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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Julie Lloyd
(Tel: 01443 864246 Email: lloydj4@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 5th July 2023

To Whom it May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Governance and Audit Committee** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 11th July, 2023 at 2.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided on request.

Members of the public or Press may attend in person at Penallta House or may view the meeting live via the following link: <http://civico.net/caerphilly>

This meeting will be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the Council's website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christina Harray'.

Christina Harray
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

- 1 To appoint a Chair for the ensuing year.

Pages

A greener place Man gwyrdach



2 To appoint a Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

3 To receive apologies for absence.

4 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

5 Governance and Audit Committee held on 18th April 2023. 1 - 6

To receive and consider the following reports: -

6 Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Programme. 7 - 10

7 Update from Audit Wales. 11 - 24

8 Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23. 25 - 50

9 Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/23. 51 - 72

10 Corporate Risk Register (May 2023) Update. 73 - 82

11 Regulator Recommendation for Improvement Progress Update. 83 - 90

12 Audit Wales Report - Homelessness - Caerphilly County Borough Council. 91 - 106

To receive and note the following information items: -

13 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. 107 - 108

14 Officers Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality January to March 2023. 109 - 114

15 Register of Employees' Interests Forms 2022/23. 115 - 122

16 Corporate Governance Panel Minutes - 13th June 2023. 123 - 124

**If a member of the Governance and Audit Committee wishes for any of the above information reports to be brought forward for discussion at the meeting please contact Julie Lloyd, 01443 864246, by 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday 11th July 2023.*

Circulation:

Councillors M.A. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, Mrs P. Cook, G. Enright, J. Taylor and C. Wright

Lay Members: V. Pearson, L. M. Rees, J. Williams and Mr N.D. Yates

And Appropriate Officers

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GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY 18TH APRIL 2023 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

M. A. Adams, Mrs. E.M. Aldworth, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, Mrs T. Parry, J. Taylor and C. Wright (Vice Chair).

Lay Members:

N. Yates (Chair), M. Rees, V. Pearson and J. Williams.

Together with:

Officers: R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer), D. Gronow (Acting Internal Audit Manager), R. Roberts (Business Improvement Manager), A. Southcombe (Finance Manager – Corporate Finance), N. Roberts (Principal Group Accountant), R. H. Williams (Group Accountant Treasury and Capital), and J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer).

M. Jones, T. Buckle, and B. Roberts (Audit Wales).

Also in attendance: Councillor E. Stenner.

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting would be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items - [Click Here to View](#). Members were advised that voting on decisions would take place via Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P. Cook.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 24TH JANUARY 2023

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee held on 24th January 2023 be approved as a correct record, and by way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 9 votes for, 0 against, and 2 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2023 (minute nos. 1-14) be approved as a correct record.

4. GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer presented the Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Programme for the period April 2023 to May 2023, and noted that the Homelessness report that was presented to Members in the January 2023 meeting, would be brought back to the next meeting on 30th May, as requested by Members. Members were also advised that further meetings were being scheduled for September and November 2023.

M. Jones, Audit Wales, also noted that the 'Audit Wales 2023 Audit Plan' would need to be scheduled in the Forward Work Programme.

Members noted the details of reports scheduled for the forthcoming meetings.

It was moved and seconded that the Forward Work Programme be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal communication, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Forward Work Programme as appended to the meeting papers be approved.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. AUDIT WALES CAERPHILLY CBC ANNUAL AUDIT SUMMARY 2022.

B. Roberts, Audit Wales, introduced the report which showed the work completed since the last Annual Audit Summary, which was issued in January 2022. Members were advised that the audit summary forms part of the Auditor General for Wales' duties.

The Governance and Audit Committee noted the report.

6. AUDIT WALES AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS ADDENDUM.

The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer introduced the report which presented the Governance and Audit Committee with the Audit Wales 'Audit of Accounts Addendum Report' for the 2021/22 financial year.

Members were reminded that at its meeting on 10th January 2023, the Governance and Audit Committee received the Audit Wales 'Audit of Accounts Report' which stated that it was the Auditor General's intention to issue an unqualified audit opinion on the 2021/22

Financial Accounts. The 2021/22 Financial Accounts were endorsed by the Governance and Audit Committee and were subsequently approved by Council on the 17th of January 2023, and then certified by the Auditor General on the 18th of January 2023, with an unqualified audit opinion.

Members were also advised that at its meeting on 10th January 2023, the Governance and Audit Committee was also asked to note that an 'Audit of Accounts Addendum Report' would be issued following approval of the 2021/22 Financial Accounts, setting out details of Audit Wales recommendations arising from the audit of the accounts and the associated management responses.

A Member queried the staff shortages within Corporate Finance and Members were advised that recruitment was currently taking place and the section should be fully staffed within the next few months. Members were also advised that a fixed-term post had been established within the capital team, and that a recruitment process had also started for this post.

The Member also sought clarification in respect of the recommendation that the Council should strengthen the reporting to the Governance and Audit Committee in respect of Internal Audit's planned audits, and progress with them during the financial year. Members were advised that this information would be addressed in a report later on the agenda and were also advised that a progress report would be brought back to the Committee at a future meeting.

A Member sought clarification on the disclosure of financial instruments, investments and borrowings, being unnecessarily complex and confusing. Members were advised that the disclosures have provided more detail than necessary, and whilst they would still remain compliant, information provided would be reduced in the future.

A Member queried matters arising under exhibit 9 in the report, which referred to the Council's business continuity plans being overdue a thorough review and update. Members were advised that this was a finding by Audit Wales IT auditors and not the accountants. Members were also advised that the last review was in 2016 and that there had been significant changes since then that would be updated in a further review that would be undertaken in 2023/24.

A Member sought clarification as to whether the recommendations were the same for all local authorities or whether these were specific to Caerphilly. Members were advised that out of the 9 recommendations, 8 were specific to Caerphilly. Members were also advised that the previous year Caerphilly had received 17 recommendations. The Member also queried whether these recommendations were expected by the Management team and whether these recommendations would be addressed positively. Officers confirmed that the recommendations were accepted and would be addressed as set out in the management responses in the Addendum Report.

The Governance and Audit Committee noted the content of the report.

7. AUDIT WALES CAERPHILLY CBC OUTLINE 2023 AUDIT PLAN.

M. Jones, Audit Wales, introduced the report which sets out details of the Audit Wales team and key dates for delivering their activities and planned outputs.

The Governance and Audit Committee noted the content of the report.

8. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2023/24.

The Acting Internal Audit Manager introduced the report which sought approval from the Governance and Audit Committee of the Internal Audit Services Annual Audit Plan for the 2023/24 financial year. Members were informed that the Committee is responsible for ensuring that risk and internal controls are adequately managed and monitored, and that the work planned by Internal Audit will achieve the required levels of assurance. The report provided details of the resources available and planned work programme for Internal Audit Services for 2023/24.

A Member sought clarification on whether there was adequate internal audit coverage across the authority, and whether assurances could be given on this matter. Members were advised that the whole authority is covered within the 'audit universe' software. Members were also advised that more detailed information was available if required. Members were informed that the audit plan is a rolling programme of audits and each establishment in Caerphilly will get an audit over a specified period of time.

A Member queried whether the information on audits for schools could be separated from all other audits under the authority and requested that information could be provided on progress and audit priorities. Members were offered the opportunity to have a presentation on internal audit work, outside the formal Governance and Audit Committee meetings.

Having considered the report, it was moved and seconded that the Internal Audit Services Annual Audit Plan for the 2023/24 financial year be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 9 votes for, 0 against, and 1 abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED to approve the Internal Audit Services Annual Audit Plan 2023/24.

9. UPDATE ON INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Acting Internal Audit Manager introduced the report which provided Members of the Governance and Audit Committee with an update on progress on Internal Audit Report recommendations. Members had requested that regular reports are prepared to provide information on progress against Internal Audit recommendations. Members were referred to a table in the report at 5.9 which provided information on the status and number of recommendations, and a further table at 5.13 which included their risk ratings.

A Member sought clarification on the uncompleted audits and outstanding recommendations, and whether management teams were aware of the backlog of work outstanding. Members were advised that a number of new staff were employed in internal audit in the last 12 months, and numerous petty cash audits have been logged as individual audits. Members were also advised that regular updates would be provided to Members for assurance that the internal audit work was being progressed.

A Member questioned why there were more recommendations for the Education and Corporate Services directorate than the other directorates in the authority. Members were advised that the current audit coverage included schools, petty cash, purchasing cards, payroll and HR, and that all these departments came under the Education and Corporate Services directorate.

A Member raised concern on the number of overdue audits at the end of the financial year, and queried where the priority would be on referring these to Management and recording

the progress on the completion of the outstanding audits. Members were advised that the details were correct at the time of completing the report, and this may have changed considerably since completion of the report. Members were assured that where these audits are high risk, management would already be aware of them prior to the production of the report.

The Governance and Audit Committee noted the content of the report.

10-11. INFORMATION ITEMS

It was confirmed that none of the following items had been called forward for discussion at the meeting, and the Committee noted the contents of the reports: -

- (i) Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000;
- (ii) Officer's Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality October to December 2022.

The Chair thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and contributions and the meeting closed at 3.28 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2023.

CHAIR

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GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 11th JULY 2023

TITLE	PURPOSE	KEY ISSUES	PRESENTING OFFICER
Update from Audit Wales (Standing Item)			Audit Wales
Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23			D Gronow
Draft Annual Governance Statement			S Harris
Corporate Risk Register (May 2023) Update			R Roberts
Regulator Recommendation for Improvement Progress Update			R Roberts
Audit Wales Report – Homelessness – Caerphilly County Borough Council			K. Denman
INFORMATION ITEMS			
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000			L. Lane

Officers Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality	To provide the Governance and Audit Committee with the information regarding the Register of Employees' Interests Forms completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) regarding Gifts and Hospitality for the last quarter and a comparison with the previous three quarters.		L. Donovan
Register of Employees' Interests Forms 2022/23			L. Donovan
Corporate Governance Panel Minutes			D. Gronow

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 12th SEPTEMBER 2023

TITLE	PURPOSE	KEY ISSUES	PRESENTING OFFICER
Update from Audit Wales (Standing Item)			Audit Wales
Audit Wales 2023 Audit Plan			Audit Wales
Public Sector Internal Audit Standards Self Evaluation update			D. Gronow
Review and Refresh of Financial Regulations			S. Harris/D. Gronow

INFORMATION ITEMS			
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000			L. Lane
Officers Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality	To provide the Governance and Audit Committee with the information regarding the Register of Employees' Interests Forms completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) regarding Gifts and Hospitality for the last quarter and a comparison with the previous three quarters.		L. Donovan
Corporate Governance Panel Minutes			D. Gronow

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 7th NOVEMBER 2023

TITLE	PURPOSE	KEY ISSUES	PRESENTING OFFICER
Update from Audit Wales (Standing Item)			Audit Wales
Annual review of Complaints 2022/23			L. Lane

INFORMATION ITEMS			
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000			L. Lane
Officers Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality	To provide the Governance and Audit Committee with the information regarding the Register of Employees' Interests Forms completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) regarding Gifts and Hospitality for the last quarter and a comparison with the previous three quarters.		L. Donovan
Corporate Governance Panel Minutes			D. Gronow

Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – Caerphilly County Borough Council

Quarterly Update: 31 March 2023

Annual Audit Summary

Description	Timetable	Status
A report summarising completed audit work since the last Annual Audit Summary, which was issued in December 2021.	January 2023	Completed

Financial Audit work

Description	Scope	Timetable	Status
Audit of the Blackwood Arts Centre's 2021-22 charitable accounts	The statutory audit of the annual charitable accounts.	January 2023.	Completed and certified.
Audit of the Council's 2021-22 grant returns	Six grant returns require audit. They include Housing Benefits, Teachers' Pensions, Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) and pooled budget returns.	January 2023.	Completed and certified.
2022-23 annual statement of accounts	The statutory audit of the Council's annual accounts.	Late 2023	Some audit planning has commenced.

Description	Scope	Timetable	Status
Audit of the Council's 2022-23 grant returns	We anticipate that the same six grants will require audit for 2022-23.	Late 2023/early 2024	We expect these audits to commence in late 2023.
Audit of the Blackwood Arts Centre's 2021-22 charitable accounts	The statutory audit of the annual charitable accounts.	January 2023.	We expect this audit to be done around December 2023.

Performance Audit work

2022-23 Performance audit work	Scope	Timetable	Status
Assurance and Risk Assessment	<p>Project to identify the level of audit assurance and/or where further audit work may be required in future years in relation to risks to the Council putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources and acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle.</p> <p>The project is likely to focus in particular on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial position • Capital programme management • Use of performance information – with a focus on service user feedback and outcomes • Setting of well-being objectives 	April 2022 – August 2023	In progress

2022-23 Performance audit work	Scope	Timetable	Status
Thematic Review – Unscheduled Care	A cross-sector review focusing on the flow of patients out of hospital. This review will consider how the Council is working with its partners to address the risks associated with the provision of social care to support hospital discharge, as well as prevent hospital admission. The work will also consider what steps are being taken to provide medium to longer-term solutions.	August 2022 – February 2023	Fieldwork
Thematic review – Digital	This project is being scoped with further details of the specific focus of the review to be confirmed.	To be confirmed.	In progress
Local project – Waste Management	This project will focus on the Council's plans to meet current and future statutory recycling targets.	October – March 2023	Draft report issued

Local government national studies planned/in progress

Study	Scope	Timetable	Status	Fieldwork planned at the Council
Building Social Resilience and Self reliance	Review of how local authorities can build greater resilience in communities	Autumn 2021 – Autumn 2022	Published January 2023	
Building safety	Review of how well local authorities are delivering their responsibilities for building safety	September 2022 – August 2023	Evidence gathering – fieldwork underway	Yes – interview with nominated officer at the Council and survey.
Planning for sustainable development – Brownfield regeneration	Review of how local authorities are promoting and enabling better use of vacant non-domestic dwellings and brownfield sites	October 2022 – September 2023	Evidence gathering – fieldwork underway	Yes – interview with nominated officer at seven councils and survey.
Governance of special purpose authorities – National Parks	Review of systems and effectiveness of governance	November 2022 – September 2023	Evidence gathering – fieldwork underway	No

Study	Scope	Timetable	Status	Fieldwork planned at the Council
Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs)	Assessing CJCs' progress in developing their arrangements to meet their statutory obligations and the Welsh Government's aim of strengthening regional collaboration.	September 2022 – June 2023	Draft report has been issued to the four CJCs. Report due to be published May/June	Yes – We explored the Council's perspective via our routine liaison meetings. Fieldwork included interviews with the chief executive, director of finance and chair of each of the four CJCs.

Estyn

Our link inspectors are continuing to work with Torfaen as part of our follow-up process for an authority causing significant concern. Wrexham local authority is still in a causing concern category and we convened a progress conference in December to look specifically at the school improvement recommendation. We are proposing to re-visit Wrexham in the summer term. We will convene an improvement conference in Powys in May to consider aspects of their work on school improvement, the transformation agenda and financial management in schools. We contributed to risk and assurance workshops in conjunction with Audit Wales and CIW in all local authorities during the spring term. We inspected Blaenau Gwent in December, and the report was published on 10 February. We inspected Rhondda Cynon Taf in January, and the report will be published on 31 March.

Field work being carried out across local authorities during the spring term includes a focus on elective home education, support for ALN reform and joint visits with colleagues from the Welsh Government to evaluate the work of local authorities regarding the support they provide to deliver national digital strategies.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

CIW planned work 2022-23	Scope	Timetable	Status
Programme 2022-23	We will publish our amended Code of Practice for the review of local authority social services in April 2023.	April 2023	Preparing for publication
Joint work	We are finalising our thematic reviews programme of work for 2023-2026. Areas for consideration include, adult safeguarding, carers, CLDT and CAMHS.	Current	In progress
	We continue to work with partners, sharing information and intelligence including completing joint reviews.	Current	In progress
	We are working in collaboration with HIW for a national review of the stroke pathway. A national report will be published early summer.	Current	In progress
	We continue to work in collaboration with HIW in conducting CMHT inspections.	Current	In progress
	CIW is working with partners to complete a rapid review. The overarching objective of the rapid review is to determine to what extent the current structures and processes in Wales ensure children who are in need of care, support and protection are appropriately placed on, and removed from, the Child Protection Register, when sufficient evidence indicates it is safe to do so. This is a collaborative review.	January 2023 – June 2023	In progress

CIW planned work 2022-23	Scope	Timetable	Status
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Annual Monitoring Report for Health and Social Care 2021-22	The 2020-21 report was published on 7 February 2021.	Published	Published
National review of Care Planning for children and young people subject to the Public Law Outline pre-proceedings	<p>Purpose of the review</p> <p>To provide external scrutiny, assurance and to promote improvement regarding the quality of practice in relation to the care planning for children and young people subject to the public law outline pre-proceedings.</p> <p>To consider the extent to which practice has progressed since the publication of both the CIW 'National Review of care planning for children and young people subject to public law outline pre proceedings' and the publication of the PLO working group report 2021 including best practice guidance.</p>	September 2022 – Spring 2023	Delivery
Joint Inspection Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA)	<p>Cross-inspectorate approach. Areas to be determined. We will complete a further four multi-agency joint inspections in total. Each local authority will have a published letter post inspection.</p> <p>We will publish a national report in late 2023.</p>	Autumn 2022 – late spring 2023	Delivery

Audit Wales national reports and other outputs published since January 2022

Report title	Publication date and link to report
Digital inclusion in Wales (including key questions for public bodies)	March 2023
Orthopaedic Services in Wales – Tackling the Waiting List Backlog	March 2023
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – Review of Board Effectiveness	February 2023
Welsh Government purchase of Gilestone Farm	January 2023
Together we can – Community resilience and self-reliance	January 2023
A Picture of Flood Risk Management	December 2022
'A missed opportunity' – Social Enterprises	December 2022
Poverty Data Tool	November 2022
'Time for change' – Poverty in Wales	November 2022
Learning from cyber-attacks	October 2022 (distributed privately to audited bodies)
National Fraud Initiative 2020-21	October 2022

Report title	Publication date and link to report
COVID-19 business support in 2020-21 – Memorandum for the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee	October 2022
Payment to the Welsh Government’s Former Permanent Secretary on Termination of Employment	September 2022
Equality Impact Assessments: More than a Tick Box Exercise?	September 2022
Welsh Government – setting of well-being objectives	September 2022
Welsh Government workforce planning and management	September 2022
NHS Wales Finances Data Tool – up to March 2022	August 2022
Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030: Evidence Report	August 2022
Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030	July 2022
Sustainable Tourism in Wales’ National Parks	July 2022
Third Sector COVID-19 Response Fund – Memorandum for the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee	July 2022

Report title	Publication date and link to report
The Welsh Community Care Information System – update and data tool	July 2022
Tackling the Planned Care Backlog in Wales – and waiting times data tool	May 2022
The new Curriculum for Wales	May 2022
Unscheduled care – data tool and commentary	April 2022
Direct Payments for Adult Social Care	April 2022
Local Government Financial Sustainability data tool	February 2022
Joint Working Between Emergency Services (including data tool)	January 2022

Audit Wales national reports and other outputs (work in progress/planned)¹

Title	Indicative publication date
NHS quality governance	May/June 2023

¹ We will continue to keep our plans under constant review, taking account of the evolving external environment, our audit priorities, the context of our own resourcing and the capacity of audited bodies to engage with us. Our Annual Plan 2023-24 will confirm plans for new work in other topic areas and we will update this list accordingly at the next quarterly update.

