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(Tel: 01443 864210 Email: [EVANSCA1@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:EVANSCA1@caerphilly.gov.uk))

**Date: 2nd December 2015**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Audit Committee** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Wednesday, 9th December, 2015** at **10.00 am** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

**Chris Burns**  
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## A G E N D A

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of Interest. Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any 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: -	
3 Audit Committee Meeting held on 9th September 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 12).	1 - 6
To receive and consider the following reports: -	

A greener place Man gwyrddach



4	Presentation on Findings of our Data Quality Review.	7 - 16
5	Request for Report on Complaints and Representations - Caerphilly Homes.	17 - 20
6	Review of a) The Corporate Complaints Policy and b) The Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants.	21 - 42
7	Regulator Proposals for Improvement Progress Update.	43 - 50
8	Corporate Risk Monitoring.	51 - 60
9	Update in Respect of the Area for Improvement in the Annual Governance Statement for 2014/15.	61 - 66
10	Audit Committee Forward Work Programme.	67 - 70
To receive and note the following information items:-		
11	Examples of a Partially Upheld Complaint Under The Corporate Complaints Policy.	71 - 74
12	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.	75 - 78
13	Officers Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality.	79 - 82
14	Certificate of Compliance - Audit of Caerphilly County Borough Council's Assessment of 2014-15 Performance.	83 - 86
15	Annual Audit Letter — Caerphilly County Borough Council 2014-15.	87 - 88
16	Update on Caerphilly County Borough Council Partnership and Collaborations Work Programme.	89 - 106
17	Corporate Governance Panel Minutes - 22nd May 2015.	107 - 108
18	Corporate Governance Panel Minutes - 28th September 2015.	109 - 110

*\*If a member of the Audit Committee wishes for any of the above information reports to be brought forward for discussion at the meeting please contact Charlotte Evans, 01443 864210, by 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday 8th December 2015.*

**Circulation:**

Councillors L. Ackerman, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, Mrs K.R. Baker, D.G. Carter, N. Dix, Ms J. Gale, C. Hawker, Ms J.G. Jones, Mrs G.D. Oliver, J.A. Pritchard, D. Rees (Chair) and J. Simmonds

Lay Member – Mr N.D. Yates (Vice Chair)

Auditors - Ms S.J. Byrne (PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP), Mr I. Davies (PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP), Mrs L. Pamment (PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP), Ms J. Joyce (Wales Audit Office) and Ms N. Jenkins (Wales Audit Office)

And Appropriate Officers.

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## AUDIT COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN, YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 10.00 AM

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#### PRESENT:

Councillor D. Rees - Chair  
Mr N. Yates - Vice Chair

#### Councillors:

Ms. L. Ackerman, Mrs E. Aldworth, D. Carter, N. Dix, C. Hawker, D. Havard, Ms J. Jones, Mrs G.D. Oliver and Mrs J.A. Pritchard.

#### Together with:

I. Davies (PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP)

N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer), S. Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance), G. Williams (Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), R. Harris (Internal Audit Manager), and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

#### 1. COUNCILLOR J.A. PRITCHARD

Members welcomed Councillor Pritchard following her recent operation. In response, she thanked those present for the best wishes she received during her recovery.

#### 2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs K. Baker and W. David.

#### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

#### 4. MINUTES – 10TH JUNE 2015

RESOLVED that, subject to it being noted that Councillors D. Havard and Ms. J. Jones were present at the meeting and were not recorded as such, the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 10th June 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 14) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following reports.

### **5. THE AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REPORT**

Mr I. Davies (Wales Audit Office) provided an overview of the report, which outlined the Auditor General's opinion on whether the financial statements gave a true and fair view of the financial position of Caerphilly County Borough Council at 31st March 2015, and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

The draft financial statements were received for the year ended 31st March 2015, in accordance with the agreed deadline. At the date of writing the report, work was still to be completed in respect of Senior Office pay disclosures; Completion of work on valuation of property, plan and equipment including Council dwellings properties; Completion of testing of income and expenditure and balance sheet items; and Completion procedures and Management representation letter.

