



AUDIT COMMITTEE- 14 MAY 2013

**SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE REPORT: HUMAN RESOURCES AND
WORKFORCE THEMATIC REVIEW FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

REPORT BY: HEAD OF WORKFORCE & OD

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 In November 2011 PWC on Wales Audit Office (WAO) behalf undertook a Human Resources ("HR") and Workforce thematic review for local government which sought to answer the question:

"Does the Council have effective arrangements in place to manage and utilise its workforce?"

1.2 The attached report published in July 2012 outlines the main findings of the review, and this report highlights CCBC's response in addressing the improvement outcomes.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The review process involved a self-assessment process followed by a review of the evidence presented by PWC to verify the assessment process and evidence provided.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The Workforce is an integral part of the delivery of the Council's overall delivery of all its Corporate Plans and therefore is fundamental to the achievement of outcomes.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The review highlighted 4 main areas for improvement, which are summarised on the front page of the PWC report (see Appendix 2).

4.2 In order to ensure the issues may be progressed satisfactorily, an Action Plan has been drawn up and these outcomes are all included in the HR Service Improvement Plan for 2013-14. (Please see attached Action Plan as Appendix 1).

4.3 It is worth noting that there are some external developments that have and will impact on the delivery of the improvement plan. This review was not conducted in CCBC alone, but was part of a wider all Wales programme of reviews. Concerns were raised with the WAO by the HR Directors Network around the consistency and appropriateness of the WAO HR review framework, and there was discussion with a view to the HRD Network developing a mutually agreed approach. Some initial outline work was also undertaken by the HRD Network.

- 4.4 During 2012, the First Minister also launched a new Strategic Framework for the Public Sector Workforce in Wales titled "Working Together For Wales" on behalf of Welsh Government (WG). This document will be overseen and monitored by the Workforce Partnership Council in future years (Please see Appendix 3).
- 4.5 The WLGA HR Directors Network subsequently commissioned the production of a People Management Improvement Framework (PMIF) for Local Government, utilising specialist support available from the Local Government Association. (Please see Appendix 4) This approach built on the earlier outline work was discussed with officers from the Wales Audit Office, who were broadly supportive of the direction taken. As it is anticipated that WG will at a future point wish to review whether its Strategic Framework is operating effectively in Local Government (as well as other parts of the public sector), it was therefore prudent that this was inbuilt into the Performance Improvement Framework.
- 4.6 The Performance Improvement Framework has been the subject of ongoing consultation and is currently in a draft format (Please see appendix 5). A small working group made up of the LGA officers, the WLGA Director of Employment and representatives from the HR Directors Network (CCBC's Head of Workforce & OD is one of the HRD reps). Attention is currently being focussed on the documentary evidence requirements that will underpin the Framework itself, and how Councils will be able to factor in its performance against its priorities.
- 4.7 Officers from WAO (Huw Rees and Karen Lees) are actively engaged in this process in order that we may achieve an outcome that all parties will find mutually beneficial, and potentially avoid the duplication of resources and time. The Framework is being designed against the recognition that we need to have the flexibility within this process to recognise that differing authorities will be at differing stages of their maturity in terms of Workforce Strategies, and dependant upon the priorities that each council may face at a given point in time.
- 4.8 It is anticipated that the Performance Improvement Framework will be completed and ready for launch within Welsh LA's during this Autumn. This has resulted in a slight delay in progressing some of the actions from the review, in order that this could be encapsulated in our Action Plan.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no potential equalities implications of this report and its recommendations on groups or individuals who fall under the categories identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan. There is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment Questionnaire to be completed for this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications associated with this report. However, it should be recognised that there are potential resource constraints that will directly impact the HR service and for wider Management with the introduction of the Action Plan.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultees that have not been included in the overall report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that Audit Committee note the content of the PWC / Wales Audit report, and the Councils response.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure Regulator reviews are appropriately managed and monitored across the Authority.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Measure 2009, Wales Programme for Improvement 2010

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1 CCBC Action Plan
Appendix 2 PWC Thematic Review
Appendix 3 WG Publication - "Working Together for Wales" - A Strategic Framework for the Public Service Workforce in Wales
Appendix 4 HRD Network - The Development of a People Management Improvement Framework (PMIF) for Local Government
Appendix 5 Draft People Management Improvement Framework