Title	Indicative publication date
Local Government Financial Sustainability Data tool update	April 2023
Springing Forward: Managing assets and workforce in local government	May/June 2023
NHS workforce planning (data briefing)	May/June 2023
Maximising EU funding	May/June 2023
Covering teachers' absence – follow-up	July 2023
NHS finances data tool – to 31 March 2023	July/August 2023
Net zero (pan UK overview)	August/September 2023
Ukrainian refugee services	September 2023
Local government digital strategy review – national summary	October 2023
Local government use of performance information, outcomes and service user perspective – national summary	October 2023
Affordable housing	January/February 2024
Local government capital programme management – national summary	To be confirmed

Title	Indicative publication date
Active travel	To be confirmed
Cancer services	To be confirmed

Good Practice Exchange events and resources

Title	Link to resource
<p>Tackling poverty in Wales: responding to the challenge – this shared learning event brought people together from across public services to share ideas, learning and knowledge on how organisations can respond to the challenges caused by poverty. We shared examples of approaches being taken by organisations within Wales and across the UK.</p>	<p><u>Tackling poverty resources</u></p>
<p>Making Equality Impact Assessments more than a tick box exercise: This shared learning event aims to assist public bodies to improve use and application of EIAs beyond an exercise in compliance by bringing people together from across public services to share ideas, learning and knowledge.</p>	<p><u>Making Equality Impact Assessments more than a tick box exercise resources</u></p>

Title	Link to resource
<p>Together we can – creating the conditions to empower our communities to thrive: This shared learning event will bring people together from across public services to share ideas, learning and knowledge. We will share the findings of our reports on social enterprises and community resilience, including our recommendations going forward.</p>	<p>19 April 2023 – 9 am – 1 pm – Cardiff. To register, please complete our booking form.</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: Inspired by the Football Association of Wales journey over the past decade, this event will examine and discuss how going beyond expectations creates an inclusive and positive attitude that becomes self-fulfilling.</p> <p>Working in partnership with the Future Generations Commissioner and the Welsh Language Commissioner, this event will assist and inspire public bodies, and the third sector to embrace the cultural diversity of modern Wales and work beyond compliance and into excellence.</p>	<p>To register, please complete our booking form.</p>

Recent Audit Wales blogs

Title	Publication date
<p>Helping people to help themselves</p>	<p>15 February 2023</p>
<p>A perfect storm – the cost of living crisis and domestic abuse</p>	<p>21 November 2022</p>

Title	Publication date
<u>Tackling poverty means tackling poverty data</u>	11 November 2022
<u>Cost of living and putting away the bayonet</u>	21 September 2022
<u>Heat is on to tackle Climate Change</u>	18 August 2022
<u>Direct Payments in Wales</u>	15 June 2022
<u>Unscheduled Care in Wales – a system under real pressure</u>	21 April 2022
<u>Skills Competition Wales</u>	18 February 2022
<u>Cyber resilience – one year on</u>	9 February 2022
<u>Helping to tell the story through numbers</u> (Local government financial sustainability data tool)	3 February 2022
<u>Call for clearer information on climate change spending</u>	2 February 2022
<u>Actions speak louder than words</u> (Building social resilience and self-reliance in citizens and communities)	14 January 2022



GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - 11TH JULY 2023

SUBJECT: ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2022/23

REPORT BY: ACTING INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES MANAGER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Governance and Audit Committee of the Internal Audit Manager's overall opinion on the Authority's Internal Control Systems derived from the work undertaken by Internal Audit Services during the 2022/23 financial year.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 It is a requirement the Council's Financial Regulations, the Internal Audit Charter and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) that the Head of Internal Audit provides an annual report to support the Annual Governance Statement. The report should: -
- Include an opinion on the overall systems of internal controls.
 - Present a summary of the audit work that has been undertaken on which this opinion is based.
 - Draw attention to any issues which may impact on the level of assurance provided.
- 2.2 The annual audit opinion should include an evaluation of 3 elements: governance arrangements, risk management and internal control. The audit opinion informs the annual governance review process and is incorporated into the Draft 2022/23 Annual Governance Statement, which is included separately on the agenda.
- 2.3 All audits performed with the exception of most grant certifications, contract final accounts, value for money, and other special reviews generate an overall audit opinion. The audit opinion is based on the number and risk rating of the individual findings noted in the audit. For grants and contracts the opinions are assessed in relation to the risk or impact of the non-compliance or the number of individual non-compliance issues noted. A report was presented to the Audit Committee in 2018 which provided details of the methodology supporting how the audit opinions are generated.

- 2.4 For systems and establishment reviews opinions are rated as “effective”, “effective with opportunity to improve”, “in need of improvement” or “inadequate and in need of Immediate Improvement”.
- 2.5 Grants are assessed “compliant” or “non-compliant” with the grant terms and conditions, and final account audits are assessed as “compliant”, “substantially compliant”, “partially compliant” or “non-compliant” with the Council’s Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.
- 2.6 The audit opinions support the assurance that can be gained overall as those audits noted as “effective” or “compliant” support full assurance, “effective with opportunity to improve” or “substantially compliant” support substantial assurance, “in need of improvement” or “partially compliant” support partial or limited assurance and “inadequate and in need of immediate improvement” or “non-compliant” support no assurance.
- 2.7 A number of school based audits were unable to be progressed during 2022/23 due to industrial action commencing after the start of the audit . These are marked in Appendix 1 as “unable to progress.”
- 2.8 A small number of specific pieces of work do not generate an opinion but the numbers of these are not significant in relation to the overall number and types of audits performed.
- 2.9 Therefore, overall assurance in relation to the Council’s system of internal controls can be gained by considering the range and number of audits and the opinions generated.
- 2.10 This report provides an overview of the work performed and a detailed schedule of audits is attached as Appendix 1

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Governance and Audit Committee is asked to note the content of this report and the Internal Audit Manager’s annual opinion for the 2022/23 financial year in order for the Committee to gain the required assurance to fulfil its role.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure that: -

- the Governance and Audit Committee is aware of the level of Internal Audit coverage and the overall opinion derived from undertaking this work;
- adequate supporting information and evidence has been supplied to the Governance and Audit Committee to enable the Committee to meet its requirements under the Committee’s terms of reference; and
- adequate assurance is provided to support the Annual Governance Statement process.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Both the Council's Financial Regulations and the Internal Audit Charter set out the reporting requirements for Internal Audit Services, and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) introduced in 2013 have also reinforced the links with corporate governance and the assurance framework.
- 5.2 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Governance and Audit Committee with an opinion or view of the robustness and effectiveness of the internal control systems and procedures in place within the organisation during the 2022/23 financial year.
- 5.3 The opinion is a key element of the annual governance review process and forms part of the published Annual Governance Statement.
- 5.4 The approach adopted for reviewing and evaluating the internal controls and processes revolves around a flexible well-constructed plan that considers several factors such as risk, impact, nature and history etc.
- 5.5 Good progress has now been made in filling vacant posts in the Internal Audit Team and at the time of drafting this report there is just one vacancy remaining with plans in place to recruit. Time and resources have been needed to support the newly recruited staff in developing their skills and experience.
- 5.6 As Members may be aware, PSIAS requires that all Internal Audit staff undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD), so allocation of resources to training and developing staff is essential and will pay dividends in the future as a well-trained, skilled team will be more resilient to deal with future challenges. Currently the staffing profile consists of 2 qualified accountants, 2 part-qualified accountants who are continuing their professional studies, and one qualified Accounting Technician (AAT). One member of staff is being supported through AAT and one other member of staff is planning to commence studying an accountancy qualification later in 2023. The Acting Internal Audit Manager is also an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors.
- 5.7 A number of audits remained uncompleted at the end of the previous financial year (2021/22) and work was performed to complete these in 2022/23, together with new assignments started in-year. The 2022/23 audits which remain incomplete will be concluded in 2023/24.
- 5.8 A full list of audits undertaken is attached at Appendix 1 and this includes audits brought to completion in the year and those started but which were incomplete and are carried forward into 2023/24. 463 individual pieces of work were undertaken, 50 were unable to be completed, and 25 were incomplete at 31st of March.
- 5.9 In addition, other work undertaken such as grant certification work, internal control advice, system advice, and special investigations etc. can also inform the overall assurance provided by the audit opinion.

- 5.10 The total number of opinions generated between 1/4/22 and 31/3/23 are shown in the table below. .

Opinion	Number	Percentage
Effective	106	27%
Effective with opportunity to Improve	193	50%
In need of Improvement	39	10%
Inadequate	2	0.4%
Compliant	33	9%
Substantially compliant	7	2%
Partly compliant	1	0.2%
Non-compliant	2	0.4%
No opinion	5	1%
TOTAL	388	100

Of the completed audits it can be seen that nearly 86% of the audits completed in the year generated a positive opinion (2021/22 80%)

- 5.11 Further information can also be gleaned in relation to the audits performed by a more detailed analysis of the findings generated from the audits performed. Findings are the individual points noted (if any) during the audit process and as a whole support the overall opinion generated. The MK Insights I.T. system allows findings to be analysed at a granular level and this analysis can also further inform the Committee as to the assurance levels and framework of internal controls. The table below shows an analysis of the findings generated between 1/4/22 and 31/3/23 and the risk ratings associated with them.

Risk rating	Number	Percentage
High	166	25%
Medium	193	30%
Merits attention	291	44%
For information only	8	1%
Total	658	100%

- 5.12 Systems audits have been carried out during 2022/23 on some of the Council's systems by means of internal control reviews, interviews with service managers and testing of samples of transactions and processes.
- 5.13 Data was also submitted to the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) in October 2022 and matches were released in January. Work on these data matches has commenced.
- 5.14 Grant certification - A number of Welsh Government grants are received by the Authority that are subject to a review of accuracy and compliance with terms and conditions requiring a year-end certification. Significant revenue streams arise from these grants.
- 5.15 Internal Audit continues to support internal groups such as the Information Governance Stewards' Group and the Complaints Group.
- 5.16 The Internal Audit Manager is a member of the Corporate Governance Panel and minutes of these meetings are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee for

information. The Panel has significant input into the Annual Governance Statement process.

- 5.17 Internal Audit Services has continued to undertake final account reviews and other contract audit work.
- 5.18 Anonymous letters, reports and complaints are received and assessed within Internal Audit to ensure that they are properly considered, and if necessary, they are then passed to appropriate service areas for further investigation or review. Resource demand for this process is difficult to forecast. These anonymous communications cover a range of possible issues and include highways, planning, anti-social behaviour, tipping, animal control, neighbour issues, child protection and safeguarding, and possible other illegal activities. Each report is assessed individually and referred appropriately. Where allegations relate to criminal activities, benefit fraud, staff irregularities or safeguarding, immediate referrals are made to relevant parties.
- 5.19 Internal Audit also log and record cheques returned to the Authority. Resources for this process are difficult to forecast, however these numbers are showing a continued downward trend which is to be expected as the number of cheque payments issued by the Council reduces.
- 5.20 Other audit work undertaken during the period under review included regularity work, advisory work, supporting working parties and advising on best practise in relation to new systems and processes.
- 5.21 The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) came into force on the 1st of April 2013 and consist of the following: -
- Definition of internal audit.
 - Code of Ethics.
 - Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.
- 5.22 The Internal Audit Service continued to conform to the Standards during 2022/223 and no significant deviations have been noted. An external peer review assessment of compliance with the Standards is due later this year.
- 5.23 An in previous years, the Senior Leadership Team under the direction of the Chief Executive and advice of the Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer and the Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer has adopted a robust and clear demonstration of governance and internal controls. The Governance Panel has met regularly, and it is considered that governance continues to be effective.
- 5.24 The Council's risk management processes and risk register continue to be reported to the Governance & Audit Committee and it is considered that this continues to be effective.

Conclusion

- 5.25 **Internal Audit manager's opinion** - The Internal Audit Manager's opinion is based on the output of the work undertaken in the year including assessments and judgements on governance arrangements and the findings and opinions from individual audits as detailed in paragraphs 5.10 and 5.11.

5.26 The data in relation to work undertaken, audit findings and opinions supports the Internal Audit Manager's opinion that the Council's systems and control procedures are effective.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no assumptions in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is not required as this report is for information purposes only.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 All comments have been reflected in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government and Elections Act 2021

Author: D Gronow, Acting Internal Audit Manager

Consultees: C Harrhy, Chief Executive
R Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services
S Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Audit work undertaken in the period to 31/3/2023.

Appendix 1 Audit work undertaken in the period to 30/3/2023

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
T1095 Nantgarw Cemetery Contracts final account	Mar-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
EXT17C - U37C Retaining Walls Scheme Wattsville and Pontlottyn Contracts final account	Mar-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
TO2109 WHQS External Works, The Crescent, Machen Contracts final account	Mar-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
TH1321 - GUH Traffic Sign Review Contracts final account	Mar-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
Martinsfield - Heat Pumps and Central Heating Contracts final account	Mar-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
EXT18C-UC33PS Pantycelyn Contracts final account	Apr-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4708 - Caerphilly Leisure Centre Replacement of Water Tanks Contracts final account	Apr-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
5028 Cefn Hengoed Community Centre Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4915 - Cefn Forest Juniors Boiler Replacement Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
4742 - Blackwood Primary School, Boiler Replacement Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4939 - Panside Primary School Toilet Refurb Final Account Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4746 - Trinity Fields Boiler Replacement Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
Supporting People HSG 2021-2022 Supporting People Grant Certification	Sep-22	Grant certification	Audit Closed	Compliant
5003 - Newbridge School, External Works Contract Final Account updated	Sep-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
Castle Court, Pontywaun Roofing Contract Final Account updated	Oct-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4727 - Ty Isaf Children's Home Refurbishment Contract Final Account updated	Oct-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
5177 Rhiw Syr Dafydd WC refurbishment Contract Final Account updated	Oct-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4912 - Ty Sign Primary Curtain Walling Works (Phase 2) Contract Final Account updated	Nov-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
5019 Coed-y-Brain Primary Roofing Works Contract Final Account updated	Nov-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
4841 Cefn Fforest Primary - Roof Replacement Works Contract Final Account updated	Nov-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4962 Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary - Replacement Boilers Contract Final Account updated	Nov-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
5038 St Martin's School Boiler Plant Contract Final Account updated	Dec-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
EXT19C-UC40PS Rhymney South - Hedlyn Builders Contract Final Account updated	Dec-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4863 Trinity Fields School - Building Contract Contract Final Account updated	Dec-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4921 Ysgol Ifor Bach - Damp Proofing Classroom Floors Contract Final Account updated	Dec-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4906 Crosskeys YC - Flood Damage Contract Final Account updated	Jan-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
5005 Blackwood Comp Roof Replacement Contract Final Account updated	Feb-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
4888 St. Cenydd Comp Fire Precaution Works Contract Final Account updated	Feb-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
WHQS Bryn Canol, Bedwas - RWS Contract Final Account updated	Feb-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
WHQS Bryn Canol, Bedwas - C G Brickwork Contract Final Account updated	Feb-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
EXT 17C-LC29PS - WHQS Scheme 9-20 Stanley Drive Contract Final Account updated	Mar-23	Contract Audit	Audit Completed	Compliant
TH1243 - Hafodyrynys Hill Demolition Contract Final Account updated	Mar-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
5081 Ysgol Ivor Bach, Boilers and Valves Contract Final Account updated	Mar-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Compliant
Libanus Primary School School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective
NFI match 002 HB to Student loans NFI match checking	Nov-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective
Payroll related NFI data matches 66, 67.1, 67.2, 68, 68.1, and 78 NFI payroll matches	Nov-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective
Blue badge NFI matches 170, 170.1, 172.1, 172.3, 172.7, 172.8, 172.9 NFI match checking	Nov-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective
COVID-19 Business Support Grants (Not NNDR) Grant Audit	Mar-22	System Audit	Audit Closed	Effective
Effective School Control Risk Self Assessment - Other	Mar-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective
NFI match report 67.1 NFI match checking	Sep-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
NFI Data match 68.1 NFI match checking	Sep-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective
NFI Data match report 120 NFI match checking	Sep-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective
NFI data match 156 NFI match checking	Sep-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective
NFI Data match 133 NFI match checking	Sep-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective
Social Services Corporate Safeguarding Self Evaluation Audit Corporate Safeguarding SAQ - Corporate Safeguarding Officer	Jun-22	Crosscutting Review	Audit Closed	Effective
Petty Cash user admin @72 Audits	Jul-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective
Starters and Recruitment Payroll -starters	Nov-22	System Audit	Audit Completed	Effective
5029 - Bedwas Comp. - Ph 2 Fire Precaution Works Contract Final Account updated	Nov-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Effective
Purchase Card - Cardholder Testing @15 Audits	Sep-22	System Audit	Audit Completed	Effective
5095 Twyn Primary - Window Refurbishment Works Contract Final Account updated	Nov-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Effective
Abercam Primary SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Completed	Effective
Cwrt Rawlin Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
The Twyn Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective
Ysgol y Lawnt SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective
Coed Y Brain Primary School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Ysgol Gymraeg Gilfach Fargoed School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Ysgol Gymraeg Trelyn School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Aberbargoed Primary School School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Hendredenny Park Primary School School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Ysgol Y Lawnt School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Pontllanfraith Primary School School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
NFI purchase ledger creditor detail matches 701, 702, 703 and 707 NFI match checking	Nov-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Bedwas High School School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Mar-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
St Cenydd Community school School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Mar-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
NFI Data match 131 NFI match checking	Sep-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
CCTV Control Room (Public Open Spaces)	May-22	System Audit	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Pupil Deprivation Grant Pupil Deprivation Grant Certification for EAS	May-22	Grant certification	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Education Improvement Grant School Improvement grant certification for EAS	May-22	Grant certification	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Risca Primary School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	May-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services Self Safeguarding Evaluation Audit Corporate Safeguarding SAQ -	Jun-22	Crosscutting Review	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Phillipstown Primary Consultation Phillipstown Primary Advisory Review	Jul-22	Advisory Review	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Allta Advisory Review Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Allta Advisory Review	Jul-22	Advisory Review	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Petty Cash User admin @ 16Audits	Jul-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Purchase Card User Administration 73 Audit visits	Sep-22	System Audit	Audit Completed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Purchase Card Authoriser Administration @62 Audits	Sep-22	System Audit	Audit Completed	Effective with opportunity to improve
HR Payroll Employee Existence Payroll - existence, duplicated posts and ghost employees	Oct-22	System Audit	Audit Completed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Purchase Card - Cardholder @14 Audits	Sep-22	System Audit	Audit Completed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Bryn Primary School Full Audit	Nov-22	Establishment Audit	Audit Completed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Ystrad Primary School Establishment Audit Full Audit	Nov-22	Establishment Audit	Audit Closed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Payroll Leavers Payroll - leavers	Sep-22	System Audit	Audit Started	Effective with opportunity to improve
Nant y Parc Primary SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective with opportunity to improve
Plas y felin Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective with opportunity to improve
YGG Caerffili SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective with opportunity to improve
Idris Davies School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective with opportunity to improve