The report outlined the more significant issues arising from the audit, which is recommended for consideration prior to the approval of the financial statements. The audit team had already discussed these issues with the Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer and members of her team.

The Committee noted that, in previous years there have been significant adjustments required in order to correct the balance of property, plan and equipment within the statement of accounts, since this time, the Authority have introduced additional procedures to reduce the levels of errors in accounting for fixed assets. Work is still to be completed in this area, and Members noted that errors of previous scales have not been identified this year. However, a number of small errors were identified, details of which were outlined in the report.

A Member raised their discontent that the report was provided as an electronic version and paper copies provided at the meeting. Officers explained that the report was not available at the time of printing the Audit Committee papers and as a result was sent to Members as soon as was available, however, comments were noted and considered for the future.

Members discussed the report and the detailed outline of the financial statements, and a Member queried the capitalisation level for purchases. It was noted that there is a guide limit of £10k, however Members were advised that this is dependent on the type of spend and the enhancement of the asset.

The Audit Committee, in noting that this was Mr Davies' last meeting, thanked the Officer their work and support over recent years and wished him well for the future.

### **6. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000**

The Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, provided Members with an overview of the report, which highlighted the number of covert operations undertaken by the Council in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

It was reported that there were two RIPA operations undertaken by the Authority for the period April to August (inclusive).

Members discussed the report, and it was noted that covert surveillance under RIPA is not used for the purpose of Employee Surveillance, which is currently on hold. Members were also informed that the Council's Corporate RIPA policy is currently under review.

A Member sought further information on the outcomes of RIPA operations and reporting process. Officers highlighted that the large majority of covert operations undertaken were in relation to sale of alcohol and tobacco products to minors and often include test purchases. All applications are taken through the judicial process and an annual report on the outcome the operations is reported to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

The Audit Committee thanked the Officer for the report and noted the contents.

## **7. UPDATE ON THE NUMBERS OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED UNDER THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

It was agreed that the agenda item 13 titled Annual Review of Complaints Received Under the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015 (which was an information item) be brought forward for consideration with this item.

The report provided Members with an update on the number of complaints received under the Corporate Complaints Policy for the period mid January 2015 to 31st July 2015, any trends identified and actions taken and the use of the Policy and Procedure to deal effectively with unacceptable, persistent or unreasonable actions by complainants.

The Officer provided an overview of the corporate complaints, which are one of the ways in which, the Council gains information on the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the services provided corporately by the Council. The result of the monitoring enables each department to focus on areas of concern, to improve services and to monitor performance and ensure that any trends in issues raised are identified and dealt with so as to be avoided in the future.

The report provided members with the total number of corporate complaints received across the Authority during the period and noted it as 129. The number of complaints upheld for Housing at Stage 2 included a significant number of complaints relating to recharges. These complaints have been analysed within the Housing division and as a result, a new recharge policy was introduced and implemented from April 2015. The new policy incorporates a revised appeals procedure and it is anticipated this procedure will provide a more streamlined and uniformed approach to the consideration of recharge appeals, with the inclusion of a Review Panel as the final part of the process.

Members noted that the number of complaints not responded to within the timescales has slightly increased when compared with the data from March 2015 (from 9.4% to 9.7% for stage 1 complaints and 3.2% to 4.2% for stage 2 complaints). There has been an overall increase of 0.3% (from 7.6% to 7.9%) of complaints dealt with outside timescale. The response times will continue to be monitored and a further update will be provided in the next 6 monthly report.

The Committee thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued. Members discussed the implementation of the Recharge Policy and sought further information on the Communication conducted with tenants. Officers highlighted further details could be obtained from Housing Officers, however it was noted that tenants have been made aware through communications with staff and information posted on the Internet.

