Sustaining Council house tenancies

**Aim:** To see an increase in the percentage of tenants staying in their Council tenancy for more than 2 years.

**Measure:** % of tenants staying in their Council tenancy for more than 2 years.

Past performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
77.16 %	75.13 %	75.05 %	76.45 %	77.00 %	<b>77.5 %</b>	<b>78.00 %</b>	<b>79.00 %</b>	<b>80.00 %</b>

#### Why this is important:

- It is important that tenants are able to sustain their tenancies in order to provide their families with more stability and cohesive communities in which to live.

#### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- During 2012/13 there have been more end of tenancies due for example to an increase in the number of: tenants transferring to other Council accommodation, and tenancies ending due to domestic violence.
- In addition to the work being undertaken to let more properties, the Council wants to encourage and help tenants to sustain their tenancies for longer, which will not only reduce the number of void properties but also provide people and their families and the communities in which they live with more stability.
- There are lots of factors that affect how long people remain in their tenancies, such as the condition of the housing estate, actual or perceived anti-social behaviour, changes in family composition such as the growth in single person households, not being able to offer the type of accommodation the tenant wants in the area of their choice, the availability and quality of community facilities and the property being suitable for individual needs and requirements, such as being suitably adapted.
- There is great uncertainty as to how Welfare Reform is going to effect the movement of tenants, which could see some tenants having to pay an under-occupation charge for spare bedrooms or being forced to move.

#### What works well now:

- The Council provides a range of services designed to help tenants to sustain their tenancies, ranging from its tenancy and estate management services to the provision of dedicated services such as the Neighbourhood Support Unit to deal with anti-social behaviour and the Tenancy Support Unit, which provides tenants with a wide range of advice and support services to help them maintain their tenancies.

- The Council has undertaken 2500 visits to tenants potentially affected by Welfare Reform to make them aware of the changes and the implications for their tenancies and to provide them with help and advice.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Produce a plan for the development of a strategy for delivering achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.	To improve the quality of Council homes and encourage tenants to remain in their homes for longer.
Continue to examine how the Council can help mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform on tenants.	So that tenants can continue their tenancies.
Undertake Systems Thinking Reviews of tenancy and estate management services.	To ensure that tenants and their needs are at the centre of service delivery so that they can sustain their tenancies.
Undertake more in-depth tenant and estate surveys.	To help determine whether the Council needs to change how it provides Housing services to encourage tenants to remain in their homes and within their communities.

## G. Help people adopt and develop healthy and sustainable lifestyles in order to improve health.

### Why this is an Improvement Objective

There are key trends that have implications for the need to help people adopt and develop healthy lifestyles in order to improve health.

#### 1. **Premature Mortality**<sup>8</sup>:

- In line with the rest of the UK, there has been a downward trend in premature mortality (aged under 75 years) from all causes in Swansea.
- However, the rates of premature mortality in Swansea have remained above the Welsh average; although in 2007-2009 the Swansea rate was not statistically higher than the Welsh average (Swansea, 413 deaths per 100,000 population; Wales, 394 deaths per 100,000 population).

#### 2. **Obesity**:

- In Swansea over one half of the adult population (57%) is reported to be overweight or obese, which has increased by 5 percentage points since 2007.
- In Swansea only 36% of people are eating the recommended daily quantity of fruit and vegetables.

#### 3. **Physical activity**:

- Despite the numbers of people in Swansea achieving the recommended levels of physical activity (which reduces the risk from some chronic diseases and poor mental health) increasing since 2005, levels still remain below the Wales average and Swansea is one of the bottom three local authority areas in Wales.

### The Council's contribution towards improvement

- The Council wants to encourage people to adopt healthier lifestyles in terms of what they eat and improving their physical activity levels.
- In order to further promote healthier lifestyles, the Council would like to encourage more young people aged 11 to 16 year olds to continue their physical or sporting activities outside of school in order to improve sustained participation in healthy activities.
- Likewise, increasing the % of children who can swim at age 11 means that, while they will be less likely to drown accidentally, they will also learn a life skill that will be fun and contribute towards a healthy lifestyle.
- At the other end of the spectrum, the Council would like to see more people referred to the Council's physical exercise programme by GPs to

<sup>8</sup> Swansea Local Service Board (2012) *Strategic Needs Assessment*



remain active after 12 months to demonstrate that they have adopted a healthier lifestyle.

- Increasing the number of growing spaces will encourage people to grow their own food to help deal with rising food prices, encourage self-sufficiency, provide a healthy activity and promote healthier eating.
- Increasing the % of school pupils who take up a free school lunch will assist learning and help secure pupils future well-being.

## G1. Sustaining physical & sporting activity outside of school

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of 11-16 year olds attending 20 or more extra curricular physical or sporting activities during the school year.

**Measure:** % of 11 – 16 year olds attending 20 or more extra-curricular physical or sporting activities during the school year.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
5%	7%	7%	9%	9%	<b>11%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>22%</b>

### Why this is important:

- The Council would like to encourage more 11 to 16 year olds to continue their physical or sporting activities outside of the school curriculum in order to improve sustained participation and promote healthier lifestyles.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- There are several well established national programmes in operation which are delivered and managed locally by the City and County of Swansea aimed at increasing opportunities for sustainable sports participation and increasing the frequency of involvement for 7-16 year olds.
- This includes targeted schemes such as Dragon sport, Dragon Multi-Skills and 5x60 which aims to provide extra curricular sporting activity and link community opportunities to those which take place within the school environment.
- Specifically 5x60 engages young people aged between 11 and 16 years, in a wide range of sport and physical activity opportunities. 5x60 takes place on the secondary school site / local community, and is lead by voluntary coaches, sport leaders and parents.
- 5x60 commenced in 2008/09 and it was aimed at targeting those young people currently not involved in school sport, school team sport and / or PE.