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
St Cenydd Comprehensive School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	Effective with opportunity to improve
Lewis Girls School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Completed	Effective with opportunity to improve
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Allta School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
NFI Council Tenants to HMRC data match 485 (property) NFI match checking	Nov-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
NFI CTRS to HMRC data matches 483 (property) and 484 (earnings) NFI match checking	Nov-21	Regularity	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
Cwrt Rawlin Primary School School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Jan-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
Islwyn High School School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Jan-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
Data Protection Training Records	Feb-22	System Audit	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
Risca Comprehensive School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Mar-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
Payment Card Industry Data @30 Audit visits	May-22	System Audit	Audit Closed	In need of improvement
Management of Temporary ID cards Temporary ID cards	Sep-22	Regularity	Audit Started	In need of improvement

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Ty Newydd Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Work Approved	In need of improvement
Petty Cash User admin	Sep-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Completed	Inadequate and in need of immediate improvement
Tyn y Wern Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Inadequate and in need of immediate improvement
Homelessness Audit 2022-23 Homelessness VFM Audit	Jan-23	VFM	Audit Started	Incomplete
Administration Additional Fuel scheme payments Consultancy	Mar-23	Consultancy Review	Audit Approved	Incomplete
Historical Financial Admin Bryn Awel Primary School	Dec-22	Special Investigation	Audit Closed	N/A
Underbankings Fochriw Primary School	Dec-22	Special Investigation	Audit Closed	N/A
DWP Security review	Nov-22	Special Investigation	Audit Closed	N/A
Armed Forced Advice and Guidance Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Oct-22	Consultancy Review	Audit Closed	N/A
DWP Security review	Feb-23	Special Investigation	Audit Closed	N/A
Lewis Drive Hedlyn EXT17C LC33PS Contracts final account	May-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Non compliant
TO2322 Rudry Trapwell Caerphilly Contracts final account	Mar-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Non Compliant
5014 St Martin's School Contract Final Account updated	Mar-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Partly compliant

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
EC19C-EC40 Woodward Avenue/Waunfawr Road Contract Final Account updated	May-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Substantially compliant
TO1812 - Blocks 3 & 4 Third Avenue, Trecenydd Contract Final Account updated	Jul-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Substantially compliant
4964 St Martins Comp Boiler Replacement Final Account Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Substantially compliant
5030 Demolition of Specsavers Final account Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Substantially compliant
4874 Ystrad Mynach Primary Boiler Replacement Final Account Contract Final Account updated	Aug-22	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Substantially compliant
EXT17C-U25C Upper Rhymney: Hedlyn Builders Contract Final Account updated	Mar-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Substantially compliant
4880 High Street Bargoed Contract Final Account updated	Mar-23	Contract Audit	Audit Closed	Substantially compliant
Ysgol Bro Sannan School Control Risk Self Assessment programme	Sep-21	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Bryn Awel Primary SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self- Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Graig y Rhacca Infants and Junior School SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Hendre Infants school SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Rhydri Primary Schools SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
St James Primary School SAQ plus 2023 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Upper Rhymney Primary School SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
White Rose Primary School SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
YG Cwm Derwen SAQ plus 2022.23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
YG Gilfach Fargoed SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Risca Comprehensive School SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Blackwood Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Cefn Fforest Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Coed y Brain Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Crumlin High Level Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Cwm Glas Infants School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Cwm lfor Primary School 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Cwmfelinfach Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Hendre Junior School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Maesycwmmmer Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Penllwyn Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Pentwynmawr Primary School SAQ2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Pontllanfraith Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Rhiw Syr Daffydd Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Risca Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
YGG Y Castell SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Ynysddu Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
YG Bro Sannan SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Aberbargoed Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Bedwas Infants School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Bedwas Junior School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Deri Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Derwendeg Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Fleur de Lys Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Greenhill Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Libanus Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Llancaeach Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Llanfabon Infants School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Markham Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
YG Penalltau SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Pengam Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Phillipstown Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Tir y Berth Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Trinant Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Ty Sign Primary SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Waunfawr Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
YG Cwm Gwyddon SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
YG Trelyn SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Bedwas High School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Newbridge Comprehensive School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Closed	Unable to progress Audit after commencement.
Petty Cash SAQ @ 3 Audits	Sep-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Hengoed Primary School Full Audit	Feb-23	Establishment Audit	Audit Started	Under review
Lewis School Pengam Full Audit	Mar-23	Establishment Audit	Audit Started	Under review
Fochriw Primary SAQ plus 2023/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Started	Under review
YG Bro Allta SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Started	Under review
YG Cwm Rymni SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Started	Under review
St Martins SAQ plus 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Nov-22	SAQ plus	Audit Started	Under review
Cwmaber Infants School 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Cwmaber Junior School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Sep-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Cwmcarn Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Gilfach Fargoed SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Glyngaer Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Hendredenny Park Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Machen Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Pantside Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Park Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Trinity Fields School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Ty Isaf Primary School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self-Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review

Audit Title	Audit Period	Audit Type	Audit Status	Compliance with Controls
Ysgol Ifor Bach SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self- Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Blackwood Comprehensive School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self- Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review
Islwyn High School SAQ 2022/23 Schools 2022 - Control Risk Self- Assessment	Dec-22	SAQ Control Risk Self-Assessment	Audit Started	Under review

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GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - 11TH JULY 2023

SUBJECT: DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23

REPORT BY: HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES AND S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Members of the Governance and Audit Committee with the Draft Annual Governance Statement for the 2022/23 financial year.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides details of the Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23.
- 2.2 Good corporate governance requires the active participation of Members and Officers across the Council drawing on their skills and knowledge and the document reflects this input. The Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 also includes updates on the area for improvement noted in the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 and identifies any new issues arising in 2022/23.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Governance and Audit Committee is asked to consider the Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and endorse its content subject to any changes agreed.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure that the Draft Annual Governance Statement is considered by the Governance and Audit Committee prior to its inclusion in the 2022/23 Draft Financial Statements.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 is attached as Appendix 1 to allow members of the Governance and Audit Committee to consider its content.

- 5.2 The document has been prepared by the Corporate Governance Review Panel. The Panel has considered responses from the Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service, and other key Officers in this process and has included these as appropriate.
- 5.3 As part of this process, the previous year's Annual Governance Statement (2021/22) has been reviewed by the Panel to assess progress on addressing issues raised and these have been updated within the document.
- 5.4 The Panel has also identified any issues for improvement that need to be reported in the 2022/23 Annual Governance Statement.
- 5.5 The Draft Annual Governance Statement will be incorporated into the 2022/23 Draft Financial Statements which will be submitted to Audit Wales on the 31st of July 2023 for the external audit to be completed.
- 5.6 The audited 2022/23 Financial Statements and External Auditor's report will subsequently be presented to the Governance and Audit Committee and Council for approval (dates to be confirmed).

Conclusion

- 5.7 The Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 has been prepared by the Corporate Governance Review Panel.
- 5.8 One specific action has been identified moving forward in the 2022/23 Statement

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 It is assumed that during the annual governance review process only those issues of corporate significance will be highlighted for consideration within the Annual Governance Statement.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Draft Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 is a statement of fact which includes one recommended action in respect of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is not required at this time as the annual budget setting process is subject to widespread consultation with IIAs being completed as required on specific proposals.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The Draft Annual Governance Statement has been considered by the Corporate Governance Review Panel and the Chief Executive, Directors, and Heads of Service have been consulted. All comments have been reflected in the Draft Annual Governance Statement attached as Appendix 1.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government and Elections Act 2021

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

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Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Governance Framework comprises the systems, processes, culture, and values by which the Council is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads the community.
- 1.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed: -
- To identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives.
 - To evaluate the likelihood and impact of those risks being realised.
 - To manage the identified risks effectively.
- 1.3 The 2022/23 financial year presented some key challenges for the Council, in particular the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate peaked at 11.1% in October 2022, which is the highest level in 40 years, and the impacts of this have keenly felt by both the Council and our residents. More details are provided in Section 5.2.10 of this document.

2. Scope of responsibility

- 2.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. The Council also had a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (Part 6 chapter one), which provides for a new and reformed legislative framework for local government elections, democracy, governance, and performance. A principal Council has a duty (Section 89) to keep under review the extent to which it is fulfilling the 'performance requirements' that is, the extent to which: -
- it is exercising its functions effectively;
 - it is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; and
 - its governance is effective for securing the above.

We also have a duty to consult a range of people and to report on performance (Sections 90 and 91).

- 2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development in setting its objectives. To do this we have set and published Well-being Objectives including the steps we will take, and the resources we will need to deliver them.
- 2.3 Audit Wales and the Future Generations Commissioner accept that public bodies will publish one set of objectives covering improvement and well-being and there is an expectation that the Corporate Plan, which encompasses the Well-being Objectives is reviewed annually.
- 2.4 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023

2.5 The Council has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government’. The Code is available through the following link: -

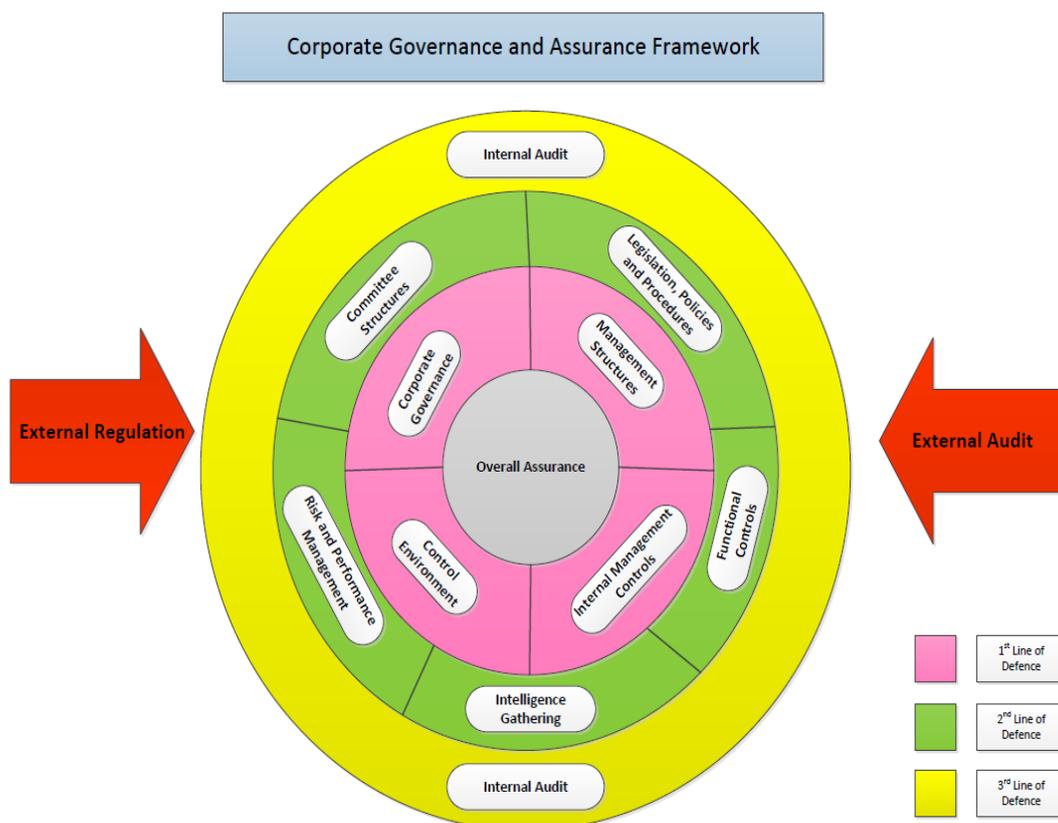
[Code of Corporate Governance](#)

2.6 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) explains how the Council has complied with the Code and meets the requirements of regulation 5(4) of the Accounts & Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 in relation to the publication of a Statement on Internal Control.

3. The purpose of the governance framework

3.1 The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture, and values by which the Council is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads the community.

3.2 During the 2016/17 financial year an Assurance Framework was produced as a diagrammatic representation of the governance and assurance processes that are in place. The Framework was endorsed by the then Audit Committee in December 2016 and continues to be relevant. Its purpose is to provide clarity and understanding of the connections between functions and activities that enable the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.



Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023

- 3.3 The system of internal control is an integral part of the Framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives, and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

4. The governance framework

- 4.1 The following paragraphs describe the key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Council's current governance arrangements: -

4.1.1 ***Identifying and communicating the Council's vision of its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users.***

- The Council's Corporate Plan (2018-2023), approved by Council on 17 April 2018, sets out the Cabinet's commitments, priorities, and Well-being Objectives. A copy of the revised Plan is available through the link below: -

[Link to Corporate Plan](#)

- The Well-being Objectives were informed by the information from the local assessment of well-being carried out by the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB). The Corporate Plan includes our well-being statement detailing why we chose our Objectives and how they will be monitored and resourced. The Plan is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure its continued relevance and at its meeting on 27 October 2021 the Council's Cabinet endorsed the relevance and continuation of the Well-being Objectives contained within the Plan.
- Long-term outcomes and interim performance standards have been established for each Well-being Objective and progress is reported via the relevant Scrutiny Committees on a six-monthly basis. Annual reports are also presented to Council on progress made.
- Through our chosen Objectives we contribute to the high level strategic PSB Well-being Plan for the county borough area ('The Caerphilly We Want 2018-2023'). Our Corporate Plan follows the same planning cycle to ensure alignment and because it is based on the same data and community.
- The Council's Annual Self-Assessment Report tells citizens and service users how we have performed against the Well-being Objectives, as required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- The Corporate Plan, PSB Well-being Plan and Annual Self-Assessment Report are endorsed by Council and communicated via media release.
- The Council structures its communications programme around the Council's Well-being themes with planned activity aligned to the chosen objectives as demonstrated in the Caerphilly newsletter and Place Shaping communications.
- Following the Local Government elections in May 2022, the newly appointed Cabinet will lead the administration until May 2027. The Council's Corporate Plan is currently being reviewed and new Well-being Objectives are being developed and will be agreed by Council later in 2023, covering the five-year period to 2028.

Draft Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023

4.1.2 *Reviewing the Council's vision and its implications for the Council's governance arrangements.*

- The five PSBs in the region merged to form the Gwent PSB in September 2021 with Caerphilly CBC providing the secretariat. During 2021 and early 2022 the PSB partners produced a regional well-being assessment identifying over one hundred issues affecting well-being in Gwent, supplemented by twenty-two local community assessments. Residents, communities, and others were consulted on the findings to check that they resonated with the lived experience to produce a new regional vision of well-being. The well-being assessment is being used to develop the next iteration of the well-being plan, which will be set on a Gwent regional footprint.
- The Corporate Plan is regularly reviewed and refined to ensure we have employed the sustainable development principle to reflect our changing aspirations, at a local and national level. A yearly review is conducted and reported to Cabinet with the most recent report being considered and approved on 27 October 2021.
- The new Corporate Plan for the period 2023-2028, currently under development, is using the data from the local assessment of well-being and comprehensive community engagement to inform the new Well-being Objectives.
- The Council has used the information in the local assessment of well-being, which identified the well-being needs and strengths of the area. The Council is a facilitating partner in the Gwent PSB and leads on the data assessment work. This data assessment is used to ensure we are supporting the economic, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the area.
- Face to face and online engagement sessions were held in the county borough as part of the ongoing Caerphilly Conversation to test the views of our communities on what the Council should prioritise. The output of each engagement exercise feeds into planning at relevant points in the year e.g. budget setting. The evidence has also been used to develop the well-being plan for Gwent 2023- 2028, to be agreed by the Gwent PSB in early summer.
- In May 2017, the Cabinet determined its current five-year plan, which runs until May 2023. This approach was taken as part of the sustainable development principle to take a longer-term view, consider how we may improve well-being, how we integrate our activity with others, particularly through collaborating with partners and our communities.
- Delivering the Well-being Objectives of the Council has taken account of the statutory guidance for public bodies under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Council has updated its risk registers, planning tools, self-evaluation and reporting templates.
- The Council has continued to work on its transformation programme through the Team Caerphilly - Better Together Strategy and has continued to deliver the programme of ten corporate reviews to drive the change forward. These have been developed in the light of engagement with staff and the learning from changes in working practices brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. The reviews were agreed by Cabinet on 22 July 2020 and have continued to be reviewed for relevance and progress. The Council has reviewed the wider implications of Covid-19 on communities and has implemented a Strategic Recovery Framework to help communities overcome the worst effects of the pandemic, adopted by Cabinet on 30 September 2020. A new Well-being and Place-shaping Framework was also adopted by the Cabinet on 24 February 2021.
- The outcomes of the ten corporate reviews will help inform the next stages of the Council's transformation programme.

