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Corporate Services Departmental Business Plan 2017-20

Date: 22nd December 2016

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Executive Board Member Foreword

This Departmental Business Plan has been produced to give staff, customers and elected members and partners a guide to the services provided by the Corporate Services. This year the Department is reflecting how Corporate Services maximises its contribution to the Well Being of Future Generations Act, which aims to make public bodies think more about the long term, working better with people, communities and each other and also looks at preventing problems and taking a more joined up approach.

I am very satisfied that this Departmental Business Plan provides me with comprehensive information on the performance of Corporate Services during the past year and its direction for 2017 onwards.

Sign Off

CLlr David Jenkins – Deputy Leader Executive Board – Resources.

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1. Departmental Overview

Introduction by Director

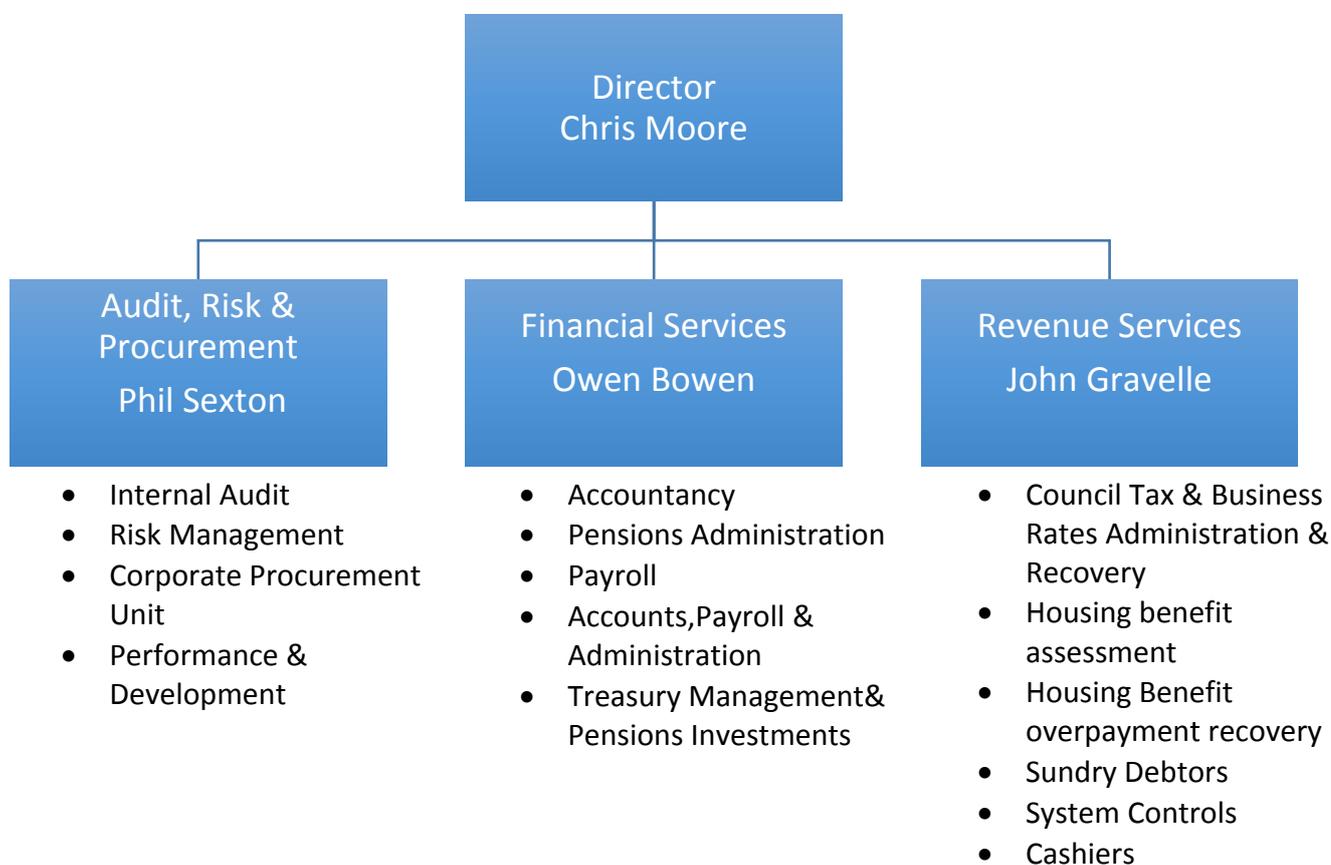
The Council is facing a period of significant and continued budget reductions and it is more important than ever to ensure we are making the best use of resources. We will continue to work with Departments to ensure that the organisation is working as efficiently as possible in order to protect and maintain front line services where possible.

The challenging financial climate will inevitably impact on revenue collection, along with the ongoing reforms to the welfare system continues to be the main focus of the Revenue Services Division. We will also strive to assess benefit entitlement as quickly as possible in order to support those residents in need of assistance with their housing costs and where appropriate provide additional support to vulnerable tenants through Discretionary Housing Payments.

Key areas and strategies for Corporate Services for the forthcoming year include communication of the updated Financial Procedure Rules, the Anti Fraud and Anti Corruption Strategy, the Risk Management Strategy together with developing the Procurement Strategy 2017-20 and taking this forward throughout the organisation. We have also included within the Business Plan our response to the proposals for improvement, contained in the Corporate Assessment by the Welsh Audit Office.

Departmental Profiles

Departmental Senior Management Structure



2. Strategic Context

Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

This is a new Act introduced by the Welsh Government, which will change aspects of how we work. The general purpose of the Act is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account. The Act is designed to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of Wales in accordance with sustainable development principles.