Members discussed recent complaints and raised particular concern in relation to a Housing complaint that had reached the Ombudsman. Members were assured that, since this complaint, the recommendations made by the Ombudsman have been met and significant

improvements have been made to internal processes, training and record keeping.

The Vexacious Complaints Policy was discussed and it was noted that, whilst it has been in place for 2 years, it has become evident that it is not fit for purpose and therefore will be reviewed in coming months.

The Committee discussed the report and sought queried the term 'Partially Upheld complaints'. It was noted that a partially upheld complaint means that part of the complaint has been accepted and processed as a complaint. It was agreed that examples/ case study of Partially Upheld complaints would be brought to the next Committee for further clarification.

Finally, a Member raised concern that a report had taken over 12 months to be referred from Audit for addition on the Policy and Resources agenda. Members felt that this was not an acceptable time and that reports from the Audit Committee should be considered by Scrutiny as a matter of priority. Officers agreed to provide a report at the next meeting, highlighting the process, any failings and an explanation of the current constitutional arrangements

## **8. WAO REPORT – THE FINANCIAL RESILIENCE OF COUNCILS IN WALES**

The report, produced by the Wales Audit Office (WAO), provided information on the financial resilience of Council's in Wales, following a review of all 22 Local Authorities in Wales.

The financial resilience review report reflected findings from reviews carried out on the 2014/15 financial planning period, the delivery of 2013/14 financial plans and the financial performance track-record of 2011/12 and 2012/13. Each Authority also received an individual financial position assessment report and it was noted that the report for Caerphilly CBC is included separately on the agenda.

The review considered the management and planning arrangements to support financial resilience at each Council and how councils plan and then deliver their budget commitments. Comparisons were also drawn with the experience of English Council's, based on similar analysis conducted in 2013/14 by Grant Thornton. The report identified some key lessons to support Welsh Council's in becoming financially resilient in the future

Members thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued. Concerns were raised about the strength of the finance team in order to deal with cuts. Members were assured that, whilst there is a significant challenge ahead, careful planning is in place to focus on service provision and avoid destabilisation.

Members discussed Income Generation and it was noted that it was a complex area, however more detailed field work is being conducted to determine whether there were any liable options that CCBC could explore.

Finally, Members were asked to note that the report is dated incorrectly and should be noted that it is relevant for the period of April 2015.

## **9. WAO REPORT – FINANCIAL POSITION ASSESSMENT, CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

S. Harris, Interim Head of Corporate Finance, presented the Audit Committee with a report produced by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) following a financial position assessment undertaken for Caerphilly CBC.

During the period May to August 2014, the WAO examined Authorities' financial positions and how they are budgeting and delivering required savings. The report considered whether



Authorities have robust approaches in place to manage the ongoing budget reductions, to secure a stable financial position that will enable them to continue to operate for the foreseeable future. The focus of the work was on the 2014/15 financial planning period. In order to inform views on the planning for and successful delivery of budgets, the review also considered track records for the previous financial years 2011/12 to 2013/14.

The work focused on whether Council's were managing budget reductions effectively to ensure financial resilience. The WAO report set out conclusions on both track record and future prospects. Following from the review, Caerphilly received 2 proposals for improvement:

1. The Council should ensure that its priorities and improvement objectives are explicitly taken into account when determining its savings plans;
2. The Council should continue to develop the framework to formally monitor the delivery of savings and report to Members. This is becoming increasingly important as the Council faces more difficult savings requirements.

Members thanked the Officer for the report and consideration was given to the impact of the savings proposals on both services and service users. Officers highlighted that, as a result of the proposals and in order to monitor the impact of the savings on service users, Managers across the Authority are being asked to conduct qualitative reviews and report the outcome.

The Committee discussed the Reserves Account and it was noted that this has reduced as a result of unexpected pressures during the financial year, as a result, a number of Invest to Save prospects are no longer available. It was agreed that an updated Provisional Report would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

The Audit Committee noted the report.