- 5x60 listen to the needs of young people by providing opportunities that they would like to participate in during lunchtime, afterschool, evenings and weekends.
- We want to ensure that every child is hooked on sport for life. One way of measuring whether we are successful in meeting this aspiration is to explore the frequency of participation in sport.
- Performance increased from 5% of 11-16 year olds attending 20 or more extra-curricular activities during the school year in 2008/09 to 9% in 2011-12. Performance is expected to remain at 9% in 2012-13 before rising each year to 22% in 2016-17. The Council would like to turn the curve more steeply so that we reach 30% by 2016-17.
- Following a review the Active Young People (AYP) service has been re-structured and changes have been made in how the service is planned and delivered. Active Young People Officers (AYP Officers) will now take a more facilitative approach and will provide direct support to primary and secondary schools, as well as local clubs and community organisations within their designated areas.
- Community Sport Coaches will be employed to coach a variety of sports across all Active Young People Programmes (Dragon Multi-Skills, Dragon Sport and 5x60) to children and young people aged 5 to 16 years.
- The Community Coaches will also provide support to the AYP Officers in the marketing and promotion of all AYP programmes. Young Leaders and Young Ambassadors will also be involved in the delivery of the programmes under the direct support and supervision from AYP Officers and Community Sport Coaches.
- AYP Officers will be responsible to recruit, train, retain and effectively deploy a range of volunteers assisting in the delivery of the programme, utilising the Development and Outreach Volunteer Policy.

**What works well now:**

- The funding received through various grants to supplement core funding is an important enabler to make a difference going forward.
- It is important that other organisations within the community are there to provide a network to help deliver the programme; likewise the volunteers and Young ambassadors make an important contribution and their training and development is vital.
- It is important that a balanced programme of activities is provided, which will include: Health & Fitness activities, such as dance and fitness classes; recreational activities, including cycling, swimming and tennis, and; more traditional sports, such as rugby and football where children will be encouraged to join clubs.

- The Council will help the clubs by focusing on a plan to build capacity, build on the Olympic Games legacy and obtain better facilities/equipment.
- A key element will be the use of performance management so that each Active Young People officer will have targets to meet, which will be monitored monthly.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Improve performance management and evaluate success going forward.	On the basis of an improved % sustaining involvement in physical or sporting activities outside of school.
Provide exit routes for children and young people by ensuring that there is somewhere for them to go after school.	To sustain children and young people's interest and involvement in their chosen activity or sport.
Move the emphasis away from participation and onto children and young people's involvement in physical activity and sport being sustainable in the longer term.	
Ensure the Council's Active Young People Officers work closely with the sports clubs.	To enable sports clubs to build capacity and take on more children and young people and maintain their involvement.

## G2. Swimming by age 11

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of children who can swim at age 11.

**Measure:** % of children who can swim by age 11.

Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
55%	76%	82%	87%	93% Projected - result due in July 2013	<b>95%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Why this is important:

- Increasing the % of children who can swim at age 11 means that children will be safer near water and will learn a life skill that will be fun and contribute towards adopting a healthy lifestyle.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- The Council has changed the way in which the swimming programme was delivered when the expected level of improvements in the percentage of children at age 11 was not being delivered.
- The Council sought to increase the numbers of swimming teachers, initially using an external grant but the programme is now self-sustaining.
- The original Service Level Agreement with schools originally provided for 3 x 30 min lessons but this has now been revised to 2 x 45 minutes lessons, which is beneficial in providing children with longer swimming time.
- Specialist swimming teachers are now being used instead of school teachers and schools appreciate the value of these lessons and are engaged.
- There has been an increase in the number of children going to swim programme lessons and staff have been up-skilled as part of their continued professional development. Free swimming has been extended into other disciplines, such as canoeing which takes them onto other things.
- The Council expects further improvements to the % of children who can swim at age 11 as these changes continue to produce benefits. Furthermore, the Council will target particular groups who find it more difficult to learn to swim, such as ethnic minority children who experience religious and cultural barriers.
- Free swimming grant can be used to focus efforts on children who struggle with swimming or experience religious or cultural barriers. Religious and cultural barriers to learning to swim, such as the segregation of boys and girls

and the need to have lifeguards of the same gender, needs to be accommodated.

- 1-2-1 lessons for children with disabilities and other children with specific needs were introduced approximately 2 years ago and this will continue.

**What works well now:**

- Providing more opportunities for children to swim and to spend longer swimming has a positive impact on children learning to swim by age 11.
- Lessons delivered by qualified swimming teachers are also an important success factor as is getting children to start swimming at an earlier age.
- Finally, the support and encouragement given by schools for swimming is an important ingredient for success.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Continue to target pupils year 5/6 non-swimmers to access free swimming lessons during school holidays	To increase the percentage of children who can swim at age 11.
Continue to target children earlier to help them to learn to swim.	
Work with schools and representative groups to better engage with parents and children of ethnic minorities to encourage them to participate more in swimming.	To develop initiatives to encourage ethnic minority children and parents to participate more in swimming.

### G3. Remaining active following a GP exercise referral

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of people referred to the Council by Health professionals to still be active after 12 months and indicating that their health has improved.

**Measure:** General Practitioner (GP) Referrals - % & Number still active after 12 months and indicating that their health has improved

	Past performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>%</b>	-	53.8%	51%	54%	51%	<b>53%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>No.</b>	-	NA	NA	145/ 266	147/ 289	<b>165 / 310</b>	<b>180 / 325</b>	<b>195 / 340</b>	<b>200/ 350</b>

#### Why this is important:

- The Council would like to see more people referred by health professionals to remain active after 12 months to demonstrate that they have adopted a healthier lifestyle.

#### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- The exercise referral scheme offered by City and County of Swansea is part of the national exercise referral program (funded by Welsh Government).
- The scheme is aimed at encouraging individuals who are currently inactive in participating in physical activity as part of a preventative or rehabilitation programme.
- The number of referrals received by the program is increasing; and in recent years we have seen the numbers completing the scheme rise to 70% (16 week programme).
- The administrative process has improved over time and there is now a regular follow up with clients. Client engagement in the scheme is better and participants are more aware of the benefits after the completion of the scheme.
- The aim is for clients to complete the programme and then make physical activity part of their lifestyle, hopefully as Active Swansea (Council leisure centre) or other partner's members.
- The Council has a limited capacity to keep taking on more referrals but retention and conversion to a physically active lifestyle is vital and a key focus.

#### What works well now:

- There is a clear focus on ensuring that people coming out of the GP exercise referral scheme become regular members of Active Swansea scheme either by becoming pay & play or direct debit members.