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4.1.3 ***Measuring the quality of services for users, ensuring they are delivered in accordance with the Council's objectives and ensuring that they represent the best use of resources.***

- A new performance framework was established and approved by the Cabinet on 26 February 2020. This performance framework has a number of component parts: -
 - Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA).
 - Directorate Performance Assessments (DPAs).
 - Service Planning.
 - Risk Management.
 - MyTime Extra.

- **Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA)** - The CPA dashboard is used by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet to monitor the Council's progress in delivering its strategic priorities, identifying and challenging areas of underperformance and discussing and agreeing any remedial actions that may be required. The dashboard provides a graphical and easily accessible overview of: -
 - Progress against CMT priorities, Directorate Management Team (DMT) priorities, Wellbeing Objectives, and the Team Caerphilly transformation programme.
 - Budget position (over / underspend) by Directorate.
 - Corporate risk position.
 - Sickness absence position by Directorate and Service.
 - Workforce position (starters and leavers).
 - Complaints and compliments received by Directorates.
 - Public Accountability Measures.
 - Freedom of Information requests received and compliance.

- The CPA dashboard is presented twice-yearly to Cabinet and will also be presented to an all-Member Joint Scrutiny Committee moving forward. The dashboard provides a position of the organisation at a point in time and enables constructive challenge and improvement activity to be agreed.

- **Directorate Performance Assessments (DPA's)** - The CPA dashboard is underpinned by a more detailed set of Directorate Performance Assessment (DPA) dashboards. DPAs provide Directorate Management Teams with a range of data to keep progress under review, drive performance improvement, and manage resources, intelligence and risks. Information in the DPA dashboards is grouped as follows: -
 - Overall summary of the quarter.
 - Progress on Directorate priorities.
 - Performance data.
 - Customer intelligence.
 - Resources – Financial, workforce, and assets.
 - Risk Register.
 - Well-being Objectives.
 - Lessons learned.
 - Conclusion.

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- The DPAs are received by Directorate Management Teams on a routine basis providing opportunities to account for progress, challenge performance and agree improvement activity. The DPA's have been shared with relevant Scrutiny Committees twice-yearly to date and will now be presented to an all-Member Joint Scrutiny Committee moving forward.
- The new performance framework is different from the previous process by joining a wide range of different information in the one place to form an overall self-assessment of the Directorate. This provides a “single source of the truth” and makes it easier to identify reasons for self-assessment learning and judgements.
- **Service Planning** – The approach to service planning centres on a Directorate service planning workshop, if required by the relevant Director.
- In advance of the workshop, Heads of Service are tasked with working through a set of questions with their staff to identify key priorities and targets for the year ahead; recognise service contributions to the Wellbeing Objectives; propose measures of success; and define potential risks.
- In 2022 Cabinet Members were invited to a series of workshops to provide a political leadership perspective on emerging priorities and the development of Well-being Objectives for 2023-2028. These were tested against the views of our communities, the data from the local assessment of well-being and re-tested with senior managers to determine their completeness and deliverability
- Corporate priorities are transposed into the DPA and CPA dashboards for quarterly review. The outputs are also incorporated into the MyTime Extra review process as well as being published and distributed as a booklet to staff from across the service, thus providing a golden thread throughout the organisation.
- Where services have existing mechanisms in place for setting priorities (for example Education have robust processes that meet ESTYN requirements), they will populate the DPA dashboards with the relevant information before the beginning of the financial year.
- **Risk Management** - The monitoring of risk is now embedded within the CPA and DPA dashboards rather than existing as a standalone document. As such, risks are monitored quarterly by Corporate Management Team and Directorate Management Teams with risk levels and mitigating actions being discussed and agreed.
- The CPA contains the Council's 'high level risks' and is owned and updated by CMT. DPAs contain Directorate as well as CMT risks. The Council's risk position continues to be reported twice-yearly to the Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet.
- **MyTime Extra** – The Council has improved the Personal Development Review (PDR) process for all staff. The new approach is undertaken formally on an annual basis (MyTime Extra) and has been rolled out across the Council. The approach is based on a set of principles to support annual meetings with staff to explore what has gone well and not so well and to set goals and priorities for the following year. The concept was introduced as part of the Team Caerphilly transformation programme. The annual discussion enables staff to reflect on their prior year achievements, discuss any learning that has emerged, define their contribution to the service objectives defined at service planning workshops, and to explore their training and development needs. MyTime Extra enables a specific link to be made between the work of the individual and the priorities of the organisation.

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There are also regular individual MyTime 1-1 meetings between employees and managers throughout the year to monitor progress.

- The Council's performance framework as set out above provides Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, CMT and DMTs with a regular and embedded mechanism for monitoring progress, managing performance, and driving improvement. The dashboards provide a 'single source of the truth,' enable key aspects of performance to be discussed, actions to be agreed, and learning to be generated. The ability to specifically link individual contributions to organisational goals provides a platform for every employee to understand how they fit, and to be recognised for the part they play in delivering the Council's objectives, thus providing a golden thread throughout the organisation.

4.1.4 ***Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny, and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication.***

- The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures that are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.
- Policy and decision-making are facilitated through the Cabinet supported by a framework of Statutory and Scrutiny Committees. Delegated decisions made by authorised senior officers, under the scheme of delegation, are posted on the intranet, when appropriate. The CMT has no collective decision-making powers, but the Chief Executive and Directors do have some delegated powers.
- The Council's Constitution is a living document and is reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis to reflect current legislation and working practices. Periodic reports are presented to the Council in relation to any proposed changes to the Constitution, with the last report being presented on 11 May 2023. In addition, Members approved that overseeing the Constitution should be added to the terms of reference of the Council's Democratic Services Committee.
- Various guidance notes for Officers and Members have been prepared to sit alongside the Council's Constitution and training has been rolled out. The documentation is available on the corporate governance pages on the Council's intranet. These arrangements have now been formally embedded within the Council's governance arrangements.
- One of the ten corporate reviews undertaken as part of the Team Caerphilly transformation programme focussed on decision-making and considered whether: -
 - Governance arrangements are in place that keep us safe while supporting modern ways of working.
 - Cabinet decision-making arrangements focus appropriately on Council-wide strategic issues.
 - Scrutiny Committees focus Committee time on Council wide strategic issues aligned to the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.
 - Delegated Decision-Making capability is introduced for individual Executive Members with appropriate thresholds and safeguards in place.
- The review determined that decision-making processes were considered to be in line with peers and meet the needs of the Council.

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- Following a further subsequent review of the Constitution, at its meeting on 11 May 2023 Council approved a number of changes, the most significant of which was a reduction in the number of Scrutiny Committees from five to three.

4.1.5 *Developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct, defining the standards of behaviour for members and staff.*

- The Council's Constitution contains formal codes of conduct that articulate the standards of ethical behaviour that are expected from both elected members and officers. These incorporate procedures for the disclosure of personal interests and offers of gifts and hospitality.
- Both members and officers are made aware of the personal conduct and disclosure requirements, and they are available for reference on the Council's intranet.
- All declarations of member gifts and hospitality are reported to the Council's Standards Committee. For officers, a quarterly update is given to the Council's Governance & Audit Committee.
- The Council has an agreed Workforce Development Strategy 2021 – 24 and one of the actions arising from it is to create a Management Development Programme to ensure current and future managers and leaders have the necessary skills to deliver the vision of the Team Caerphilly transformation strategy.
- Customer Services standards have been introduced as standards of behaviour adopted by the Council that all staff should be adhering to.

4.1.6 *Reviewing and updating standing orders for contracts, financial regulations, a scheme of delegation and supporting procedure notes/manuals, which clearly define how decisions are taken and the processes and controls to manage risks.*

- The Monitoring Officer in conjunction with senior officers and members undertakes periodic reviews of the Council's Constitution including reviewing Standing Orders for Contracts, Financial Regulations, and the Scheme of Delegation to ensure that current practices and legislation are reflected.
- As mentioned above, one of the ten corporate reviews focused on decision making and found that the Council's governance arrangements were fit for purpose and supported modern ways of working. Following a further subsequent review of the Constitution, at its meeting on 11 May 2023 Council approved a number of changes, the most significant of which was a reduction in the number of Scrutiny Committees from five to three.
- The standard member reporting procedure requires consideration of risk for all significant decisions. This is also underpinned by a robust structure and system for identifying and evaluating all significant business risks at both corporate and operational levels, the key elements of which are a Corporate Risk Register, Directorate Risk Registers and Service Level Risk Assessments. These are all key elements of the new performance framework that was approved by Cabinet on 26 February 2020.
- The Council has formally agreed a Risk Management Strategy which was originally endorsed in 2013 and updated in 2017. More recently, an updated Risk Management Strategy was approved by the Governance and Audit Committee on 25 January 2022. The updated Strategy is available through the following link: -

[Risk Management Strategy 2022](#)

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- The Corporate Risk Register is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee twice-yearly, with CMT providing quarterly updates through the CPA. The Cabinet also receives mid-year and year-end updates as part of the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA). Scrutiny Committees also receive updates through Directorate Performance Assessments (DPAs).

4.1.7 ***Undertaking the core functions of an Audit Committee, as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities.***

- The Council has appointed a Governance & Audit Committee, with terms of reference that comply with CIPFA guidelines. These extend to monitoring and reviewing the adequacy of the governance framework.
- Training for new members of the Committee and refresher training is carried out periodically and at least twice in a Council term. Ad-hoc training is provided as required or where specific needs have been identified.
- The Terms of Reference are reviewed and updated periodically with the latest review being completed in February 2021 and reported to the Committee on 19 March 2021.
- Lay members have been appointed in accordance with the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 in readiness for the new municipal cycle which started in May 2022.
- During the 2023/24 financial year a self-evaluation and skills/knowledge assessment will be undertaken for the Governance and Audit Committee based on the latest CIPFA guidance.

4.1.8 ***Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures and that expenditure is lawful.***

- The Council aims to ensure compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations through a variety of mechanisms, including the following: -
 - Corporate Management Team.
 - Directorate Management Teams.
 - Heads of Service.
 - Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer.
 - Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer.
 - Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).
 - Data Protection Officer.
 - Internal Audit.
 - External Audit.
 - Performance Management Framework.
- The Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer and the Head of Financial Services & Section 151 Officer attend each formal meeting of the Corporate Management Team, have regular briefings with the Chief Executive, and also attend all Cabinet meetings. Furthermore, the standard committee reporting procedure and report template requires these Officers to examine reports to the Executive for compliance with legal and procedural issues. The report template also includes a section on financial implications which is reviewed by the Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer.
- The Council has a Deputy Monitoring Officer and during 2022/23 Council approved the establishment of a new Deputy Chief Executive post and a new Deputy Section 151 Officer role, thus providing further resilience for the organisation.

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4.1.9 *Arrangements for whistle blowing and for receiving and investigating complaints from the public.*

- The Council has in operation a widely publicised Whistleblowing Policy, which forms part of the Council's Constitution. This is overseen by senior officers within the Council and reported to the Council's Standards Committee on an annual basis.
- The Council also operates a formal Corporate Complaints Procedure, which has been widely publicised.
- The Governance & Audit Committee has continued to play a more proactive role in monitoring the level of complaints and the procedures that are in place, with reports being presented periodically. The Cabinet also receives reports to enable the executive to review the complaints dealt with under the Corporate Complaints policy. In addition, individual Scrutiny Committees may receive reports on complaints when requested.
- There are a number of avenues for members of the public to report concerns, complaints and other matters.
- One of the corporate reviews undertaken included a review of complaints handling, with the aim being to ensure consistency across the Council together with the introduction of a new centralised complaints logging system. The new logging system has been developed and as a result of ongoing trials changes are being made to the system to enhance the features available, which in turn will streamline the process further. It is anticipated that the system will be fully rolled out by the end of the year and will provide data that will allow services to be refined and improved.

4.1.10 *Identifying the development need of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training.*

- Formal induction programmes and training and development plans are in place for members. Where identified through the staff appraisal process, senior officers participate in management development training.
- Council approved an Induction Programme which was implemented following the Local Government elections in May 2022 and includes certain aspects of member training as mandatory.
- In order to meet members specific ongoing training needs, feedback is sought following the Induction Programme and a Training Needs Analysis Questionnaire is distributed to all members with the responses reviewed and the outcome used to inform future training programmes.
- The Council continues to participate in the Leadership Programme facilitated by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), which comprises training for members who hold or aspire to hold senior office.
- A review of induction arrangements for officers is being undertaken as this area can be improved. Although some progress has been made with developing an I.T. solution, this is still in progress and needs review in line with the impact of the GDPR.
- As mentioned in Section 4.1.5 leadership and development competencies are being reviewed to identify effective behaviours that are needed to deliver the vision of the Team Caerphilly transformation strategy, and the skills and values required from all staff. A new fixed-term Principal Human Resources Officer has been appointed to assist with this work.

4.1.11 *Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation/engagement.*

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- The Council has a strategically embedded corporate communication strategy which defines the way the Council will communicate with its staff, residents, partners and other stakeholders. In February 2020, the Council also adopted its Consultation and Engagement Framework, setting out a series of high-level principles which build upon the way the Council engages with its citizens and supports enhanced consultation and engagement activity across communities. The framework complements the principles within the Corporate Communication and Engagement Strategy and also has clear links to the Council's Team Caerphilly transformation strategy. The framework's intentions are: -
 - To highlight the continued importance of effective consultation and engagement and the clear strategic link to the decision-making process.
 - To demonstrate the key role that engaged, empowered communities have in supporting the future proofing of Council services.
 - To provide a clear definition of engagement and explain the 'Spectrum of Engagement'.
 - To outline the principles and standards that underpin meaningful engagement and consultation.
- Since its adoption, the Council has made good progress in building upon these intentions. Internally, the Council's engagement team have organised a series of awareness raising/information sessions for staff on effective consultation and engagement.
- The Council has also undertaken a number of significant consultation exercises since the framework's inception. The "Caerphilly Conversation" is an ongoing resident survey which seeks resident views on a wide range of subject areas, including satisfaction with Council services, service transformation going forward, what the Council should focus on, and the role of communities.
- The feedback from these surveys has been shared with CMT, Cabinet and the wider staff group, and the information is used for service and financial planning.
- During 2022/23 the Council has been developing a new on-line engagement platform to complement face-to-face activity. This platform dubbed 'Engagement HQ' allows topic based and geographically based engagement, including mapping, sentiment analysis, analytics and feedback in an open and transparent common tool to be used across the Council.

4.1.12 ***Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships and other group working as identified in the CIPFA Framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" and reflecting these in the Council's overall governance arrangements.***

- The Council has adopted a partnerships and collaborations framework which specifies the minimum governance requirements in respect of all the Council's partnerships and the enhanced requirements in respect of its key partnerships.
- In addition, the framework sets out the requirements for creating new partnerships and collaborations and importantly includes the arrangements for disbanding and exiting arrangements.
- The Council maintains details of all current partnerships and collaborations, and this is reviewed and updated bi-annually.

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- The Council has long-standing partnership arrangements with the third sector and has enshrined these in its joint agreements. In 2013 this agreement brought in the PSB partners, third sector organisations, Community and Town Councils and the Caerphilly Business Forum. The Third Sector Partnership Agreement has been updated to align with the PSB's Well-being Plan, "The Caerphilly We Want 2018-2023" and was signed by all PSB organisations in July 2019.
- From 2021 partnership governance started to be developed to provide a framework for the up-and-coming Gwent Regional Well-being Plan. A new Gwent Third Sector Partnership agreement was developed during the latter part of 2022/23.

5. Review of effectiveness

5.1 The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the Corporate Governance Review Panel (which has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment), the Internal Audit Manager's annual report, and comments made by Audit Wales, Estyn, and Care Inspectorate Wales. The review covers all significant corporate systems, processes, and controls, spanning the whole range of the Council's activities, including in particular those designed to ensure:-

- The Council's policies are put into place.
- Laws and regulations are complied with.
- Required processes are adhered to.
- Performance and financial statements and other published information are accurate and reliable.
- Human, financial, data/information and other resources are managed efficiently and effectively.
- Services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

5.2 The following paragraphs describe the processes that have been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework.

5.2.1 **Corporate Level Review**

- A Corporate Governance Review Panel has been established to oversee the compilation of the Annual Governance Statement. Membership of the Panel is as follows: -
 - Corporate Director for Education & Corporate Services (Chair).
 - Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer.
 - Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer.
 - Head of Transformation.
 - SIRO/Head of Customer & Digital Services.
 - Internal Audit Manager.
 - Cabinet Member for Finance & Performance.
 - Chair of Governance & Audit Committee.

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5.2.2 Directorate Level Review

- The Council adopts Directorate Assurance Statements requiring members of the Corporate Management Team to review the operation of a range of governance systems and procedures within their service areas, and to indicate whether there are any significant non-compliance issues. These are analysed by the Corporate Governance Review Panel to ascertain whether there are any common areas of concern, and if so, whether these constitute significant governance issues and as such need to be included in the Annual Governance Statement.
- The new performance management framework has resulted in the introduction of Directorate Performance Assessments (DPA's) as detailed in Section 4.1.3.

