

Welcome to the summary of Bridgend County Borough Council's annual report for 2016-17. The annual report presents what we achieved in 2016-17 in carrying out our priorities set out in our Corporate Plan 2016-20, not everything we did in that year. These priorities are: supporting a successful economy, helping people to be more self-reliant, and smarter use of resources.

We made 46 commitments to deliver our priorities, with 32 (nearly 70%) fully achieved, a further 11 (24%) that were mostly completed. We also identified 58 indicators to measure success. Of those with a target, 59% met or exceeded the target, with a further 12.2% missed the target marginally. Of those indicators that missed the target, 25% showed improvement; 45% were new indicators which made it hard to set challenging but realistic targets; and a further 15% were influenced by external circumstances. To read the full report, please go to the BCBC website: www.bridgend.gov.uk. The sections below highlight some of our achievements.

Priority One – Supporting a successful economy

Our aims were:

To help local people develop skills and take advantage of opportunities to succeed.

- We supported 722 people through our Communities for Work, Bridges into Work and Bridgend Employment and Skills Project (BESP) programmes by providing opportunities for individuals to develop skills, training, qualifications, and work placements. In all, 218 people entered employment.
- We negotiated four apprenticeships for young people in our 21st Century schools programme and built three permanent apprenticeships into our ICT structure.
- For the fourth year in a row, all our looked-after children leaving school, training or work-based learning schemes achieved approved external qualifications.
- Through support from our Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) the number of our young people in Year 11 reported as being not in education, employment or training (NEET) continued to fall steadily, from 7.6% (2009) to 1.5% (2016).
- The Year 11 GCSE pupils who achieved the Level 2 threshold increased from 59.7% to 61.7%, above the Welsh average of 60.33%.
- The percentage of pupils at A level achieving the Level 3 threshold (2 A levels grades A - E) increased this year from 97.6% to 98.3%.
- The renovation of Jennings building Porthcawl created more than 30 jobs during the construction phase.

To create conditions for growth and enterprise

- We continue to work with the Bridgend Business Forum whose membership now stands at 800.
- The number of PAYE/VAT registered businesses in the borough increased for the third year from 4,440 to 4,540.
- The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal was agreed by the UK Government and is seeking to deliver a £1.2 billion investment into the region over the next 20 years.

To create successful town centres;

- Visitors to town centres rose from 6,527,906 to 7,971,331 (Bridgend) and from 5,013,457 to 5,055,306 (Porthcawl).
- The value of total annual expenditure by tourists also increased from £313 million to almost £330 million.
- The Rhiw Car Park was completed on time and on budget.
- In all, there was £31.5 million of externally funded town centre regeneration projects underway or in development during the year.
- A £7 million maritime centre was approved as part of the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus Programme winning a £1.1m Big Lottery grant.

Priority Two - Helping people to be more self-reliant

Our aims were:

To give people more choice and control over what support they receive by providing early access to advice and information,

- Our new single point of contact was used by 2,108 adults and 2,042 children to access information, advice and assistance.
- We appointed 2 more Local Community Co-ordinators who supported 167 people to access community opportunities rather than statutory services.
- 80.2% of people reported that they felt involved in any decisions made about their care and support, with 86.6% of people being satisfied with the care and support they received.
- Our reablement service supported 394 older or disabled people to learn or re-learn skills and techniques, and regain confidence to manage as many daily living tasks as possible on their own.

To reduce demand by investing in targeted early help and intervention programmes,

- We focused on safely reducing the numbers of looked after children. As a result, 75.6% of looked after children now remain living within their family.
- We set up a new model of short breaks for children with disabilities in Bakers Way, and began building a new 52 week provision for children with very complex needs. This included involving families, carers and young people themselves to co-design new models of Short Breaks.
- We developed a range of move on and accommodation support services for young people leaving care.
- We supported 3,879 individuals and families through our Families First programme to help reduce child poverty. Of these, 1,553 accessed a commissioned project (single agency support); 220 families accessed support for having needs relating to disability and

353 families signed a Team Around the Family (TAF) action plan. In addition, 164 young people and adults entered employment, education and/or training the Family Learning and Engagement programme.

To support carers in maintaining their roles

- The Young Carer's Co-ordinator undertook 51 Young Carer Assessments this year and all 51 were issued with Young Carer ID cards.
- Bridgend Carers Centre provided 730 pieces of information, advice and assistance to carers through a variety of ways.
- Within the local authority, 277 adult carers' assessments were completed and incorporated into the assessment for the cared for person.
- We supported 250 people to stay at home through disabled facilities grants, helping them to maintain their independence.