## **10. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES: ANNUAL OUTTURN REPORT 2014/2015**

The report provided Members with details of the work carried out by Internal Audit Services during 2014/2015.

It is a requirement both of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the Council's own Financial Regulations that an annual audit activity plan is prepared to ensure that there is an effective and efficient use of audit resources. In addition to producing the audit plan, it is also a requirement that the Internal Audit Manager produces an annual report on work carried out by Internal Audit Services during the financial year.

The report provided a detailed summary of the activities Internal Audit was involved in during the year, which included the internal audit review of Local Service Board and Regional Development Plan grants, conducting Audit visits to Local Authority establishments, Assisting Caerphilly Homes with the stocktaking at the Council's stores and assisting with the introduction of new procedures, Audits of Contractors final accounts and involvement in the development of new and existing systems and procedures. Additionally, Internal Audit staff continued to provide and support staff on Standing Order for Contracts, Financial Regulations and financial best practice including tailored training or instruction as and when required.

Members thanked the Officer for the detailed report and sought further information on the Audit and follow up process. The Officer highlighted that, following the initial Audit, an action plan is agreed with the appropriate service manager and a review mechanism is in place to monitor the satisfactory completion of the agreed actions. In the situation where it is felt that satisfactory progress has not been made with the implementation of the agreed actions an escalation process allows reporting of concerns to the Director/ S151 Officer and in some cases the Audit Committee. It was noted however, that there is a different process in place

for schools, in which the follow up meetings would be conducted with School Governors.

Members discussed staff sickness within Internal Audit and queried whether agency staff had been considered. It was noted that, due to the nature of the department and the work, it was difficult to recruit agency staff on a short-term basis. However, for significant periods of long-term sickness, it would be considered.

Members discussed the Local Authority savings requirements and, having recognised the significant role that Internal Audit Services play, sought assurance that there would be no cut to staff within the team. Officers acknowledged the work of the Internal Audit Team to be an integral service to ensuring that there are robust procedures and policies across the Authority and assured Members that there are no planned reductions to the team in 2016/17 or 2017/18.

Audit Committee noted the report.

## **11. AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Forward Work Programme up to September 2016 was presented for Member consideration. It was noted that additional updates on Business Continuity Arrangements, Annual Governance Statement and Corporate Risk Register are to be scheduled for future meetings.

Having fully considered its content the Audit Committee noted the Forward Work Programme up to September 2016.

## **12. INFORMATION ITEMS**

The Committee received and noted the following information items:-

- (1) Audit of Caerphilly County Borough Council's 2015-16 Improvement Plan.
- (2) Officer's Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality.
- (3) Annual Review of Complaints Received Under the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy 1st April 2014 to 31 March 2015 – was taken in conjunction with agenda item 6 – Update on the Numbers of Complaints Received under the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.

The meeting closed at 11.44am.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2015, they were signed by the Chair.

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CHAIR

# Caerphilly Council Data Quality Review 2015-16

## Feedback

page 7

Sara-Jane Byrne – Performance Audit Lead  
Phil Morgan – Performance Auditor

November 2015

Agenda Item 4

# What was the purpose of the Review?

- The review assessed the robustness of the Council's arrangements to check that performance data is accurately captured, calculated and reported in a timely manner.
- We examined the corporate arrangements and their application through testing the following six performance indicators (PIs):
  - **Page SCC025:** Percentage of appropriate statutory visits
  - **Page SCC037:** The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting
  - **THS012:** The percentage of principal roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal C roads that are in overall poor condition
  - **Local:** The number of homes brought up to WHQS as recorded on annual return to Welsh Government
  - **Local:** Number of homes compliant with WHQs in respect of external elements or Number of homes compliant in terms of internal elements
  - **Local:** Percentage of cases who have had their risk of homelessness prevented by assistance to remain in their existing accommodation

# Overall Findings

- The Council has further improved its data quality assurance arrangements, resulting in increasingly robust data quality in services measured both by national and local indicators.