5.2.3 Scrutiny Committees

- The Council has Scrutiny Committees which meet in public and make recommendations on the improvement and development of policies and hold the Executive and officers exercising delegated powers to account for their decisions. At its meeting on 11 May 2023, Council approved a reduction in the number of Scrutiny Committees from five to three.

5.2.4 Governance & Audit Committee

- The Council has appointed a Governance & Audit Committee whose terms of reference comply with the latest CIPFA guidelines. These extend to monitoring and reviewing the adequacy of the governance framework.
- Periodic ad-hoc training and development sessions are held for members of the Committee to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge required to effectively undertake their roles.
- The Council appointed Lay members to the Committee in December 2021 and April 2022, in line with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

5.2.5 Standards Committee

- The Council has appointed a Standards Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Local government Act 2000 and associated regulations. Its terms of reference are set out in the Council's Constitution.

5.2.6 Business Improvement Team (BIT)

- The Business Improvement Team (BIT) is responsible for implementing and maintaining the Council's performance management framework. The Team supports and challenges the Council as a whole, and individual services, to continuously improve using relevant data and the team also supports service reviews that are undertaken as part of the Team Caerphilly – Better Together transformation programme.
- The BIT is part of the Council's Service Improvement and Partnership Unit which includes Policy, Equalities, Welsh Language and voluntary sector support. This has strengthened our approach to performance management by reinforcing the links to our policy and planning activities. It has enhanced our ability to respond to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in terms of having a lead role within the Gwent Public Services Board (PSB), demonstrating our own contribution to the well-

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being goals for Wales, delivering our Well-being Objectives, and embedding the sustainable development principle.

- The BIT also works with the Council's external auditors to co-ordinate audits and inspections, and the outcomes and recommendations arising from these audits and inspections are reported to and monitored by the Chief Executive, CMT and the Governance & Audit Committee.

5.2.7 Information Governance

- The Council's Information Governance structure continues to provide assurance that information is used appropriately and kept securely.
- The Head of Customer & Digital Services is the Council's Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), and the Procurement and Information Manager is the Deputy SIRO.
- The SIRO's role is to assure the Council's information through implementation of the Information Risk Management Policy.
- The process for Heads of Service, as Information Asset Owners, to submit half-yearly information risk returns to the SIRO continued throughout 2022/23. The process provides the SIRO with enhanced visibility to ensure risks are reported appropriately, measures to reduce risk are effective across all services, and information risk management is embedded into the culture of the organisation.
- Information Security reports directly to the Procurement and Information Manager. The recruitment of a dedicated IT Security Manager and apprentice took place during 2022/23 to increase capacity in response to increasing cyber security risks.
- The Data Protection Officer (DPO) required by Article 37 of GDPR is the Information Governance Manager. This post provides DPO reports to CMT via the SIRO and the relevant Cabinet Member quarterly. The post also fulfils the DPO function for all of the Council's Schools via a Service Level Agreement and works closely with Legal Services via the Exemption Panel.
- A network of Information Governance (IG) Stewards within each Service Area assist Heads of Service in assuring their information by communicating key messages on IG policies and training and developing and maintaining a GDPR compliant Record of Processing Activities via Information Asset Registers and Privacy Notices.
- Investment in Information Governance continued throughout 2022/23 with the contract for the existing Information Compliance Officer extended for an additional year and two additional Information Compliance Officers recruited in March 2022 to improve the Council's data protection and access rights (Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004) compliance.
- Encouraging effective records management practices across the Council including during the set-up of new technologies, will continue, to ensure records repositories are well managed and to encourage services to make the best use of Council data.
- Effective records management, especially of electronic formats, will also help to address growing demands of information rights requests whilst staff Council-wide work in an agile way. The potential to automate aspects of information requests is being explored, alongside other measures to manage the volumes of requests received.
- Information Governance and IT Security continue to work closely together, and this will continue moving forward.
- At its meeting on 14 June 2022, the Governance & Audit Committee considered the 'Draft Cyber Security Strategy 2022-2025', and this was

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subsequently formally approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 30 November 2022.

[Cyber Security Strategy 2022-2025](#)

5.2.8 Internal Audit

- Internal Audit Services is responsible for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of the system of governance and internal control. A risk-based Internal Audit Plan is produced each financial year, which is agreed by the Chief Executive and the Governance & Audit Committee. The reporting process for Internal Audit requires a report of each audit to be submitted to the relevant Directorate. Each report includes recommendations for improvements and an agreed management action plan. The process includes follow-up reviews of agreed recommendations to ensure that they are acted upon. CMT and the Governance & Audit Committee receive regular updates on progress against Internal Audit recommendations.
- During 2017/18 the Internal Audit Services' conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) was subject to external peer review which determined that with the exception of a few minor issues the Section was compliant. A new review cycle has now been entered into and plans are in place for a further external review to take place during 2023/24
- In recent years, a number of the Internal Audit Team staff have left the Council's employment due to retirement or resignation. However, good progress has been in recruiting to these posts with just one vacant post now remaining. Furthermore, the capacity of the team has been increased, and four members of staff are now studying for formal qualifications with one further staff member to commence studies in September 2023.
- During the 2021/22 financial year an Anti-Fraud Strategy was drafted, and this was endorsed by the Governance & Audit Committee on 14 June 2022. The Strategy is underpinned by an Action Plan that was presented to the Committee on 11 October 2022.

[Anti-Fraud Strategy](#)

[Anti-Fraud Action Plan](#)

- Based on the audit work undertaken during the 2022/23 financial year the Acting Internal Audit Manager has concluded that overall the Council's systems and control procedures are effective.

5.2.9 External Audit (Audit Wales)

- The Council receives Audit Wales reports on the annual statement of accounts, and other areas such as financial management and the financial position, performance management, risk management, and governance.
- At its meeting on 18 April 2023, the Governance & Audit Committee received the Audit Wales 'Annual Audit Summary 2022' which provided a summary of audit work completed since the previous Audit Summary issued in January 2022. The report is available through the following link: -

[Annual Audit Summary 2022](#)

- CMT and Cabinet meet annually with Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn as part of an Assurance & Risk Assessment Review and this informs the

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forward work programme for audit reviews and inspections. CMT and the Governance & Audit Committee receive regular updates on progress against recommendations arising from Audit Wales and Regulator reviews.

5.2.10 Extraordinary Events – Cost-of-Living Crisis

- The 2022/23 financial year presented some key challenges for the Council, in particular the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate peaked at 11.1% in October 2022, which is the highest level in 40 years, and the impacts of this have been keenly felt by both the Council and our residents.
- During 2022/23 the Council received grant funding from the Welsh Government (WG) for the Cost of Living Support Scheme and administered circa 76,000 payments to our residents totalling £11.6m. The Council also made in excess of 24,000 Winter Fuel Payments totalling ££4.8m on behalf of WG.
- At its meeting on 04 October 2022, Council agreed to set aside £3m usable reserves to create a Cost of Living Hardship Fund to support a range of initiatives that will assist our communities.
- The cost of living crisis has impacted on Council budgets with financial pressures being experienced across all areas, in particular energy, fuel, food and drink, and construction/contractor costs. Despite this, the Provisional Revenue Budget outturn position for 2022/23 shows a net underspend of £8.9m across all service areas (including schools and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)).
- The financial position will remain extremely challenging moving forward and the 2023/24 budget proposals approved by Council on 23 February 2023 included total cost pressures of £55.4m. These pressures are being funded through an increase in the Welsh Government Financial Settlement of £22.2m, permanent savings of £4.9m, temporary savings of £6.9m, the one-off use of reserves totalling £15.3m, and £6.1m from a 7.9% increase in Council Tax.
- Due to the unprecedented levels of inflation, the current economic outlook, and the range of temporary budgetary measures that were approved for the 2023/24 financial year, the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been updated based on a range of assumptions, resulting in a potential savings requirement of £48.335m for the two-year period 2024/25 to 2025/26.
- A financial strategy that seeks to continuously salami slice our services and deplete our reserves is not a sustainable or an appropriate approach, especially when the demands upon our services are far higher than ever, as our communities continue to present far greater and increasingly complex needs to us. To ensure we are able to meet the needs of our communities, whilst operating with reduced finances, a whole council and a whole county borough holistic approach has been defined and is now beginning to be delivered.
- The scale of the financial challenge facing the Council requires new approaches to service delivery and this is being led by the Chief Executive, Leader, CMT, and Cabinet and is being co-ordinated through our Transformation and Placeshaping Investment Programmes. It is vital that required changes are developed at pace and that key decisions are made early to ensure that the projected savings requirement for 2024/25 and 2025/26 can be delivered.

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5.3 **Review Outcome**

- The Council's governance arrangements are regarded as generally fit-for-purpose and are in accordance with the governance framework. The Council is committed to maintaining and improving the governance framework and resources are prioritised for this.
- The 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement identified one area where improvements could be made to strengthen existing processes and procedures during 2022/23: -

1. In January 2023 we will present an updated Medium-Term Financial Plan to the Cabinet aligned to the emerging corporate priorities of the new administration and the Council's transformation programme.

Update – An updated MTFP was presented to Full Council on 23 February 2023, and this showed a potential savings requirement of £48.335m for the two-year period 2024/25 to 2025/26. The Council's Corporate Plan is currently being reviewed and new Well-being Objectives are being developed and will be agreed by Council later in 2023, covering the five-year period to 2028.

- The review of the Council's governance arrangements operating throughout 2022/23 has highlighted one area where further steps will need to be taken to ensure that sound governance arrangements are in place and are fit-for-purpose to deal with emerging issues: -
- 1. During Autumn 2023 we will present a further update on the MTFP to Cabinet and Council along with specific proposals to address the anticipated financial gap aligned to our Transformation and Placeshaping Investment Programmes.**
- We propose over the coming months to take steps to address the above matter to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the issue identified during the review process and we will monitor implementation.

Signed: -

**Cllr Sean Morgan
Leader of the Council**

**Christina Harray
Chief Executive**

Council date TBC

Council date TBC

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GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 11TH JULY 2023

SUBJECT: CORPORATE RISK REGISTER (MAY 2023) UPDATE

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update of the Corporate Risk Register in accordance with the Council's Risk Management Strategy.
- 1.2 The updated Corporate Risk Register (CRR) (Appendix A) is presented to Governance and Audit Committee so there is opportunity for the Committee to satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements are in place for the Council's risk management processes to be regularly and robustly monitored and scrutinised.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Under the Council's Risk Management Strategy, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) own, manage, monitor, and review the Council's Corporate Risks on a quarterly basis, with six monthly progress reports submitted to Cabinet. Updates are also provided to Governance and Audit Committee, which has the role of reviewing and challenging the Risk Register and where relevant, and any resultant action plans for the Council's key strategic or corporate risks.
- 2.2 In order to present the most recent information, this report focuses on the Corporate Management update as of May 2023.
- 2.3 There are currently risks on the Corporate Risk Register.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Governance and Audit Committee considers the content of the Corporate Risk Register and associated mitigating actions.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Governance and Audit Committee to satisfy itself that robust processes and procedures exist and are applied for the management of top-level risks. Members have a

critical role to play in evaluating the Council's risk management arrangements and in particular understanding how the council identifies, manages and, where possible, mitigates/removes risk.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Authority identifies and manages risks at different levels. Service priorities identify risks to delivering business whilst directorate risks can be more significant risks that may have cause and effect across a Directorate. The Corporate Risk Register is the highest level of risks to the whole authority, the strategic risks often referred to as the Corporate Risk Register (CRR).
- 5.2 This report, updates on the risks within the CRR only. The directorate risks are updated on a quarterly basis within the 'Directorate Performance Assessment' (DPA)
- 5.3 The Corporate Risk Register is a 'living document' and will change when reviewed and assessed on a quarterly basis. New risks will emerge, and some existing risks will be closed. Risk ratings will change (red/amber/green) and mitigating actions and progress comments will be updated.
- 5.4 Risks were last updated to Governance and Audit Committee on 24 January 2023.

In summary there are **18** Risks on the Risk Register (Appendix A) of which **9** are rated as a high risk, **9** as medium with the regular rating. There is **1** new risk that has been added to the register since April 2023, this is the potential withdrawal of the Bus Support Funding and has been assessed as a high risk.

There were 2 risk's that were reassessed and moved from medium to high, and they are the medium term financial (ref CRR02) and from low to a high risk in the development of the Local Development Plan (ref CRR-06) .

There are no risks that are suggested to be removed or deleted in this reporting period.

- 5.5 The initial Covid-19 recovery risk had a separate risk register as it was a dynamic document and needed to be updated frequently, this has now been revised as a new risk to focus on recovery measures and to be aware of any 'new future waves'.

Conclusion

- 5.6 In line with the approved Risk Management Strategy the Corporate Risk Register is periodically reviewed and updated and is presented to the Governance and Audit Committee to provide an opportunity for the Committee to satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements are in place for the Council's risk management processes to be regularly and robustly monitored and scrutinised.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 It is a reasonable assumption that the significant financial and demand challenges facing the authority will continue, however it is assumed that resource will be reviewed for those significant risks where required.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report does not relate to the development of a policy, strategy, practice or project so no specific Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this report, however Risk Management is part of the 7 organisational activities within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and as such also needs to recognise risk to the citizen over the long term and look at ways to prevent further impact occurring.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report, although Appendix A identifies risks regarding the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP ref CRR-02).

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report although there is a new risk around the Resilience and Well-being of Staff.

10. CONSULTATIONS

This report has been sent to the consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
11.2 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Author: Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Manager, roberr@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Christina HARRY, Chief Executive
Richard (Ed) Edmunds, Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services
Cllr. Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Performance, Economy and Enterprise
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Kathryn Peters, Corporate Policy Manager
Deborah Gronow, Internal Audit Manager

Background Papers:

Appendices:

Appendix A – Corporate Risk Register update 2023 (as at Quarter 1)

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Caerphilly CBC Corporate Risk Register

Appendix A

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Description	CMT Lead Officer	Last Quarter Risk Level	Current Risk Level	Planned Mitigations and Progress	Does the risk affect the Well-being of our Communities?	Well-being Risk Level
				Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24			
CRR 17 2022/23	Impact on cost of living (inflationary) increases on our communities	The recent price increases in household energy bills combined with higher costs for food shopping and the price of fuel have created significant challenges for many residents, especially those already in need. The cost of living increase is likely to lead to additional demand being placed on council services as families affected seek our help. Difficulties in this area will continue throughout the winter and in to 2023.	DS	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoL strategic and operational groups meeting on fortnightly basis to ensure CoL crisis at forefront of planning and decision making. • CoL landing page complete (on website) as one stop shop for CoL support. • New CoL Newline in production - due for distribution in March 23 (specific campaigns also being planned to promote takeup of Pension Credit etc). • New programme of engagement events (to promote support available) being prepared for 2023. • Additional Cost of Living team recruited within Housing Rents to provide additional services for residents for income maximisation, welfare benefits support and energy advice. • Welcoming Spaces network developed across County Borough - comprising 33 projects across 55 venues, (inc all CCBC libraries) - offering warm place, food, activities, socialisation etc for those unable to heat their homes effectively. • Warm Packs purchased and distributed to vulnerable residents (via frontline support staff, partners and via Welcoming Spaces and community groups). • Hardship Fund being established to provide additional financial assistance for those not eligible for other grants. • Energy grant scheme being prepared (for launch in March/April 23) to provide grants for installation of energy efficiency measures (including boilers, windows etc) for households. • Additional small scale measures including mobile phones, hygiene packs available for those in need. • Ongoing additional funding and support to be made available to Food Poverty network (e.g. Foodbanks, fareshare schemes) throughout 22/23 to ensure adequate capacity to provide support to those at risk of food poverty (supported by additional initiatives including Cooking Champions) 	Yes - cost of living increases have the potential to affect those in our communities who are already most in need.	High
CRR 08	Pressures on social care	Social Care capacity is an ongoing problem for the authority. The ability to recruit and retain care staff, in the face of significant competition from the retail and hospitality sectors is becoming more and more of an issue. As a consequence independent providers are handing back packages of care and the future of some care homes is in the balance.	DS	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant uplift in fees for 2022/23 for independent sector providers • Commitment to external review of fee structures • Participation in work re standard fee methodologies at Regional Partnership Board level • Continue to open new in house residential homes for children • Fee levels for 23/24 to be determined as part of the budget setting process • Capacity/fragility issues flagged up at a regional level via RPB and associated strategic groups • Recent dom care provider failure resolved by bringing carers onto in-house payroll. 	Yes - reducing help that can be provided for the most vulnerable in our society will affect our ability to contribute to a 'Healthier Wales' which requires peoples mental and physical well-being to be maximised.	High
CRR 16 2021/22	Recruitment and Staffing Capacity	The Council needs to be able to employ sufficient numbers of staff across its services in order to ensure service delivery can be maintained. At present, there are challenges in recruiting replacement staff within certain Council professions that could, if not overcome, create difficulties over the medium to long term. There is also a shortage of Senior Leadership Capacity at present.	ED	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reforming Recruitment Project continues to show promising signs • Review of 2022/23 Apprentice process underway and 2023/24 being planned • Succession Planning and Workforce Development Strategy implementation • Recruitment webpages updated and refreshed with further video content • Specialist campaigns and resources designed to support specific recruitment • Procurement of specialist social media recruitment solutions • Improved benefits package established (includes 6 additional days leave) • Internal Recruitment Team adverts going out imminently • Deputy Chief Executive successfully recruited • Deputy Section 151 Officer recruitment underway • Successful recent interventions in Digital, Social Care, Catering • Performance metrics around new entrants, internal moves and exits being collated for ongoing review 	No - this risk relates to organisational capacity	