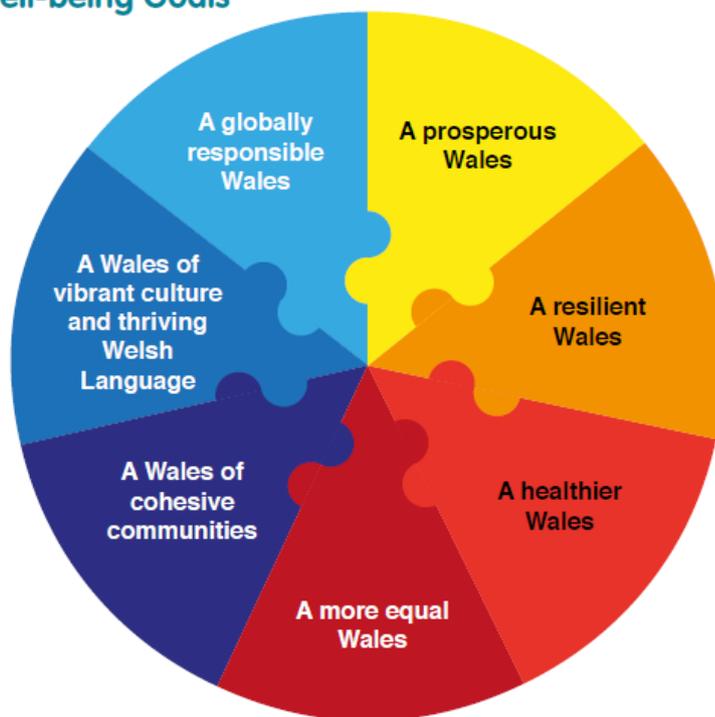
The Sustainable Development Principle of the Act

The new law states that we must carry out sustainable development, improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. **The sustainable development principle** is

‘... the public body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about encouraging public bodies to think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place **seven** well-being goals, which are noted below:

Well-being Goals



The Sustainable Development Principle and the 5 Ways of Working

The principle is made up of **five key ways of working** that public bodies are required to take into account when applying sustainable development. These are:-

- A. Looking to the **long term** so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
- B. Taking an **integrated** approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their priorities;
- C. **Involving** a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them;
- D. Working with others in a **collaborative** way to find shared sustainable solutions;
- E. Understanding the root causes of issues to **prevent** them from occurring.

Strategic Links

**The County of Carmarthenshire's Well-being Plan –
To be published by May 2018**

Service Specific Acts

- The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act
- Welsh Language Standards under Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- The Ageing Well Plan
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Council Tax (Administration & Enforcement) Regulations 1992

- The Rent Officers (Housing Benefit & Universal Credit functions – Local Housing Allowance Amendment’s) Order 2016
- The Benefit Cap (Housing Benefit and Universal Credit(Amendment’s) Regulations 2016
- The Housing Benefit and State Pension Credit (Temporary Absence) Regulations 2016

Service Strategies

- Revenue Budget Strategy
- 5 Year Capital Programme
- Treasury Management Policy and Strategy
- Dyfed Pension Fund –www.dyfedpensionfund.org.uk
- Funding Strategy Statement
- Administration Strategy
- Communications Strategy
- Corporate Risk Register
- Governance Policy
- Business Plan
- Statement of Investment Principles
- Welsh Government Procurement Policy Statement
- Audit Charter
- Audit Plan
- Financial Procedural Rules
- Anti Fraud and Anti Corruption Strategy(under review)
- Risk Management Strategy (under review)
- Corporate Assessment Report 2015
- Carmarthenshire County Councils Well-being Objectives

How Services join-up to show contributions to the National Well-being Goals

The identification of well-being objectives should flow from having a clear view of the contribution a public body can make to the seven well-being goals SPSF 2 Para 4

KEY: **L** = Lead Role / **S** = Supporting Role

The 7 Well-being of Future Generations Goals
See Appendix 3 for Definitions

Department	Division	Prosperity	Resilience	Healthier	More Equal	Cohesive Communities	Culture and Welsh Language	Global Responsibility
Corporate Services	Audit, Risk & Procurement	S			S		S	S
	Financial Services	S			S		S	
	Revenue Services	S			S	S	S	

Carmarthenshire's Corporate Strategy 2015-20

In September 2015 the Council published its Corporate Strategy and outlined its key areas of focus across seven outcome areas. In particular the department leads on the following focus points:

Making Better Use of Resources

- Providing services as efficiently as possible, ensuring value for money and supporting staff in order to reduce sickness absence rates.
- Investigating and developing new ways of working and providing services.
- Working in collaboration with other organisation's to identify areas for shared services and economies of scale to reduce running costs.
- Reviewing management and back office costs in order where possible to safeguard front line services.

Building a Better Council

- Increasing collaboration with our partners and communities in order to support the delivery of services.
- Responding to the need to reform local government and ensuring Carmarthenshire is well positioned in any future arrangements.
- Strengthening the position of the Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire by implementing the recommendations of the 'Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire's report (March 2014).

Core Values

 <p>Core values</p> <p>Customers First</p> <p>Excellence</p> <p>Integrity</p> <p>One Team</p> <p>Take Responsibility</p> <p>Listening</p> <p><small>CYNGOR Sir Gâr Carmarthenshire</small></p> <p><small>EICH CYNGOR arleinamdani www.sirgar.llyw.cymru YOUR COUNCIL doitonline www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales</small></p>	<p>Customers First – we put the needs of our citizens at the heart of everything that we do</p> <p>Listening – we listen to learn, understand and improve now and in the future</p> <p>Excellence – we constantly strive for excellence, delivering the highest quality possible every time by being creative, adopting innovative ways of working and taking measured risks</p> <p>Integrity – we act with integrity and do the right things at all times</p> <p>Taking Responsibility – we all take personal ownership and accountability for our actions</p>
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3. Review and Evaluation

Current Strengths

- We are ensuring the maximum use of Community Benefits in all procurements where such benefit can be realised. A template summarising the Welsh Government Community Benefits measurement tool has been developed and sent to the Business Service Providers and Domiciliary Care Providers to make reporting against their targets an easier process. We are working with colleagues in Environment on the South West Wales Regional Contractors Framework and we have developed a standard template for the community benefit call-offs which we are looking to our partners to utilise.
- We are strengthening procurement arrangements by reviewing the reasons for non-compliance with procedures and taking corrective action to prevent these re-occurring. Revised Contract Procedure Rules were approved by Audit Committee on 30th September 2016 which reflect changes in Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and strengthen internal procedures and processes.

