



Bridgend County Borough Council
Cynghor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12



www.bridgend.gov.uk

This document is prepared under Part One, Section 15, of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the related statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Government.

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Foreword

We are pleased to present our annual report on the financial year 2011-12. Despite the challenging economic and financial climate, we have continued to maintain a strong focus on frontline services and made improvements, in many areas. What evidence do we have to support this claim? Over three quarters (75.68%) of our services improved last year when compared to the previous year. Below are some of the things we said we would do and did.

We supported our communities and businesses in their efforts to deal with the economic situation. We made 111 successful bids to fund community projects. These bids raised a total of £982,414. The projects, in the “Community First” areas, led to new jobs or resulted in new volunteering schemes and training in skills. We also supported 196 community groups in a variety of ways.

We also helped local businesses, advising those that needed help to access financing from the £1.2 million Local Investment Fund and the £1.8 million Community Enterprise Grant. Altogether, we allocated £589,100, supported 46 firms and 7 individuals, and helped create 82 new jobs during the year. The support we provided under these fund/grants attracted £810,220 additional investment from the private sector.

We promised to do what we could to provide sustainable and affordable housing for those in need. In 2011-12, nearly a quarter (23%) of the houses built in the County Borough was classed as “affordable”. We improved the conditions of 62 properties in the Caerau Housing Renewal area.

Delivering better value for money has been a constant focus. We achieved a 37% reduction in our expenditure on Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation for homeless people, by doing more to prevent homelessness, and developing a greater range of housing options for people in housing need. We opened the Cornerstone House temporary accommodation, consisting of 6 self-contained flats. We increased the supply of accommodation for young people aged 16-21.

We continued to support our senior and disabled citizens by taking actions to enable them to stay in the community. We delivered disabled adaptations to properties faster than ever before, reducing the time taken from 415 days the previous year to 251 days. We provided extra care housing (39 flats at Kenfig Hill) to help senior citizens live independently. We more than doubled the number of Telecare installations (to 1089). We significantly increased the number of citizens supported by the Community Integrated Intermediate Service.

We promised to develop a new integrated approach to looking after children and young people. Here too we scored some successes. The number of families benefitting from the “team around the family” approach shot up to 71 (from 4 in 2010-11).

In the schools, we reduced the number of unauthorised absences by working closely, wherever possible, with pupils, teachers, and parents. We know our educational standards need to be improved further and we will continue to invest in our schools to provide our children with the best possible start in life. In 2011-12 we opened a new school in Brackla, the Archbishop McGrath High School, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Welsh Government, and won a national award for its innovative design.

We are keen to help our children and others to become more active and healthy. We opened excellent new sports facilities at Archbishop McGrath High School. They are available to the general public outside school hours. We got more people walking, under the “Let’s Walk Cymru” programme. The number nearly tripled, from 350 to 948.

One of our key objectives is to regenerate our towns and valleys. We played an active role in the Western Valleys Strategic Regeneration Area Programme, securing funding for projects in all 3 valleys. Projects included the Caerau Village Square Enhancement which has transformed the centre of the village, and has since been nominated for a national Regeneration and Renewal award for community-led regeneration.

We continue to take care of environment – for ourselves, our community, our children, and their children. We manage our waste more effectively than ever. We recycled more than 50%, which was better than the Wales average of 44.73%, and we have already exceeded the Welsh Government’s recycling target for next year. We sent less waste to landfill than in the year before (we reduced the percentage from 28.4% in 2010-11 to 26.3%). We were ranked number one in Wales in 2011-12.

We promised to make our communities safer and more inclusive. We co-operated with South Wales Police and other agencies to find ways of reducing the nuisance and disorder associated with drinking in public places. We introduced a system of designated Public Place Orders that make it easier to deal with such problems. Partly as a result, the number of anti-social behaviour incidents in Bridgend County Borough fell by 28.6%, from 9,182 in 2010-11 to 6,558 in 2011-12, and the number of first-time offenders reduced by 50%.

We re-surfaced our highways wherever we could, but the percentage of A and B roads in poor condition rose a little. In 2012-13 we have invested new funds (around £2.8m) to help remedy this problem, under the Welsh Government's "Local Government Borrowing Initiative".

We are proud of our achievements in 2011-12, but we are not complacent. There are always areas for further improvement and these are identified in the report alongside our successes. We hope you find this report interesting and thought-provoking – if you have any comments please do let us know.

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An online survey can be accessed on the "Our Performance" page of our website where you can leave feedback on the Annual Report: <http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/web/groups/public/documents/services/015180.hcsp>



Councillor Mel Nott
Leader of the Council



Darren Mepham
Chief Executive

Introduction

This Annual Report summarises how we performed during 2011-12 by demonstrating the progress made in delivering our key priorities and highlighting areas where further improvement is needed.

We have a legal obligation under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to have arrangements in place to ensure our services are continually improving and to publish an annual performance report for citizens.

The report focuses on our nine “Improvement Objectives” which are our corporate priorities for the year. These are grouped under overarching strategic themes and are listed below:

Strong Communities

To build safe and inclusive communities supported by an effective physical infrastructure

To develop and support sustainable and affordable housing solutions for those who are homeless or in need

To implement better integrated health and social care services to support independence, choice, empowerment, dignity and respect

Young Voices

To work in collaboration with partners to combat poverty and provide children with the best start in life

To help all children and young people to achieve higher standards of attainment through accessing high quality learning opportunities

Healthy Living

To improve physical and emotional well-being by promoting active lifestyles, participation and learning

New Opportunities

To support our disadvantaged communities by promoting economic growth, physical renewal and sustainability

Proud Past and Green Spaces

To manage and promote the natural and historical environment

Corporate Governance

To improve the way we work to ensure effective and efficient use of our financial, technological, physical and human assets

Appendix A: Performance Indicators 2012-13 is published separately. It provides detailed information on our key performance indicators, including performance over the past 3 years and a comparison of our performance against the Welsh average.

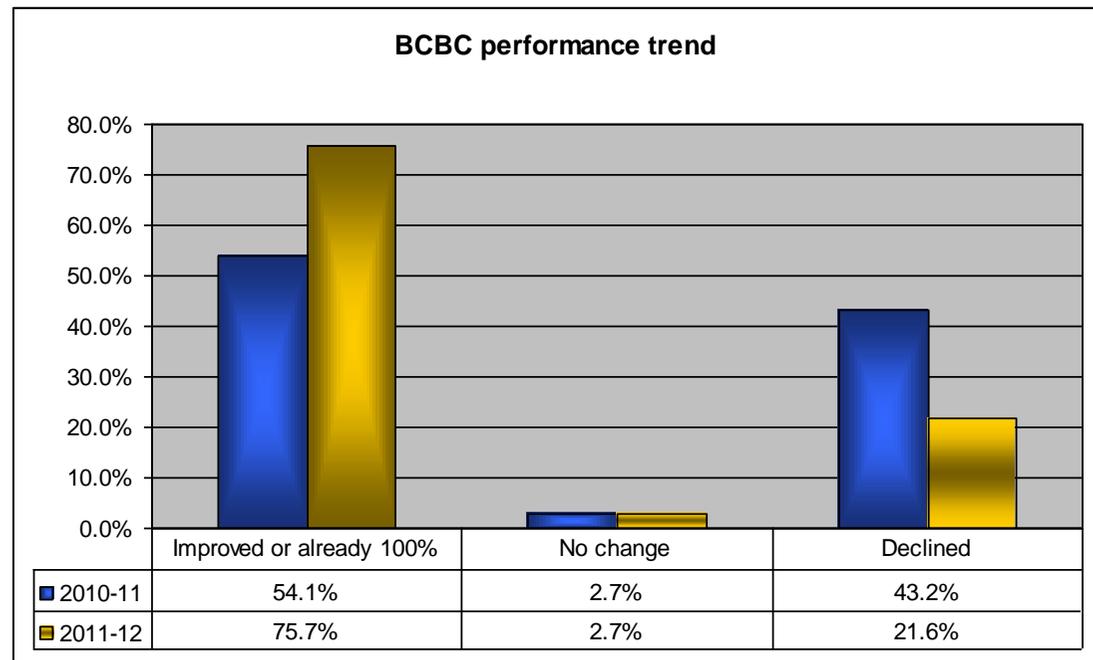
Section 1 – Summary of Council’s Performance against National Indicators

Each year, the Welsh Government and the Local Government Data Unit (LGDU) publish local authority performance information on a range of services, highlighting areas where there have been notable changes in the overall level of performance. This makes it possible to compare the performance of the 22 Welsh local authorities across those services.

This section summarises how Bridgend County Borough Council performed in 2011-12 in comparison with its own performance in the previous year and with that of other local authorities.

Overall Performance Compared with the Previous Year

In 2011-12, 41 performance indicators were collected and published nationally. Thirty-seven of the 41 indicators have comparable data, of which 28 (75.7%) showed an improvement; 1 (2.7%) remained the same; and 8 (21.6%) showed a decline.



Service Improvement

The Council provides citizens with a range of services. Between 2010-11 and 2011-12, the Council improved in:

- 7 of the 8 indicators for education;
- 11 of the 16 indicators for social care;
- 3 of the 4 indicators for housing;
- 4 of the 5 indicators for environment and transport;
- 1 of the 2 indicators for planning and regulatory services; and
- 2 of the 2 indicators for leisure and culture.

The table below shows how the Council performed in 2011-12 compared with Wales as a whole. We have rounded the data to make comparison easier.

Service Area	Bridgend CBC		Wales	
	No of comparable indicators	% of indicators where performance improved	No of comparable indicators	% of indicators where performance improved
Education	8	88% (7)	9	89% (8)
Social Care	16	69 (11)	16	63% (10)
Housing	4	75% (3)	4	75% (3)
Environment & Transport	5	80% (4)	5	60% (3)
Planning & Regulatory Services	2	50% (1)	2	100% (2)
Leisure & Culture	2	100% (2)	2	100% (2)
Overall	37	76% (28)	38	74% (28)

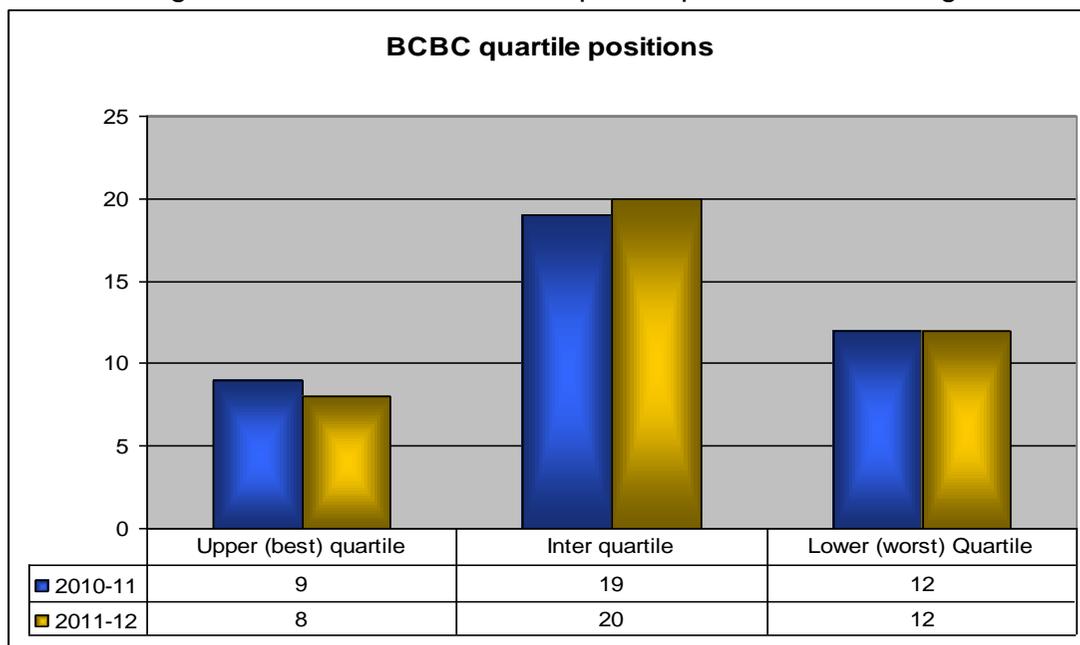
Bridgend CBC Position Relative to Other Parts of Wales

In 2011-12, for the 40 indicators for which comparable data were available for other parts of Wales, the Council performed above or at the national average in the case of 21 indicators, that is to say, 52.5%. That was better than our performance in 2010-11, when 48.7% of the same dataset performed above or at the national average.