CRR 11 2020/21	Fleet	Providing a fully operational, compliant fleet of vehicles is essential for the Council to deliver all of its front line services. In this regard the Council holds a goods vehicle operators licence ("O licence") and must continue to demonstrate compliance with the conditions of the "O licence" and the legislative framework in which it exists. There is a current risk relating to the ability of the Council to staff its fleet management and maintenance service with suitably qualified and/or experienced staff and deliver the required level of management and maintenance standards.	ED	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking to add additional officers with the necessary qualifications to the license to provide additional contingency Work is underway with Recruitment to seek to increase staffing numbers. Residual staffing capacity concentrating on HGV Fleet Sub contractors being engaged for other work where the market is able to respond. To explore arrangements for external maintenance through a strategic partner to provide additional contingency Processes and procedures for vehicle safety and driver compliance are currently under review and will be revised if necessary Notice served to withdraw from the current managed service contract (ends Jan 2024) and lease/purchase vehicles (and maintenance, where appropriate) via a WG Framework. Workshop is contractually obliged to maintain any vehicles leased through existing arrangement for the entire lease period which will be beyond January 2024. Council is currently overusing short term or 'spot hires' to plug gaps in provision 	No - this risk relates to organisational capacity	
Q2 2022	Ukraine War	The Ukraine War has displaced a significant number of Ukrainian Nationals and UK Government, Welsh Government and Local Government is attempting to provide opportunities for resettlement. This will place significant additional pressures on Housing, Social Care, Education and wider support services at a time when resources are already stretched. Amendments to long standing allocation, admission and access policies may also be a requirement which could cause unintended consequences. The war has also impacted on certain supply chains increasing the lead times and delivery timeframes of certain goods.	CH	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings are held at a strategic and operational level with Welsh Government and WLGA to understand current impacts Dialogue with Private Sector Landlords to identify possible vacant properties. Grant applications submitted to WG to enable repairs/improvements to private sector stock A temporary 12-month resettlement team has been created to help absorb the additional workload and a weekly MDT runs with key partners Support sessions held for Ukrainian refugees. Welsh Government super-sponsor scheme continues to drive capacity and planning challenges for Local Authorities Some easing of numbers/pressures at current time but position remains very volatile. Update to Cabinet given. 	Yes - pressure around housing and possible education and social care needs of Ukrainian refugees adds to challenges already being seen by over-stretched services.	High
Q3 Dec 22	Waste Strategy and Recycling Performance	Compliance with Welsh Government Statutory Recycling Targets	CH	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft strategy submitted to WG Minister January 2023. Joint Scrutiny meeting took place March 2023. Feedback on draft strategy received verbally from WG early April, so scheduled Cabinet meeting deferred to allow detailed consideration of the WG feedback. Revised implementation plan to be provided to WG mid-May for consideration. Officers working with WG consultants to consider detailed analysis and key interventions to improve performance during April. Further engagement with Members scheduled with Cabinet agreement for public consultation of draft strategy scheduled for Autumn 2023. 	Yes - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving higher levels of re-use and recycling has a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions Failure to achieve future statutory recycling targets may lead to WG fines which are significant financially and reputationally. 	Medium
CRR-02	Medium Term Finances - cost of living impact on organisation	The cost of living crisis is having a significant impact on the Council's financial position due to rising inflation, higher than expected pay awards, the increased costs of energy and supplies and the wider impact of cost of living on our residents.	SH	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023/24 budget approved by Council 23/02/23. Total 2023/24 cost pressures of £55.5m funded through 6.9% uplift in Financial Settlement (£22.2m), permanent savings of £5m, temporary savings of £6.9m, use of reserves totalling £15.3m and 7.9% increase in Council Tax (£6.1m). £22.2m of temporary measures for 2023/24 contributing to overall anticipated savings requirement of £48.3m for the two-year period 2024/25 to 2025/26. Work underway to refocus the transformation programme and to identify other savings proposals to address the financial gap. Draft delivery plan to be developed Summer 2023 for implementation thereafter. Capital funding review taking place early Summer. Cabinet update Autumn 2023. 		

CRR-06	Local Development Plan (LDP)	It is essential that the Council has a Local Development Plan in place which sets the policy context for future development control decisions as well as ensuring that sufficient land is earmarked to support the range of needs across the County Borough such as Housing, the Economy, Green space, etc.	MSW	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressing the current Local Development Plan Process in accordance with the delivery agreement between the Council & Welsh Government (WG). Recent correspondence from WG will require further regional work (including the CCR) on growth assumptions. Given the recent interaction with WG, then the LDP is probably not deliverable in its current form and in accordance with the existing delivery agreement timeline. A Council decision will therefore be required in July 2023 linked to the report of consultation. The will determine the agreed way forward for the LDP from now until formal adoption. Options appraisal developed and scheduled for consideration by Cabinet May 2023 with Council recommendation July 2023. Lobbying strategy for SDP being implemented. 	Yes - this could impact our ability to maximise our contribution towards a resilient and healthier Wales	Medium
CRR-04	Impact of Climate Change	Climate change and the trend for increased risk & frequency of adverse weather presents a risk to the natural & built environment.	MSW	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonisation Strategy and associated action plan in place and a new team created. Report on progress against the action plan and way forward for decarbonisation to be presented to Scrutiny 2nd May 2023 and Cabinet 17th May 2023. Effective Emergency Planning Strategies, processes and operational responses. Robust Local Flood Risk Management Strategies underpinned by a progressive suite of flood alleviation infrastructure projects. Implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) practices across new developments. Effective management of the natural environment across the countryside/green open space portfolio/culture and embedding across organisation Specific actions across the Council's asset portfolio to reduce its own level of carbon emissions. 	Yes - there is an impact to a 'Resilient Wales by not proactively addressing the operational response to climate change. The contribution to global issues and a 'Globally Responsible Wales' is met through low carbon planning and sustainable development. There is a direct impact to Health also.	Medium
Added Q4 21/22	Housing Supply	The authority currently has around 6000 people on its Housing waiting lists and significant challenges in ensuring that people are in the right accommodation for they and their families particular needs. The influx of Ukrainian refugees, the Afghan resettlement programme and local homelessness challenges are increasing the need an appropriate supply of housing.	DS	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caerphilly Keys service now in place. New build programme agreed and progressing with 400 homes target. Outline planning for circa 130 homes at Ty Darren and Oakdale Secondary School. Transitional Accommodation Programme Board established. Progression of Development and Governance Strategy, with Cabinet updates Quality of offer - review of service and standards. 	Yes people having a roof over their heads and living in accommodation of a suitable size and standard is a fundamental part of wellbeing and is evidenced as having a positive impact on people's health.	High
CRR 13 Added Q1 20/21	Increased Homelessness	Increased numbers of homelessness could result in increased incidents of rough sleeping and increased use of B&B/hotel type accommodation to address emergency needs. This in turn could result in poor outcomes for the households concerned and a repeat of the homelessness cycle. As national Covid policy delaying evictions by private landlords has come to the an end, evictions could rise significantly.	DS	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Rapid Rehousing Strategy • Caerphilly Keys service now in place. Use of support providers and specialists to assist those that are homeless and to sustain tenancies to avoid homelessness occurring Implement Homelessness strategy which has been developed in collaboration with neighbouring authorities Review the availability of temporary accommodation to reduce/avoid use of Bed & Breakfasts. Look at opportunities to further increase the availability of properties in the private sector as an alternative means of accommodating homeless persons Work closely with the police and probation service to plan accommodation for prison leavers Review the type of accommodation that is required to meet the needs of those presenting so that this can be considered in longer term future planning 	As above	

CRR 07	Impact of Covid-19 on learner achievement	The impact of covid on learner achievement remains unknown and requires further evidence and appropriate intervention, particularly with the inconsistent nature of assessment since 2020 along with reduced levels of pupil attendance and higher than average levels of exclusions.	ED	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Strategy that focuses on Reignite, Recover, Reform Agenda now live • Develop the information, intelligence and data to ensure it operates as an effective commissioner of improvement services • Further enhance self evaluation and improvement planning processes • Greater focus on inclusion and improved wellbeing with enhanced tracking • Establish a system of active peer learning that provides opportunities to consider problems, share good practice and innovation • Increased support for pupils at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) • Improving Pupil Attendance • Support More Able and Talented pupils • Improve Pupils' Acquisition of Digital Skills • Deliver Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 • Build new schools through Sustainable Communities for Learning • Ensure Medium Term Financial Planning arrangements for Schools 	Yes, this limits contribution to 'Prosperous and More Equal Wales'. Standards of attainment and gaps in inequality can result in a low skilled, low paid workforce, and higher levels of unemployment leading to poverty. Over the long-term (25 years) in the life of a young child to adult the potential outcome of the attainment gap makes this a medium risk. This is a long term risk	Medium
CRR 18	Impact on cost of living (inflationary) increases on the Council	The impact of rising energy and fuel costs, cost increases and shortages across major supply chains and increases in the cost of construction schemes are increasing the operational costs of delivering services, placing Council budgets under significant strain and creating challenges for the workforce.	DS	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cross cutting Cost of Living Working group has been formed under DS leadership which is seeking to address challenges across the community and staff populations • Group is mapping all existing cost of living activity underway across the organisation • Group is considering options to introduce new support to those most in need • Web resources are being developed to provide a single source of assistance to our residents and staff that are most in need • Financial impact on projects - ringfenced fund being developed - timing 		
CRR 12 - Added Q1 2020/21	Covid-19 Recovery and Future Wave Response	As the local economy seeks to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council will need to focus on a series of recovery measures to stimulate local growth. The Council will also need to remain prepared to manage its critical services and workforce pressures through potential future waves that limit social mobility and reduce the availability of resource	CH	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet have adopted an Economic Recovery Framework to stimulate growth and a progress report is scheduled for cabinet consideration in Autumn 2023. • New Economic Development Strategy TOR being developed • Adoption of Corporate Plan scheduled July 2023. • Cabinet have adopted a Social Value Policy to drive community benefit and the foundational economy across the locality • The Council is overseeing the Regional TTP function supporting Gwent to better manage a range of communicable disease responses • The Council maintains a critical service list and business continuity plans • The Council continues to formalise and embed its Agile Working approaches to ensure services can be provided from any location 		
CRR 14	COVID Enquiry (Capacity to service)	Inquiry has now commenced. CCBC now receiving requests to submit evidence with extremely short timeframes of 2-3 weeks. WLGA hosting regular meetings to support LA's in conjunction with the LGA. No be-spoke resources identified, therefore completion of evidence falling to a small number of officers, all of whom have other duties. Requests/submissions likely to go on for many months/years.	DS	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid 19-Inquiry Group established. • Submissions agreed and signed off by CEO • Consideration to be given to a creation of a be-spoke role to complete evidence requests. • Awaiting feedback from Covid Inquiry. 	No - this risk relates to organisational capacity following which organisational capacity and functionality will be reviewed.	
CRR 15	Resilience and Wellbeing of Staff	Since early 2020, Council staff have been dealing with unprecedented challenges over an extended period of time. Staff have supported communities through the pandemic. More recently staff have had to respond to the impacts of the Programme for Government, the war in Ukraine and, more recently the Cost of Living crisis. Expectation continue to rise and the Council's resources are extremely stretched at present. There are high levels of staff sickness currently. The 2023/24 budget is also adding further workload pressures as alternative mechanisms for service delivery will need to be worked up.	CH	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding the Workforce Development Strategy • Embedding the Employee Wellbeing Strategy • Further promotion of the Employee Benefits Scheme • Recommendation to provide staff with an additional 5 days annual leave • Embedding the Employee Wellbeing Framework • Work commenced with external support to understand the underlying reasons for sickness absence levels and to pilot some new approaches to reduce impact • Creation of a coaching network across the organisation to help unlock issues • Exploration of facilitated staff resilience sessions 	No - this risk relates to organisational capacity	
CRR 19 Q1 2023	Impact of Strike Action on Public Services	There is a significant likelihood of extensive industrial action being taken across multiple public services, largely in relation to levels of pay and working conditions.	CH	TBD	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Unions strikes require careful management and communication • Update on teaching industrial action needed. • Ongoing dialogue with TU's regarding intentions to ballot for strike action Local Government in Autumn. • Review budget implications. 		

<p>NEW Added May 2023 CR-20</p>	<p>Potential Withdrawal of Bus Support Funding and Contraction of Local Bus Services</p>	<p>It is likely that WG funding to support the bus industry will be withdrawn and some bus companies may cease to trade while others will only run commercially viable routes thereby reducing bus services across the County Borough in the long term.</p>	<p>MSW</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>High</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings being held nationally and regionally (regional scrum) as this is a Wales wide issue. • In June 2023, WG confirmed a continuation of BES funding until March 2024 and the regional scrum has agreed revisions to the bus schedule with each local authority. The amendmenst to CCBC services are relatively minor overall but the funding is only in place until March 2024. 	<p>Yes - restricting connectivity of communities and limiting potential to travel for those without access to a car or rail travel</p>	<p>High</p>
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GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - 11TH JULY 2023

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

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
 SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on progress of recommendations that have been made by all regulators since the last Governance and Audit Committee update, and to advise on any new proposals that have been added since that time.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The register was last updated and presented to the Governance and Audit Committee January 2023. Since that time there have been no new proposals added onto the register and no areas for consideration as part of the Well-being of Future Generations examination.

2.2 We have 11 recommendations on the register, and none have been added. There is now 1 considered to be actioned and completed. If agreed by the Governance & Audit Committee, that would leave 10 outstanding.

2.3 We have received 1 report since the last time an update was provided in January 2023, and this is still making its way through the process.

2.4 The above does not include the improvement 'certificates' that come before Governance and Audit committee, as these confirm compliance to our statutory duty so do not make proposals or recommendations. Nor does it include External Financial Audit outputs at this point as the Governance & Audit Committee receive updates on progress against recommendations in the next Audit Wales Audit of Accounts Report.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 We recommend 1 recommendation be closed down as completed and encourage members to view the specific proposals attached within Appendix A and judge if they agree that these are now complete. It is recommended that Governance and Audit Committee give their agreement (if appropriate) to close the proposals that are noted

as 'completed' within Appendix A.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure members are aware of progress against the Council's actions for progressing regulator recommendations and proposals and have assurance that progress is being made through an opportunity to monitor and challenge content.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The table below provides a summary of proposals or recommendations and the numbers outstanding from each piece of work. Whilst the numbers give some scope the focus is on the quality of the output as some recommendations can take a long time to complete whilst others are shorter actions, however the important factor is the value of the recommendations, quality of output, and the difference they make. Paragraphs 5.2 to 5.8 and appendix A expand on the pieces of work as noted below.

Name of Report	How many original proposals or recommendation outstanding	How many recommendations completed in this reporting period	How many are left to complete?
Welsh Housing Quality Standard Follow up Review	1	1	0
Financial Sustainability Assessment 2021	2	0	2
Springing Forward Workforce	1	0	1
Springing Forward Asset Management	3	0	3
Homelessness Report	2	0	2
Decarbonisation	2	0	2
Total	11	1	10

5.2 Welsh Housing Quality Standard Follow up Review

We have now completed our Delivery Plan as part of our long term vision and priorities for the future. We have more to do, to develop our investment plan and to promote the Plan but the action to deliver the recommendation are now complete and move into day to day work so we now recommend this proposal come of the register.

5.3 Financial Sustainability Assessment

As noted in the appendix, the 2023/2024 Budget was approved by Council at the end of February 2023. Work is underway to refocus the Transformation Programme to address the proposal of using the programme to develop financial benefits coming from transformation.

5.4 **Springing Forward – Workforce**

The Audit Wales report and response was presented to Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on 23rd January 2023. Since that time, we have made steady progress which can be seen in appendix A with a roll out date in the Autumn of workforce planning tool kit.

5.5 **Springing Forward – Asset Management**

Two of the three proposals have moved up to 75% complete and details are available in appendix A. The third proposal has just begun, and we are scoping out an asset mapping exercise so we can identify assets that can be considered for sharing.

5.6 **Homelessness**

The recommendations within this work are making steady progress and are on track to be completed by 2023 /2024. This is also now linked to the Corporate Risk Register so mitigating actions and proposals can be aligned.

5.7 **Decarbonisation**

This is a long term piece of work; we have a Decarbonisation Strategy called 'Reduce, Produce, Offset and buy.' As noted in the appendix a report went to Cabinet who approved the 10 recommendations needed to achieve our carbon targets, as a result these actions will now make greater progress across 2023/2024.

Other Regulator work

- 5.8 Although school inspections were suspended during the Covid-19 pandemic, settings in a formal follow-up category continued to be monitored. During this period, all schools in receipt of this process were removed from any follow-up category.

Following an initial pilot phase in spring 2022, Estyn formally restarted their school inspections. A number of schools in Caerphilly have been inspected in recent months across secondary and primary settings. Although some the inspections have resulted in positive outcomes, five settings are now in follow-up categories. One secondary is in significant improvement, one primary is in 'special measures,' the pupil referral unit is in 'significant improvement' and two primary schools are in 'Estyn Review.' Recommendations from all Estyn inspections are used to identify appropriate levels of support. Progress against the recommendations, for schools in a follow-up category, are tracked through the Schools Causing Concern process.

- 5.9 Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) held their Annual Review Meeting with the Director of Social Services on 19th December 2022, and progress was noted in all Regulatory areas. The written confirmation of this meeting is awaited. There has been a transfer of Link Inspector for the Local Authority and periodic meetings with the two Heads of Service have taken place. No concerns have been raised. Thematic Assurance Checks and inspections for regulated services are continuing. Whole service inspections are due to resume during 2023.