- The E-Tender Wales Bravo Solutions Software for Contracts and Tender Registers is being used to support the Authority's E-Tendering and this now supports the Council's Contract Register.
- The revised Contract Procedure Rules contain a clause that requires officers who make use of the negotiated procedure without prior publication to report to the Authority's Audit Committee the reasons for the use of this procedure and the subsequent procurement activity undertaken.
- The Procurement Strategy that is currently under development will embed the approach of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement across the organisation. A sustainable Risk Assessment (SRA) is carried out for tenders over the value of £25k which has been added as a requirement in our revised Contract Procedure Rules. The assessment ensures that environmental, social and economic issues are addressed in all key procurements. Recent examples of SRA's that have been carried out are Contract Vehicle Hire, Carmarthenshire Integrated Community Equipment Store in Dafen(CICES) and Dog Kennelling.
- We have progressed further with Pre Market Engagement and are currently working on adopting this procedure for the forthcoming Mechanical and Electrical Service Contracts which is a £38 million contract with opportunities for many local suppliers. One of the aims of this consultation is to gain valuable information to develop a suitable lotting strategy for the framework.
- We have introduced new self-service payment facilities at The Hub in Llanelli town centre, a key customer service location. This has provided customers with the means to make any payment due at the main point of contact without the need to call at the Llanelli cash desk.
- We have embedded a Personal Budgeting Support Officer post within the Housing Benefits service to continue the good work and joint working established with the local Job Centres Collection during the Universal Support Delivered Locally pilot which ran until September 2015
- We have strengthened the process for recovery of unpaid Sundry Debtor accounts in conjunction with Legal Services Division, by improving the focus and speed of referrals for legal action.

Areas for Improvement

The Procurement Fitness Check (KPMG, 2013) highlighted and recommended a category management approach, utilising procurement expertise within departments. This requires increased capacity of the Corporate Procurement Unit and appropriate spend analysis tools which have been planned for 2017/18.

Category Management will require the establishment of Category Project Teams across the Authority in order to identify and deliver the agreed Category Strategy for forthcoming years.

To investigate further the opportunities presented by the adoption of available e-procurement tools to appropriately minimise complexity, cost, timescales and requirements for suppliers

To explore the opportunities for additional mailings to be outsourced, potentially including local taxation recovery documentation (Reminders, summonses etc) and sundry debtors invoices, in order to achieve further efficiencies.

Regulatory Report Recommendations and Proposals for Improvement

In January 2016 the Wales Audit Office published its Corporate Assessment of the Council. The report contained 6 proposals for improvement concerning:

1. Governance
2. Use of Resources – Finance (As detailed below)
3. Use of Resources – People
4. Use of Resources – Assets
5. Use of Resources – ICT and Information Management
6. Improvement Planning

Our Proposals for Improvement are as follows:

Recommendations	Half Year Progress
P1.4 Review the remit of Audit Committee to make sure it is delivering what is expected of it.	Meeting held on 18 th July 2016. Members considered current remit against the constitution and CIPFA guidance.
<p>P2.4: Strengthen procurement arrangements by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (P2.4.1) Reviewing the reasons for non-compliance with procedures and taking corrective action to prevent these re-occurring. • (P2.4.2) Setting up and maintaining a Tender Register and Contracts Register • (P2.4.3) Establishing, maintaining and regularly reporting to Audit Committee a list of single tender actions. 	<p>There is on-going analysis of the spend data using the Spend Analysis Tool (Spikes) for the Financial Year 2015-16. TIC Programme Board on 23rd September 2016 received an update on the 8 Key Themes highlighted by the Spend Review and noted progress.</p> <p>Revised contract procedure Rules have been approved by Audit Committee on 30th September 2016 which reflect changes in Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and also strengthen internal procedures and processes.</p> <p>Tender Register and Contracts Register - Bravo is used to support the Authority's E-Tendering and this now supports the Councils Contract Register. This work is an ongoing to capture historic contracts that have been uncovered as part of the TIC review.</p> <p>The revised Contract Procedure Rules were approved by Audit Committee on 30th September – The new Rules contain a clause that requires officers who make use of a Negotiated Procedure without Prior Publication to report to the Authority's Audit Committee the reasons for the use of this procedure and the subsequent procurement activity undertaken.</p> <p>TIC Programme Board on 23rd September 2016,</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (P2.4.4) Reviewing the differences in the use of the Councils framework contracts to drive a more consistent process going forward 	<p>received an update on the 8 key Themes highlighted by the Spend Review and noted progress.</p>
<p>P2.1 Develop more explicit links between the medium term financial plan (MTFP) and the Councils improvement planning, detailing the impact that financial constraints are having on outcomes for citizens</p>	<p>Timetable established so that draft Departmental Business Plans will be presented to Scrutiny Committees at the same time as budget proposals consultations.</p>
<p>P2.2 Develop and utilise benchmarking and Value for Money Indicators in budget setting to better inform decisions and allow for further debate and challenge of existing costs and potentially identify further efficiency savings.</p>	<p>Departments are seeking additional benchmarking and value for money indicators with the detailed budget, service and KPI information provided in the budget seminar sessions.</p>
<p>P2.3 Improve financial reporting by :</p> <p>P2.3.1 developing clearer links between financial and service performance including developing joint financial and performance reports to Members</p> <p>P2.3.2. Monitoring and reporting on individual savings targets to ensure that areas of over and under achievement are explicitly identified enabling effective challenge, remedial action and sharing of good practice.</p> <p>P2.3.3 Providing sufficient information on reserves and a clear audit trail for decisions regarding reserves.</p> <p>P2.3.4 Liaising with Members to ensure that financial information is appropriate to their needs.</p>	<p>Budget monitoring reports are now linked to the performance dashboard. Timetable established to ensure that draft Business Plans are posted to Scrutiny Committees at the same time as they consider the budget consultation</p> <p>Monitoring report completed and presented to Corporate Management Team and Executive portfolio holders. Monitoring being updated in line with bi-monthly budget monitoring cycle.</p> <p>Draft reserves Strategy report prepared based upon end of year position as at 31st March 2016. Report will go forward to future meeting of the Executive Board.</p> <p>New budget monitoring format implemented for Executive Board and Scrutiny Committees.</p>

4. Departmental Priorities

Audit, Risk and Procurement Division

The challenging financial climate impacts on all Departments and the Audit, Risk and Procurement Division and this plan shows how resources will be used to achieve objectives of the Division. Key areas and strategies for the forthcoming year include communication of the Financial Procedure Rules, the Anti Fraud and Anti Corruption Strategy and the Risk Management Strategy together with developing a new Procurement Strategy 2017-20. We will also ensure that Business Continuity Management is embedded throughout the Authority.

