



AUDIT COMMITTEE – 5TH FEBRUARY 2014

SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Under the local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 the Auditor General is required to give an opinion on whether the Council has discharged its duties in respect of improvement reporting and met the requirements of the measure.
- 1.2 This report to Audit Committee summarises the conclusions of the Auditor General's assessment for Caerphilly and also makes recommendations for future monitoring of delivery of any proposals for improvement flowing from the review.
- 1.3 Members have a critical role to play in evaluating Regulator reviews and in particular understanding what difference such reviews make to improvement of services for our citizens. They also have a clear role in monitoring progress in achieving report recommendations from the wide range of reviews undertaken.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Review headlines that:
 - In the opinion of the Auditor General, and based on audit work undertaken to date the Council has discharged its improvement reporting duties under the Measure although there is potential to strengthen its arrangements further.
- 2.2 The Auditor General has made a Proposal for Improvement. It is:
 - P1: In future reports the Council should:
 - Explain what corrective actions it has taken when performance and comparative information identifies areas in need of improvement.
 - Provide more contextual information within the main narrative to give a more rounded picture of performance and provide a fuller evaluation of performance against its improvement objectives.
 - Consider more targeted use and reporting of comparative information with similar councils during the year and within future performance reports.
- 2.3 The Auditor General will undertake more detailed work on the arrangements that support the Council's performance management and reporting over the following months and report this, as well as summarising WAO work and the work of other relevant regulators during 2013-14, in an Annual Improvement Report for the Council that will be issued by the end of March 2014.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 Service Improvement is key to delivering council priorities.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Director believes the Regulator's proposals and any subsequently agreed Action Plan should be monitored by the following route.

	For Decision	For Monitoring	Final Sign Off on completion
Corporate Management Team (CMT)		P1	By October 2014 Annual Performance Report publication date
Cabinet			
Scrutiny (state which)			
Audit committee			
Council			
Responsible officer only			

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Local Government Measure defines fairness and access as one of the criteria that constitutes 'improvement' within the Wales programme for Improvement 2009.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

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 approves the programme of monitoring detailed in paragraph 4.1 of this report.

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.

Author: Colin Jones, Head of Performance Management & Property Services
Consultees: N. Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services
Corporate Management Team
Cllr David Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Performance & Asset Management
Ros Roberts, Performance Management Manager

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Improvement Assessment Letter – 2nd December 2013