



AUDIT COMMITTEE – 5TH MARCH 2014

SUBJECT: PROGRESS ON THE IMPROVING GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND S 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the Audit Committee of the progress to date on the Improving Governance Programme (IGP), which has been expanded to include the action plans resulting from the WAO Public Interest Report on Chief Officers and Essential Car Users and Annual Leave Allowance published in December 2013 and the Special Inspection Report published in January 2014 presented to and approved by Council on 28th January, 2014.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides an update to Members of progress in respect of this key area requiring improvement as part of the Council's Improving Governance Programme.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Good governance arrangements should be embedded in the Authority.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Members are reminded that the Improving Governance Programme has been driven operationally by the Improving Governance Programme Board. This Board comprises:

Nicole Scammell - Acting Director of Corporate Services & S.151 Officer
Gill Lewis - Secondee from Aneurin Bevan Local Health Board
Cllr. C. Forehead - Cabinet Member for HR & Governance/Business Manager
Gareth Hardacre - Head of HR and OD
Colin Jones - Head of Performance and Property
Alessandra Veronese - Programme Manager
Gail Williams - Interim Monitoring Office
Dan Perkins - Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Lisa Lane - Solicitor

- 4.2 Members will be aware that the progress of the Improving Governance Programme is reported by the Board on a fortnightly basis to CMT and monthly to Cabinet. In addition the Audit Committee receive reports on a regular basis.
- 4.3 Members will be aware that the Auditor published two reports, the Welsh Office Public Interest Report on Chief Officers Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances and the Special Inspection Report, both were presented to Council on 28th January 2014. The reports highlighted a number of additional recommendations in relation to corporate governance.

- 4.4 At the meeting of Council, the proposed Action Plans to comply with the additional recommendations set out in the WAO reports were approved. The additional actions have now been incorporated into the existing Improving Governance Programme.
- 4.5 The report sets out details of the reports presented to Cabinet and Council on the Improving Governance Programme . The reports are listed as background papers (copies are available electronically).
- 4.6 A further report including the up-to-date Action Plan was presented to Cabinet on 19th February, 2014. The latest report to Cabinet sets out the progress to date and highlights outstanding issues and includes the additional actions as approved by Council on 28th January 2014. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix 1.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's Equalities process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Where applicable, these have been included in reports to Cabinet and Council.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Where applicable, these have been included in reports to Cabinet and Council.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All consultation responses have been included in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Audit Committee Members note progress made to date in respect of the Improving Governance Programme and the recent additions to the Programme.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To improve Corporate Governance and respond to the WAO Public Interest Report March 2013 and the Annual Improvement Report as presented to Council on 8th October, 2013, and the further WAO reports presented to Council on 28th January, 2013.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S.151 Officer
Consultees: Corporate Management Team
Cllr. C. Forehead, Cabinet Manager for HR & Governance / Business Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Cabinet Report 19th February, 2014 "Improving Governance Programme Update"

Background Papers:

- Programme Working Documents
- Report to Cabinet on 13th November, 2013 - *Improving Governance Programme Update*
- Report to Cabinet on 16th October, 2013 - *Improving Governance Programme Update*
- Report to Cabinet on 18th September, 2013 - *Improving Governance Action Plan*
- Report to Cabinet on 11th December, 2013 - *Improving Governance Action Plan*
- Report to Cabinet on 2nd October, 2013 - *Risk Management Strategy and Guidance*
- Report to Council on 8th October, 2013 - *Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan*
- Report to Cabinet on 30th October, 2013 - *Corporate Planning & Performance Framework*
- Report to Council on 29th January, 2014 - *Wales Audit Office Report - Public Interest Report on Chief Officers Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances*
- Report to Council on 29th January, 2014 - *Wales Audit Office Report - Special Inspection Caerphilly County Borough Council*
- Report presented to the Scrutiny Leadership Group on 30th January, 2014 - *Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan Update*