- 5.10 The Assurance and Risk Assessment Letter (Audit year 2021-2022) Final was received beginning of January 2023 and any recommendations will be reported on the next Governance and Audit Forward work programme. This work report covered
- Financial Position
 - Implications of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
 - Self-assessment arrangements
 - Carbon reduction plan

Future Audit Work Programme includes:

- 5.11 The ARA for 2022-23 notes that the Audit Assurance Work for April 2022-August 2023 is likely to focus on :
- Financial position
 - The Capital Programme management (project scoping starting July 23)
 - Use of performance information, with a focus on service user feedback and outcomes (the output is in progress)
 - Setting of well-being objectives
- 5.12 The Waste Strategy Review Report is making its way through the Audit Wales clearance process from draft to a final version.
- 5.13 For clarity, Audit Wales used to issue Proposals and Recommendations. A proposal was a 'suggestion for improvement' and a 'recommendation' meant an Authority had a 'statutory duty' to act. Therefore, Appendix A has a mixture of 'P' for proposals and R for recommendations. However, since the 2009 Local Government Measure, Performance duty was revoked in 2021, there are no longer proposals and all Audit Wales references from now on is referenced as a 'Recommendation'.
- 5.14 **Conclusion**

When monitoring progress against the recommendations, members are advised to consider what value the recommendations and actions to address them are making and what difference the activity makes for our citizens. The view of Audit Wales is that the decision on whether a recommendation is completed is an internal matter for the organisation to decide, (although it is within their remit to make more recommendations if they do not believe it has been addressed). Audit Wales receive this update as part of attendance at Governance and Audit Committee.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 It is a reasonable assumption that the financial and demand challenges facing the authority will continue. Alongside this, demand levels for key services will continue to increase with changing demographics and increased expectations placed on the local authority.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report does not relate to the development of a policy, strategy, practice or project so no specific Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this report,

however the Sustainable Development principle would be considered as part of any action planning to address proposals.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, although Financial Sustainability is noted as one of the reviews and has proposals attached.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific personnel implications directly resulting from this report although one of the proposals is in relation to workforce development.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 All consultation responses received have been included in the body of this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government and Elections Act
11.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (2015) Act

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Appendices:

Appendix A Action Plan and Response to Regulator Proposals

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Homelessness – Caerphilly County Borough Council

Audit year: 2021-22

Date issued: November 2022

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This document has been prepared for the internal use of Caerphilly County Borough Council as part of work performed/to be performed in accordance with Section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004, and Section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015].

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

This document is also available in Welsh.

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Homelessness is a strategic priority for the Council. It has outlined its ambition within several strategic plans which it has and intends to continue to develop with its key partners 7

There are many complex and difficult issues facing the homeless in Caerphilly and, while the Council is aware of them, its plans to address these issues are yet to be fully implemented 8

More needs to be done, building on the way the Council is using integrated preventative work with partners, to address future demand for homelessness 9

The Council has positive relationships with many of its partners. Some have identified areas that could be improved further to help prevent and reduce homelessness where the Council has yet to take action 10

The Council is proactive in seeking to increase its resources and is developing its understanding of its future resource requirements 12

The Council has a framework for monitoring and evaluating its progress on its homelessness ambition. However, the effectiveness of this is impeded by the absence of clear milestones and targets 13

Summary report

Summary

What we reviewed and why

- 1 In January 2018, the Auditor General's report on 'How Local Government Manages Demand – Homelessness', identified that 'Local authorities are reacting to the problems caused by homelessness with varying degrees of success, but there is limited focus on preventing the fundamental causes of homelessness.'¹
- 2 The report highlighted that 'Legislation focusses on preventing homelessness but not all authorities have effectively organised themselves to fully implement these new duties' and 'Local authorities and partners need to focus on tackling the underlying causes of homelessness but are not giving this sufficient focus in their strategic responses.'
- 3 One of the recommendations in the report was for local authorities to set out and agree their expectations of partners identifying how they will work together to alleviate homelessness. The agreement should be reviewed regularly, and all partners' performance reviewed to identify areas for improvement.
- 4 Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently the Ukraine Refugee Crisis and cost of living crisis have been putting increased pressure on the Council's homelessness service. It has also resulted in an increase in the number of people presenting as homeless, with the number of unintentionally homeless and in priority need having doubled in the last year from 56 in Q3 2020-21 to 113 in Q4 2021-22.
- 5 This increase has led the Council to source new emergency temporary accommodation. Additional support is required to manage such facilities to avoid rough sleeping. The total number of households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation has also increased by 123% over the last year from 60 in Q3 2020-21 to 134 Q4 2021-22.
- 6 During the latter part of 2021, through to the current day, the Council has been facing several external risks that are negatively impacting the number of households seeking support from the homelessness service. These include:
 - the ending of the UK Government's furlough scheme;
 - the ending of the Universal Credit top-up;
 - escalating utility costs, rising inflation;
 - new/changing legislation such as the Renting Homes Wales Act (2016) and the potential that rough sleeping will become a priority need; and
 - increasing numbers of Ukrainian refugees and other asylum seekers.

¹ Auditor General for Wales, [How Local Government manages demand – Homelessness](#), January 2018.

- 7 These pressures have also negatively impacted the Council's ability to prevent homelessness, with a fall in the percentage of households prevented from becoming homeless from 73.1% in 2019-20 to 62.18% in 2021-22.
- 8 As the Auditor General's 2018 report identified, homelessness 'is more than a housing problem with much of what causes homelessness being outside the control and influence of local authorities' homelessness services. However, despite this, it is the local authority which has the statutory duty to prevent and address homelessness.' Under the Housing Act 2014, the Welsh Government sought to co-operate, to ensure that tackling homelessness is wider than a local authority housing service and a multi-agency response is required to be truly effective.
- 9 Over the last year the Welsh Government has required councils to document their plans for addressing homelessness in their Housing Support Programme Strategy and more recently their Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Both plans must reflect the critical role that effective partnership working will have on minimising homelessness.
- 10 Therefore, our review has sought to answer the question: In seeking to address homelessness, is the Council effectively adapting its strategic intent to deliver a long-term sustainable preventative approach? With a key area of focus for the review being to explore how the Council is working with its partners to deliver its homelessness ambitions.
- 11 We undertook the review during the period May 2022 to August 2022. Our work included reviewing documents, interviewing staff, Councillors and partners, and facilitating a workshop with key homelessness partners.

What we found

- 12 We have concluded that tackling homelessness in an important priority for the Council. However, it has yet to fully develop a sustainable and preventative approach to achieve this.
- 13 We reached this conclusion because:
- homelessness is a strategic priority for the Council. It has outlined its ambition within several strategic plans which it has and intends to continue to develop with its key partners.
 - there are many complex and difficult issues facing the homeless in Caerphilly and, while the Council is aware of them, its plans to address these issues are yet to be fully implemented.
 - more needs to be done, building on the way the Council is using integrated preventative work with partners, to address future demand for homelessness.
 - the Council has positive relationships with many of its partners. Some have identified areas that could be improved further to help prevent and reduce homelessness where the Council has yet to take action.
 - the Council is proactive in seeking to increase its resources and is developing its understanding of its future resource requirements.

- the Council has a framework for monitoring and evaluating its progress on its homelessness ambition. However, the effectiveness of this is impeded by the absence of clear milestones and targets.

Exhibit 1: recommendations

The table below sets out the recommendations that we have identified following this review.

Recommendations

To improve the Council’s ability to understand its performance and drive improvement, the Council should:

Recommendation 1 – strengthen its planning and monitoring for homelessness by:

- better use of forecasting and benchmarking data;
- setting a clear longer-term vision to meet changing needs;
- developing clear milestones and targets to assess its progress;
- identifying measures to evaluate the impact of its preventative activity; and
- ensuring the required medium to longer-term resources are reflected in its Medium Term Financial Plan.

Recommendation 2 – continue to work with its partners (internal and external) to address some key areas for improvement, such as:

- engaging partners earlier in the development of key plans, strategies and developments;
- identifying opportunities to improve the completeness and timeliness of shared information;
- assessing the opportunities to improve the offender pathway; and
- improving the dialogue with partners around what constitutes a ‘reasonable offer of accommodation’.

Detailed report

Tackling homelessness is an important priority for the Council. However, it has yet to fully develop a sustainable and preventative approach to achieve this

Homelessness is a strategic priority for the Council. It has outlined its ambition within several strategic plans which it has and intends to continue to develop with its key partners

In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- 14 Preventing homelessness is a key Council priority in the current Corporate Plan 2018-2023. A Cabinet Member has a specific portfolio for Housing, which includes homelessness. This should ensure that this area continues to have a strategic profile.
- 15 The Council has also made a commitment to building more Council and affordable accommodation by 2025. It has stated that accommodating the needs of homeless individuals will form a part of its development programme.
- 16 To comply with Welsh Government requirements, the Council has several current strategies and plans. For example, the Housing Support Programme Strategy (HSPS), Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan (RRTP) and the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). These outline the Council's approach and ambitions around homelessness.
- 17 The Council has developed both the LHS and the HSPS in conjunction with partners, albeit the methods of engagement and consultation used particularly for the HSPS were impacted by the pandemic.
- 18 The Council has told us that its RRTP has been developed with one-to-one discussions with stakeholders and partners. Some of the partners engaged with as part of our work confirmed this. However, to ensure that the final plan is shaped and informed by a much broader group of stakeholders, it is proposing to establish a Strategic Partnership Group. This group had not been established at the time of our work. Engaging Partners around the design and delivery of its RRTP will be critical if there is to be an effective multi-disciplinary/sector approach to preventing and reducing homelessness.
- 19 The Council is in the process of drafting several supporting plans, such as its Development and investment strategies to further outline aspects of its strategic intent around homelessness. It will be important to engage partners and stakeholders early in the development of these. Some partners felt that the Council could do more to engage them earlier on specific developments, in particular where there will be support services that will also need to be provided by others.

There are many complex and difficult issues facing the homeless in Caerphilly and, while the Council is aware of them, its plans to address these issues are yet to be fully implemented

In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- 20 The Council has an improved retrospective and current understanding of its homelessness position from its own internal information and the needs analysis undertaken for the recent key documents such as, the Housing Support Programme Strategy (HSPS) and the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP).
- 21 Some of the key factors that are impacting the current homelessness position within the Borough include:
- the increasing complexity and volume of homelessness cases which the Council has reported as negatively impacting staff well-being. The Council is seeking to redress this through its ongoing review of structures and resources for the service.
 - a lack of single bed or move on accommodation stock, which currently are the properties in highest demand for those at risk of homelessness. The Council, together with the private sector, has recently developed affordable single bed accommodation and is currently evaluating sites to build more accommodation.
 - existing accommodation is often unsuitable and does not meet tenants' specific needs. This leads to failed tenancies, exacerbated mental health issues and a negative impact on the Council's preventative ambitions. At the time of our work, the Council told us it was undertaking a review of accommodation suitability to understand this issue more fully. We have not seen the outcome of this review.
 - the increasing numbers of those 'sofa surfing', although due to the difficulty in quantifying this data, it represents an unknown future risk.
 - a recognition that the Common Allocations Policy may not focus appropriately on the people in most need. At the time of our work the Council was reviewing this.
 - the legacy of a significant increase in the use of temporary accommodation due to the mandated requirement to provide emergency accommodation for all rough sleepers during the pandemic.
 - current and future external issues, including: the Ukraine Refugee Crisis, the Cost-of-Living Crisis, new legislation such as the Renting Homes Wales Act (2016) and the potential that rough sleeping will soon become a priority need. These have and will increase demand on the Council's housing/homelessness service on an already limited supply of high demand accommodation. The Council told us that responding to the Cost-of-Living Crisis is now its primary focus and that it has started to realign its services to

be able to respond more effectively. Supporting tenants to maximise their benefits will be increasingly important to help ease the financial pressures during this crisis. The Council has a dedicated benefits maximisation team who in the last year have managed to increase benefits for tenants by more than £3 million.

- 22 The work undertaken by Crisis during 2021 has provided the Council with a more comprehensive and granular understanding of the homelessness environment and its approach to addressing the issues. The Council has reported that it is in the process of responding to the issues raised within the Crisis report, with the identification of some quick wins and longer-term changes which it is integrating into its RRTP.
- 23 However, the Council still needs to develop an understanding of the future homelessness outlook if it is to plan effectively for the longer term.

More needs to be done, building on the way the Council is using integrated preventative work with partners, to address future demand for homelessness

In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- 24 The Welsh Government's Housing Support Grant funding has enabled the Council to develop many initiatives with its internal and external partners. This is to help support its preventative approach to supporting people and reducing homelessness.
- 25 The Council has recognised that due to the national imperative for no one to be on the streets during COVID, it had focused more on dealing with the immediate crisis and less on prevention during this period. Therefore, a greater focus on preventative approaches will be needed if it is to start to address the increases in those at risk of or presenting as homeless.
- 26 The Council has made a strategic commitment to focus on prevention. This is clear within its RRTP which states it wishes 'To focus on early prevention and intervention of Homelessness which will support people to remain in their homes. Where this is not possible to work with households to achieve a positive successful outcome before they must enter interim temporary accommodation.'
- 27 The Council has also stated that it intends to ensure there is a greater focus on identifying and meeting the specific needs of its citizens and that this will be key to its preventative approach. In support of this it has committed within its RRTP to consider establishing a multi-disciplinary central assessment co-located hub. This will provide more person-centred housing and support need assessments to better understand the needs of those who require assistance and support.
- 28 The Council's new access service 'Caerphilly Cares', developed initially in response to the pandemic, has been successful in supporting individuals and preventing them from becoming homeless. At the time of our work, the Council was

considering the Caerphilly Cares model as part of the referral pathway from the Health Board to expedite the discharge process. However, more work needs to be undertaken to measure the impact of this support and the border prevention interventions, both in terms of avoided costs, improved well-being, and reductions in homelessness.

- 29 The Council's Public Accountability Measure (PAM) measure 'percentage of households prevented from becoming homeless' has seen negative performance, dropping from 73.1% in 2019-20 to 62.18% in 2021-22. The Council's own assessment of the reasons for this reduction is due to the impact of COVID on key services to support homelessness. Whilst PAMs were not collected across Wales during 2020 and 2021, it will be important that this picture is set in the context of other Councils.
- 30 There are many regional groups that directly or indirectly impact the Council's planning and approach to tackling homelessness such as; Cardiff Capital Regions, Gwent Housing Support Commissioning Group, the Gwent Public Service Board, and the Regional Partnerships Boards' Sub-group, Housing Health and Social Care. However, other than for the Gwent Regional Housing Support Collaboration Group, the extent to which there is a current specific regional focus and collaboration around addressing Homelessness appears to have less of a profile than it did in prior years. It is recognised that the pandemic, and the requirement to have a local focus in plans such as the RRTP, will have contributed to this.

The Council has positive relationships with many of its partners. Some have identified areas that could be improved further to help prevent and reduce homelessness where the Council has yet to take action

In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- 31 Key internal partnerships within the Council to deliver on its homelessness ambitions, such as those between the Housing Support Work funded through the Housing Support Grant and the Homelessness part of the Housing Service, are well integrated. This is despite them being in two different services areas, albeit under the same directorship.
- 32 Overall, the partners that we were able to engage with as part of our work were very positive about their relationship with the Council. Partners provided several examples of shared homelessness projects and reflected on their ability to engage with Council officers on a day-to-day basis. However, not all partners were available for interview or were represented at our Partner workshop.

- 33 Our work identified several examples of positive working with Partners around homelessness. These included:
- the recently completed collaborative new build project with the private sector (Willmott Dixon) to build energy-efficient affordable one-bed apartments for the future.
 - working with private landlords through the Caerphilly Keys programme, to provide support for landlords and tenants to sustain tenancies in the private rented market.
 - initiatives funded under the Housing Support Grant including the joint Health and Council funded roles. For example, the Nurse Practitioner based in a GP surgery specifically focused on supporting homeless people. Also, a team located at a provider of specialist care acts as a bridge between, Health, Housing, Social Services, Mental Health, and Drug and Alcohol services to support those with complex needs from becoming homeless.
 - psychology staff based in a homelessness unit, where they have provided a virtual service to understand the root cause behind why a person is homeless. Partners have used this information to identify and support specific needs to reduce the chances of these individuals becoming homeless again.
 - the proactive relationship between the Health Board's Mental Health and Learning disabilities team (MH&LD) and the Council's Housing support and Homelessness teams. A good example of this is in the joint development of a new discharge process of patients from the MH&LD wards. It focused on improving the timeliness of assessments and reducing the risk of homelessness, which we were told is showing some early benefits.
 - the development of a debt relief order process in conjunction with the Citizens Advice Bureau and the homelessness team, which will support tenants who are struggling to pay their rent and are under threat of becoming homeless.
- 34 When prompted to focus on opportunities for improvement, key reflections from partners included:
- some commissioned services feeling that their voice is not always heard or listened to.
 - opportunities for the Council to establish earlier engagement. For example, earlier involvement in proposed developments, in particular, where there will be a requirement for future shared support services.
 - a request that the Council should endeavour to better understand service user need before making their 'reasonable offer' of accommodation to service users.
 - a recognition that managing long-term versus short-term need is challenging. The current situation has forced all partners to be more reactive than proactive, however, they must now focus more on proactive work.

- a need to improve information flows in some areas. For example, Partners felt that aspects of the current allocations system do not work as well as they should, citing concerns over insufficient tenant information being shared with partners. In some cases, this has led to tenants being inappropriately placed and/or the individuals not having the right support around them, leading to their needs becoming more complex and tenancies becoming unsustainable.
- concerns over the effectiveness of the current offender pathway and the need for this to be reviewed. It will be important that the Council's response to this concern in the RRTP which stated, 'Reviewing the existing pathway for offenders with criminal justice agencies is still reflective and current. Considering the employment of a dedicated offender officer within the Housing Solution Team to enhance the joint working between the agencies', is prioritised.

35 Notwithstanding the many positive examples of partners working, there were also some further areas where our work identified opportunities for improvement around internal and external partnerships. These included:

- variable attendance at the local Housing Support Commissioning Group by key partners, such as Probation Services, Police and Health;
- limitations in the relationship with the rest of the Health Board, other than for the Mental Health and Learning Service;
- the need to engage Members earlier in the process for potential developments of accommodation focused on addressing homelessness; and
- information on the homelessness pathways and support is not as clear as it could be for both external and internal customers and therefore represents a risk around potential delays in vulnerable citizens accessing the right support services.

The Council is proactive in seeking to increase its resources and is developing its understanding of its future resource requirements

In reaching this conclusion we found that:

36 The Council have been successful in drawing down additional funding from various Welsh Government grants to support some of their homelessness initiatives. At the time of our review, they were in the process of seeking additional funding from the Welsh Government for a specific capital grant to help with the Ukraine refugee crisis, and with bids for the Regional Partnership Board Regional Improvements Fund which have a homelessness focus. Other successful funding bids include the £3.1 million from the Welsh Government's Innovative Housing Programme to support its partnership project with Willmott Dixon to build 18 new single bed units in the borough.