Of the 40 indicators that received rankings,

- 8 were within the top 25% of the dataset (the so-called “upper quartile”), one less than in 2009-10;
- 20 were within the mid 50% (the inter quartile range), one more than in 2010-11; and
- 12 were within the bottom 25% (the lower quartile), the same as in 2010-11.

The following chart shows the Council’s quartile positions ranked against the all Wales data for the past two years:



Detailed information about each of the indicators can be found in “Bridgend CBC Performance Indicators 2011-12”, which is available on the website.

Section 2 - Council's Performance against its Priorities Set for 2011-12

STRATEGIC THEME ONE – STRONG COMMUNITIES



What do we want for people in Bridgend County Borough?

“We want people in Bridgend County Borough to live in safe, inclusive and sustainable communities.”

Improvement Objective One

To build safe and inclusive communities supported by an effective physical infrastructure

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
<p>Increase community engagement and cohesion through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing and publishing a community cohesion strategy • Continue supporting and developing Community First Partnerships • Implementing the Council's Citizen Engagement Strategy 	<p>The Community Cohesion Strategy was officially launched in March 2012.</p> <p>In total, 111 bids for funding were successful, which resulted in an additional £982,414 for development projects in the Community First areas. Of the citizens in Community First areas, 1657 were referred to employment and/or volunteering-related opportunities, 610 engaged with training and skills events, and 196 community groups received assistance with publicity, identification of funding sources and the arrangement of meetings.</p> <p>All actions for 2011-12 within the Citizen Engagement Strategy were completed on time. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with Participation Cymru to produce a Practitioners' Manual for engagement; • working in partnership with the Local Service Board to produce a joint website to support citizen engagement activities; • establishing the Council's Corporate Flickr account, which became operational in January 2012. This social media channel provides an additional opportunity to share information on our services and activities with our citizens; • preparatory work was also completed for the creation of a Corporate Twitter account, which is an on-line, interactive means for citizens to become involved in the Council's engagement and decision-making processes; and • developing a joint consultation programme for the Local Service Board partners to enable more activities to be conducted jointly, reduce costs and avoid "consultation fatigue" for citizens.

<p>Work with South Wales Police and other responsible authorities under the Licensing Act to introduce a bespoke “traffic light scheme” for local licensed premises by 31 March 2012</p>	<p>Working together with licensed traders, a scheme aimed at helping to reduce breaches in licensing regulation and alcohol-related crime was launched in Bridgend Town Centre. At present it is too early to establish a reasonable base line of data to show improved compliance and any reduction in non-compliance.</p>
<p>Further develop the designated public place orders in our town centres in consultation with South Wales Police</p>	<p>Designated Public Place Orders are a measure to help deal with issues of nuisance and disorder associated with the consumption of alcohol in streets and public places. Such Orders were already in force for Bridgend Town Centre and Pencoed. Following public consultation and in collaboration with South Wales Police, Orders were put in place for Porthcawl and Maesteg during 2011-12. Appropriate signs were erected in the relevant areas.</p> <p>Information from South Wales Police is that there were 2,620 fewer reported incidents of anti-social behaviour across the County Borough, equating to a 28.6% reduction compared to 2010-11.</p>
<p>Strengthen food hygiene enforcement and education</p>	<p>The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) is now in its second year. Targets were achieved for the inspection of food premises and new and high risk businesses for food safety. The percentage of food establishments in Bridgend that are “broadly compliant” with food hygiene standards increased from 72% in 2010-11 to 77% in 2011-12. Our performance in 2011-12 was, nevertheless, below the Wales average of 82.98% and the South East Wales average of 79.82%.</p>
<p>Reduce first time entrants into the Criminal Justice system</p>	<p>The Bridgend Youth Bureau (BYB) was launched in January 2011, specifically to deal with young people aged 10 – 17, arrested for the first time for low-level offences. The “Bureau” system aims to avoid young people who have made a one-off mistake being subject to Court or other actions that would immediately “criminalise” the individual. Under the system, the young offender enters into a contract to undertake a number of activities that are aimed at helping them, the victim(s) and the community. Over 93% of those attending the BYB have been reported as not reoffending.</p>

	<p>The BYB service was also expanded to link directly with other relevant teams. These included the “Just Ask Plus” team, which provides an integrated service to 16-25 year olds who are living in the Bridgend County Borough and are in need of support. (Further detail on Just Ask Plus is provided under Improvement Objective 3.)</p>
<p>Implement the Council’s Equality Scheme and Welsh Language Scheme</p>	<p>The Corporate Equality Scheme has been replaced by the Strategic Equality Plan.</p> <p>The Welsh Language Scheme 2008-2011 was implemented. A new scheme was approved in March 2012.</p> <p>Examples of the improvements achieved were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation activity undertaken by the Community Safety and Community First Partnerships enabled a good understanding of issues for local communities. • The customer service centre included monitoring of all kinds of language and access needs in its customer relationship management system and encouraged visitors to the centre to provide feedback on the service received. • We continued to improve access to Council premises for disabled people and developed an “<i>Access Improvement Strategy for Council Premises</i>”. • Disabled people were actively involved in the prioritisation of access improvements and in the delivery of regeneration schemes. • Revised guidelines and a toolkit for completing equality impact assessments were published to help managers employed by the Council to undertake such assessments on policy and service change proposals.

<p>Develop and publish a strategic equality plan in compliance with the public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>Development of the Strategic Equality Plan was completed and the plan was published in April 2012. The aim of the plan is to ensure equality is integral to our delivery of services, taking into account individuals' backgrounds including race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, transgender status, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership.</p>
<p>Deliver an effective car parking strategy that encompasses car parking enforcement and staff/public parking</p>	<p>This was not achieved in 2011-12. However, a joint venture was agreed with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and a joint Project Board was established to consider and develop arrangements for the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement.</p>
<p>Deliver an effective ground and pavilion maintenance regime</p>	<p>The annual grass cutting regime from March to September was harmonised into a schedule that includes fortnightly cuts on high use areas such as playing fields, three-weekly cuts for urban areas and six-weekly cuts for rural areas. This has enabled us to achieve greater consistency and equitability in the service across the County Borough within the existing level of resources.</p>
<p>Continue to maintain highway infrastructure and improve road safety</p>	<p>Despite an extensive programme of highways re-surfacing, the percentage of A and B roads in poor condition increased to 7.1% and 9.0% respectively. The Council did achieve a reduction in the percentage of C roads in poor condition, from 13.3% in 2010-11 to 13.0% in 2011-12.</p> <p>Regrettably, as this is an annually calculated measure, the full effect of our rolling programme of maintenance is not reflected in the performance result. We survey 50% of A and B roads and 25% of C roads each year. Consequently, the effects of repair works carried out to A and B roads may not show in the survey results until up to 2 years after the works are undertaken. The effects of repairs to C roads may not be reflected in the figures for up to 4 years after repairs are undertaken.</p> <p>Additionally, our programme is aimed at ensuring maintenance work provides a long-term solution, which means each project may take longer to complete. A further relevant factor is that roads can deteriorate at differing rates, despite repairs being undertaken.</p>

	<p>For example, extreme weather conditions can lead to roads deteriorating at a faster rate.</p> <p>Data produced by South Wales Police evidences that the year-on-year trend of reducing casualties arising from accidents on roads in the County Borough continued in the 2011 calendar year. The 2011 figure of 368 casualties represents a reduction of 43% when compared to the baseline number of casualties that was set on the basis of 1994-1998 average figures. This is the biggest percentage reduction achieved by any of the unitary authorities in the South Wales Police area.</p> <p>The percentage of highways and relevant land inspected that is of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness increased to 98% from 97.7% in 2010-11. This figure was above the Wales average of 95.3%.</p>
<p>Continue to deliver year on year improvements in recycling to ensure we hit Welsh Government performance targets</p>	<p>Our waste management continued to show year-on-year improvement with an increase in our recycling/reuse rate to above 50%. This level already exceeds the Welsh Government recycling target for 2012-13.</p> <p>We reduced the overall percentage of waste sent to landfill from 28.4% in 2010-11 to 26.3%. Our performance was ranked number one in Wales in 2011-12 and was significantly better than the Wales average of 44.73%. However, the percentage of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill increased from 37.7% in 2010-11 to 47.2%. This increase was due to the large tonnage of highway soil in the year that required disposal through landfill.</p>

<p>Progress local authority requirements under the Flood & Water Management Act & Flood Risk Regulations 2009</p>	<p>The Act and Regulations place a number of statutory duties on the Council, including the production of local flood risk management strategies, flood risk reports and maps, investigation of flooding incidents and actions to improve the sustainability of flood defences and drainage systems.</p> <p>The first milestone to be completed was the submission of a preliminary assessment of the flood risk in Bridgend. Our report was submitted and approved by the Environment Agency in June 2011.</p>
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Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

The Council's plans for 2012-13 have been prepared to meet the challenge of maintaining frontline services and delivering improvements against a background of cuts in funding, including the reduction in income for services, such as car parking and planning applications, resulting from the economic downturn.

New arrangements for Civil Parking Enforcement will continue to be developed during the year and are currently scheduled for introduction in April 2013.

Programmed highway improvements will total around £2.8m. This will be funded by the Council and through the Welsh Government's "Local Government Borrowing Initiative", for which there will be a budget increase over the next 3 years.

The Welsh Government has set a challenging target to recycle 70% of all municipal waste by 2024-5. Failure to achieve the recycling/composting targets could result in the inefficient use of resources, with waste being disposed of through landfill, and also financial penalties. We will continue to work towards achieving the target, set by the Welsh Government, of recycling 70% of all municipal waste by 2024-25. We have a long-term strategy in place for increasing recycling rates and the introduction of a Civic Amenity Improvement Plan for our collection sites will improve performance in the medium term. The procurement process for the regional anaerobic digestion facility is proceeding and our plan is to have a facility to deal with food waste in place by 2014. In the short term, we shall continue to undertake education and communication with our citizens in order to increase participation in recycling.

We will continue to work with South Wales Police and other partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Some of the actions we plan to take include strengthening the mechanisms for reporting anti-social behaviour incidents across the County Borough, to assist

with identifying locations for targeted action. We will also undertake education activities with local communities, partners and agencies, aimed at both tackling domestic abuse and supporting the victims of domestic abuse. We will conduct a review of the effectiveness of the Designated Public Place Orders in Porthcawl and Maesteg, using data from South Wales Police, which has the necessary powers to enforce the Orders.