To support the third sector, town and community councils and community groups to meet local needs

- We planned to develop a joint strategy with the Third Sector but work is more complex than expected and will remain a priority for us in 2017-18.
- We set up a joint working group with Citizens' Advice Bureau to explore the impacts of welfare reform in the County Borough.
- We developed and published a Town and Community Council Charter that sets out how all councils will work together to build on existing good working relationships and each partner's commitment in delivering the provision and upkeep of local amenities.
- The Third Sector provided services to 365 older people, people with learning disabilities, people with physical disabilities and people with mental health issues.

Priority Three -Smarter use of resources

Our aims were:

To achieve identified budget reductions

- In 2016-17, we made budget reductions of £5.632m (75%) of the planned savings, with the remaining £1.845m achieved through maximising grants and other income and strict vacancy management.
- We said we would identify and take forward at least three new income generation initiatives last year. We were unable to achieve this due to internal management changes and changes in EU law.

To improve the efficiency of and access to services by redesigning our systems and processes

- We continued to develop our Digital Transformation programme with a range of automated and online services. We had planned to put further services online but this involved a complete redesign of our website, which is taking some time.
- We developed an integrated finance and procurement system automating our most common internal processes to reduce transaction costs.
- We webcast a total of 14 hours of council meetings in 2016-17.
- We improved our understanding of citizens' views and increased responses to consultations by using mobile devices and tablets at engagement events.

To make the most of our physical assets including school buildings

- Construction work began on the new Betws Primary School, the relocated Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwm Garw and new Brynmenyn Primary School. We also completed a consultation on the relocation of Pencoed Primary School and the Heol Y Cyw Campus.
- We continued to rationalise our administrative estate as part of our initiative to deliver multi-million pound savings by reducing the number of offices and depots we run and streamlining our structure.

- The asset disposal programme continued to progress well. We exceeded our target of £4m this year by generating £5.625m of capital receipts.
- For the fifth year in a row, we significantly exceeded the target set by Welsh Government to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 3% in the non-domestic public building stock. We achieved a 12.79% reduction.
- A total of 66 community organisations, predominantly sports clubs and associations, contacted us about undertaking the management of 55 different assets. Whilst there have been no transfers as yet, 19 applications are now at differing stages of development.

To develop the culture and skills required to meet the needs of a changing organisation

- During the year 231 Managers attended training to improve their People Management Skills.
- 295 employees undertook training to improve their Welsh language skills.
- 59.1% of staff completed e-learning modules on our new Learning and Development website. This is a rise from 43.1% in 2015-16.

To make the most of our spend on goods and services

- We achieved a 100% tender compliance in the year.
- We restructured the Corporate Procurement Unit and worked closely with the Third Sector and SMEs to ensure that local providers are 'tender ready' and able to bid competitively against national organisations.
- We continued to work in partnership alongside Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) and Business Wales to organise a joint bespoke tendering and procurement event for the third sector in the County Borough of Bridgend.

Finance

Last year, the amount we spent on delivering services to our citizens and investing in our landscape and infrastructure totalled around £440 million. The total amount that we have available to spend is made up from three main sources listed below.

Our revenue expenditure which represents day to day costs such as salaries, equipment, supplies and services was £254.535 million, and resulted in an underspend of £356,000.

Our capital expenditure which represents our spending on schools and infrastructure such as roads, bridges and buildings, was £18.27 million.

We also received specific government grants totalling £91.7 million for programmes such Families First and Flying Start.

What our regulators said about us

The Auditor General for Wales audited the Council's Improvement Plan for 2016-17, and certified that the Council had acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties. He also undertook improvement assessment work under three themes: governance, use of resources, and Corporate Assessment Follow up. He concluded that the Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement.

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) undertook an inspection of children's services. The inspectors reported that some of the practice they had seen varied and that more needs to be done in the areas of decision making, risk assessment, quality assurance and multi-agency engagement. CSSIW made 5 recommendations which we put into a plan to address.

Our Improvement and Wellbeing Objectives for 2017- 18

Our improvement and well-being objectives for 2017-18 remain unchanged, as follows, which are defined by our Corporate Plan 2016-20:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Helping people to be more self-reliant
- Smarter use of resources

Want to know more?

Hard copies are available at local libraries. You can also contact the Corporate Improvement Team on (01656) 643224 or email improvement@bridgend.gov.uk.

This report is also available in Welsh.