- In the last 12 months the program has also been able to offer benefits at other leisure sites.
- There is a tapered approach encouraging participants to continue their physical activity once the scheme ends; reduced membership costs are offered to encourage them to remain members and stay active.
- As well as its own leisure centres, the Council also works with the LC and other partners as the point of exit for participants of the scheme.
- Likewise, the Council makes greater use of facilities with partners, such as LC, Hazel Court and Open spaces, etc.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Offer a wider program of activity to encourage participants to try new activity, that link to ongoing exit routes	To help encourage Exercise referral clients to remain members and stay active.
Upgrading Active Swansea gyms in 2013/14 to provide better facilities.	
Continue to provide specific membership packages for Exercise Referral clients to take up a direct debit offer at Active Swansea or partnership sites.	
Develop robust evaluation methods to ensure that all information is collated properly.	

## G4. More Growing spaces

**Aim:** To increase the number of available growing spaces.

**Measure:** Number of growing spaces

Past performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
15	15	15	15	16	<b>25</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>55</b>

### Why this is important:

- The Council wants to increase the number of growing spaces that will encourage people to grow their own food to help deal with rising food prices, encourage self-sufficiency, provide a healthy activity and promote healthier eating.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- The definition of a growing space is flexible and is not restricted to formal allotment provision. Sustainable community led projects will be encouraged and prioritised.
- Allotments and encouraging people to grow their own food is a Council Policy Commitment and is an important element of the Council's strategy to help people adopt and develop healthy and sustainable lifestyles.
- Increasing cost of food may cause people to switch to purchasing energy dense foods which are high in saturated fat or sugar.
- The increasing costs of transport may further contribute to this trend if affordable healthy food cannot be bought locally.
- The number of available growing spaces, such as Allotments, has remained static over the years. The Council currently has 16 allotted sites, 11 of which are leased to and run by the local community through societies; there are another five sites that need to be developed and leased.
- The sites are managed by the groups of individuals/societies that lease the growing spaces and typically are offered at a lease of less than 7 years.
- Some societies have reduced the size of plots in order to provide more people with opportunities to obtain a growing space.
- A £50k grow local budget has been provided from 2013/14 towards the development of community growing spaces in order to improve existing or create new opportunities.



**What works well now:**

- The availability of the “grow local” budget from 2013/14 and the work the Council is doing to promote growing spaces should increase the availability of growing spaces and the take up of such spaces.
- Self management of sites by societies ensures that there is local ownership of allotment sites.
- The Council will also investigate the viability of a Garden share scheme where participants would allow part of their garden to be shared for growing purposes and will look to work with ward members, Community Councils and town councils to see if there is potential to identify and release land for growing spaces.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Develop 5 new projects – orchards, schools, a youth centre, former allotment and raised beds etc – and pilot options.	To establish the best approach to develop growing spaces.
Roll out the Grow Local scheme.	To increase the number of growing spaces to help encourage people to grow their own food.
Investigate the viability of a Garden share scheme where participants would allow part of their garden to be shared for growing purposes.	
Review the possibility of using raised beds and Community Centres for developing growing spaces.	
Develop route maps for people who may be interested in developing / using a growing space.	

## G5. Increasing free school lunch take up

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of pupils identified in the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) who take up free school lunch.

**Measure:** % of pupils identified in PLASC who take up free school lunch – primary / secondary schools

	Past Performance					Projection			
	2008 -09	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17
<b>Primary Schools</b>	85%	77%	79%	74%	77%	<b>79%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Secondary Schools</b>	64%	61%	65%	62%	64%	<b>66%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>70%</b>

### Why this is important:

- Increasing the % of pupils who take up a nutritious and free school lunch will assist learning and help secure their future well-being.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- Swansea is one of the highest performing authorities encouraging children who are entitled to take up free school lunch.
- Swansea Council's school meals service serves up to 13,000 meals a day in education establishments across the City and County.
- The school meals service in the primary sector is compliant with Appetite for Life Nutrient and Food based standards and the 3 weekly menus fully comply with Welsh Government standards.
- Secondary schools are working towards total compliance with Appetite for Life Nutrition and Food based standards by September 2013 and have made a significant movement towards this through intensive consultation/tasting sessions with pupils.
- 26% of those entitled to free school meals in Swansea had breakfast compared to the Welsh average of 23.5%.
- There is a link between education attainment and the benefit of eating healthily.

### What works well now:

- Children benefit from a healthy meal at lunchtime and menus are designed so that lunch time is fun.
- The lunch break is seen, by most pupils, as the most important part of the day, as they crave time to refuel, relax, socialize and exercise.

- Having a nutritionally-balanced school meal in an attractive environment helps improve children’s behaviour and their ability to focus on learning in the afternoons.
- Free School Meals are essential for children as this may be their only hot meal of the day.
- Promoting free school meals through ‘Captain Jack the Pirate – Join the Crew’ themed campaign has helped boost the number of primary-aged children enjoying a healthy school meal at lunch time.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Develop cashless payment systems so that it is not obvious which pupils receive free school meals, which should encourage further take up.	To encourage greater take-up of healthy school meals amongst school pupils.
Continue to promote school lunches through the Captain Jack themed campaign.	
Secondary schools to continue working towards total compliance with Appetite for Life Nutrition and Food based standards by September 2013, which should further improve nutritional value and help encourage greater take-up.	

## H. People are safe, well and supported to live independently (Adult Services)

### Why this is an Improvement Objective

There are key changes to demographic trends and people's expectations of social care that have implications for changing the provision of adult social care services.

#### 1. Changing needs:

- An ageing population, limited public finance, increased costs and the changing expectations of people who need support all combine to create different and increased demand for adult social care services.
- This means there will be a greater need for prompt services that are responsive and tailored to meet people's needs and preferences. There will also be a requirement to see a continued improvement in the balance of care towards supporting people to be independent.
- These fit in with the national context, espoused by documents such as Sustainable Social Services and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill and are core social care values.

#### 2. Changing services<sup>9</sup>:

- Both locally and nationally, in order for social care services to be sustainable, there is a realisation that 'things have to be done differently' and a more creative and innovative approach is needed to the delivery of services.
- The numbers of older people supported in residential / nursing care have increased. For example, there has been an increase in the numbers of people with dementia who can no longer be supported safely to live in their own homes in the community.
- The Council has introduced a range of measures to reduce the overall numbers of people requiring ongoing support from social services. Reviews of clients have been focussed on rehabilitation and re-ablement. Eligibility criteria have been introduced in adaptations and equipment services to focus resources on those in the most need.
- Adult Social Services have focussed on encouraging the uptake and development of effective community resources to support older people. Such services are often universal (i.e. do not require an assessment to participate).