We will continue the implementation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, maintaining our robust inspection approach.

Improvement Objective Two

To develop and support sustainable and affordable housing solutions for those who are homeless or in need

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
<p>Work with partners to provide housing options to meet a range of housing needs, with an emphasis on the prevention of homelessness</p>	<p>In the year, 182 young people aged 16-21 presented as homeless, representing a 13% decrease on 2010-11. We increased the emphasis on the use of housing advice, rent deposit schemes, family mediation and joint working with the private rented sector, and achieved an improvement in the percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months.</p> <p>The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant reduced significantly from 414 in 2010-11 to 251 in 2011-12.</p> <p>The Council and the four registered social landlords that operate in the County Borough (Hafod, Linc-Cymru, Valleys to Coast and Wales & West) drafted a Common Allocation Policy. This draft policy sets out a standardised approach to who will be given priority for social rented housing and how it will be allocated.</p> <p>Working with these four registered social landlords, 82 additional affordable housing units were provided in the County Borough during the year.</p> <p>We reduced our use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for temporary housing, achieving a substantial saving of 37% in the associated expenditure compared to 2010-11.</p>
<p>Improve the supply, range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation</p>	<p>We delivered a new temporary accommodation scheme called Cornerstone House, providing 6 self-contained flats for homelessness households. All flats were occupied by July 2011.</p>
<p>Work in collaboration with partners to develop a service to advise / support young people aged 16 to 21, in particular those</p>	<p>We increased the supply of sustainable accommodation for young people aged 16-21. The Supported Lodgings Service recruited and approved 6 new service providers, and in addition two existing foster carers changed to providing long-term placements for</p>

<p>leaving care and those at risk, to live independently</p>	<p>young people. This increased the total number of Supported Lodgings providers to 14 by March 2012</p> <p>The expanded “Just Ask Plus” service was launched in April 2012 to include a full homelessness assessment service and assistance with supported lodgings. (Further detail on Just Ask Plus is provided under Improvement Objective 3).</p>
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Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

The Council recognises that homelessness often represents a culmination of several problems, such as debt and relationship difficulties and often leads to increased levels of stress, depression and isolation for children as well as adults. Homeless people usually need a range of support and services, with cost implications. This, together with the consequences of the Welfare Reform agenda, will be challenging. We will continue to work with partners in the public and private sectors to provide a range of options to meet housing need, including increasing the amount of temporary and affordable accommodation, and to further develop the support services with an appropriate focus on preventing homelessness.

We are working towards the opening of 10 further self-contained flats, to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households, by April 2013.

We intend to develop a mechanism to identify tenants who are in rent arrears, so that early support can be provided to avoid homelessness. We also plan to conduct an options appraisal for the development of a local Social Lettings Agency.

The number of vacant privately-owned dwellings increased from 855 in 2010-11 to 1026. In 2012-13 we intend to commence implementation of the Welsh Government “Houses into Homes” empty homes loan scheme. Subject to Welsh Government guidance, we will publicise the scheme and introduce the means to enable applications.

The Council has some powers to enforce sales of privately-owned vacant properties when deemed appropriate. The success and benefits of those instances where this action has been taken will be examined in 2012-13, to inform consideration of our future approach.

Improvement Objective Three

To implement better integrated health and social care services to support independence, choice, empowerment, dignity and respect

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
<p>Re-model adult social care to establish new models of assistance and support through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the development of Telecare, extra care and specialist dementia services• a new model of service delivery for residential and home care	<p>The Telecare review started in July 2011 and is still in progress. A significant part of the review has been considering the monitoring arrangements and the resources required.</p> <p>The total number of Telecare installations increased from 504 in 2010-11 to 1089 in 2011-12. The percentage of clients who felt the service made it easier for them to manage in their own home increased from 92% in 2010-11 to 95%.</p> <p>We opened Llys Ton (Kenfig Hill) Extra Care Housing, providing 39 flats, all of which are fully occupied. Extra Care Housing combines the advantages of high quality, self-contained accommodation, with the provision of flexible care and support services, enabling people to live independently.</p> <p>Plans for the refurbishment of specialist accommodation for people diagnosed with dementia were finalised, and building work is due to start during the summer of 2012.</p> <p>The percentage of adult clients supported to live in the community increased slightly from 88.3% in 2010-11 to 88.6% in 2011-12.</p> <p>A reduced proportion of older people (aged 65 or over) were supported in care homes in the year.</p> <p>The percentage of clients with a care plan at 31 March whose care plans should have been reviewed during the year and were reviewed during the year, increased from 75.50% in 2010-11 to 78.10% in 2011-12.</p> <p>In 2011-12 around 400 more people aged 75 or over had their release from acute care (usually care in hospital) delayed than in 2010-11. The reasons for delays can include</p>

	<p>the lack of a suitable social care package being in place to support the patient once transferred from the acute care setting.</p>
<p>Continue to improve the transition arrangements for young people with complex needs moving into adulthood</p>	<p>The Council is committed to the ongoing development of a universal, integrated service for all young people in need of supported living within the County Borough. In 2011-12, the existing after-care service and youth service “Just Ask” were merged and expanded to create the new “Just Ask Plus” service for 16-25 year olds. The new service became operational on 2 April 2012 and is based at the former Just Ask offices in Bridgend town centre. “Just Ask Plus” provides a service that can respond promptly, flexibly and effectively to the needs of vulnerable young people. It provides advice, practical assistance, information and personal support to young people in a range of areas, including education, employment, training, housing, welfare rights, health, leisure and personal development.</p> <p>A protocol was agreed between Children’s Social Care services and Adult Social Care services for joint involvement in cases where high-cost care packages for individual children are under consideration. This will ensure appropriate future planning for these young people as they transfer into Adult Social Care services. We also revised the care pathways for young people with complex needs who are moving into adulthood.</p>
<p>Establish with Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board a framework of integrated locality networks within Bridgend County Borough under a new Bridgend Care Partnership</p>	<p>The programme has now been running for a year. Bridgend Care Partnership continues to meet and is overseeing the integration agenda.</p> <p>The Western Bay Regional Collaborative was established in 2011-12. There are four main programmes: Learning Disability, Mental Health, Older People and Children. The aim of the Collaborative is to provide better outcomes for citizens and better deployment of resources.</p>
<p>In partnership with the Health Board, align the Community Integrated Intermediate Service (CIIS) with services for physical and sensory impairment as part of the wider programme of integration and remodelling</p>	<p>The Contact Assessment and Review team was co-located and integrated with the Community Resource Team Intermediate Care Services. We commenced the development of arrangements to deliver a single access point for community health, community district nursing and social care services for adults.</p>

	<p>The number of citizens supported by CIIS increased from 1065 in 2010-11 to 1252 in 2011-12. The numbers of citizens who received help and support from CIIS, resulting in a hospital stay not being necessary, increased from 768 in 2010-11 to 912 in 2011-12.</p>
<p>Work with partners in the health and third sectors, to implement a targeted programme of health and well-being promotions</p>	<p>We established a joint Public Health team with Public Health Wales and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board. This is the first joint team in Wales and it has resulted in a more cohesive and effective approach to health promotion.</p> <p>The Healthy Living Department continued its successful work with the NHS to deliver effective health intervention programmes targeted at improving the health and well-being of “at risk” individuals in the County Borough. Three examples of this are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The National Exercise Referral Scheme for Bridgend, which was developed jointly by the Council and local health partners. GPs and other health professionals can refer patients with, or at risk of developing, long-term health conditions. The scheme offers participation in a variety of activities tailored to the needs of the individual. In 2011-12, the number of referrals to the scheme was 1913, which significantly exceeded the target of 1200 set by the Welsh Government. 2. The Pulmonary Rehabilitation Project, which assists participants to manage a number of chronic health conditions. In 2011-12, the number of participants in the project increased from 45 to 63. 3. The Garw Valley Obesity Project, which is the result of collaboration between the Council, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, Cwm Garw GP Practice and Public Health Wales. Local GPs are able to refer patients into the service as an alternative to prescribing anti-obesity drugs. Participants are then provided with expert advice about ways of achieving a healthier lifestyle and weight loss. The number of participants in the programme increased to 221 from 145 in 2010-11. Results have shown that 58% of all participants achieved an overall weight loss of 5% or more

	<p>In Bridgend, we have continued to support and develop improved health in the workplace. In 2011-12, the “Well-being Through Work” Project commenced, aimed at improving the health and well-being of working age people in Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea. The focus is to deliver a range of interventions that significantly improve the support available to individuals, employers and health care professionals, helping people, who are at risk of losing their job, to stay in work. The project has two key areas of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting individuals to remain in work • Improving work and workplaces <p>The impact of the project is yet to be assessed.</p> <p>In the Bridgend County Borough, the integrated Public Health and Prevention Team continued to work with colleagues from Public Health Wales to promote the Corporate Health Standard and the Small Work Place Health Award. These are schemes that the Welsh Government has developed to encourage employers to adopt practices to improve health and well-being. The Corporate Health Standard is awarded at four different levels - Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum – and is targeted at employers with more than 250 employees. The Small Workplace Health Award is for companies with less than 250 employees. The Awards cover a range of health and well-being areas, with some examples being mental health, physical activity and tobacco and alcohol use. In 2011-12, the Council achieved the Silver Corporate Health Standard.</p>
<p>Review and where necessary reconfigure the Supporting People programme to ensure compliance with Welsh Government requirements and respond to existing and emerging social needs</p>	<p>The Supporting People Programme is funded through two separate streams; the Supporting People Grant (SPG), which is administered directly by the Local Authority and the Supporting People Revenue Grant (SPRG), which is administered by the Welsh Government. The SPRG is paid directly to accredited providers of housing-related support for a number of vulnerable clients groups including homeless and potentially homeless people, vulnerable young people and people fleeing domestic abuse. In 2010, the Welsh Government audited SPRG-funded services in Bridgend for</p>

which the Authority had responsibility as an accredited support provider. All recommendations arising from the audit have been implemented.

A review of SPRG funding for learning disability clients was carried out in 2011, in association with Adult Social Care. The revised banding arrangements were agreed by the Supporting People Planning Group and introduced in 2012. The new arrangements more appropriately mirror need and the provision of housing related support to individual recipients.

Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

Actions to enable and support further integration of health and social care will continue in 2012-13, with attention being paid to how integrated services in the County Borough can align with and complement collaboration with our neighbouring authorities. We must ensure that we define the detailed structure and role of integrated care services in the future and ensure there is sufficient capacity for change.

Information on the revised care pathways for young people with complex needs who are moving into adulthood will be incorporated into leaflets and guides for these young people and their families.

We will complete the development of processes and protocols to deliver a single access point for community health and social care services for adults and the integration of community district nursing services into this arrangement.

Continuing the development of the re-enablement services, we will facilitate early discharge from hospital by providing an environment at Bryn y Cae in Brackla where patients can regain their independence through therapeutic support, prior to returning home.

The Remodelling Adult Social Care Programme will continue to monitor the development of future models of service for people with dementia and the transitional support needed for young people with disabilities who are moving into adulthood. New models of service are needed for people with the early on-set of dementia. The challenge for the Council will be how to transform more traditional service models to meet future needs and expectations and be sustainable into the future. We will be increasing services for people with dementia at Glan yr Afon in Ynysawdre, with the number of dementia beds increasing from 22 to 30.

