

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:**           **CABINET**

**DATE:**               **TUESDAY, 18 MARCH 2014**

**REPORT BY:**       **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**SUBJECT:**           **IMPROVEMENT PLAN QUARTERLY MONITORING**

**1.00**   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01    To receive the 2013/14 Quarter 3 Improvement Plan monitoring reports for the period October to December 2013.

1.02    To note the following: -

- the levels of progress and confidence in the achievement of high level activities which seek to deliver the impacts of the Improvement Plan;
- the performance against improvement plan measures and the predicted level of performance for year end; and
- the current (net) risk levels and targeted risk levels for the risks identified in the Improvement Plan and the arrangements to control them.

**2.00**   **BACKGROUND**

2.01    The Council adopted the Improvement Plan for 2013/14 in June 2013. This is the second monitoring update prepared for Cabinet.

**3.00**   **CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01    The Improvement Plan monitoring reports give an explanation of the progress being made toward the delivery of the impacts set out in the Improvement Plan. The narrative is supported by measures and / or milestones which evidence achievement. In addition, there is an assessment of the strategic risk and the level to which they are being controlled.

3.02    Individual sub-priority reports (24 in total) have been completed by each lead accountable officer. A summary of the reports has been brought together to provide a single report for Cabinet.

3.03    Appendix 1 provides a summary against each Improvement Plan priority of the RAG status for each high level activity, measure and risk. Copies of the more detailed quarter 3 Improvement Plan

monitoring reports are available in the Member's Library and on request. Members will receive respective reports when circulated with Overview and Scrutiny Committee agendas.

### 3.04 **Monitoring the progress of our activities**

Each of the sub-priorities have high level activities which are monitored over time. 'Progress' monitors progress against scheduled activity and has been categorised as follows: -

- RED: Limited Progress – delay in scheduled activity; not on track
- AMBER: Satisfactory Progress – some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track
- GREEN: Good Progress – activities completed on schedule, on track

A RAG status is also given as an assessment of our level of confidence at this point in time in achieving the 'outcome(s)' for each secondary priority. Outcome has been categorised as: -

- RED: Low – lower level of confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)
- AMBER: Medium – uncertain level of confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)
- GREEN: High – full confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)

### 3.05 In summary our overall progress against the high level activities is: -

#### PROGRESS

- We are making good (green) progress in 52 (53%).
- We are making satisfactory (amber) progress in 45 (46%).
- We are making limited progress (red) in 1 (1%).

#### OUTCOME

- We have a high (green) level of confidence in the achievement of 67 (68%).
- We have a medium (amber) level of confidence in the achievement of 30 (31%).
- We have a low (red) level of confidence in the achievement of 1 (1%).

### 3.06 The high level activity for extending the use of agile working within the Asset Strategy sub-priority is assessed as red for both progress and outcome.

Whilst there has been an increased uptake in agile working which is having positive impacts on productivity and cost, progress is not as rapid as planned. A target of 30% was set by the end of the year and in reality the actual outturn is likely to be in the 5-10% range. This will improve with the mobilisation of Connah's Quay services into Flint and other consolidations. Until the Council makes wider decisions on its total civic and office estate progress will be incremental not transformational. Options for the wider estate are in development.

### 3.07 **Monitoring our performance**

Analysis of performance against the Improvement Plan measures is undertaken using the RAG (Red, Amber Green) status. This is defined as follows: -

#### PERFORMANCE

- RED equates to a position of under-performance against target.
- AMBER equates to a mid-position where improvement may have been made but performance has missed the target.
- GREEN equates to a position of positive performance against target.

#### OUTCOME

- RED equates to a forecast position of under-performance against target at year end.
- AMBER equates to a forecast mid-position where improvement may have been made but performance will miss target at year end.
- GREEN equates to a forecast position of positive performance against target at year end.

### 3.08 Analysis of current levels of performance shows the following: -

- 44 (57%) had achieved a green RAG status
- 29 (38%) had achieved an amber RAG status
- 4 (5%) had achieved a red RAG status

Analysis of predicted outcome levels of performance shows the following: -

- 68 (86%) forecast a green RAG status
- 10 (13%) forecast an amber RAG status
- 1 (1%) forecast a red RAG status

### 3.09 The measures which showed a red RAG status for current

performance are: -

3.09a **Implement 20 mph advisory zones** – sub-priority: Traffic and Road Management.

During 2013/14 the target was to have 20mph advisory zones outside 40 schools. Currently 19 of 84 schools have advisory zones. The remaining 25 are due to be completed during 2014/15. The 40 schools programmed for 2013/14 are all included in an external signage contract, tenders for which we returned in January 2014. However approval is awaited from WG for the type of sign to be used. The solution to restore performance is not under the control of the Council.

3.09b 2 measures within the sub-priority: Carbon Control and Reduction have a red RAG status: -

**Reduce our carbon footprint through delivery of our Carbon Reduction Strategy (non-domestic property portfolio)**

The weather patterns, following a cold start to the year has been temperate, resulting in “absolute” savings for April to December of 3% on electricity, 9% on gas, 34% on LPG and 54% on oil. When adjusted for weather patterns the statistics show a modest reduction of 0.85% compared to the same period last year. The final quarter of the financial year remaining will be one where energy usage will be relatively high and the annual out-turn on reductions may vary. The full report covers a number of concerns which will prevent achievement of annual and aspirational targets. Some progress has been made in the investment in and installation of renewable energy schemes which will have an impact on future statistics.

