



## **AUDIT COMMITTEE – 14TH DECEMBER 2016**

**SUBJECT: REGULATOR PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRESS UPDATE**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on progress against the proposals made by all regulators since the last Audit Committee update (May 2016).

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 Since May 2016 there have been 9 proposals addressed and 6 new proposals added onto the register.

2.2 There have been 3 Areas for Improvement (AFI's) from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate of Wales (CSSIW) since the last update but these have already been addressed.

2.3 There have been 2 new reviews received from the Wales Audit Office, Financial Resilience (local) Report (May 2016) and the Leisure Review (May 2016) which came onto the Cabinet Programme in June and are now featured in this progress update. CSSIW carried out a national review with a local output called 'National review of care planning for children and young people subject to the Public Care Outline pre-proceedings' which is yet to be published. There were no formal recommendations made for Caerphilly at the end of the fieldwork stage of the review.

2.4 Currently we have 20 proposals on the register at this time. There are 9 recommended for closure which would leave 11 outstanding if the closures are agreed by the Audit Committee.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

3.1 Although the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been introduced and replaces Part 1 of the 2009 Local Government Measure, Part 2 is still a legal requirement and this part puts a duty on an authority to 'make arrangements to continuously improve'. The reporting of progress against regulator proposals and recommendations for improvement are part of those arrangements.

3.2 Improvements as part of the Leisure Review or the CSSIW annual review would contribute towards: A healthier Wales and a more equal Wales.

### **4. THE REPORT**

4.1 There have been five regulator outputs received since the last update, which are noted in paragraph 4.9. One of the four is the Waste Review. The outcome was not finalised as a report but as 'a letter'. The letter provides more of fact find or a position statement and had no suggestions for improvement and therefore has no content to include on the attached register

(appendix A). The WAO's Annual Improvement Report (15/16) did not make any additional recommendations or propose any improvements other than to endorse the proposals made within the CSSIW annual review, so these are noted in the appendix.

- 4.2 At June 16 Audit Committee there were 11 proposals outstanding, now as at Nov 2016 there are 20 proposals on the register with 9 coming onto the register and these are shown below against individual review categories, however as 9 have been addressed this still leaves 11 outstanding.

	Customer Services Review	Assets (Land and property)	Financial Position	Improving Governance	Financial Resilience (new)	Leisure Review (new)	CSSIW	Total
How many	6	3	1	1	5	1	3	20
Completed	2	1	-	1	2	-	3	9
How many left	4	2	1	0	3	1	0	11

- 4.3 In summary as at November 2016 there are;

Outstanding	New proposals added	Subtotal outstanding	Those completed	Current Total Outstanding	Total outstanding last time reported
11 (from last time)	9	20	9	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>

- 4.4 At this time last year there were 22 proposals outstanding, so the numbers are reducing despite the additional proposals. Of the 11 outstanding, 6 have been on the register for more than 3 years (these are in para 4.6 and 4.7). There have been 98 proposals or recommendations since the register began (this does not include most of the improving governance actions as they were monitored by the Improving Governance Board).
- 4.5 The numbers of the proposals or recommendations only tell part of a story and some of the proposals have had many actions and have been more complex, making them not easily resolved within a year, however progress is being made and specific updates are given below;
- 4.6 There were seven proposals from the WAO Customer Services Review and now there are four outstanding, following the development of the Customer Services Strategy. These proposals were delayed on several occasions due to the decisions around the medium term financial plan and how this would affect what the **Customer Service** strategy would deliver. The strategy went to Policy and Resources Scrutiny in January 2016 and Cabinet in April 2016 where this strategy was approved. Although the Strategy is available on the intranet it still needs to be publicised as part of an awareness raising process. Currently an action plan has been drafted to deliver the strategy to be progressed through the Business Improvement Programme. As the action plan is still being finalised we have reduced the percentage completed to a lower percentage of completion.
- 4.7 **Asset Management** now has two proposals outstanding as the Asset Strategy was approved by Council in November 2016, five proposals having been addressed in total. We will move into the last two proposals which are developing individual service asset plans and an overall plan for implementing the strategy. A 'State of the Estate Report' was presented to members and will be a regular feature in updating members and staff on the progress of Land and Building Asset management.

- 4.8 **HR strategy** (Improving Governance). The HR Strategy is now completed and is available via the intranet. The strategy will be reviewed by members in 12 months' time. As the proposal is complete it is recommended for closure on this occasion.
- 4.9 There are two new reports that are now in the system and two that entered the system but are not included on the register. These are available to read on the Members Portal and are:

<b>Name of Report</b>	<b>Where will the report be presented to?</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Financial Resilience	CMT 2 <sup>nd</sup> June, Cabinet July 16. This was delayed in part due to purdah. This had 6 proposals for improvement.	Proposals reported in this December update
Leisure Review	Report presented to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny 28 June 16 and Cabinet 27 <sup>th</sup> July 16.	Proposals are reported in this December update
Waste Review	Fact Finding Letter	No proposals for improvement, not included on register.
Annual Improvement Report	Council 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 16	No separate proposals to include.

- 4.10 The Education Service advises there are no ESTYN reports or recommendations to report on this occasion. CSSIW carried out a national study called the 'National Review of care planning for children and young people subject to the Public Care Outline pre proceedings' and this is due out next month. In the meantime we have received a positive local output which has minor areas for consideration. When the report is final we may include these on the register for the next Audit report.
- 4.11 Wales Audit Office has stated that the decision on whether a proposal is completed is an internal matter and is for the organisation to decide, (although it is within their remit to make more proposals if they do not believe it has been addressed). We will forward the register onto the Wales Audit Office for their information and update once seen and agreed by Audit Committee.
- 4.12 We recommend 6 proposals be closed down as completed and encourage members to view the specific proposals attached within Appendix A and judge if they concur that the proposal is now completed.
- 4.13 When monitoring progress against the proposals, members are advised to consider what value the proposals are making and what difference the activity in addressing them has made for our citizens.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No specific Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this report; however the Local Government Measure 2009 cites fairness and accessibility as part of the definition of what 'Improvement' means.

## **6. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

- 6.1 Improvements in developing a Leisure Strategy would maximise contribution towards: A healthier Wales and Corporate Parenting and a new quality framework would help to maximise contribution towards a more equal Wales.
- 6.2 Some of the proposals impact change of planning for example developing a longer term MTFP, from three years to five years.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report although it is worth noting that external audit fees could be reduced, if regulators are assured and place reliance on the organisation's own ability to monitor and challenge itself to improve.

## **8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

- 9.1 There have been no consultations that have not been included in this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 It is recommended that Audit Committee note the contents of this report and give their agreement (where appropriate) to close the proposals that are noted as 'recommended to be closed' within the Appendix.

## **11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 To ensure members are aware of progress the Council's action plan for progressing regulator recommendations and proposals and have an opportunity to monitor and challenge its content.

## **12. STATUTORY POWER**

- 12.1 Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009.

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Appendices:

Appendix A: Update of proposal register November 2016.