We will progress collaborative arrangements for supporting and enhancing outcomes for older people, people with a learning disability, people with a mental health diagnosis, people with chronic conditions and vulnerable adults. We have a suite of actions planned for

2012-13 to streamline access to advice, support and services across the health and social care system and to support independence and care in the home and in the community.

In order to promote greater independence, well-being and choice for all our citizens, we must continue to develop new and more flexible support services. In 2012-13, this will include the provision of direct payments and personalised budgets and the challenge will be to change, modernise and improve the financial efficiency of existing patterns of service.

Actions to further develop the “Just Ask Plus” service are planned for 2012-13. These include enhancements to the provision of advice and support on housing to young people presenting as homeless and also the provision of advice and support on substance misuse through a Substance Misuse Practitioner. Funding will also be sought for a Keeping In Touch Worker within the service, to support young people not in education, employment, training or training.

The Welsh Government implemented the recommendations of the Aylward Review by issuing new Supporting People Guidance in July 2012. Consequently, in the Bridgend County Borough, responsibility for payments to providers of the old Supporting People Revenue Grant (SPRG) projects will transfer in the course of 2012-13 and new governance arrangements will link Bridgend to the newly-established Western Bay Regional Collaborative Committee, together with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and the City & County of Swansea.

STRATEGIC THEME TWO – YOUNG VOICES



What do we want for children and young people in Bridgend County Borough?

“We want children and young people in Bridgend County Borough to thrive, learn and achieve their full potential.”

Improvement Objective Four

To work in collaboration with partners to combat poverty and provide children with the best start in life

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
<p>Develop an integrated approach to service delivery by bringing services for children and young people closer to local communities</p>	<p>The Children and Young People’s Partnership (CYPP) has worked with officers from the Council and other partners to explore new ways of working that will improve the lives of children, young people and their families. The result has been arrangements, including the Integrated Working Framework, for driving forward combined services, with a whole-family approach. Actions were ongoing in the year to bring teams that deliver services together. These included the necessary building blocks for integrated, locality working within the Bridgend West area, in readiness for a pilot to commence in April 2012. The total number of families benefiting from this “team around the family” approach increased to 71, from 4 in 2011-12..</p> <p>A notable success of the CYPP work programme in 2011-12 was the development of a results-based approach to auditing need, service planning and contractual arrangements with partners. This makes services more accountable for the effect which they have on the population they serve, rather than simply being accountable for the performance of the service itself.</p> <p>The Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) is a mechanism, used by all relevant agencies, to assess a child/young person and his/her family at an early stage, when concerns start to appear because basic needs are not being met. Use of the JAFF triggers multi-agency consideration of the family for support. In 2011-12, the team became the first in Wales to successfully develop and deliver an electronic system to support the JAFF. A full year is needed to start to produce statistical evidence of effect.</p> <p>“Families First” is the Welsh Government’s programme to transform services so that they better meet the needs of children, young people and families who are living in poverty. At the heart of Families First is the development of a whole-family approach, built around integrated services. In 2011-12, we developed our family support strategy, “Families Together”, to advance the Families First agenda within the County Borough and mesh with our existing</p>

	<p>frameworks and projects for integrated service provision. The strategy and action plan were approved and commended by the Welsh Government.</p> <p>In the year, there was a reduction in the number of children referred to Social Services with concerns about neglect or abuse.</p>
<p>Develop and implement a child poverty strategy</p>	<p>Development of our Child Poverty Strategy for the Bridgend County Borough was ongoing during the year, ensuring it reflects the principles and ways of working of other strategic programmes and documents, so that there is a coherent approach to tackling this major and challenging issue. The Strategy has been approved by Cabinet and actions are underway to progress its implementation.</p>
<p>Improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people by transforming our services for looked-after children and families with high level of needs</p>	<p>The Residential Redesign project was initiated after a review, which concluded that the redesign of residential services within the Council's community homes could help to improve outcomes for looked after children and young people. This would principally be achieved through facilitating service availability and the involvement of all relevant agencies in the planning and delivery of services for each individual child. Under the project, two of the residential children's homes were redesigned in 2010-11 to become a "Transition Unit" and a "Complex Needs Unit". Both of these new services became operational in January 2012. At the same time, the Maesteg children's home was decommissioned.</p> <p>We increased the number of in-house foster carers as a result of successful recruitment campaigns by Bridgend Foster Care and the Resolutions Foster service. Between April 2011 and March 2012, Bridgend Foster Care increased its foster carer cohort by 8, with an additional 16 placements available during these dates. Resolutions Foster Service is a service between 4 local authorities, with Bridgend CBC being the host authority. This service increased its foster carer cohort by 5, with an additional 7 placements available between April 2011 and March 2012.</p> <p>The Children and Young People's Partnership Anti Bullying Task Group agreed a multi-agency approach to developing effective anti-bullying policies. It is currently too early to produce data on the specific impacts of the approach. We are working with the Welsh</p>

	<p>Government to progress the collection of this data and include appropriate performance measures.</p> <p>In 2011-12, 91% of our looked after children were allocated to a qualified social work practitioner, which was a 10% increase on 2010-11.</p> <p>There was a decrease in the percentage of initial assessments for looked after children that were completed during the year, where there was evidence that the child had been seen by the Social Worker. Work to improve this is planned with our safeguarding teams. However, we significantly improved the way that we carry out the assessments for all looked after children resulting in waiting times being greatly reduced. The specific performance improvements achieved were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92% of initial assessments being completed within timescales, compared to 59% in 2010-11; • 86% of core assessments being completed within 35 working days, compared to 35% in 2010-11; • 74% of statutory visits to looked after children taking place in accordance with regulations, compared to 61% in 2010-11; and • 97% of all looked after children reviews being carried out within statutory timescales, which was the same performance that we achieved in 2010-11.
<p>Support families in helping them to meet the social, emotional and learning needs of their children</p>	<p>There has been an increase in the numbers of young parents accessing further education and employment. Genesis 2 is a project that works in collaboration with both the Families First and Flying Start programmes to provide support to the most disadvantaged families, enabling them to access learning, training and volunteering opportunities. Improving their skills contributes to their employment prospects and helps them to make progress with providing a financially secure environment for their families. Whilst parents are engaged in learning/volunteering opportunities, Genesis 2 can also provide high-quality childcare, which can contribute to improving children's social, emotional and intellectual development. During 2011-12, the project assisted 189 parents or families, with 18 participants entering further education and 5 gaining employment. These numbers represented a reduction on the 2010-11 levels, when the project had 229 participants, of which 46 entered further education</p>

	<p>and 15 gained employment.</p> <p>In collaboration with Social Services, Health professionals, After Care, Women's Aid, Women's Aid Learn Direct and training providers, the Way Forward Project continued its work to deliver tailored packages of support in parenting, languages and play, education, training and/or employment services for young mums and dads who are aged 16-25 years old, and pregnant women aged 16-25. Such support gives vulnerable young people the opportunity to reach their full potential and can help improve their self-respect.</p> <p>Efforts were ongoing to support formerly looked after young people into education, training or employment, recognising the individual circumstances of each young person and their complex needs. However, the percentage of such young people, with whom the authority is in contact and who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19, decreased to 29.4% from 37.5% in 2010-11.</p>
<p>Work towards the prevention of the supply of alcohol and other age restricted goods to minors</p>	<p>Efforts continued in the year to reduce the supply/sale of age-restricted products and, consequently, reduce the negative impact such sales can have on the behaviour and health of young people.</p> <p>In the year, additional funding totalling £2800 was secured from the Welsh Heads of Trading Standards. This was used to support the production of additional advice literature and general inspection work, particularly out of hours, aimed at preventing the sale of tobacco products to minors.</p> <p>A number of test-purchase exercises were conducted to test traders' due diligence and procedures in relation to the sale of a range of age-restricted products, including alcohol and fireworks. Where necessary, enforcement action was taken together with the provision of additional advice and guidance.</p>
<p>Roll out Flying Start to more areas in line with national policy</p>	<p>The Flying Start programme is a Welsh Government-funded initiative, which aims to provide both early years care and education and to develop a strong partnership with families and other services that cater for young children, such as Health. The Welsh Government has</p>

extended what it considers to be a “highly successful programme”, resulting in Bridgend’s Flying Start programme being extended to include children and their families in additional streets of North Cornelly and Pyle from January 2012.

Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

We face a number of challenges in 2012-13 in relation to our provision and plans for safeguarding children and family support services. These include the sustained pressure on our resources from the high number of looked-after children and vulnerable children requiring safeguarding services. We must ensure that all care plans are outcome-focused and regularly reviewed within prescribed timescales, to ensure that the needs of all looked after children and children in need of protection are progressed, particularly in respect of children and young people with challenging behaviour and complex needs. Against this background and within the context of increased workloads, we will need to maintain and support the staff within our safeguarding teams and ensure that our social workers do not have excessive caseloads.

We will be continuing to develop the integrated working team and embed the joint approaches to meeting the needs of children and their families into its operations. We intend to establish a Safeguarding Board with our partners, to further develop regional partnership working whilst ensuing local needs are addressed.

To build on the actions we have already taken, we will monitor and continue to review in-house residential care provision for children with complex needs, to ensure its effectiveness and to reduce the level of reliance on care provision outside of the County Borough.

We will make enquiries of other local authorities and work with the Fostering Network regarding the implementation of a mother and baby placements service for the Borough, as this is a priority target for our Bridgend Foster Care Team in 2012-13. Events aimed at recruiting prospective foster carers will take place in 2012-13.

We will progress implementation of the Child Poverty Strategy. An action plan will be submitted to the Local Service Board as a recommended agenda for collaborative working with partners in the strategy’s implementation.

The Welsh Government has announced the “doubling” of Flying Start across Wales from April 2012 and this will enable the further expansion of the programme across additional areas of need in the Borough.

We plan to take a number of actions in 2012-13 as part of our efforts to prevent of the supply of alcohol and other age restricted goods

to minors. These include providing additional trader guidance, undertaking public awareness activities, further development of “Counter Act” (a scheme to improve compliance of licensed premises with the law in partnership with South Wales Police), undertaking further underage test purchase exercises and delivering initiatives targeting the purchase of alcohol by adults on behalf of children.