We will ensure the aims of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement are delivered across the Procurement Function and that Sustainable Procurement and the early engagement of local businesses is key to how we procure and how this affects our local economy.

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Internal Audit		
1	Review the Anti Fraud and Anti Corruption Strategy – approval required by Audit Committee	March 2018	Helen Pugh
2	Review the Financial Procedure Rules and approval required from Audit Committee	March 2017	Helen Pugh
3	Review Audit Manual	March 2018	Helen Pugh
4	Promote the Authority's Financial policies and procedures, Antifraud and Anti Corruption Strategy	On going	Helen Pugh
	Key Measure		
1	6.4.1.13 Actual achievement against Annual Audit Plan	Reported Quarterly to Audit Committee	Helen Pugh

Risks

The following identified Risks for the Division have been taken into account in the actions planned for the year:

- Failure to sufficiently influence Managers across the Authority to support the move towards a more efficient and effective ways of working.
- Failure to understand the complexities, challenges and additional timescale required for effective cross organisation collaboration.
- Failure to deliver plan.

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Risk Management		
1	Ensure Business Continuity Management and Emergency Planning work together throughout the Authority through regular group meetings	Ongoing	Helen Pugh
2	Develop a new Risk Management Strategy – Approval required from Audit Committee	December 2017	Helen Pugh
	Key Measure		
1	6.4.2.3 % response to letters of claim – issuing acknowledgement letter to claimant/claimant legal representative, and referral of claim to appropriate Insurer within 6 working days of receipt at the Risk Management Section	Reported Quarterly	Helen Pugh

Risks

The following identified Risks for the Division have been taken into account in the actions planned for the year:

- Failure to understand the complexities, challenges and additional timescale required for effective cross organisation collaboration.

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Corporate Procurement		
1	Develop a new Procurement Strategy taking account of the significant changes to Welsh Public Sector Procurement including the establishment of the National Procurement Service	December 2017	Alan Aitken
2	We will ensure the maximum use of Community Benefits in all procurements where such benefit can be realised and report those benefits on all contracts over £1m	March 2018	Alan Aitken
3	Revisit the business case for eProcurement Service (ePS) – the availability of various eProcurement tools to improve electronic procurement	March 2020	Alan Aitken
4	Establishing, maintaining and regularly reporting to Audit Committee a list of single tender actions	March 2018	Alan Aitken
5	Contribute towards the achievement of the 7 well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – WPP (9 and 10).	March 2018	Alan Aitken
6	Support the early engagement of Local Businesses and have due regard to the effect of our procurement on the local economy	March 2018	Alan Aitken
7	To work with departments on Category Management of spend	March 2018	Alan Aitken
8	Ensure the Themes resulting from the Spend Analysis are progressed and monitored by the Procurement Governance Board	March 2018	Alan Aitken

Risks

The following identified Risks for the Division have been taken into account in the actions planned for the year:

- Failure to sufficiently adopt and make use of available e-procurement tools to appropriately minimise complexity, cost, timescales and requirements for suppliers Wales Procurement Policy (6).

- Given increased budget pressures, failure to identify sufficient resource to be able to meet the volume and complexity of exercises generated as a result of the Spend Control Emerging Themes identified by the Procurement Governance Board from the ongoing Whole Authority Spend Analysis.
- Failure to address the adoption of a Category Management approach to procurement as recommended by the Welsh Government Procurement Fitness Check Report.
- Failure to provide sufficient legal support to Procurement Staff in light of increasing challenges to the procurement process

Financial Services Division

Financial Services provides a diverse range of Services in supporting the Councils key objectives.

These encompass the provision of a sounds financial management platform underpinning Council Service delivery and Corporate Service Planning, management of the Authority's investments, preparation of budget and accounts as well as the provision of transactional services delivered through 5 distinct areas:

- Accountancy
- Pensions Administration
- Payroll
- Systems, Accounts Payable and Administration
- Treasury Management and Pensions Investments

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Accountancy		
1	We will undertake the Closure and Audit of the Accounts within the appropriate timescales	June 2017	Owen Bowen
2	Continue to investigate and develop new ways of working which will result in delivering an even more efficient and effective Accountancy Services.	March 2018	Owen Bowen
3	Introduce new budget monitoring formats for the monitoring cycles	June 2018	Owen Bowen
	Key Measure		
1	6.1.1.3 An unqualified audit on the final accounts	September 2018	Owen Bowen

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Risks

Failure to close accounts by deadline

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When#1	By Who
	Pensions		
1	We will implement changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme as a consequence of legislation changes	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
2	We will continue to Develop Opportunities for collaboration with other Local Government Pension Schemes	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
3	We will ensure compliance with the implementation of auto enrolment in accordance with the requirement of the Pensions Act	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
4	We will ensure that scheme members have the opportunity of registering with 'My Pension online' via site visits to all scheme employers	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
5	We will implement i-connect which will facilitate direct data transfer from employer payroll system to the Altair Pension database	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
6	We will undertake GMP reconciliation in accordance with HMRC statutory requirements	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
7	We will implement changes to the Fire fighters Pension Scheme as a consequence of legislation changes	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
8	To participate in the Actuarial Services Review	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
9	We will implement changes to the Police Pension Scheme as a consequence of legislation changes	March 2018	Kevin Gerard
10	To support the Pensions Board	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
11	To assist in training members of the Pension Board	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
12	To collaborate with other LGPS funds on investments and governance	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
13	We will participate in the Actuarial Services Review	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
14	We will tender for an Actuary	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
15	We will ensure timely closure of Accounts for the Dyfed Pension Fund	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
16	We will produce the Dyfed Pension Fund Annual Report	March 2018	Anthony Parnell

Risks

- Failure in the upgrade of the Pensions Administration System.
- Failure to comply with Grants Regulations.
- Threat of increasing Pension Fund Shortfall

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When#1	By Who
	Payroll		
1	Commence the rollout of Resourcelink direct input to Schools	March 2018	Kevin Jenkins