### The Council's contribution towards improvement

- The Council is introducing new safeguarding arrangements to reduce risk;

<sup>9</sup> Swansea Local Service Board (2012) *Strategic Needs Assessment*

- Developing new ways of keeping people independent through, for example, the “Community Connector” Project is a key priority;
- Monitoring the timeliness of the provision and installation of equipment and aids to people within their own homes is an important contribution towards helping people maintain their independence;
- The Council is introducing and extending re-ablement services whereby care staff will aim to do less for service users and more with them, helping people to develop confidence in their own abilities and regain skills and independence instead of going into long term care.

## H1. Cases where the risk has been managed

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of cases where the risk safeguarding vulnerable adults has been managed

**Measure:** % of cases where the risk has been managed

	Past Performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
% of cases where the risk has been managed	-	-	83.77 %	90.41 %	92.00 %	<b>92.1 %</b>	<b>92.2 %</b>	<b>92.3 %</b>	<b>92.4 %</b>

### Why this is important:

- We have developed two new strands to our approach to managing risk:

1. Reviewing our arrangements for safeguarding adults: ‘Everybody’s Business’:
  - We recently reviewed our safeguarding arrangements to examine their effectiveness in protecting vulnerable adults.
  - Safeguarding arrangements had largely evolved over time – for example, the Safeguarding Adults Team was positioned within the Mental Health service area – and therefore it was timely to consider if improvements could be made to our safeguarding processes and arrangements.
  - The review was undertaken against a backdrop of wider social care legislative changes, the regionalisation agenda and the ‘refocus on the family’ (rather than the separation of adults and children).
  - The review, which was published in March 2013, identified that, rather than having a discrete team responsible for safeguarding, there was a need for all social work teams to be involved in the process.
  - In effect, the review recommended that safeguarding becomes ‘everybody’s business’: that the responsibility of safeguarding is shared across Adult Services and partner agencies to ensure that vulnerable adults are protected.
  - To facilitate this, staff from the safeguarding team are to be transferred to existing social work teams. These changes will come into effect, it is envisaged, by early August 2013.

2. Regionalising our adult safeguarding arrangements (the Western Bay Regional Safeguarding Adults Board):

- Historically, safeguarding boards have operated on local authority footprints. There is general agreement that these arrangements are unsustainable and the need for boards to operate across more than one local authority has been made explicit in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill.
- We are now, therefore, partners in the Western Bay Safeguarding Adults Board (WBSAB) which, as well as Swansea, covers the local authority areas of Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend as well as the Abertawe Bro-Morgannwg Health Board. The Board will also cover two Basic Command Unit (BCU) areas for South Wales Police.
- This regional approach to safeguarding will have many inherent advantages such as ensuring consistency across organisations, maximising joint agency learning when things go wrong and working together to identify areas of risk.
- Major changes to our approach to safeguarding will play a vital role in managing risk. The 'everybody's business' approach will foster a collective responsibility to safeguarding across all of our staff rather than being thought of as a discrete function of a specialist team.
- This approach will also be more resilient; this resilience will be needed to cope with the increased demands from an ageing population as well as socio-economic pressures which are likely to lead to greater strains on families and public services.
- Similarly, the regional approach to safeguarding is both more sustainable and pragmatic than the previous model of individual local authority safeguarding boards at a time of increasing demand and decreasing public resources. As discussed above, this approach has many intrinsic advantages associated with the collaborative approach – such as sharing information and learning.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- We have performed above the Welsh average for the relevant national performance indicator (SCA/019 –Referrals completed where evidence that risk as been managed) for the past two financial years. Despite this, for 2010/11 and 2011/12 we were ranked, respectively, ninth and thirteenth out of the 22 Welsh LAs so there is scope for improvement.
- Previous performance is based on the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Adults Team (SAT), which will be absorbed into social work teams as we move to the 'everybody's business' approach.
- The SAT undertook a range of safeguarding activities: strategic, prevention, training and advice /support, as well as responding to requests and investigative work. The SAT, too, ensured that the Deprivation of Liberty Standards (DoLS) were implemented and monitored.
- The SAT was a small team which could easily be hit by capacity issues; this lack of resilience could potentially leave an impact on vulnerable adults. The

new approach will lead to a more robust and efficient way of dealing with referrals, which will hopefully be reflected in the results for this indicator.

- The targets have been set in the absence of any data about the new arrangements being put in place. It would be reasonable to assume that current performance would be maintained, if not improved, but the absence of any reliable data makes it difficult to quantify improvement. As such, marginal improvements only are being predicted.

**What works well now:**

- We have found that the single point of contact – through our Intake Service – is efficient at handling referrals. Previously, a referral involving a safeguarding issue would have been passed to the Safeguarding Adults Team. Within the new approach, the referral will be passed to the relevant service area which will then make the threshold decision.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Go live with the new 'Everybody's Business' approach to safeguarding within Swansea from the summer 2013.	To foster a collective responsibility to safeguarding across all of our staff, increase resilience to cope with the increased demands from an ageing population and refocus social work on the family (rather than the separation of adults and children).
Undertake further work exploring integrating safeguarding across adult and child and family services in the Swansea Social Services department.	
Undertake preliminary work to see how the Signs of Safety method – an innovative strengths-based, safety-organised approach to child protection casework currently being piloted by Child and Family Services – could be adapted for Adult Services.	

## H2. Support more people to be independent

**Aim:** To increase the number and percentage of people that are supported to be independent.

**Measure:** No. / % of people that are supported to be independent.

	Past Performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
No. / % of people that are supported to be independent	6,644	7,444	6,529	6,324	6,828	<b>6,900</b>	<b>6,990</b>	<b>7,090</b>	<b>7,200</b>
	86.3 %	87.4 %	85.5 %	85.1 %	85.8 %	<b>86.0 %</b>	<b>86.2 %</b>	<b>86.4 %</b>	<b>86.6 %</b>

### Why this is important:

- The following are a number of innovative methods the Council has recently introduced to keep people as independent as possible:
  - We have developed 10 assessment beds at a number of local authority homes for older people in order to offer short-term rehabilitative care to reduce the number of people entering long-term residential care.
  - We are managing emergency admissions better and these have reduced in the last quarter of 2012/13. Because emergency placements have represented a notable proportion of admissions to long-term residential care, such placements are now being authorised by Principal Officers. We have also held two workshops with key staff on the management of emergency placements and identification of alternative services.
  - We have developed a rapid response homecare service to help, where appropriate, people to remain at home in a crisis.
  - Our Intake Team is trying to ensure that people referred to them who have lower levels of support needs are diverted from social services care to community and third-sector resources at the point of contact.
  - As an example of the diversion process, we are running a pilot project for two years which involves the deployment of 'Community Connectors'. These officers will, among other things, put people with a lower level of support need in touch with appropriate community resources.
- We are currently evaluating these interventions which are all aimed at keeping people as independent for as long as possible.
- Keeping people independent is a core social care value and is at the heart of local and national policy. We will continue to work with our service users to promote independence, safety and dignity.