The Council is now in a better position to strengthen how it uses performance information to improve services.

# Corporate Arrangements - Strengths

- Performance calendar in place with dates for data collection, data submission, self-assessment, CMT performance reports etc.
- Standardised CMT scorecard for Directorate performance reports
- PI owners are all provided with relevant statutory PI guidance
- Guidance and support is given on developing definitions for local PIs
- A range of general and tailored training opportunities provided by the corporate performance team for PI owners

## Corporate Arrangements – Strengths (2)

- Accountability is being embedded in Directorates rather than performance data being owned in the centre
- A number of standard data collection and assessment forms used by the corporate centre to monitor data quality
- Corporate approach to risk assessing national and local PIs
- Target setting guidance is in place, although it is not prescriptive
- Good approach to addressing under-performance by putting in place remedial action

## Specific PIs – Findings

Page 12

- Across the six indicators checked there were no major issues of accuracy or process, indicating that corporate arrangements are effective.
- Definitions of PIs (national and local) are well understood by PI owners
- Increased focus on automated/mechanised approach to data collection – away from manual processes
- PI owners able to confidently and clearly demonstrate software and have worked hard to develop systems and processes to collate and analyse the necessary data to meet indicator definitions.



## Specific PIs – Findings

- Changes in performance (good and bad) from 2013-14 to 2014-15 understood and explained well by PI owners
- Good examples of data wrongly added to databases found and deleted during the year, showing the impact of audits and checks carried out within the services
- Clear knowledge, and understanding, of corporate data quality processes

# Proposals for further strengthening Data Quality Arrangements (1)

- Escalating cases of late or non completion of standard, corporate forms and returns (e.g. working papers) to ensure compliance
- Consider the development of more meaningful local PIs to help assess outcomes
- Minimising, where possible, the number of PIs where more than one software system is used by services to collect and analyse data – a situation that poses a potential risk to the accuracy of the data.

# Proposals for further strengthening Data Quality Arrangements (2)

- Ensuring that relevant managers are clearer about how they can use their data to improve performance
- Focussing more, with corporate support, on local PI definitions to ensure that software systems are designed in a way to collect relevant data as accurately as possible
- Developing a more consistent approach, within service areas, to quality checking the work of officers responsible for data input

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## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR REPORT ON COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS  
– CAERPHILLY HOMES**

**REPORT BY: INTERM HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER**

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

- 1.1 To provide members with an update on the request for a report to be presented Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee relating to housing complaints and representations.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Audit Committee on 11 March 2015, a request was made for a report to be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in relation to complaints about Caerphilly Homes because Members were specifically concerned about housing complaints. The report was subsequently presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 30th September 2015.

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

- 3.1 Members requests for reports to Scrutiny Committees are considered by the Scrutiny Leadership Group in line with the Council's arrangements for Scrutiny, including the terms of reference for each Scrutiny Committee in the Council's constitution and in accordance with Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 The minutes of the Audit Committee from 11 March 2015, record the following;

“The Committee thanked the Officer for the report and discussed their concerns for Housing Complaints, the impact the WHQS Programme has had on the data and concerns over programme slippage. Officers highlighted that reports on the WHQS Programme are considered at Caerphilly Homes Task Group and Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, therefore it was agreed that discussions be undertaken with the Chair of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the monitoring of service delivery and performance/customer satisfaction of WHQS and Housing.”

- 4.2 Following the meeting, the request for a report was referred to the Chief Housing Officer who arranged for a report to be prepared. The date for the presentation of the report was also considered in conjunction by the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee.