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Accounts Payable and Administration		
1	To deliver the corporate 'Key Performance Indicator' for the prompt payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days to target (93.5%) and to work closely with the Departments in order to monitor and identify areas of performance improvement	March 2018	Neil John
2	Implement the electronic submission of Invoices on a bulk basis for Castell Howell and Energy Providers in order to increase efficiency	March 2018	Neil John
3	Investigate the feasibility of P2P rollout in Schools via a pilot site	March 2018	Neil John
	Key Measure		
1	CFH/006 The percentage of undisputed Invoices which were paid in 30 days	March 2018	Michelle Gutteridge

#1

Risks

Failure to pay invoices within 30 days

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Treasury Management		
1	Ensure officers are trained appropriately on Treasury Management and Banking	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
2	We will review the merchant services charging	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
3	We will produce and comply with the Treasury Management Policy	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
	Key Measure		
1	6.1.2.1 Return on Investments to outperform the average 7 day LIBID (London Interbank Indicative) rate for the year	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
2	6.1.2.2 Net borrowing rate to outperform the average PWLB rate for the year	March 2018	Anthony Parnell
3	6.1.3.4 Dyfed Pension Fund to outperform the benchmark return as set out in the Investment Brief (5 year rolling to nearest quarter)	March 2018	Anthony Parnell

- Threat of financial crisis impacting on Treasury Management and Dyfed Pension Fund Management.

Revenue Services Division

Revenue Services is responsible for the administration, billing and collection of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates from householders and businesses, respectively. The service also undertakes on behalf of all the Authority's departments, the billing, collection and recovery of miscellaneous income (known as Sundry Debts) as well as having responsibility for operating the Councils four full time cash offices with the associated income functions.

In addition to these income collection functions, the unit is responsible for the administration of Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit Schemes which help low income households meet their rent and/or Council Tax. Also embedded within the service is a fraud investigation officer and personal budgeting support officer.

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Council Tax		
1	We will develop, in conjunction with partner departments and after appropriate consultation, policy options in relation to Council Tax premiums for long term empty properties and second homes for Elected Members consideration	March 2018	John Gravelle
	Key Measure		
1	CFH/007 % of Council Tax due for the financial year which was received by the Authority	March 2018	John Gravelle

Risks

- Failure to achieve Local Taxation collection targets at a time of continuing economic difficulties.
- Possible unintended consequences and uncertain outcomes, in the event of Council Tax premiums being introduced

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Business Rates		
1	We will implement, administer and collect the "Ymlaen Llanelli" Business Improvement District (BID) levy in respect of ratepayers in the Llanelli Town BID Area.	March 2018	John Gravelle
2	Review the Discretionary Relief Policy and where relevant recommend changes for Council's consideration	March 2018	John Gravelle
	Key Measure		
1	CFH/008 % of non domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the Authority	March 2018	John Gravelle

Risks

- Additional workload with Business Rates Team arising from implementation of the Llanelli Business Improvement District, with no additional resources.
- Withdrawal of Welsh Governments Wales Retail Rate Relief scheme increasing the rate payable by smaller businesses.
- National Non-Domestic Rates re-valuation effective April 2017 placing further workload pressures on the Business Rates Team.

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Housing Benefits		
1	We will aim to achieve performance targets in relation to the speed and accuracy of benefits processing and collection of recoverable benefit overpayments	March 2018	John Gravelle
2	Review the Discretionary Relief Policy and where relevant recommend changes for Council's consideration	March 2018	John Gravelle
3	We will continue to raise awareness of welfare reforms, particularly the roll-out of Universal Credit as affecting Housing Benefits recipients, with Customers, elected members and to Stakeholders/partner departments	March 2018	John Gravelle
4	We will continue to fulfil the requirements of the DWP Universal Credit, delivery partnership agreement in terms of budgeting support for vulnerable claimants and technical/specialist support for the UC delivery centres	March 2018	John Gravelle
	Key Measure		
1	6.6.1.2 We will retain the reduced average number of days taken to process new Housing/Council Tax Benefits	March 2018	John Gravelle
2	6.6.1.3 We will retain the low average number of days taken to process notifications of changes of circumstances in Housing/Council Tax Benefit Claims	March 2018	John Gravelle
3	6.6.1.5 The amount of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered during the year as a % of the total amount of Housing Benefit overpayments identified during the year.	March 2018	John Gravelle
4	6.6.1.6 The amount of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered during the year as a % of the total amount of Housing benefit overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the year plus the total amount of Housing Benefit overpayments identified during the year	March 2018	John Gravelle
5	6.6.1.9 We will retain the high % of recently calculated Housing/Council tax Benefit claims that have been calculated accurately based on a sample check	March 2018	John Gravelle

#1

Risks

- Potential staff retention/recruitment issues in the benefits service due to concerns over long term job security arising from the Universal Credit roll-out, resulting in frequent understaffing in the assessment team.
- Due to the complexity of the schemes the constant flow of new and inexperienced staff give rise to potential accuracy issues and lower 'productivity' with the assessment function.
- Additional Council Tax Reduction Scheme workload due to the extra verification work for the increasing number of customers in receipt of Universal Credit
- Failure to achieve overpayment recovery collection targets due to the nature of the debt and the customers circumstances as well as the general economic situation.
- Potential pressure on the Discretionary Housing Payment funding provided by the DWP in the event of future reductions in the fund and/or future increased demand due to changes in benefit cap and other reforms.

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Income & Systems Team		
1	Review the success and fitness for purpose of the existing arrears recovery procedure and provide continuing guidance and assistance to service departments to ensure adherence to invoice raising and recovery requirements.	March 2018	John Gravelle
2	To undertake a proactive service improvement and development role to explore the opportunities unit wide introduction and expansion of digital transactions and electronic contacts	March 2018	John Gravelle
	Key Measure		

#1

Risks

- Insufficient resources (within the unit and elsewhere) to progress identified service improvements and system changes.

Ref	Service Priorities With Key Actions and Key Outcome Measures	By When ^{#1}	By Who
	Cashiering Service		
1	We will introduce self-service payment kiosks at customer service locations where there is no payment facility and (subject to appropriate consultation) replace existing cash desks at locations where the level of customer footfall no longer warrants a staffed customer facing cash payment facility.	March 2018	John Gravelle

#1

Risks

- Uncertainty over take up of self-service facilities due to customer preference for traditional service points.