**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- The City and County of Swansea has a good record of supporting adults under 65 in the community, and for the indicator relating to those adults (SCA003a), we have been in the top four authorities in Wales each year since 2008/9.
- However, performance on supporting older people in the community (SCA003b) has been weaker in recent years, largely as a result of higher numbers of older people being supported in residential care. This now appears to have peaked and numbers are reducing, albeit slowly.
- Forecasting performance on this indicator is complicated by the following:
  - Move to develop alternative models of provision (described above) which are intended to reduce the recourse to formal social care services.
  - Anticipated demographic pressure from an ageing population, with six per cent more older people aged 65 and over by 2017.
  - Changes to service provision as a result of implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill.
  - There remains potential for greater levels of rehabilitation to the community from residential care, but we may continue to have higher levels of older people in residential care for some years yet.
- As a result, we have set targets which reflect a need to respond to fundamental change in the nature of service provision at a time of great demand.

**What works well now:**

- There are a number of established methods in addition to those described above which are currently employed to keep people independent. These include:
  - Our Domiciliary Care Service (DCAS): This service provides reablement home care as well as assessing the long-term care needs of services users (see under the reablement section below for more detail).
  - Our Community and Day Services: These give people the opportunity to socialise with other people and join in with group activities. Community Connectors will further enrich people’s social networks by putting them in touch with community resources run by volunteer and third sector organisations.
  - Providing aids and adaptations so that people can be supported at home.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Complete an interim evaluation of the assessment beds.	To determine the extent to which service users are returning home and are not being admitted into long-term residential care

Evaluate the Community Connector pilot.	To determine whether this has helped people maintain their independence.
Analyse data from our Intake Team.	To see how referrals for people with a lower level need, and who are diverted into community and third-sector based resources, are being supported.

### H3. Reducing the time taken to install aids and equipment

**Aim:** To reduce the average number of working days taken from the completion of the care plan to provision and / or installation of aids / equipment.

**Measure: (SSA2)** The average number of working days taken from the completion of the care plan to provision and / or installation of aids / equipment.

The average number of working days taken from the completion of the care plan to provision and / or installation of aids / equipment.								
Past Performance					Projection			
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
5	5	5.46	6.69	7.32	7	7	7	7

**Why this is important:**

- We want to reduce the amount of time taken between the completion of the care plan to the provision of, and/or installation of aids and equipment.
- We will continue to meet or better the Key Performance Indicator of seven days from Receipt of Order to Delivery of Community Equipment as set out in the Section 33 Agreement and Service Specification.
- The receipt of community equipment by the service user in a timely fashion significantly impacts on the need for admission to hospital or a residential care setting.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- Performance has shown some decline over the past three years. Prior to 2012 this was due to the lack of investment in the service which faced continuing increases in demand.
- From April 2012 a new contract was agreed with partners enabling new infrastructure investment and a new IT system to become operational. However, performance in the past year has also shown evidence of decline.
- There are three principal factors behind this:

- First, the increased focus on more specialist and often bulky items which cannot be kept in stock has led to increases in the length of time to deliver these items which contribute to the overall increase in average time.
- Second, and more recently, the new contractual arrangements since April 2012 have affected how we count items of equipment delivered; we also now exclude many items issued to hospital patients on discharge, which means that the average for the remainder provided by the Local Authority has increased.
- Third, a number of items of equipment previously counted have not been included during the past twelve months which has affected this indicator.
- We will continue to work with partners to monitor performance. However, the future target has been set in light of the new contract for equipment provision (which has been agreed jointly with Neath Port Talbot CBC and ABMU); this specifies a delivery standard of seven days so any target below seven days will present a challenge and will incur additional costs to the service.

**What works well now:**

- The Community Equipment and Alarm Services have re-located to form a central hub of provision; this will inevitably provide the platform for a more integrated service for service users who make use of these home-based items.
- In addition, the premises now offer a Demonstration facility for Service Users to try before installation takes place, thereby increasing choice and participation in the Initial Assessment process.
- The Pooled Fund arrangement has been in operation with the service for 12 months and appears to be working well so far.
- The new IT system operational under the new contract offers much greater potential for management of the service and ease of ordering for practitioners.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Refine the software used to manage the service.	To ensure that we appropriately identify and count items of equipment which contribute to service users continued independence in the community.
Progress the appointment of a Pooled Fund Manager which has been agreed by the partners.	To enhance the management of the service arrangements and improve the information available about the performance of the service, enabling further refinement of the contract.

Continue to monitor the timeliness of the provision and installation of equipment and aids to people within their own homes.	To reduce the need for admission to hospital or residential care.
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#### H4. Clients returning home after re-ablement

**Aim:** To increase the numbers / % of clients returning home following a period of re-ablement instead of going into long term residential care.

**Measure:** The number / % of clients returning home following re-ablement.

	Past Performance					Projection			
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
The no / % of clients returning home following re-ablement	Not applicable			52 per cent returned home <sup>10</sup>		Not able to provide projections at present: pilot is too new			

**Why this is important:**

- Reablement is central to the way in which we want to deliver care within Swansea Social Services.
- Reablement involves an assessment period whereby care staff will aim to do less for service users and more with them, helping people to develop confidence in their own abilities and regain skills.
- Over past few years, reablement has been provided through our Domiciliary Care Assessment Service (DCAS). DCAS is a short-term domiciliary care service run by our in-house Home Care Services. When someone has been assessed as needing domiciliary care, this will initially be provided by DCAS. DCAS has a dual role. Primarily it is an assessment service, which works out the level of long-term care that service users require. It is also an enablement service where care staff, community health staff and occupational therapists work with service users to maximise their capabilities and encourage independence.
- All community care assistants receive reablement training to support and aid the reablement process. For newly appointed staff, training is now provided

<sup>10</sup> Because of the small number of service users involved this data includes clients who used the service during 2011-12 and 2012-13; this figure therefore represents performance for both years.

by Personal Care Consultants; this ensures that they have the key skills and knowledge to support service users to be more enabled.