- 4.3 As the Forward Work Programme for the Policy and Resources Committee had already been agreed by the Scrutiny Leadership Group for the period February to April 2015 (including the meeting held on 14th April 2015), the report was added to the Forward Work Programme covering the period May to August 2015.
- 4.4 The report was due to be presented to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 14th July 2015, however due to the number of items for discussion on that agenda the Chair agreed to defer the report, which was then added to the Forward Work Programme for the period August to September 2015. The report was presented to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 30th September 2015.
- 4.5 By way of additional information, members will be aware that, following the recent Scrutiny review and recommendations, the Council is taking steps to reduce the pressure on scrutiny agendas by limiting the number of items for discussion per agenda to 4 and that each Scrutiny Committee will also discuss its Forward Work Programme at each meeting. In addition, Scrutiny Chairs are now able to add urgent items to work programmes.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not needed because the issues covered are for information purposes only, therefore the Council's full EIA process does not need to be applied.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 This report is for information only.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To monitor the request for a report to be presented.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972

Author: Angharad Price, Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

For information only

Nicole Scammell Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer

Gail Williams Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Lisa Lane, Corporate Solicitor

Cllr Hefin David, Chair of Policy and Resources Committee

Cath Forbes-Thompson

Background papers;

Caerphilly Homes Complaints and Representations Report 30th September 2015

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## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF A) THE CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY & B) THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE PERSISTENT AND UNREASONABLE ACTIONS BY COMPLAINANTS**

**REPORT BY: INTERIM HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Audit Committee on the changes proposed to the Corporate Complaints Policy as set out in Appendix 1 prior to presenting the policy to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.2 To ask the Audit Committee to recommend that the current Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants as set out in Appendix 2 be endorsed with no amendments.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 To seek views on proposed changes to the Corporate Complaints Policy and to endorse the current Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent or Unreasonable Actions by Complainants.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The policies support the provision of higher quality and more effective services to the public.
- 3.2 The policies ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently and fairly across all service areas whilst ensuring staff are aware of the process of identifying unreasonably persistent complainants.

### 4. THE REPORT

#### **Corporate Complaints Policy**

- 4.1 By way of background information, on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012 the Audit Committee considered the implementation of the Council's new Corporate Complaints Policy which was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet and implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2013.
- 4.2 The policy was developed for adoption by public sector organisations across Wales by a "Complaint Wales Group" set up by Welsh Government. The Group comprised relevant officers from public sector organisations across Wales and chaired by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, for adoption by public sector organisations across Wales. The policy was developed with a view to ensuring that complaints were dealt with in a consistent manner

across Wales with the significant change being the number of stages in the process being reduced from three to two. This provision remains prescriptive and cannot under any circumstances be varied.

- 4.3 The Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee provides that it “shall oversee and monitor the outcomes of complaints received by the Authority under the Council’s Corporate Complaints Policy and review the policy on an annual basis and to make comments on the adequacy and effectiveness of the policy”. Members will be aware that this Committee receives six monthly update reports on the complaints received under the Corporate Complaints Policy and has recently received an Annual report reviewing the complaints policy for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.
- 4.4 Members advised that the policy is working well and there are no proposals to significantly amend the Policy other than to include the following, which are track changed on the copy of the policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report
- 4.4.1 Additional contact details for Social Services and the Information Unit have been added to page 3 of the policy for clarification.
- 4.4.2 A new paragraph 7 has also been incorporated on page 3 of the Policy to clarify that the Policy does not relate to conduct/discipline issues. This paragraph follows similar wording to that contained in the booklet issued by the Ombudsman which sets out what types of complaints the Ombudsman is able to look at. Whilst a matter of conduct or discipline is not considered under the Corporate Complaints Policy, where such issues are raised they are referred to the relevant service area for separate consideration.
- 4.4.3 At page 5 of the policy, where a formal investigation of a complaint is considered (ie Stage 2), and the Council’s practice is for the Head of Service or a person nominated on his/her behalf to deal with such complaints. Accordingly the policy has been clarified to reflect how this part of the process is dealt with. Where a Stage 2 complaint involves more than one Head of Service, the policy currently provides that it will be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer or his/her deputy. It is proposed that this provision is amended to include the Corporate Solicitor.
- 4.5 Members are asked to consider and endorse the proposed changes prior to referring the Policy to Cabinet for approval.
- 4.6 **Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Persistent and Unreasonable Action by Complainants**
- 4.7 The introduction of the Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Persistent and Unreasonable Action by Complainants was considered by Audit Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 and adopted by Cabinet in November 2013. The Policy is subject to a two yearly review this was due in November 2015.
- 4.8 Members are advised that it remains the case that the majority of complainants pursue their complaints with the Authority in an appropriate manner. However a small number of complainants pursue their cases in a way that can impede investigation of their complaint or have significant resource implications in dealing with the case for example the sheer number or nature of their enquiries may lead to them to be considered as persistent.
- 4.9 However officers are also mindful of the fact that unreasonable complainants may make reasonable complaints. As such all correspondence must be considered to ensure that all issues raised have been addressed.
- 4.10 Whilst there have been no formal referrals under this Policy since its introduction in November 2013, officers have had regard to its provisions when considering the actions of any complainant whose behaviour was becoming unacceptable or persistent in nature. As such it