Ways of Working

Which of the 5 Ways of working have we met?		Strong Partial None	How much work do we still need to do to meet these ways of working?
A	Looking at the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs	Strong	In line with the Wales Procurement Policy Statement (Principle 3 ' <i>Economic, Social & Environmental Impact</i> ' and Principle 9 ' <i>Policy Development and Implementation</i> ') we will consider Whole Life Costs in terms of achieving Value For Money and contribute towards society, the economy and environment. We will deploy the procurement guidance issued in all relevant contracts.
B	Understanding the root causes of the issues to prevent them reoccurring	Strong	We need to continuously review our practices and policies across Corporate Services to ensure that we address issues affecting customers. An example being Benefit notification documents where further work is required to simplify the information provided in relation to a very complex area of work with statutory requirements.
C	Taking an integrated approach so that we look at all well- being goals and objectives of other services and partners	Strong	<p>The Corporate Procurement Unit are working towards an Integrated approach using Sustainability tools, e— procurement, community benefits, joint bidding, ethical procurement, Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQulD) as per the Welsh Procurement Policy Statement (Principle 3,4,5,6,7,8,9 &10.</p> <p>Revenue Services is providing assistance and data to other Departments within the Authority to mutual customers – where appropriate to do so – in order to improve efficiency and accuracy in providing services, avoid duplication of effort and putting the customer to unnecessary inconvenience.</p>
D	Collaboration - Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions	Strong	<p>The Pensions Administration Unit works collaboratively with the other Pension Funds in Wales in areas such as regulatory interpretation and scheme communications.</p> <p>The Pension Investments Unit collaborates with other Local Government Pension Funds on investment, governance and accounting issues and works in partnership with the Funds Actuary, Investment Managers, Independent Investment Adviser, Performance Manager, Custodian, Legal Adviser and Auditor.</p> <p>The Accountancy and Technical section provides the Financial Management System for the Mid and West Wales Fire Service, Dyfed Powys Police Authority and Brecon Beacons National Park and Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We also provide a payroll service to a range of external clients which include: • Pembrokeshire Coast National Park • Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service • Carmarthen Town Council • Mentrau Cwm Gwendraeth, Gorllwein Sir Gar, Bro

		<p>Dinefwr, Castell Nedd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of smaller bodies. <p>Revenue Services has assisted the Valuation Office Agency by issuing a mailshot on its behalf to all ratepayers within the County, providing information with regard to the 2017 national revaluation exercise.</p>
E	<p>Involvement a diversity of population in decisions that affect them</p>	<p>We are proactive in supplier engagement and consider a diverse and whole supply chain, Sustainable Risk Analysis, improved dialogue and communication with supply chain in the Procurement Activity.</p> <p>We consult with the Public, Elected Members and the 50 plus forum in the budget consultation process and the Council Tax Premiums consultation for their views and recommendations. Our Budget consultation work has been identified as best practice in Wales.</p>

Maximising Contributions

7 National Goals	How the function / priority maximises its contribution to National Goals
<i>A more equal Wales</i>	Carmarthenshire County Council has developed a Strategic Equality Plan which covers all our legal duties and which reaffirms our commitment to equality and diversity
<i>A Wales of cohesive communities</i>	We have embedded a Personal Budgeting Support Officer post within the Housing Benefits service to continue the good work and joint working established with the local Job Centres collection.
<i>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language</i>	As part of our responsibilities under the Welsh Language Standards, we have worked with our partners to prepare a Welsh language Promotion Strategy. This Strategy will support the Welsh Government's vision and aim to make the Welsh language the county's main language through a series of objectives.
<i>A globally responsible Wales</i>	Carmarthenshire is a Fair Trade County and the Council is committed to supporting this pledge in our procurement and promotion activities.

5. Resources

Budget Summary

		2017-18		
		Expenditure	Income	Net
		£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Director and Support Services Costs</u>				
Chief Officer Group	S	420	-417	4
Total Director and Support Services Costs		420	-417	4
<u>Finance</u>				
Accountancy	S	2,273	-2,450	-177
Treasury & Pension Investment Section	B	243	-242	1
Grants & Technical	B	332	-220	112
Local Taxation		2,178		
less recharged to Other Service Heads		-1,384		
Net Local Taxation	S	794	-13	781
Housing Ben Admin		2,393		
less recharged to Other Service Heads		-2,092		
Net Housing Ben Admin	S	301	-151	150
Net Housing Advances	S	3	0	3
Revenues	S	1,080	-1,071	10
Benefit Fraud	S	77	-76	1
Payroll	S	658	-657	2
Payments	S	599	-605	-7
Pensions	S	1,047	-1,126	-79
Total Financial Services		7,409	-6,611	798
<u>Audit, Risk, Procurement</u>				
Procurement	N	445	-442	3
Audit & Risk Management	S	905	-850	55
Business Support Unit	N	154	-200	-45
Resources Training	N	93	-104	-11
Total Audit, Risk, Procurement		1,597	-1,596	2
<u>Other Services</u>				
Audit Fees		376	-86	290
Bank Charges		64	0	64
Council Tax Benefits		15,516	0	15,516
Rent Allowances		48,378	-47,090	1,288
Miscellaneous Services		7,113	-112	7,001
Total Other Services		71,447	-47,288	24,159
Corporate Services Total		80,874	-55,911	24,962

Savings and Efficiencies

Department	16-17 Budget	'2017-18 Proposed	'2018-19 Proposed	'2019-20 Proposed	Total
Corporate Services	£'000	£'000	£000	£000	£000
<u>Financial Services</u>					
Accountancy	1408	109	91	178	378
Treasury Management	108	75	0	0	75
Revenues & Benefits	670	0	57	0	57
Payroll/Payments	229	23	0	40	63
Total Financial Services	2416	207	148	218	573
<u>Audit, Risk & Procurement</u>					
Audit, Risk & Procurement	713	0	0	40	40
Total, Audit Risk & Procurement	713	0	0	40	40
Corporate Services Total	3129	207	148	258	613

Audit, Risk & Procurement

Internal Audit operates with 10.8 FTE posts. This includes a vacant fully funded post for an Investigations Officer required to lead on Internal Audit Investigations and Fraud Issues. (*The Investigations Officer post has the full support of the Director of Corporate Services and the Audit Committee*).