Improvement Objective Five

To help all children and young people to achieve higher standards of attainment through accessing high quality learning opportunities

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
<p>Implement the School Effectiveness Framework and the associated national strategies for literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>We are a partner in the Central South Consortium, together with the Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, RCT and Vale of Glamorgan local authorities. In the year, we commenced the design and establishment of the consortium's Joint Education Service, to support school improvement</p> <p>In our schools, we piloted the use of the Pupil Tracking Model, developed by the consortium, for pupils in years 3 to 6. This enables the performance and progress of pupils to be tracked on a regular and systematic basis, across all schools.</p> <p>Performance in the Foundation Phase/Key Stage 1 reached 81.8%, exceeding the Welsh average of 80.5%. There is no comparable data for previous years.</p> <p>Pupil attainment at Key Stage 2 did not improve, while performance elsewhere in Wales showed improvement. Performance in Maths was a key factor in this. In response, individual schools' improvement targets for Key Stage 2 performance were reviewed to ensure that they include an appropriate level of challenge and aspiration. Also, standardised reading and mathematics tests for all pupils in Key Stage 2 were introduced.</p> <p>Pre-VENT is a Key Stage 3 intervention programme that aims to support pupils aged 11-13 in their development of basic literacy and numeracy skills. We supported 1776 pupils in 2011-12, which has resulted in improved standards of literacy at Key Stage 3.</p> <p>Overall, Key Stage 3 performance improved from 60% in 2010-11 to 67% in 2011-12, but was marginally below the Welsh average of 68.1% and the South East Wales average of 70.9%.</p>

	<p>The proportion of Key Stage 4 pupils achieving desired levels of English and Maths was disappointing in 2011-12, although the overall average qualifications point score for pupils aged 15 improved. In both areas, our performance was below the Welsh average. Also, performance between our schools was more variable and inconsistent than might be expected.</p> <p>Good progress was made in reducing the number of 16 year olds not in employment, education or training (NEET) from 7.1% in 2010-11 to 4.4% in 2011-12. This was achieved through the successful implementation of the European Convergence funded Pre-VENT 14 – 19 Project, via the work of the Studio 34 centre and improved multi agency working with Bridgend’s Youth Support Services.</p> <p>The Education Welfare Service worked closely with pupils, parents and partners to deter unauthorised absence. This resulted in further reductions in the levels of absence at primary and secondary level.</p> <p>School inspection outcomes continued to be positive in the main, with significantly fewer schools requiring follow-up action than is the case nationally.</p>
<p>Reduce the impact of disadvantage on educational attainment by implementing the strategy for Education Inclusion</p>	<p>We established the Team around the Pupil, Parent and School (TAPPAS) approach in December 2011. TAPPAS teams are now in place across the County Borough.</p>
<p>Ensure the range of post 14 learning opportunities supports young people in making the transition from education into training or employment</p>	<p>Implementation of an extensive programme of activities for 14 – 19 year olds is closely aligned to the Council’s response to the Transformation Agenda. All schools have met the demands of the Learning and Skills Measure; learners in the County Borough now have a significantly increased curriculum offer at Key Stage 4 and Post-16. There has been a significant increase in the level of collaboration between all secondary schools particularly at Post-16, resulting in schools now making around 40 more choices available to Post-16 students. This number is in addition to those courses already available in each of our secondary schools.</p>

	<p>In December 2011, a consortium of local, Third Sector providers of both formal and non-formal learning was established, working collectively to agreed quality standards and protocols.</p> <p>Opportunities for vocational learning have improved with the number of centres offering the intermediate level Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification to 14-19 year olds increasing from 4 to 8.</p>
<p>Create community focused schools that are fit for purpose and valued by their communities</p>	<p>We are implementing a challenging programme of school modernisation across the County Borough, aimed at ensuring our school premises are fit to support the delivery of a first-class education in the 21st Century. Throughout the modernisation process, discussions are held with learners, schools and their communities. Consideration is given to the circumstances of each school, with the best long-term interests of the children and young people in its locality being the priority while ensuring the current quality of education is maintained.</p> <p>Continuing our progress under the programme, the Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School was opened in September 2011. Pupils and staff played a significant part in the development of the building. The new three-storey school features fully equipped class rooms, science labs, music suites and a large entrance hall doubles as an amphitheatre-style drama area with seating. The school incorporates new sports facilities for use by both the school and the local community.</p>
<p>Give better support and information to young people, to help them in making important choices and decisions</p>	<p>As detailed under Improvement Objective 3, we have developed the Just Ask Plus advice and support service for 16 to 25 year olds.</p> <p>Various emotional health, well-being and anti-depression programmes and activities were taken forward by the Youth Service. These included encouraging young people to engage with volunteering opportunities, enabling them to gain experience in the working environment.</p>

	Sexual health and teenage pregnancy is an ongoing concern and the Youth Service worked in partnership with the Regeneration Team to secure a mobile resource to take information and advice on these issues to young people living in the outlying areas of the Borough.
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Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

Feedback obtained through our Citizens Voices survey, which was reported in the spring of 2012, was that our schools and education are some of the best things about living in the area. However, our citizens want improved opportunities for young people to develop their skills, including more apprenticeship schemes. Under Strategic Theme 4 – New Opportunities – we have provided information about actions we are taking in relation to prioritising the expansion of apprenticeship opportunities.

Continuing financial pressures present significant challenges and reinforce the need to develop new, innovative models of service delivery. We must ensure the quality of the new Central South Consortium Joint Education Scheme arrangements for supporting school improvement and these will play a key role in improving future pupil attainment. We will continue to provide effective support to schools that face challenges, including the small number that have required post inspection follow-up action, both during and beyond the transition to the scheme. The Pupil Tracking Model will be extended to cover pupils in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 3. Use of the system will need to be fully embedded in our schools, to enable the dynamic capture and management of school improvement information.

In 2012-13, our schools will benefit from significantly increased grant funding to support the three national priorities of literacy, numeracy and reducing the impact of disadvantage. In the context of increasing delegation of funding and responsibility to schools, we will need to ensure that this additional resource is targeted appropriately and used to best effect in individual schools.

We will develop a sustainable learning model for 14 – 19 year olds, which will also comply with the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure and meet the expectations of the Welsh Government's Transformation Agenda (for post 16 year olds) beyond March 2014. Approval of the Bridgend County Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) Strategy for 2011-14 is planned for 2012-13 and we will also progress or complete the seven key actions that support the implementation of the strategy.

STRATEGIC THEME THREE – HEALTHY LIVING



What do we want for people in Bridgend County Borough?

“We want people of all ages in the County Borough to live healthy, independent lives.”

Improvement Objective Six

To improve physical and emotional well-being by promoting active lifestyles, participation and learning

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
<p>Implement the Sport and Active Living Strategy – Better Health, Successful Sport and the Creating an Active Bridgend Strategy to encourage more adults to be more active more often throughout life</p>	<p>These strategies are aimed at re-modelling services and re-directing and focusing resources on supporting more people, to be more active, more often. One of the key strategic actions is to establish sustainable new models of service delivery for sport and recreation services through a partnership approach to improvement and this is detailed below. A further key strategic action is to progress dual sports facilities for schools and communities and this is reflected in our Schools Modernisation programme.</p> <p>In partnership with the Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Welsh Government, the Council opened the new Archbishop McGrath High School in Brackla in December 2011. Its high-quality sports facilities are available for use by the public during evenings and weekends.</p> <p>“State of the Art” community sports facilities were also included in the preferred design for the new Gateway to the Valleys Comprehensive School in Ynysawdre, with a link to the existing Ynysawdre Swimming Pool.</p>
<p>Establish sustainable new models of service delivery for sport and recreation services through a partnership approach to improvement</p>	<p>This is an integral part of the Sport and Active Living Strategy. In April 2012, the management of our indoor leisure centres and swimming pools was successfully transferred to Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) and Halo, under the Healthy Living Partnership Contract. Both GLL and Halo are social enterprises. GLL is one of the largest public sector leisure operators in the country, managing around 100 leisure facilities and Halo also operates a number of leisure centres on behalf of Herefordshire and Shropshire Councils. Under the partnership agreement, the Council retains ownership of the buildings and facilities but GLL/Halo are responsible for all maintenance. These arrangements offer better facilities for citizens and secure financial</p>

	<p>savings. The Council has retained responsibility for the strategic commissioning of sport and recreation services and directing the funds secured from the Welsh Government and other external sources.</p>
<p>Increase levels of physical activity among young people under 16 years of age as part of the “Creating an Active Bridgend” Plan to support children and young people to live active lives and become active adults</p>	<p>The Council’s “Active Schools” initiative aims to continually increase opportunities for participation in physical activities in our schools through enhanced curriculum support and extra curricular intervention. As part of this, the Dragon Sport programme was aimed at children aged 7 to 11 years and was successfully delivered in 2011-12. The programme was evaluated by Sport Wales, whose assessment was that the programme had met all its targets, with actions being taken to ensure continuation in the community. Further, the Council’s performance was recognised as good practice.</p> <p>Dragon Sport achieved 9319 registrations against a target of 7900. Registrations by girls accounted for 3741 of the total, against a target of 3650. The Council supported 257 after school clubs and an additional 11 clubs in the community. Girls accounted for 40% of registrations and remain a strategic target group for growth in participation.</p> <p>A similar programme for sports in secondary schools attracted 4787 registrations, engaging 60% of pupils on the school roll. The objective to grow levels of activity for both boys and girls was achieved, although registrations were higher for boys. In total, there were 3285 sessions of activity with 937 pupils attending on 20 or more occasions.</p> <p>The STRATA survey of sports participation for year 9 pupils takes place every 2 years. In the 2011-12 survey, the proportion of children who considered themselves healthy or very healthy increased to 76% from 73% in 2009-10.</p>
<p>Increase opportunities to participate in outdoor activity as part of the agreed Sport and Active Living Strategy – Better health, Successful Sport</p>	<p>The Council promotes the use of our improved walking routes and participation in community-based exercise programmes. One programme, “Lets Walk Cymru”, attracted a significant increase in participants from 350 in 2010-11 to 948, including 129 families.</p> <p>Visits to our sport and leisure facilities for participation in physical activity increased</p>

	<p>again, exceeding 2010-11 levels by 6%.</p> <p>Team Extreme funding secured through Sport Wales was utilised to extend the provision of more varied outdoor activities and develop activity instructors in Communities First areas and through the Bridgend County Youth service. The programme attracted 322 participants against a target number of 300.</p> <p>The Garw Valley Obesity Project, the National Exercise Referral Scheme and the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Project all had increased numbers of participants in 2011-12 (as detailed further in Improvement Objective 3).</p>
<p>Improve support for people's emotional well-being, especially for children and young people</p>	<p>The emotional well-being survey "Inside Story" has been piloted successfully, with 600 young people completing the survey. We began the roll out of the survey to all schools and this is scheduled for completion by September 2012. The results of the survey will enable us to establish a baseline of the emotional well-being needs of our children and young people, which will inform future service considerations and developments.</p> <p>Physical visits to libraries increased to over 450,000 in the year, although there was a slight reduction in the actual number of materials issued. A number of improvements to library facilities in the County Borough were implemented. These include improved library facilities at Ty'r Ardd, the development of Community Library Partnerships in Caerau and Nantymoel. Integrated Community/Day Care facilities at Sarn and Pyle LIFE Centre were implemented, which will increase the opportunity for the library service to work in partnership with adult social care colleagues, particularly on reading schemes.</p> <p>European funding was secured to improve visitor amenities and events at Bryngarw Country Park and refurbishment of the Visitor Centre commenced. The events and promotions under the One Historic Garden project had a positive impact on visitor numbers to the park, with visitor numbers exceeding 30,000 in the last 3 months of 2011-12.</p>

Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

The promotion of physical activity as part of improving the health and well being of our citizens will remain a priority in 2012-13. The Council has committed £3m of capital funds to the Healthy Living Partnership Programme for 2012-13. In its changed commissioning role, the Council must ensure that sustainable and appropriate services are delivered to support the increasingly important preventative health agenda as well as the well-being and sporting ambitions of communities and individuals. A performance framework and contract monitoring regime will be established to ensure an enhanced service is delivered in 2012-13 and beyond and that there are demonstrably improved outcomes for our citizens.