- Under the Transformation of Adult Social Services (TASS) programme, and to complement DCAS, we have been piloting assessment beds. The pilot, first introduced in 2011, has been established to prevent those people who can be described as being in 'crisis' – for example suffering from an acute urinary tract infection – from being admitted temporarily into a care home (or even hospital). Temporary admission to a care home can, for a number of reasons, lead to service users moving permanently into long-term residential care rather than returning home.
- To prevent this situation, the assessment beds have been introduced into four of our residential care homes. The assessment bed service is a short intervention (lasting up to three weeks) created with the clear purpose of getting the service user home as soon as possible. To do this, service users receive intensive reablement support from staff at the care home, together with health care staff based in the community, to build strength, skills and confidence.
- The assessment beds are important because they facilitate greater outcomes for service users, provide high-quality and person centred care and are more financially sustainable than long-term residential care.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- The assessment beds are still very much in their infancy so there is little data, at present, to discuss historical performance or to use for future forecasts. We have reported above, however, on data collected so far; these figures are predicated on 48 people returning home from a total of 91 people being admitted to the assessment beds (52 per cent).
- However, we are currently reviewing our data capture methods as part of the evaluation exercise we are undertaking to assess the efficacy of the assessment bed service. We hope to conclude this evaluation exercise by Autumn 2013.
- In the interim, we have already undertaken a largely qualitative case study evaluation at St. John's Residential Care Home – one of the sites of the assessment beds – to see if this individual service prevented admission in to long-term residential care.
- The evaluation of the beds painted a generally positive picture: the results of the study revealed high-levels of satisfaction among service users, families and professionals toward the service. The results also revealed that the majority of residents were discharged on or before the designated three weeks stay, with the median stay being 15 days.
- Moreover, a search of the social care record database revealed that, of the 32 older people who had used the assessment bed service, well over half (n=19) were currently living at home (or were residing at home before they passed away). The packages of care for those residing at home were also small (less

than 10 hours), and this therefore represents significant savings on the costs associated with residential care.

- That said, occupancy levels for the beds, however, could be as low as seven days in the month and this data was corroborated by a number of professionals who felt that the service may be an under-utilised resource. Effective gatekeeping – that is, screening inappropriate referrals – may be a contributory factor in this result. Paradoxically, professionals also felt that the service could be seen to be working too well: because of their favourable experiences within the unit, service users actually found the idea of residential care appealing.
- On balance, however, the interim evaluation suggested that the assessment bed service at St. John’s is a highly-thought of service that did prevent, to a certain degree, admittance to long-term care.
- As reported above, a more comprehensive study of all the assessment beds will be reported in Autumn 2013. It will be instructive to see whether the larger and detailed study corroborates this earlier report.

**What works well now:**

- From the St.John’s evaluation it appeared that the service was well-liked among those who had used the beds. However, the counter argument was that it was too popular: service users, it appeared, from their stay found the idea of residential care appealing; therefore rather than preventing admissions to long-term services, the intervention may actively encourage it.
- St.John’s only admits people for reablement from the community (step-up); no-one was admitted from hospital (step-down). Other care homes with assessment beds will cater for people from both the community and hospital routes and their effectiveness in rehabilitating people from these two settings will be reflected in the larger evaluation report.
- Generally, it is difficult to say unequivocally whether the assessment beds work well until more time has passed and more detailed evaluations have been undertaken.

**What we are going to do:**

What?	Why?
Continue to explore and review the effectiveness of the reablement approach.	To determine whether or not reablement is helping to reduce the number of long term placements for older people.
If reablement is proven to be effective, investigate whether it might be better for all assessment beds to be located in one place rather than spread throughout the city.	So that services can be effectively concentrated.

<p>Inform and persuade other professionals, e.g. GPs about the availability and value of reablement services.</p>	<p>To help break the cycle of residential care being seen as the default option.</p>
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## I. Minimise waste and increase recycling through promotion, working with others and by targeting low participating areas

### Why this is an Improvement Objective

There are key issues that have implications for the need to help people recycle more of their waste.

#### 1. National Waste Strategy:

- Local Authorities are facing significant legislative and policy measures including the Landfill Allowance Scheme (LAS), Landfill Tax and the imposition of recycling and composting targets.
- The Welsh Government published a revised national waste strategy in 2010, entitled Towards Zero Waste which sets out sustainable waste management and waste reduction targets for authorities.
- Landfill sites are regulated via environmental permits issued to the operator. The design, operation, monitoring, closure and aftercare of landfill sites are subject to the requirements of the EU Landfill Directive and landfill should be the last option for most waste, especially biodegradable and recyclable waste.
- Landfill capacity is running out and the UK landfill tax is also set to increase by £8 per tonne until 2014 equalising the cost of landfill and alternatives; in time, this will make landfill more expensive than alternative disposal methods.
- Statutory targets for increasing the amount of municipal waste that is recycled or composted is 52% by 2012/13; this will rise to 58% by 2015/16.

#### 2. Local and national performance:

- The Council's performance increasing recycling has improved steadily over the last few years going from 31.57% in 2008/09 to 45.15% in 2011/12.
- However, when compared to other Local Authorities in Wales, Swansea's performance has been below the Welsh average of 48.53% (2011/12) with the Council being placed 16<sup>th</sup> in Wales.
- If the targets set by Welsh government are not met then the levy fines of £200 for every tonne that the target is missed will be enforced, which would mean an additional £250,000 for every 1% short of the target missed.
- The Council's service development strategy for Waste spans 15 years to show how the higher rate of 70% recycling will be met by 2025.



- At present, the Council's main landfill site at Tir John, along with other recycling centres in the City are managed by Swansea Waste Disposal Company, an arm's length company of the Council.
- However, the Council will become directly responsible for the existing services under new plans. This will give the Council more flexibility to develop and improve its recycling services, increase the potential for achieving national recycling targets and tough landfill allowances by bringing the waste services in-house this will save the Council money.
- In previous years, legislation meant that local authorities were required to create arm's length companies to manage waste disposal services, but the rules have since changed and councils are being encouraged to take advantage of the changes.