The Corporate Procurement Unit now also operates with 10.8 FTE. As a result of in depth work undertaken with the TIC Team, in order to support Departments and successfully introduce Category Management, we are currently about to recruit 2 Principal Procurement Officers.

Whilst the former Resources Department operated a Business Support Unit of some 8.8 FTE back in 2007, this has now been reduced substantially with only 1.8 FTE Officers remaining. The focus is now on Performance & Development issues with a significant amount of the administrative functions undertaken back in 2007 having either ceased, rationalised or transferred.

Revenue Services

Although precise timelines are uncertain, the gradual roll-out of Universal Credit and the resultant reduction in working-age cases will over time, give rise to a gradual reduction in Housing Benefit staffing levels. Based on the current understanding, this reduction in work load could start (albeit slowly) towards the end of 2017/18.

However at present it is difficult to predict with certainty the likely numbers involved, particularly as the section is facing additional Council Tax Reduction (Benefit) work for the cases that have already migrated to Universal Credit.

Conversely a Personal Budgeting Support service has now been embedded in the Benefits Section to meet the Council's commitment to the Universal Credit Delivery Partnership Agreement with the DWP. This function is likely to expand as UC claim numbers increase over time.

More generally, the age profile of senior staff within Revenue Services (Team-Leader and above) is such that a number have either already recently retired or will be retiring in the short/medium term.

To ensure business continuity and achieve efficiencies (both financial and operational) a structure realignment is currently being implemented within the Revenues area of the service. This involves merging certain teams which will give more operational resilience but also a reduction in the number of team-leader posts (which are being vacated by retirements) from 5 to 2 and the new team-leader appointments will be in place prior to 2017/18.

A similar review of the Benefits team structure is also planned with a view to also addressing issues over staff retention which has been a significant challenge for the service for some time.

Financial Services

The Financial Services Division has been realigned following the appointment of the Director of Corporate Services and structures and processes are continually reviewed to deliver service efficiencies.

During the last financial year, the posts of Chief Accountant, Capital Accountant and a post of Senior Accountant have been released, and in the coming year the posts of Accounts Technician and Clerical are released.

6. Key Departmental Measures by Division

Definition / Measure Reference (abbreviated definition is fine)		2014/15		2015/16			2016/17		2017/18	Cost Measure (£)
		All Wales Comparative data			Target set	Result (when available)	Target set (at EOY)			
		Our Result	Our Result	Quartile * to ****				Welsh Median	Welsh Best Quartile	
Audit, Risk & Procurement										
1	Actual Achievement against Annual Audit Plan (6.4.1.3)	92	84	Not Applicable			92	Qtr 2 29	92	
2	% Response to letters of claim – issuing acknowledgements letter to claimant/claimant legal representative, and referral of claim to appropriate Insurer within working days of receipt at the Risk Management Section (6.4.2.3)	96	95	Not applicable			95	Qtr 2 99	95	
Accountancy										
3	An unqualified audit on the final accounts – 6.1.1.3	Achieved	Achieved	Not applicable			Achieved		Set to Achieve	
Accounts Payroll and Administration										
4	The % of undisputed Invoices which were paid in 30 days – CFH/006	95.2%	94.9%				93.5%	Qtr 2 88.7%	TBC	
Treasury Management & Pensions Investments										
5	Return on Investments to outperform the average 7 day LIBID (London Interbank Indicative) Rate for the year – 6.1.2.1	Out-Performance 0.23%	Out-Performance 0.20%	Not applicable			To out-perform	Qtr 2 Out-performance of 0.21%	To out-perform	
6	Net borrowing rate to outperform to average PWLB rate for the year – 6.1.2.2	Out-Performance 0.35%	Out-Performance 0.415 %	Not applicable			To out-perform	Qtr 2 Out-performance of 0.725 %	To out-perform	
7	Dyfed Pension Fund to outperform the benchmark return as set out in the Investment Brief (5 year rolling to nearest quarter) – 6.1.3.4	Under-performance of -0.4%	Under-performance of 1.2%	Not applicable			To out-perform	Figures available at EOY	To out-perform	

Council Tax										
1	% of Council Tax due for the financial year which was received by the Authority (CFH/007)	97.06	96.63				58 (Qtr2) 97.00 (EOY)	59.03 (Qtr 2)	TBC	
Business Rates										
10	% of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which was received by the Authority (CFH/008)	98.32	98.4				60.00 (Qtr 2) 97.50 (EOY)	62.55 (Qtr 2)	TBC	
Housing Benefits										
1	Average time for processing new Housing/Council Tax benefit claims (Local PI ref: 6.6.1.2)	26.00	21.76	Not applicable			29.00 (Qtr 2) 23.00 (EOY)	23.39 (Qtr 2)	TBC	
2	Average time for processing Housing/Council Tax Benefit notifications of changes of circumstances (days) (Local PI Ref: 6.6.1.3)	4.90	5.23	Not applicable			7 (Qtr 2) 5.50 (EOY)	5.86 (Qtr 2)	TBC	
3	The amount of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered during the year as a % of the total amount of Housing Benefit overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the year plus the total amount of Housing Benefit overpayments identified during the year. (Local PI ref: 6.6.1.6)	38.75	40.08	Not applicable			25.00 (Qtr 2) 40.00 (EOY)	31.10 (Qtr 2)	TBC	
4	% of recently calculated Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims that have been calculated accurately based on a sample check (Local PI Ref: 6.6.1.9)	93.94	95.45	Not applicable			93.00 (Qtr 2) 94.00 (EOY)	96.73	TBC	