**The percentage of local authority municipal waste prepared for reuse, recycled or of source segregated bio waste that is composted or treated biologically in another way**

The performance for quarter 3 was 54% which against the annual target of 62% has led to the red RAG status. Promotion of recycling and awareness-raising with customers continues to contribute to the increase in kerbside recycling tonnages. Alternative methods for recycling of heavier materials, such as wood, need to be explored to increase tonnages further; although currently diverted from landfill they are sent to biomass which cannot be included in the recycling figures. In addition, on-going improvements in signage and meet and greet at HRC sites allows for greater segregation of materials at first point of contact.

3.09c **Reduction in the cost per person in our offices** - sub-priority Asset Strategy.

Quarter 3 performance was £1,233.00 which is the same as that achieved for 2012/13 overall, however the target for 2013/14 is £1,172.18. Closure of premises and more employees moving to agile working will have positive impacts on our overall cost base in that we

will require less accommodation. See paragraph 3.06 above which discusses the progress made in implementing agile working.

### 3.10 **Monitoring our risks**

Analysis of the current (net) risk levels for the strategic risks identified in the Improvement Plan is as follows: -

- 7 (8%) are high (red)
- 49 (56%) are medium (amber)
- 31 (36%) are low (green)

### 3.11 The 7 high (red) risks are: -

#### **Community attachment to current patterns of school provision**

Cabinet has approved the proposed Infant/Junior amalgamations including the schools at Holywell, which were subject to statutory notice and did not attract formal objections. As a result, the Holywell amalgamation from 2016 has been approved. Consultations and plans for the remaining 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme area review outcomes continue. The process of amalgamation of the fourteen separate schools to seven primaries will then be complete. Overall the strategy is on track with positive support from Welsh Government. The red risk remains due to the scale and the complexity of the programme, and the risk that until there are formal decisions on and finalised plans for the preferred options, then future delays in the programme may occur.

#### **Limited funding to address the backlog of known repairs and maintenance works in educational assets**

The repairs and maintenance budget has been reduced by 10% in accordance with Council policy and as buildings age their condition further deteriorates. Whilst the programme for repairs and maintenance is having a positive effect the risk remains high. Options are being explored to reduce the number and size of buildings. In addition, options are being explored for the transfer of assets to local management committees. The cost effectiveness of existing procurement and contracting methods will be reviewed.

#### **Programme delivery capacity**

The programme risk of project delivery is increasing as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme comes on stream. Project management is currently coordinated between officers and the contractor. This is successful on single projects which are procured using a partnering approach. However, increased work under the programme will require additional management and coordination. These additional posts appear on an agreed governance structure.

### **Approval of business cases to draw down 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Grant**

The Outline Business Case (OBC) (part of the treasury 5-case model) has been approved by WG. Work has commenced on the preparation of the Final Business Case (FBC). Progress and timing of these business cases has been good; the submission of further cases is dependent on the capacity of WG to appraise the documents. Work on the preparation of documents and the collation of data is on-going.

The Gateway review of the progress of the 21 Century Schools Programme by an independent panel has concluded that the RAG status (appertaining to Gateway review criteria) would be an Amber / Green. This is formally interpreted as the scheme probably succeeding providing that any identified risks are mitigated, and is a good outcome in comparison with general Gateway reviews.

### **Encouraging developers to build a range of affordable housing in the current economic climate – sub-priority Modern, Efficient and Adapted Homes**

There have been delays to the agreement of a new model of private finance to deliver increased numbers of affordable homes. However, approval has now been given for a new housing company which will start trading in April 2014. The formation of the new housing company will enable the adoption and use of a wider range of models to deliver affordable housing.

### **Maximising our joint resources with our partners**

Corporate private rented sector working group is yet to be established. Their work will focus on development of corporate service standards, policies and processes in relation to the sector. In addition work is planned to review joint and collaborative working in the private rented sector with neighbouring local authorities.

### **Gaining political agreement to a business approach for fees and charges which may have public opposition – sub-priority Matching Resources to Priorities**

The work to implement a Corporate Fees and Charges Policy is outstanding and will be included as a target in the next version of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

## **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 Cabinet Members are invited to review performance, risks and actions.
- 4.02 To note the following: -
- the levels of progress and confidence in the achievement of key activities which seek to deliver the impacts of the Improvement Plan;

- the performance against improvement plan measures and the predicted level of performance for year end; and
- the current (net) risk levels and targeted risk levels for the risks identified in the Improvement Plan and the arrangements to control them.

## **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 There are no specific financial implications for this report. However the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan is aligned to resource the priorities of the Improvement Plan and the monitoring will help to inform future iterations.

## **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 There are no specific poverty implications for this report. However poverty is a priority within the Improvement Plan and reporting against activity to protect people from poverty is included in the Improvement Plan monitoring report.

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 There are no specific environmental implications for this report. However the environment is a priority within the Improvement Plan and reporting against activity to improve the environment is included in the Improvement Plan monitoring report.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 There are no direct equality implications for this report.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 There are no direct personnel implications for this report.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 The Improvement Priorities are monitored by the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees according to the priority area of interest.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 All directorates have been consulted with regarding the reporting of relevant information.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 – Improvement Plan Monitoring Summary

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**Contact Officer:** Vicki Robarts  
**Telephone:** 01352 701457  
**Email:** [vicki.c.robarts@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:vicki.c.robarts@flintshire.gov.uk)