**The Council's contribution towards improvement**

- The Council has been encouraging people to recycle, reuse and reduce their household waste.
- The Council has undertaken a number of initiatives to try and help facilitate this and it has been successful in achieving year on year increases in the recycling rate and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill.
- However, meeting the statutory targets has proved challenging and more work will be needed in order to meet the statutory targets within the timescales.

**I1. Recycling more waste, sending less waste to landfill**

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of municipal waste re-used, recycled and composted.

**Measure:** **(WMT/009b)** % of municipal waste being re-used, recycled and composted.

**(WMT/004b)** - % of municipal waste sent to landfill

Past Performance					Projection			
<b>(WMT/009b) % of municipal waste being re-used, recycled and composted.</b>								
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
31.57 %	34.55 %	40.47 %	45.15 %	49% (statutory target 52%)	<b>52%</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>58% Statutory target</b>	<b>60 %</b>

Past Performance					Projection			
<b>(WMT/004) % of municipal waste sent to landfill.</b>								
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
67.67 %	64.93 %	59.26 %	54.54 %	49.7%	48%	43.5%	<b>42%% Estimate based on difference between statutory target of 58% and 100%</b>	<b>40 %</b>

**Why this is important:**

- Reducing the amount of waste produced together with increasing the levels of waste recycled/composted, will significantly improve our ability to meet Welsh Government targets, avoid penalties and help contribute to protecting finite resources.

**The story behind past performance and expected trends:**

- The Authority has introduced a number of initiatives which has accounted for the improvement in recycling wastes including:
  - Cardboard being introduced to kerbside collection (2008);
  - kitchen waste and garden waste collection expanded to cover the whole of the County with new households being incorporated into the weekly collection (2009);
  - the delivery of home composting bins to areas not included on Garden Waste rounds completed (2009);
  - plastic collections introduced to whole of County on opposite week to green bags including schools plastic collections moved to kerbside rounds (2010);
  - alternative weekly collections (AWC) of black bags introduced for Thursday and Friday rounds and kitchen waste expanded to all households (2010);
  - AWC for black bags introduced for Monday and Wednesday rounds (2011)
- Initiatives on piloting and rolling out new approaches to help recycling at Household Recycling Centres in alliance with WRAP (Waste & Resource Action Plan) will help in terms of ensuring best practice is utilised in the redesign and operation of the Household Waste Recycling Centres going forward.
- An independent survey has recently been completed through the Welsh Government Improvement Programme.
- Trials to sort waste at Household Recycling Centres, trade service and kerbside residual collection have also been undertaken.

- A significant door knocking campaign has also been undertaken which identified areas which could benefit from a more concerted campaign.

**What works well now:**

- The significant improvements in kerbside collection provision, door knocking and targeting by staff in particularly low participation areas has provided an increase in participation in those areas. Targeting flats to encourage residents to recycle more through follow up surveys and door knocking has led to a project being undertaken to ascertain what if any method encourages residents to recycle more.
- Arrangements are in place to encourage businesses to recycle rather than dispose of their commercial waste. The commercial waste services have also been rebranded as a Trade Recycling service and placed under the management of the Waste Minimisation team.
- Changes have been made to Household Waste Recycling Centres with staff actively promoting and assisting in recycling and challenging residents regarding the residual waste that they present for disposal.
- The development and implementation of an annual action plan setting out an ongoing programme of activities/initiatives. These included such actions as advertising, promotions, educational initiatives, road shows and service improvement measures.
- Local authorities in South West Wales Region have formed a regional group to procure capacities for sustainably treating food waste using Anaerobic Digestion; Swansea is the lead authority.
- A recent trial undertaken at the Baling Plant to sort residual waste material showed that the average amount of recyclates recovered was 50%.
- A further trial included waste material being sent to a third party and this gave a potential 45% recycling rate with 55% diverted from landfill.
- Assuming this same recovery rate, the Authority's recycling figure would increase significantly. The approximate cost of such sorting and disposal of residual is estimated at £85 per tonne which covers the processing cost. A further trial was undertaken by sending residual waste material to a third party and this gives a cost of £118 per tonne. Savings in landfill tax of £64 a tonne, giving a net additional cost of £54 per tonne.
- A tender exercise was also carried out to establish what other companies would charge for waste disposal and what recycling rates they could achieve. The results of this were disappointing; the best result being a guaranteed 4% recovery of recyclates and a landfill diversion of 85%, the cost per tonne was £100.

**What we are going to do:**

Over the course of the next few years the following proposals are to be undertaken to further increase recycling and reduce landfill:

**Waste Minimisation**

- Undertake a continued education/awareness programme to encourage residents and businesses to reduce the amount of waste they produce.

**Re-use**

- Develop partnerships with third sector organisations to encourage the re-use of household items.
- Develop the re-use of materials presented for disposal via the bulky waste collection service and at Household Waste Recycling Centres.

**Kerbside collection**

- Undertake a targeted door knocking campaign to improve participation and understanding of the recycling services available with a particular focus on food waste.
- Continue to increase public awareness by undertaking an extensive advertising and publicity campaign around 'Help Swansea meet the recycling target' logo.
- Identify and implement additional kerbside recycling streams.
- Look at ways to reduce the amount of residual waste presented at the kerbside for collection.

**Amenity sites**

- Introduce 'meet and greet' officers at the Household Waste Recycling Centres to assist residents in reducing the amount of residual waste being disposed at the sites.
- Provide additional training for site staff to help reduce the levels of residual waste being deposited.
- Install new signage and improved layout of sites to encourage increased recycling.
- Introduce a permit system for large vehicles.
- Introduce rubble recycling facilities at the sites.
- Prepare 'invest to save' proposals for larger initiatives at the sites.
- Implement the recommendations of the WRAP survey to help increase recycling at Household Waste Recycling Centres

**Materials Recycling Facility**

- Develop a facility to sort residual waste in order to extract recyclable materials.

**Regional procurement**

- Food and residual waste treatment – procurement of the food and residual waste treatment is progressing through the South West Wales Hub.

## 12. Clearing fly tipping promptly

**Aim:** To increase the percentage of fly tipping incidents cleared promptly.

**Measure:** (STS/006) % of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days.

Past Performance					Projection			
<b>(STS/006) % of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days.</b>								
2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
93.03 %	96.39 %	92.50 %	86.08 %	92.9 %	<b>93%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>

### Why this is important:

- If we improve our arrangements for collecting and recycling waste then this should have a beneficial impact on reducing the incidents of fly tipping and should improve the speed with which incidents are dealt with.