Corporate Strategy 2015-2020

Ref	Corporate Strategic Expected Outcomes and Strategic Focus	Lead Role	Significant Support	Support
Making Better Use of Resources				
1	Managing and making best use of the Council's property and assets with a focus on rationalising office accommodation and sharing with other partners as well as facilitating community ownership of assets for community benefit			✓
2	Providing services as efficiently as possible, ensuring value for money and supporting staff in order to reduce sickness absence rates	✓		
3	Investigating and developing new ways of working and providing services		✓	
4	Working in collaboration with other organisations to identify areas for shared services and economies of scale to reduce running costs		✓	
5	Reviewing management and 'back office' costs in order where possible to safeguard 'front line' services.		✓	
	Improved public satisfaction levels with the services provided by the Council			
	Reduction in organisational 'running costs'			
	Increased on line activity to address public queries and transactions			
Building a Better Council				
6	Promoting local democracy and transparency by further developing approaches to engaging and communicating with our residents and stakeholders including the increased use of digital technologies		✓	
7	Ensuring the Council's governance arrangements and constitution are fit for purpose for future requirements in line with the findings and recommendations of the 2014 WLGA 'Peer Review'		✓	
8	Managing and supporting our workforce to provide better outcomes for our residents through appropriate recruitment, retention and development of our staff.			✓
9	Developing an integrated workforce plan that supports the Council's strategic objectives.			✓
10	Increasing collaboration with our partners and communities in order support the delivery of services		✓	
11	Responding to the need to reform local government and ensuring Carmarthenshire is well positioned in any future arrangements.		✓	
12	Strengthening the position of the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire by implementing the recommendations of the 'Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire's report (March 2014)		✓	
	Increasing public communication, consultation and engagement			
	Improved staff satisfaction levels			
	Reduced staff sickness absence levels			
People in Carmarthenshire are healthier				
13	Ensuring further integration of community focused Council support services with health services			✓
14	Enhancing the range of community options to support older people to remain independent in their later years			✓
15	Supporting disadvantaged children and families to build their resilience with early intervention through targeted intervention programmes such as Flying Start, Families First and Communities First and embedding this practice within our core services			✓
16	Increasing the availability of rented and affordable homes to support the needs of local people by building new homes, bringing empty homes back into use and ensuring an allocation of affordable homes on new developments			✓
17	Mitigating the local impacts of welfare reform by supporting effected residents through the changes			✓
18	Supporting residents suffering from fuel poverty and introducing renewable energy technology to our tenants homes in order to save them money on energy costs			✓

19	Getting more Carmarthenshire people more (physically and creatively) active, more often in order to improve the health and well-being of our residents.			✓
	Reduction in referrals to adult and children's social services			
	Increased availability of rented and affordable homes			
	Increased use of leisure facilities			
People in Carmarthenshire fulfil their learning potential				
20	Ensuring continuous improvement in education outcomes for all children and young people across all learning phases			✓
21	Successfully introducing and translating the new national curriculum and qualifications into an inspiring and engaging local curriculum			✓
22	Developing a self-improving school system across the County making every school a good and improving school			✓
23	Continuing to improve school attendance			✓
24	Ensuring a range of youth support services to foster the engagement of young people in education, work and community life			✓
25	Continuing to improve the condition, suitability and resource efficiency of our schools network through the Modernising Education Plan by investing a further £170m in the improvement of school premises through the 21 st Century School Programme			✓
26	Further developing the 'Un Sir Gâr - Yr Hwb' service approach by simplifying access to learning and employment support services for young people and working age people.			✓
27	Further developing Welsh medium and bilingual education provision within the County in accordance with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan			✓
	Improved educational attainment			
	Improved school attendance rates			
	Reduced number of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training			
	Improved condition of schools			
People who live, work and visit Carmarthenshire are safe and feel safer				
28	Protecting and safeguarding children and adults from harm			✓
29	Supporting children, young people and families at times when they are facing challenging circumstances and enabling them to build their resilience to cope in the future			✓
30	Being good corporate parents to children and young people who come into the care of the Authority			✓
31	Reducing speeding and road traffic accidents			✓
32	Reducing anti-social behaviour by working in partnership with other agencies and communities to tackle local problems			✓
33	Reducing drug and alcohol misuse within the county			✓
	Appropriate support provided to children, young people and families as required			
	Reduction in road casualties			
	Reduction in total recorded crime			
	Reduction in anti-social behaviour			
Carmarthenshire's communities and environment are sustainable				
34	Enhancing and utilising our rich natural environment whilst at the same time adapting to future needs as a result of climate change			✓
35	Supporting resilience with our rural and urban communities			✓
36	Taking further steps to reduce waste and increasing recycling working towards achieving the national target of 70% recycling by 2024/25 (from 59% in Carmarthenshire in 2014)			✓
37	Improving digital inclusion within the county but ensuring access to IT equipment, developing digital literacy and supporting connectivity for our communities			✓
	Increased rates of recycling			
	Improved digital access			
	Improved transport links			
	Increased use of renewable energy			
Carmarthenshire has a stronger and more prosperous economy				
38	Creating jobs and growth throughout the County			✓
39	Developing training and learning opportunities for local people			✓
40	Improving the highway infrastructure and communication network to support further economic development and connectivity			✓

41	Ensuring long-term economic and social benefits for Carmarthenshire through the Swansea Bay City Region and future European and external funding avenues			✓
	Increased employment			
	Reduction in working age population in receipt of out of work benefits			
	Increased economic activity and productivity			

Appendix 3

Draft KIOP /Well-being Objective

	Draft KIOP /Well-being Objective	Lead or supporting contributions		
		Audit, Risk & Procurement	Financial Services	Revenue Services
		Phil Sexton	Owen Bowen	John Gravelle
1	<i>Continue to Improve learner attainment for all (KIOP)</i>			
2	<i>Reduce the number of young adults that are NEET (KIOP)</i>			
3	<i>New – Help children live healthy lifestyles (Childhood Obesity)</i>			
4	<i>New – Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences.</i> Tackling Adverse Childhood experiences (ACE) / Flying Start)			
5	<i>Tackling poverty (KIOP)</i>			Support
6	<i>Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county (KIOP)</i>	Support		
7	<i>Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes (KIOP)</i>			Support
8	<i>New Help people live healthy lives (Tackling risky behaviour and Adult obesity)</i>			
9	<i>New – Supporting good connections with friends, family and communities (Family Support Strategy) Cohesion</i>			
10	<i>Support the growing numbers of older people to maintain dignity and independence in their later years(KIOP)</i>			
11	<i>New – Ageing Well plan.</i>			Support
12	<i>New – Looking after the present and future cultural and natural conditions of the environment</i>			
13	<i>Improving the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity (KIOP)</i>			