Bridgend Recreation Centre, the Borough's largest leisure centre, will undergo a major refurbishment, with work commencing in the latter part of 2012, subject to all the necessary planning and design processes being completed. The refurbishment is being undertaken under the Healthy Living Partnership with social enterprises Greenwich Leisure Limited and Halo. The facilities at the centre will be upgraded and extended to include new health and fitness areas and studio spaces. The new facilities will be aimed at increasing physical activity as well as improving the space for already successful programmes, such as the National Exercise Referral Scheme.

We will continue to work with partners in encouraging adults and children to be more active more often throughout life. As part of this, we plan to develop a more co-ordinated approach to the provision of healthy living activities for young people with disabilities, reviewing Families First, Sport Wales and Disability Sport investments.

To build on the success of the Garw Valley Obesity Project, actions will be taken to extend the service throughout the County Borough.

We intend to take a number of actions to support improved mental health services for people of all ages in the Borough. We will continue to work with our partners in the NHS to develop joint operational policies for community mental health teams. We need to ensure the provision of individual, professionally-managed Care and Treatment plans for people in receipt of secondary mental health services and to develop multi-agency support services for people who have a number of problems including substance misuse and accommodation issues.

We plan to make changes to the Garw library, as a further development of our library provision, based on the life centre model where a variety of well-being services are provided under one roof. Additionally, we will undertake consultation on moving the Bridgend Library so that it is co-located with the leisure centre.

STRATEGIC THEME FOUR – NEW OPPORTUNITIES



What do we want for people in Bridgend County Borough?

“We want people in the County Borough to have access to employment opportunities and to be able to realise their potential and ambitions.”

Improvement Objective Seven

To support our disadvantaged communities by promoting economic growth, physical renewal and sustainability

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
Complete the development of Phase 1 of Porthcawl Regeneration Programme (Porthcawl Harbour)	We were unable to complete the Phase 1 of the Porthcawl Regeneration Programme. A developer was selected through the tender process, and the design for the development was completed. However, the contract was not completed due to the current economic situation. The Council is committed to delivering regeneration, and an alternative development strategy is already being pursued.
Deliver Local Investment Fund (£1.2M) and Community Enterprise Grants (c£2m)	<p>Bridgend County Borough Council is one of six authorities in South East Wales able to access and benefit from funding under the European Union's Convergence Programme. We provided advice and assistance to businesses in the Borough area and supported a variety of local business projects by helping them get grants under the £1.2 million Local Investment Fund and the £1.8 million Community Enterprise grants. Altogether, we allocated £589,100, supported 46 firms and 7 individuals, and we helped create 82.4 new jobs in 2011-12. The support we provided under these fund/grants attracted additional investment from the private sector totalling £810,220.</p> <p>In addition, we launched the South East Wales Community Economic Development Programme in the Borough. The purpose of the programme is to build sustainable and vibrant communities through the development of social enterprise activities. A support package is available to provide a business development service of advice, guidance, mentoring, and training.</p>

Continue to work with Bridgend College and universities to develop skills strategy	<p>We had a Skills Strategy in place. In 2011-12, we took the following actions to implement the strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We developed a programme of conservation training through the THI (Townscape Heritage Initiative) funding as a consortium with other south Wales authorities (RCT, Torfaen, Newport etc.), and completed 4 workshops. • We funded 50 work placements through the Employment Routes Programme, with 74 participants completing 6 routes.
Have a firm and robust planning policy basis to support the development of sustainable community	We continued to deliver a Local Development Plan, in accordance with the Delivery Agreement with the Welsh Government. At the same time, we were one of the top performing Councils in Wales for the processing of planning applications, and our success rate at appeal was 89%.
Implement the Park and Ride Scheme under the Pencoed Regeneration Strategy	The Pencoed Park and Ride scheme became fully operational, which will help to attract people and businesses to the town centre.
Deliver the Masterplan for Bridgend town centre by completing Public Realm schemes on site - Cheapside, Merthyr Mawr and Elder Street by March 2013	<p>The Masterplan was adopted in Summer 2011, which will guide development in the town centre for the next 10 years.</p> <p>Works progressed at Cheapside and Merthyr Mawr and is on target for completion by October 2012. Works at Elder Street were also progressing and are on schedule for completion by January 2014. At the same time, an initiative programme of events, such as the “Bridgend Mash Up”, and preparatory work for the Eisteddfod, were delivered to raise the profile of the town for new visitors.</p>
Make preparations for the development of Ewenny Road, Maesteg Industrial Estate	A draft development framework for the Ewenny Road Industrial site was prepared. Following the sale of the adjacent, privately-owned, former Budelpack COSi site, the Council opened discussions with the new owners over a joint development approach

	<p>that best serves the site, but also has regard to the wider land assets in the area and optimises usage and development opportunities.</p>
<p>Deliver a programme of social, economic & physical improvements in partnership with public, private and third sectors, including the projects agreed under the Western Valley Regeneration Plan (VARP)</p>	<p>Our VARP project links with the Western Valley Strategic Regeneration Area (WVSRA) programme and ties Bridgend's three valleys areas (Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore) with valleys in Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthen and Powys. The aim of the programme is to tackle deprivation in these areas. The programme supports large-scale strategic projects as well as small, local community-led schemes.</p> <p>Nine strategic VARP projects were supported in 2011-12. In the Llynfi Valley, 2 projects were completed and these were the Caerau Village Square Enhancement Project delivering landscaping and streetscape improvements to a semi-derelict site in the centre of Caerau and the implementation of a number of security measures for the Spelter Industrial Site, to ensure its long-term sustainability. A project plan for enhancements to Blackmill Village Centre was also completed.</p> <p>One project was approved through the Ogmore Valley VARP. In the Garw Valley, the Garw Valley Real Food project was completed. We agreed with the WVSA to move the delivery of the mountain-biking project, Garw Valley Experience, to 2012-13.</p> <p>The Get It On project was completed, supporting the creation of IT resources in community venues.</p> <p>We improved the condition of 62 properties in the Caerau Housing Renewal area.</p>

Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

We need to continue to regenerate our towns and more deprived areas so there will be lasting economic, environmental and social changes, which will improve the quality of life for residents. Continuing with our successful programme of events to attract people to our town centres will support their future vitality and viability. The significant challenge for 2012-13 is to deliver the multi-million pound physical regeneration schemes already commenced in Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl. We will bid for funds from the Welsh Government's new "Communities First" programme. As we experience further constraints on the Council's capital resources, we will need to seek out alternative sources of funding for regeneration projects.

We will continue to look for more innovative ways to attract people to our town centres, to support their future vitality and viability.

Implementing the Apprenticeship Scheme will be a corporate priority. Each of the Council's directorates will examine the actions and resources that are needed to implement the scheme and these will be included in our business plans. There will be a focus on linking apprenticeships to Council projects and actions we should take to support looked after children and young people who are not in employment, education or training. The Welsh Government is launching a fully-funded project for apprenticeships in grounds maintenance.

STRATEGIC THEMES FIVE AND SIX – PROUD PAST AND GREEN SPACES



What do we want for people in Bridgend County Borough?

“We want local communities and visitors to enjoy and benefit from the County Borough’s natural and built environment.”

Improvement Objective Eight

To manage and promote the natural and historical environment

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
Prioritise physical access improvements to public rights of way in line with the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan	<p>We completed our Rights of Way improvement programme, benefiting from grant funding from the Welsh Government and the Countryside Council of Wales. Our schemes resulted in 24.6 km of improvements to existing paths and the creation of 6.6 km of new paths. The coastal path along the whole Bridgend County Borough coastline was completed with signage and way-marking. As part of the work, the Boardwalk at Rest Bay was extended. Where necessary, Rights of Way were formally registered by Creation Agreement with the relevant landowners.</p> <p>Our annual walking festival, developed in conjunction with Rural Development, attracted 635 participants, representing an increase of 102% on the number of participants in 2010-11.</p> <p>New or revised leaflets for our Garw Valley Walk, River Ogmore and Merthyr Mawr Circular Walk were published and made available through a variety of points including tourist information centres, libraries and our website.</p>
Develop cycleways and community routes	<p>Funding from the Wales European Funding Office and South East Wales Transport Alliance enables us to develop the cycle route in the Llynfi Valley. The route from Maesteg to Caerau was formally opened in November 2011. Construction of the Caerau to Croeserw section was commenced and is scheduled to be opened in 2012. The final total length of the route will be approximately 7km.</p> <p>We completed the preparation of our “Safe Routes in Communities” action plans and prepared funding bids in liaison with schools and community bodies. We implemented the Maesteg Comprehensive Phase 2 Safe Routes to Schools scheme. With funding from the Welsh Government, we implemented routes in Blackmill/Evanstown and Laleston.</p>

<p>Improve parks, playing fields and green spaces</p>	<p>We continued our activities to improve our parks, playing fields and green spaces, achieving Green Flag status at Wilderness Lake, Porthcawl. The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales and is a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country.</p>
<p>Deliver biodiversity by working with Countryside Council for Wales & Environment Agency to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raise awareness of green infrastructure principles; and • ensure the concept is adopted across a range of the Council's services 	<p>A Landscape and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) based on Green Infrastructure principles was commissioned in support of the emerging and statutory Local Development Plan, which the Council produces. The total cost of this commission is £20k, with funding being provided by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). The consultants have prepared an initial draft of the guidance and comments will be sought in the course of 2012-13.</p> <p>In support of this SPG, we have also been successful in obtaining Welsh Government Planning Improvement Funding (PIF) (£15k) and our Strategic Studies Fund (£5k) for a Landscape Character Assessment.</p>
<p>Develop and implement a Built Heritage Strategy that will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase public awareness, knowledge and enjoyment of the historic environment • protect and enhance the County Borough's built heritage and historic landscapes • raise standards in design quality across the county Borough 	<p>We made the decision to defer the completion of our Built Heritage Strategy to 2012-13 and prioritise a collaborative programme of statutory appraisals for our 15 existing conservation areas, along with assessment of 4 additional potential areas that are identified in the adopted Unitary Development Plan. This re-prioritisation was considered necessary to allow us to take maximum advantage of the time-limited funding that was available to support the conservation area appraisals.</p>
<p>Improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions in all main operational activities</p>	<p>The project to convert street lights to part night burning between 00:00 and 05:30 hours continues to achieve savings in both carbon dioxide emissions and energy usage. In 2011-12, there was a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of over 4000 tonnes.</p>