### The story behind past performance and expected trends:

- Performance since 2009/10 has been on a downward trend going from 96.39% in 2009/10 to 86.1% in 2011/12; although in 2012-13 this has improved to 92.9%.
- During 2011/12 the basis of calculating the figures changed, which partly accounts for the lower result that year. The definition of the national performance measure around fly tipping (STS/006) allows authorities to interpret the collection of data differently on what constitutes a single fly tipping incident and there appears to be significant variations in results across Wales.
- In 2011/12 there were operational / organisational changes within the Street Scene services, which have been implemented; this also had an influence on performance during this period.
- In 2012/13 working methods were examined using the 'systems thinking' approach and changes made to reduce waste and delay. These changes have proved successful and the actual figures have risen back to pre-merger levels despite having a smaller workforce and restrictions on agency cover.
- These changes together with a community based approach should improve the existing level of the service going forward.

**What works well now:**

- As part of the operational and organisational changes made to working methods, requests for fly tipping removal now go directly to those responsible for dealing with it.
- Keeping the relevant employees updated of the outcome of their work to help them appreciate the reasons behind the instruction to search for evidence and to help improve the service.
- All bags are now searched for evidence to allow notification and prosecution with the aim of reducing the amount of fly tipping carried out.
- Partnering with Community groups such as “Friends of Parc William” in Lower Loughor where volunteers take proactive action to reduce the number of fly tipping incidents.

**What we are going to do:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Visible Data for operatives. This is a work in progress to be displayed on a large poster in the depot.	To keep the relevant employees updated of the outcome of their work to help them appreciate the reasons behind the instruction to search for evidence and to help improve the service.
Statistics on number of bags searched and resultant action will be posted for all operatives to see.	
To promote the principle of partnering with other Community groups across the City and County and support them to reduce littering and fly tipping.	To achieve a reduction in littering and fly tipping.

**City & County Swansea update to the response to the Statutory Recommendation made in the Auditor General Wales Annual Improvement Report 2010**

1. In 2011, the Wales Audit Office (WAO) issued a statutory recommendation relating to Planning Committee arrangements put in place by the previous Council. They concluded that these arrangements did not form part of a consistent and coherent approach to service improvement, represent good value for money, contribute to more efficient ways of working or represent good governance. The key findings that led to the statutory recommendation were that:
  - In 2010, Members had increased the number of committees from two to four contrary to the advice of the WAO, external consultants and earlier findings from an internal working group. No rationale was put forward for the decision which was taken without reference to the anticipated benefits, potential costs, risks or probity considerations.
  - The increase in the number of planning committees did not represent good value for money or contribute to more efficient ways of working.
  - The new committee arrangements did not represent good governance. In particular, the area committee focus on local ward issues and small-scale development was in direct conflict with the Council's stated aim to develop a more strategic role for the planning service in supporting its strategic regeneration objectives for the city.
2. During 2012, the WAO undertook a further review to determine if the weaknesses identified previously were being addressed by the new Council and the officers responsible for the service. They interviewed senior Members and officers, and observed a number of meetings of the new area committees.
3. Following its election in May 2012, the new Council charged the Chief Executive to consider the criticisms previously made and make recommendations to Council within six months. In response, the Chief Executive set up an Improvement Board, comprising the Chief Executive and relevant senior officers. At Member level, a Planning Services Leadership Group, Chaired by the Leader and including the Deputy Leader, Cabinet member for Place and the Chair of the Development Management and Control Committee was formed to provide a clear political lead.
4. Having considered options presented in a report by the Chief Executive, on 22 November 2012 the Council resolved to retain a structure of an overall Development Management and Control Committee and two area development and management control committees. Members sit on the main committee and on the area committee within which their ward lies. The resolution of the Council includes provision for review 'of performance at the end of each financial year, and that a further review of the structure is made in the light of future published Welsh Government guidance when that guidance becomes available'.
5. All three committees are chaired by the Chair of the Development Management and Control Committee who, amongst other responsibilities as Chair, is charged with ensuring members exercise their quasi-judicial role,

when taking decisions at committee. The Chair has powers to review & overrule call-ins to committee by Ward Members, with provision for a panel to adjudicate in the case of disputes. Since the May 2012 elections, all members have received basic training and this has been supplemented by more detailed briefing on the planning law relating to specific applications (most recently regarding a wind farm application) prior to decision making.

6. The Council has made improvements to the way the performance of the planning service can be evaluated and is introducing a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach to performance management. The performance information now available includes service delivery data as well as overall information about the proportion of applications considered by members and those where members do not accept officer recommendations. As a result of the focus on this particular service, lessons are being learned and the RBA approach is now being adopted as the corporate performance management tool.
7. The Council has also recognised the potential for improving the layout of the chamber used for holding planning, and other meetings, and is considering ways in which proceedings can be made clearer for those observing in the public gallery.



## Where to find additional information

### *Standing Up for Swansea Corporate Improvement Plan 2013/17*

The Delivery & Information Service has prepared this document on behalf of the Council. If you have any questions or comments on the content of this plan, you can contact the Business Performance team by: Email to [improvement@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:improvement@swansea.gov.uk) Telephone 01792 636852. The Corporate Improvement Plan 2013-17 can be found by clicking on the following web link: <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=155>

### *One Swansea Plan*

If you are interested in finding out more about the *One Swansea Plan*, then you can do so via the Council's web-site by clicking on the following web-link: <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=52292>

Also, if you have any questions related to the *One Swansea Plan*, you can contact the Scrutiny Team by:

[scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk)

Telephone 01792 637732

### *Local Service Board*

Website: [www.swansea.gov.uk/LSB](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/LSB)

### *Equality & Diversity*

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/equalityscheme>

### *Sustainable Development*

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=4275>

### *Wales Audit Office inspection reports*

[http://www.wao.gov.uk/reportsandpublications/localgovernment\\_687.asp](http://www.wao.gov.uk/reportsandpublications/localgovernment_687.asp)

### *Estyn Inspection Reports*

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/inspection/inspection-reports/?searchTitle=&searchType=All&localAuthority=51&searchPostcode=&searchDistance=10&submitted=1>

*Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) Inspection Reports*

<http://www.csiw.wales.gov.uk/dataviewer/index.asp?searchtext=Enter+Name&postcode=Postcode&authority=SWA&region=&results=true&settings=>

*Scrutiny Board Reports*

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=36785>