- 37 Due to the Pandemic, the cost to the Council of temporary Bed and Breakfast accommodation is at all-time high. Whilst the Welsh Government's Hardship Fund has met this cost in part, this funding ceased in March 2022 and only a smaller grant has been made available. Therefore, maintaining the escalating cost of providing temporary bed and breakfast accommodation represents an increased and ongoing financial pressure on the Council's resources.
- 38 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan includes a proposal that its COVID-19 Earmarked Reserves are topped up to £5 million. This is to cover the additional pandemic-related costs due to be incurred over the short to medium term, including those costs around homelessness.
- 39 There is Member support for the Council's strategic ambition around homelessness, such as developing more single bed accommodation, but costs have yet to be fully defined and are still to be approved by Members. Notwithstanding this, approval was given by the previous administration to set aside £30.2 million to boost the Capital Programme for the Council's Well-being and Place Shaping Framework, which includes the development of affordable accommodation. However, the full long-term picture on the future resources required to deliver the Council's approach to addressing homelessness will become clearer as key strategic documents, such as its Development/Investment Strategy and its understanding of future need and expected outcomes, are finalised.
- 40 The Council has indicated that the new Corporate Plan, will include a focus on homelessness. It will be important that any proposals for homelessness contained within the new Corporate Plan and other homelessness plans and strategies are fully reflected with its revised MTFP to ensure appropriate resourcing matches the Council's ambition.
- 41 Key senior officers within the Housing team are relatively new in post and are currently taking stock on the structures and service design of the Caerphilly Homes (Housing Directorate), to support the delivery of their Local Housing Strategy, Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and Delivery Plans. Whilst still in progress, it is likely that this stocktake will result in a request for additional resources. This will require approval of a business case which will be prioritised against other competing Council resources.

The Council has a framework for monitoring and evaluating its progress on its homelessness ambition. However, the effectiveness of this is impeded by the absence of clear milestones and targets

In reaching this conclusion we found that:

- 42 The Council has a framework for monitoring and evaluating its progress on its homelessness ambition. Whilst the current suite of Strategies and Plans has a short and medium-term focus, many of the initiatives are focused on addressing need over the longer term.

- 43 Homelessness is one of the key priorities for the Caerphilly Homes Directorate and is routinely monitored as part of the Council's Performance Assessment Framework. However, this assessment framework does not include medium to longer-term milestones and metrics, which means the Council is unable to clearly assess the progress it is making on addressing its homelessness ambitions.
- 44 The Council has recently taken their Rapid Rehousing Transition plan to Cabinet (7 September 2022). It confirmed that this will replace the Homeless Project Plan that was presented to Cabinet in November 2021, which outlined key service area priorities and objectives for the Housing Solution Team. It has also told us that it intends to develop its final Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan into a more local plan which will become its overarching plan for homelessness, and that this will include specific milestones and outcomes to enable it to measure its progress.
- 45 There are some examples of where benchmarking data has been used, such as the development of the Local Housing Strategy. However, this data was from 2018-19. There were few other examples of Homelessness benchmarked data being routinely used to better understand opportunities for service improvement. Whilst the national collection of Public Accountability Measures, including those around homelessness was suspended due to COVID, other required data reporting under the Housing Act (Wales), is available across Wales. The Council could better use this as it develops its approach to preventing and addressing homelessness.
- 46 Members are sighted on progress on specific initiatives/services, such as Caerphilly Cares, with the latest annual performance being scrutinised by the Social Service Scrutiny Committee in March 2022.
- 47 The Housing Directorate is investing in a new Housing IT solution which it is hoped will provide more granular data around Housing and homelessness to support its decision making. The Directorate has also recently created a new post to specifically look at improving housing data, focusing on its fitness for purpose and any potential data gaps to help support better understanding of performance.



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GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 11TH JULY 2023

SUBJECT: REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000

**REPORT BY: HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND DEPUTY MONITORING
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the numbers of covert surveillance operations undertaken by the Council in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) for the period 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 To provide an update on the number of operations undertaken in accordance with RIPA for the period 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 None. This report is for information only.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) sets out strict controls for public authorities wishing to carry out covert surveillance of individual members of the public as part of their exercise of their statutory functions. In addition to this Act, advice and guidance is found within the Codes of Practice issued by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office.
- 5.2 The Authority has a corporate policy, which provides guidance on how surveillance should be used by the relevant officers.

5.3 Public Authorities undertaking covert surveillance of individual members of the public are subject to inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office.

5.4 Members are advised that for the period 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023 one RIPA operation has been undertaken in relation to the sale of alcohol and/or disposable vapes containing nicotine to children under the age of 18 years.

5.5 **Conclusion**

The report advises members that there has been one RIPA operation undertaken for the period 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023 in relation to the sale of alcohol and/or disposable vapes containing nicotine to children under the age of 18 years.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 There are no assumptions contained in this report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 As this report is for information there is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment to be completed.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 There has been no consultation undertaken on this report as it is for information only.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Author: Lisa Lane Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer

For information: Robert Tranter Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer



GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 11TH JULY 2023

**SUBJECT: OFFICERS DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY
JANUARY TO MARCH 2023**

REPORT BY: HEAD OF PEOPLE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Governance and Audit Committee with information regarding the Register of Employees' Interests Forms completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) regarding Gifts and Hospitality for the period 1 January to 31 March 2023 ie the third quarter of the financial year 2022/2023 and a comparison with the previous three quarters.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Enclosed as Appendix 1 is a list of Register of Employees' Interests Forms in respect of Gifts and Hospitality completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) for the period 1 January to 31 March 2023.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Governance and Audit Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendation is designed to ensure members of the Governance and Audit Committee have an oversight of the position in relation to officers' Gifts and Hospitality.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Council's Code of Conduct for Employees sets out guidance for employees on a range of issues, including the completion of a Register of Employee Interests form,

which help maintain and improve the high standards of conduct within Local Government and protect employees from misunderstandings and confusion.

- 5.2 Completed Register of Employees' Interests forms are submitted to Heads of Service, Directors or the Chief Executive who countersign the forms to show they are aware of the declaration. The form also records details of any controls / action taken to protect the Council's interests in the circumstances outlined on the form. A copy of the countersigned form is given to the employee and a copy sent to Human Resources for filing on the employee's personal file.
- 5.3 The Head of Service, Director or Chief Executive retains the original form and maintains a summary spreadsheet to record the forms. On a monthly basis the summary spreadsheet or a nil return is submitted to Human Resources for collation and monitoring for consistency and compliance.
- 5.4 In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Employees, Gifts / Hospitality of less than £25 may be accepted by the employee but any Gift / Hospitality which could be seen by a third party as placing the employee under an improper obligation such as more than one Gift / Hospitality from the same party must be refused, irrespective of its value.
- 5.5 Employees may accept small offers of Hospitality only where the activity is of a nature where there is a genuine need to impart information or to represent the Council in the community. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented.
- 5.6 The table below details the number of declarations regarding Gifts submitted by Directorate for the period 1 January to 31 March 2023 and the previous three quarters for comparison.

Directorate	Jan – March 2023	Oct – Dec 2022	July – Sept 2022	April – June 2022
Economy and Environment	0	0	0	1
Education and Corporate Services	0	0	0	0
Social Services and Housing	0	0	1	2
Total	0	0	1	3

5.7 The table below details the number of declarations regarding Hospitality submitted by Directorate for the period 1 January to 31 March 2023 and the previous three quarters for comparison.

Directorate	Jan – March 2023	Oct – Dec 2022	July – Sept 2022	April – June 2022
Economy and Environment	1	0	0	0
Education and Corporate Services	1	0	0	0
Social Services and Housing	0	0	0	0
Total	2	0	0	0

5.8 Conclusion

The Head of People Services will continue to monitor the declarations submitted and work with Heads of Service to improve their understanding, promote best practice and corporate compliance of the Code of Conduct where appropriate.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no assumptions made within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The personnel implications are included in this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

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Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services
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Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
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Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer
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Cllr Nigel George, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Property and Highways
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Appendices:
Appendix 1 Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality 1 January to 31 March 2023

Appendix 1
Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality 1 January to 31 March 2023

Directorate	Service Area	Post Title of Employee Making the Declaration	Type of Declaration	Details of Declaration	Post Title of Head of Service, Director or Chief Executive who authorised the declaration	Outcome
Economy and Environment	Infrastructure	Group Manager Highway Engineering	Hospitality	Attendance at dinner of Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation. Cost of ticket sponsored by a consultant. Approx value £45.	Head of Infrastructure	Accepted
Education and Corporate Services	Education and Corporate Services	Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services	Hospitality	Attendance at a staff awards evening Coleg y Cymoedd. Attendance in capacity as a Governor. Approx value £30.	Chief Executive	Accepted

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GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 11TH JULY 2023

SUBJECT: REGISTER OF EMPLOYEES' INTERESTS FORMS 2022/23

REPORT BY: HEAD OF PEOPLE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Governance and Audit Committee with information regarding the Register of Employees' Interests Forms completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) for the 12 month period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and provide a comparison with the same information for the previous 2 financial years.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Enclosed in the Appendices are summaries of the declarations completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) by Directorate, Service Area, Type and Relationship for the 12 month period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Governance and Audit Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendation is designed to ensure members of the Governance and Audit Committee have an oversight of the position in relation to officers' Register of Employees' Interests Forms.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Council's Code of Conduct for Employees sets out guidance for employees on a range of issues, including the completion of a Register of Employee Interests form, which help maintain and improve the high standards of conduct within Local Government and protect employees from misunderstandings and confusion.

- 5.2 Completed Register of Employees' Interests forms are submitted to Heads of Service, Directors or the Chief Executive who countersign the forms to show they are aware of the declaration. The form also records details of any controls / action taken to protect the Council's interests in the circumstances outlined on the form. A copy of the countersigned form is given to the employee and a copy sent to Human Resources for filing on the employee's personal file.
- 5.3 The Head of Service, Director or Chief Executive retains the original form and maintains a summary spreadsheet to record the forms. On a monthly basis the summary spreadsheet or a nil return is submitted to Human Resources for collation and monitoring for consistency and compliance.
- 5.4 In 2022/23 46 declarations of interest were made by 39 employees, in 2021/22 50 declarations of interest were made by 39 employees, compared to 47 declarations of interest made by 39 employees in 2020/21. Where multiple declarations have been made on one form they have been recorded individually.
- 5.5 Appendix 1 summarises the declarations of interest by Directorate and Service Area for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and a comparison with the previous 2 financial years. The declarations for the previous years have been adjusted to reflect the current Directorate structures.
- 5.6 A total of 46 declarations of interest were made in 2022/23, compared to 50 in 2021/22 and 47 in 2020/21. A percentage breakdown of declarations of interest by Type is shown below:

Type of Declaration	% of Declarations		
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Relationship	34	60	33
Outside Interest	53	30	54
Gifts and Hospitality	9	10	13
Annual Leave	4	0	0

- 5.7 Appendix 2 shows the detail of the declarations of interest by Type shown above divided into the 3 sections of the Register of Employees' Interest Form for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and a comparison with the previous 2 financial years.
- 5.8 The percentage for declarations of Outside Interests have increased to 54% and include external employment. Appendix 2 shows the detail.
- 5.9 The Governance and Audit Committee will be aware that Gifts and Hospitality is the subject of a separate, quarterly report to the Committee.
- 5.10 Appendix 3 shows the detail of the declarations of interest by Relationship for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and a comparison with the previous 2 financial years. A percentage breakdown by Relationship is shown below:

Type of Relationship	% of Declarations		
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Councillor	6	0	7
Contractor	19	3	13
Employee	56	33	53

Other	19	64	27
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5.11 **Conclusion**

The Head of People Services will continue to monitor the declarations submitted and work with Heads of Service to improve their understanding, promote best practice and corporate compliance of the Code of Conduct where appropriate.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no assumptions made within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The personnel implications are included in this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Declarations by Directorate and Service Area
- Appendix 2 Declarations by Type
- Appendix 3 Declarations by Relationship

Appendix 1

Declarations by Directorate and Service Area 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23

Directorate	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Chief Executive	2	1	0
Economy and Environment/Communities	26	13	5
Education and Corporate Services	6	12	17
Social Services and Housing	13	24	24
Total	47	50	46

Directorate / Service Area	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Chief Executive	2	1	0
Economy and Environment/Communities	26	13	5
Director	3	1	1
Infrastructure	2	2	2
Land and Property Services	1	0	0
Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services	3	3	2
Regeneration and Planning	17	7	0
Education and Corporate Services	6	12	17
Director	0	0	1
Corporate Finance	3	4	1
Customer and Digital Services	1	1	0
Learning Education and Inclusion	0	0	2
Legal and Democratic Services	1	4	1
People Services	0	2	5
Transformation Services	1	1	7
Social Services and Housing	13	24	24
Director	0	0	1
Adult Services	5	16	11
Childrens Services	6	6	5
Caerphilly Cares	0	0	0
Caerphilly Homes	2	2	7
Overall Total	47	50	46

NB The declarations for the previous years have been adjusted to reflect the current Directorate structures.

Appendix 2
Declarations by Type 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23

Type of Declaration	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Relationships	16	30	15
Councillor	1	0	1
Contractor	3	1	2
Employee	9	10	8
Other	3	19	4
Outside Interest - Financial	16	10	17
Business Relationship	0	0	0
Outside Employment	14	10	17
Personal Interest	2	0	0
Outside Interest - Non Financial	9	5	8
Business Relationship	0	0	0
Membership of an External Body	5	0	3
Personal Interest	1	1	4
Volunteering	3	4	1
Gifts and Hospitality	4	5	6
Gift	4	0	4
Hospitality	0	0	2
Annual Leave	2	0	0
Personal Interest	2	0	0

Appendix 3
Declarations by Relationship 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Relationship – Councillor	1	0	1
Aunt / Uncle including in-Law / Step / Civil / Ex	1	0	0
Friend / Acquaintance	0	0	1
Relationship - Contractor	3	1	2
Aunt / Uncle including in-Law / Step / Civil / Ex	1	0	0
Brother / Sister in-Law	0	1	0
Cousin including in-Law	1	0	0
Friend / Acquaintance	1	0	0
Husband / Wife including Partner / Civil Partner / Ex	0	0	2
Relationship - Employee	9	10	8
Aunt / Uncle including in-Law / Step / Civil / Ex	1	0	0
Brother / Sister	1	1	1
Brother / Sister in-Law	0	0	2
Child / Step Child	2	2	1
Cousin including in-Law	0	0	0
Friend / Acquaintance	2	0	1
Husband / Wife including Partner / Civil Partner / Ex	3	2	1
Niece / Nephew including in-Law / Great / Step	0	1	1
Parent / Step	0	4	1
Relationship - Other	3	19	4
Aunt / Uncle including in-law / Step / Civil / Ex	0	3	0
Brother / Sister	0	4	1
Brother / Sister in-Law	0	1	0
Child / Step Child	1	1	0
Cousin including in-Law	0	1	0
Friend / Acquaintance	1	0	0
Grandparent including Great / in-Law / Step / Civil / Ex	0	3	0
Husband / Wife including Partner / Civil Partner / Ex	1	3	2
Niece / Nephew including in-Law / Great / Step	0	1	0
Parent / Step	0	2	0
Parents-in-Law including Civil / Partner / Ex	0	0	1

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Agenda Item 16

Corporate Governance Panel Minutes 13th June 2023

Attendees: Steve Harris/Deb Gronow/Rob Tranter/Liz Lucas/Sue Richards/Cllr Stenner/Nigel Yates

Chair: Steve Harris

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Richard (Ed) Edmunds, Sue Richards, and Nigel Yates. Noted that Nigel Yates was trying to connect to the meeting but was unable to do so as he kept receiving a message that he was 'waiting in the lobby'. DG to look into this matter in order that Mr Yates can join the next meeting without any problems.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 14th March 2023 were discussed. SH to look at progress on actions and SH to then meet with Ed to discuss.

Financial Regulations Review – Report to be presented to the Governance & Audit Committee in September 2023. DG to speak to IE (Procurement) in relation to Standing Orders. LL queried whether there is a need to look at thresholds due to the Cost-of-Living crisis.

RT advised that Financial Regulations and Standing Orders should be treated separately and that they would both need to go to Council as changes would be required to the Constitution.

Action: DG to liaise with LL/IE around any possible changes to Standing Orders.

3. Update on Draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022/23 contributions and comments received/outstanding

DG advised that all information has been received and that she was in the process of pulling it together with a view to the document being issued for wider consultation.

Action: DG to issue document.

4. Progress on issue(s) raised in Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2021/22

DG in process of collating responses. DG needs to clarify one or two things however the document is coming together in order for Ed and SH to review prior to issuing for wider consultation.

LL had some concerns that the document seemed to be outdated in its current format and needs updating. This is a difficult document to read and needs refreshing. SH will review and update. SH will circulate clean draft for comments.

SH stated that we need to get the balance right in order that it is fit for purpose and also complies with the requirements of Audit Wales. DG to look at 2023/24 document and formats that other LA's use in order to make it a more readable document.

Action: Need to look at refreshing document and look at what other LA's are doing. To be undertaken in Autumn with a Panel session in January to discuss.

5. Issue(s) for inclusion/areas for improvement in Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022/23 – risks identified, horizon scanning etc

SH to look at and draw out any issues and may need to have individual discussions with officers.

Action: SH to review documentation and contact officers individually if required.

6. AOB

RT queried in Mr Yates absence whether the meeting was quorate. SH confirmed that the Group was established in order to formalise governance arrangements in the Authority and was quorate.

DG queried the self-assessment training and support for members of the Governance & Audit Committee. DG advised that WLGA and CIPFA could provide support. SH advised that this was a matter that could be discussed outside of this meeting with himself and Ed.

7. Date of Next Meeting - TBC