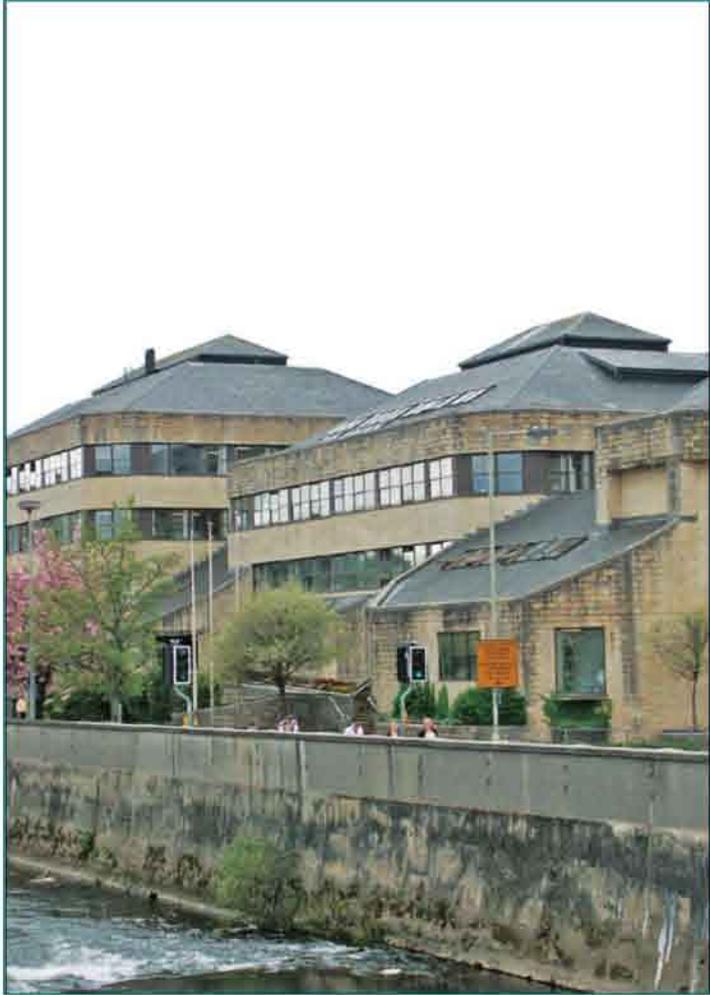
	<p>Energy usage reduced by nearly 90,000KWh. As at 31 March 2012, the conversion of part night street lighting and upgrades on lanterns had produced approximately £ 27000 in energy savings. Against a background of increasing electricity prices, any cost savings realised through reduced energy usage are invested back into further energy initiatives and upgrades on lighting equipment. We are working towards completing the project by the end of March 2013.</p> <p>In terms of carbon emissions from Council-managed transport, we achieved a reduction of 21% compared to the emissions levels in 2010-11.</p> <p>Additionally, we achieved a further 5.85% reduction in the carbon dioxide emissions from our non-domestic public buildings stock.</p>
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Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

Fifty percent of the County Borough is countryside. As weather patterns change and development grows, it becomes more important for us to understand and use the green infrastructure that our countryside provides. Sustainable living, working and travelling are all areas that we need to improve, to ensure the county Borough leaves a positive legacy for its young citizens. A key action in 2012-13 will be for us to incorporate green infrastructure and landscape working for the Borough into the planning process for the Local Development Plan. In support of our work to develop Landscape and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance, we have been successful in obtaining Welsh Government Planning Improvement Funding (PIF) of £15K and also £5k through the Strategic Studies Fund. This funding will be used to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment and to develop an on-line Green Infrastructure tool during 2012-13. We will consider the merits of developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy.

The preservation and protection of our heritage, including our historic buildings remains a priority. We will complete the development of our Built Heritage Strategy.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE



What do we want for people in Bridgend County Borough?

“We want people in the County Borough to benefit from a council that is fair, ambitious, citizen-focussed and efficient (FACE).”

Improvement Objective Nine

To improve the way we work to ensure effective and efficient use of our financial, technological, physical and human assets

What did we say we would do?	How did we do?
Implement Job Evaluation according to the project plan	Proposals for a new pay structure and revised terms and conditions were developed. The formal consultation with employees and trade unions ended in July 2012 and the project plan was updated accordingly. Trade unions are currently undertaking a formal ballot of their members on the proposals.
Develop a Medium Term Financial Strategy by March 2012	The Medium Term Financial Plan was approved by Council in February 2012.
Develop a workforce plan by September 2011	Development of the Council's Workforce Plan was completed and the Plan was agreed by the Corporate Management Board.
Undertake a programme of service reviews	<p>The objectives of the Council's WorkWise projects are to create the means to review and manage services using lean thinking techniques, to realise financial savings through these reviews and to raise performance against the Customer Charter. The delivery of change and improvement through WorkWise has two distinct phases – review and implementation.</p> <p>In 2011-12, WorkWise service reviews were completed for Housing and Homelessness Services and Older Peoples Adult Social Care and a review was commenced for Safeguarding and Family Support.</p> <p>Previously, reviews were undertaken for Taxation and Benefits, Pupil Services and Highways Maintenance. In the year, these moved on to the implementation phase.</p> <p>Benefits realised through the changes implemented for Taxation and Benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a reduction of 2 days in the average time taken to process new benefits claims; • an improvement in the detection rate of Council Tax fraud, resulting in over £20k of additional Council Tax income being generated; and • fulfilment of the Customer Charter commitment to answer 80% of calls in 30

	<p>seconds and address customers' queries at the first point of contact.</p> <p>A number of operational issues arose in the course of implementing the changes proposed by the Pupil Services and Highways Maintenance reviews. These have been examined and solutions are under consideration.</p>
<p>Deliver the Customer Services Strategy</p>	<p>The Customer Services Strategy underpins and drives our implementation of the Customer Services Charter, aiming to deliver consistent, high-quality customer service. A number of actions were planned for 2011-12 to help deliver the Charter commitments, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a contact centre capable of processing all enquiries into the Council on a single telephone number and email address, offering resolution at the first point of contact. In the year, our Telephone Contact Centre responded to 82% of all calls within 30 seconds and 90% of enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. Additionally, we responded to all email enquiries within 5 working days. These levels of performance exceeded the Charter commitments; • a Customer Records Management system that is integrated with other information systems and enables customers' enquiries to be dealt with more seamlessly. Progress was made with this development in the year, which is being implemented in tandem with other work relating to the processes for dealing with Housing and general Waste enquiries; and • a continuous training programme for customer service staff with associated National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) accreditation. A successful pilot of completing the NVQ awards on-line was conducted and all customer service staff working towards NVQ levels 2 and 3 are now completing the award requirements online.

Provide lean, sustainable, fit for purpose office accommodation	The successful termination of leases, as part of the Office Accommodation Strategy, achieved annual recurring savings of £280,000.
Implement the ICT Strategy 2009 – 2012 to support the technology enabled transformation of services by means of a flexible and efficient infrastructure	<p>Forty four actions were completed during the total timescale of the 2009-2012 Strategy, with the following being achieved in 2011-12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we delivered full service availability for our voice, data and storage networks and our core ICT applications, supporting the Council’s services and operations; • preparatory work for the Data Centre Collaboration Project with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council was completed and sanctioned as part of the All Wales Public Services ICT Strategy; • initial ICT testing was conducted to progress and support collaborative working with staff using the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board networks and systems; and • delivery of “cloud computing”, which is a key element of our ICT strategy, whereby our Data Centre will deliver networked hardware, software and data storage to our service users. In 2011-12, 31 of our schools signed up to a desktop cloud service and the technology is already in use in 16 of these schools. <p>Two actions were not fully completed and have been carried forward to the 2012-2015 strategy.</p>
Pursue joint legal services	We are one of six partner authorities working collaboratively to reduce costs with joint purchases. In 2011-12, we achieved a reduction of £15,000 in the Council’s legal services costs through a joint subscription to the Lexis Nexis on-line library.
Implement the commissioning strategy for children and young people’s services and develop best commissioning practice	Commissioning is about understanding needs and responding effectively to those needs. For children and young people this means that a number of public, private, voluntary and community service providers need to work together to ensure an effective response. In 2011-12, we:

- developed the toolkit and trained staff in its application;
- applied the toolkit for significant pieces of new commissioning, for example, the Family First programme; and
- collected and analysed data for commissioning services.

Currently, we are leading on a project to develop regional commissioning for advocacy services for children and young people, involving two health authorities and five local authorities in Wales.

Challenges for 2012-13 and our responses

We will continue to achieve efficiency savings from rationalising and release of assets. Unfortunately, the current fragile property market impacts on the level of income from our non-operational estate. Sales of assets will have a beneficial impact on our maintenance programme allowing us to increase planned maintenance and investment in the important assets that the Council retains.

We will complete phase I of our office accommodation plan. This will ensure that staff working in the same directorate are co-located. As far as possible, staff working on partnership projects and services will also be co-located.

Throughout 2012-13, we will progress and monitor the 39 actions and projects required to deliver the new ICT Strategy 2012-2015.

We will move forward with the actions in our Strategic Equality Plan, promoting equality and fair treatment for all our citizens.

In the course of 2012-13, we will continue to improve the quality of our processes for commissioning services for children and young people by embedding the use of the planning toolkit into all our planning and service provision activities.

We will begin the implementation of our ICT Strategy for 2012-2015, addressing the two outstanding actions from our 2009-2012 Strategy, which are to implement a revised ICT network model in our schools and to investigate access to electronic services and maps from handheld devices for our mobile staff.

Section 3 – Summary of Financial Performance

Funding Council services

A common feature in all our work is the desire to provide quality services that give value for money to Council Tax payers. Like all large organisations, we have to manage our finances carefully and in a way that enables us to direct our resources at our spending priorities and maintain delivery of core services.

The Council incurs two types of expenditure:

Revenue expenditure includes all spending on the day to day running costs of services such as staff salaries, maintenance of buildings, equipment, general supplies and services. These costs are paid for by grants received from government, the income received from Council tax payers, business ratepayers and fees and charges made for certain services.

Capital expenditure relates to spending on schools and infrastructure such as roads, bridges and buildings owned by the Council. These assets will provide benefit to the community over long periods of time and the expenditure is largely financed by borrowing and capital grants.

The planned gross revenue expenditure on services for 2011-12 was £390.9m. The Council budgeted for income from grants and fees and charges of £147m, resulting in an approved net revenue budget of £232.9m. As shown in the table below, the net cost of services provided by the Council in 2011-12 was £229.6m, resulting in an under-spend of £3.3m, which was transferred to Directorate Earmarked Reserves and Corporate Provisions.

Actual Revenue Expenditure compared to Budget 2011-12

Directorate/Divisions	Revised Budget 2011-12 £,000	Actual Outturn 2011-12 £,000	Actual Over/(Under) Spend 2011-12 £,000
Children	117,383	117,382	(1)
Well-being	42,702	42,550	(152)
Communities	25,103	25,053	(50)
ICT & Customer Care	7,615	7,612	(3)
Performance	9,192	8,570	(622)
Legal & Regulatory Services	5,730	5,731	1
Total Directorate Budgets	207,725	206,898	(827)
Council Wide Budgets	25,232	22,698	(2,534)
Total	232,957	229,596	(3,361)
Contribution :		820	820
Directorate Earmarked Reserves		2,500	2,500
Corporate Provisions		41	41
Transfer to Council Fund			
Total	232,957	232,957	0

The under-spend in directorate budgets reflects unexpected income and contributions from external sources at year end and the application of the Council's staff vacancy management policy. However, the under-spend masked underlying budget pressures which included:

- continued pressure of demand for independent fostering placements for children in care and out of county placements;
- an increase in demand for the education behaviour support service;
- increased pressure on the home care budget responding to additional needs of service users;
- increased pressure on residential and nursing placements associated with an increase in the elderly population; and.
- reduction in income budgets such as car parking income and development control and planning fees.

Capital Expenditure

In addition to spending money providing services on a day to day basis, the Council also spends money providing new facilities, enhancing assets in the Council's portfolio or providing capital grants to others. Capital expenditure in 2011-12 amounted to £28.304m. Assets created, improved or work in progress as a result of this expenditure included:

- Primary School Amalgamations;
- Coleg Cymunedol y Dderwen (Gateways to Valleys College);
- Hartshorn House Refurbishment; and
- Llynfi Valley Cycle Network.

Efficiency Savings

The savings planned for 2011-12 were £7.4m of which £6.4m was achieved during the year and compensating reductions were achieved by the application of the Council's staff vacancy management protocol. Budget reduction proposals, where savings were not fully met, relate to adult social care proposals linked to continuing health care and anticipated increases in car park income not being realised.

Section 4 – Working in Partnership

In recent years there has been a drive from Welsh Government for greater collaboration in public services. The reason for this is that by working together with our partners we are able to operate in a more effective and efficient way; this results in an improved service for citizens and financial savings for the organisations involved.

The majority of our actions for the Improvement Objectives 2011-12 had some element of partnership working. This ranged from engaging citizens and local groups in reviewing and planning services, joint planning partnerships across local partner agencies, and the integration of parts of our service with another agency e.g. health and social care, sports and leisure. Some of our major collaborative arrangements from 2011-12 are shown below:

- Partnership working with Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board. The purpose of this is to integrate many aspects of service delivery for Adult Health and Social Care, which includes a model for integrated care for older people and people with a physical disability or sensory impairment.
- Development of the Central South East Wales Education Consortium to provide one central Education Service for school improvement covering Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Vale of Glamorgan Councils. By joining forces with other Councils it will enable a better, more effective service to be provided that aims to improve education standards across the regions.
- Arrangements are in place for further collaboration with South Wales Police. An example of this is the work with our Safeguarding and Family Support service where we are improving the management of domestic abuse referrals where children are part of the household. The partnership approach will give a more responsive service to adult victims and the safeguarding of children.
- We are working with Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea Councils to develop an anaerobic digestion facility to deal with the region's waste. This facility will use food waste from households and businesses to produce fertiliser and biogas that will be used to generate electricity and heat. We anticipate the facility will be in place by 2014 and will generate enough power to meet the energy needs of approximately 5,000 homes.

- The Bridgend Local Service Board project “Connecting Families” has been launched which aims to provide a multi agency approach to improve outcomes for families in need and reduce the associated long term costs to public services. The project will be provided in partnership with South Wales Police, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, Job Centre Plus and other partners from the voluntary and third sectors.

The main partners we will work with during 2012-13 are shown below:

- Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board
- Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations
- Bridgend College
- Bridgend Equality Forum
- Bridgend schools
- Bridgend Youth Council
- Environment Agency
- Halo Leisure
- Other local authorities in the region
- South Wales Fire Service
- South Wales Police
- Sport Wales
- Town and community councils
- Valleys to Coast (V2C) and other registered social landlords
- Welsh Government
- Wales Probation Trust

Section 5 – Citizen Feedback

Citizen feedback is vital when planning how we will improve local services for local people. There are a range of options available for you to get in touch and have your say on how you think we should be delivering our services both now and in the future. Some examples of how we consulted with you during 2011-12 are shown below:

Citizens Panel

Our Citizens' Panel is made up of over 1300 residents that are a representative group of the population in Bridgend County Borough. The group reflects the make up of the County in terms of age, gender and geographical location.

A Citizens' Panel survey was carried out in September 2011. A total of 786 survey returns were received, representing a response rate of 56.5%. A summary of the responses per category is shown below:

Streetscene

Almost seven tenths (69.3%) of respondents stated that they were either "very" or "fairly" satisfied with their local street scene. Respondents stated that dog fouling (33.8%) and the number of parked cars (32.0%) had the most impact on their local street scene. Comments received include "*Dog fouling a serious problem throughout the valley*".

Over half of all respondents (55.9%) stated that they were satisfied with the Streetscene in their chosen town centres.

Parks & Playing Fields

The facilities most used by respondents and/or their families were general areas for walking/playing (44.5%); and children's play areas (27.9%).

Over two thirds of people (68.7%) stated that they were "satisfied" with the management and maintenance of parks, playing fields and children's play areas. Comments received include "*The flower displays are a pleasure to see in the spring and summer. Well done*".

Street Cleanliness

Three quarters (75.0%) stated that they were satisfied with the cleanliness of the streets in their street and immediate area. Over half were also satisfied with the cleanliness of their streets in their town or village centre. Comments received include “*On the whole the street cleaners are very good and conditions are certainly improving*”.

Highways Maintenance

Almost all respondents (98.2%) said that the work of Highways Maintenance was important; with over three quarters of these (78.5%) stating it was “very” important. Over two thirds of respondents (68.4%) felt that the Highways Maintenance section’s performance was “good”. Comments received included “*I find staff very polite and helpful when I phone/email requests. Winter problems - in snow if grit bins are in place the public must throw grit themselves to help with the problem especially on side streets*”.

Citizens Voice

A major consultation process called “Citizens Voice” was undertaken by the Local Service Board to help share the priorities for the new Single Integrated Partnership Plan. The 5 questions and most popular responses are shown below:

What are the three best things about living or working in the Bridgend County area?

Natural environment and proximity to major centres and transport links (under 16s valued the sports and leisure opportunities, clubs and societies and shopping opportunities)

What do you think Bridgend County area needs?

Improved shopping opportunities and more jobs and employment opportunities (under 16s wanted more sports and leisure opportunities and activities for young people).

What do you want to see more of in the Bridgend County area?

More jobs and employment opportunities.

What would you like Bridgend County area to be like in five years time?

Bridgend is cleaner, businesses are thriving and people are healthier.

What one thing would you most like to change to improve the quality of life for you or your family?

Better health and improved finances

Improvement Objectives

We also consulted with citizens on our Improvement Objectives 2012-13 through two focus groups. In general, participants felt that the outcomes and improvement objectives we have identified for citizens are appropriate and so were most of the priorities under each of the Improvement Objectives. However, participants would like to see the following priorities considered:

- Support people to stay in their own homes
- Support students in further education
- Increase the provision of apprentices
- Increase in basic skills (post 16)
- Improve transport links
- Encourage inward investment
- Improve highways and maintenance of roads
- Raise awareness and education of how to protect open countryside
- Preventing fly tipping

We have already considered some of these priorities when we finalised our Improvement Objectives 2012-13 and we will continue to consider others when we develop our new Corporate Plan for 2013-17.

Strategic Equality Plan

We have developed our Strategic Equality Plan, which demonstrates how we will promote equal opportunities for all, and address the most pressing issues for those sharing one or more of the “protected characteristics” under the Equality Act 2010 (those being: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnerships).

We carried out extensive consultation to establish what the key priorities were for each of the groups and contacted a number of local equality, community and voluntary group representatives. We also engaged with the Valley Voices: Bridgend forum, the Valleys Regional Equality Council, the Bridgend Equality Forum and frontline Adult Social Care staff.

Following this, we developed 9 draft objectives and conducted a survey. The survey was advertised to residents, local equality/community/voluntary group representatives, the Council's Citizens Panel and employees. We undertook direct consultation with a number of representative groups including:

- Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People ;
- Bridgend Deaf Club;
- Bridgend Equality Forum; and
- Valley Voices: Bridgend forum.

We received 224 survey responses, with 75% of respondents rating every one of the 9 draft objectives as being either very or fairly important to helping to promote equal opportunities and make a difference to people's lives. The comments and suggestions received helped us to further develop the draft objectives and the action plan.

A copy of the Strategic Equality Plan can be found by visiting the Equalities page on our internet site:

<http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/web/groups/public/documents/services/098289.hcsp#TopOfPage>

Section 6 – What Did Our Regulator Say about Us?

Each year, the Wales Audit Office and relevant Welsh inspectorates undertake audit and inspections on how well we are planning for improvement and delivering our services. The Auditor General for Wales then presents a picture of improvement over the previous 12 months in a report entitled “Annual Improvement Report” which draws on the findings of these audits and inspections.

In January 2012, Wales Audit Office issued the Annual Improvement Report covering our activity in 2011. The main message in the report was that overall we have good arrangements in place to deliver improvement and we perform well in the areas we focus on but our evaluation and reporting of performance is not sufficiently balanced. The reasons for arriving at this conclusion are summarised below.

The Council is developing good plans and putting appropriate arrangements in place to deliver its programme of improvement, evidenced by the fact that the Council:

- has appropriate arrangements in place to address its priorities and has responded well to previous suggestions for improvement;
- is meeting its statutory obligation with regard to the Welsh Language Act;
- has Information and Communications Technology (ICT) arrangements that are likely to support improvement; and
- has good medium-term planning that is aligned with a continuing programme of change across some of its major services.

The Council has achieved much of what it set out to achieve in its identified priorities:

- Overall the Council made good progress towards achieving its Improvement Objectives in 2010-11, and in most cases the Council has an action plan in place to improve performance where that was not as good as expected.
- The Council has improved its support for people in need. The Council performs well against some of the key adult service indicators and must now ensure that it has the necessary capacity to deliver its plans for further improvement. Progress has been made in children’s social services, corporate support for delivering improvements to people in need is good and the Council is improving the way it deals with homelessness.

- The Council is making good progress in improving physical and emotional well-being of people with health issues but overall, education performance is inconsistent and there are some indications of a dip in 2010-11.
- The Council has done what it set out to do to create and maintain the area as a safe, prosperous and pleasant place. The Council has made progress in meeting its objective to build safe and inclusive communities and work to regenerate areas of the Borough is helping support its objective of promoting economic growth. The Council is amongst the best councils in Wales in managing waste.
- The Council has also successfully created new, or improved existing, cycleways, coastal paths and rights of way in the Borough in 2010-11.

The Auditor General's Report did not make any statutory recommendations but made the following two proposals for improvement:

Proposal 1: In order to help citizens fully understand the progress the Council is making in meeting its objectives and improving performance, the Council should:

- ensure its annual report is more balanced;
- be clearer about performance that is not as good as expected, as well as where it has exceeded expectations;
- set out what it intends to do as a result; and
- actively seek feedback and comments from citizens and communities.

Proposal 2: The Council needs to continue to address areas for development and improvement set out in previous external audit and inspection reports.

Our Responses

We have reviewed the way in which performance information is presented to you, ensuring that we give you a clear picture of what we achieved in the year, where we could have done better, and what actions we are taking to progress the priorities we planned to deliver.

We continue to address areas for development that have been identified by our external auditors and inspectors by embedding those areas in our Corporate and Directorate Business Plans for 2012-13 and monitoring the progress we are making on a regular basis.

Section 7 – Improvement Objectives for 2012-13

Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 we are required to set our improvement objectives annually to confirm what our main priorities are for the year ahead.

When reviewing our Improvement Objectives we need to ensure the services we are providing reflect the priorities you have identified and take into account the recommendations from the Wales Audit Office.

In order to ensure your views have been taken into account we developed the Improvement Objectives 2012-13 with a focus group of citizens. Other groups that contributed to their development include our Local Service Board partners and our Community Safety and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Our improvement objectives 2012-13 are:

1. To build safe and inclusive communities
2. To develop and support sustainable and affordable housing solutions for those who are homeless or in need
3. To work in collaboration with partners to meet the different needs of all children and young people and provide them with the best start in life
4. To help all children and young people achieve higher attainment by improving learning opportunities and making them more accessible
5. To improve physical and emotional well-being by promoting and supporting active lifestyles, participation and learning
6. To implement effective integrated health and social care services to support independence, health and well-being
7. To support and invest in our communities to promote economic growth, physical renewal and sustainability

8. To manage and promote our natural and historic environment

9. To improve the way we work to ensure effective and efficient use of our financial, technological, physical and human assets

For full details on the actions we have in place to deliver each objective, please visit the Corporate Improvement page on our website: <http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/web/groups/public/documents/services/015180.hcsp>