remains a useful tool to officers when dealing with complainants under the Corporate Complaints Policy.

- 4.11 Members are therefore asked to endorse the current Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants under the Corporate Complaints Policy.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this Report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The views of the consultees where appropriate have been incorporated into the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members are asked to provide their views on the changes proposed to the Corporate Complaints Policy as set out in Appendix 1 prior to presenting the policy to Cabinet for approval.
- 9.2 Members are asked to recommend to Cabinet that the current policy for Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants is endorsed.

## **10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To review the Corporate Complaints Policy and the Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972-2003 Public Services Ombudsman Wales Act 2005.

Author: Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services/Interim Monitoring Officer  
Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services  
Angharad Price, Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Lisa Lane, Solicitor  
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Kim Davies, Customer Services/Complaints Officer  
Karen Williams, Support Officer

Judith Morgans, Customer Services Manager  
Ros Roberts, Performance Manager  
Andrea Jones, Corporate Complaints Officer  
David A Thomas, Policy Officer  
Richard Harries, Internal Audit Manager  
Leigh Brook, Corporate Finance

Background Papers:

Report to Audit Committee 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2012 - Implementation of new Caerphilly County Borough Council Complaints Policy

Report to Audit Committee 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2013 – the Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Persistent Unreasonable Actions by complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Corporate Complaints Policy with track changes

Appendix 2: Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants with no amendments



# Caerphilly County Borough Council

## Corporate Complaints Policy

Version 1 with amendments – Nov 15

## Caerphilly County Borough Council

### Corporate Complaints Policy

#### Introduction & Policy Statement

Caerphilly County Borough Council is committed to dealing effectively with any complaints you have about our service. We aim to clarify any issues about which you are not sure. If possible, we will put right any mistakes we may have made. We will provide any service to which you are entitled that we have failed to deliver. If we were wrong we will apologise and offer redress if appropriate. We also aim to learn from our mistakes and use the information we gain to improve our services.

#### Principles

The Council will aim to use the following principles in its operation of the Complaints procedure:-

- Accessible and simple
- Fair and impartial
- Timely, effective and consistent
- Accountable
- Delivers continuous improvement

#### What is A Complaint?

A complaint is:

An expression of dissatisfaction or concern which requires a response. It may be:

- Either written or spoken
- Made by one or more members of the public
- About the Council's action or lack of action or about the standard of service provided
- About the Council itself, a person acting on its behalf or a public service provider partnership

#### Who Can Complain?

Any member of the public, including a child, who has received, or was entitled to receive, a service from the Council may make a complaint.

A complaint can also be put forward by someone on behalf of another person, as follows:-

- a. Someone who has died
- b. A child
- c. Those who lack the capacity (as defined by the Mental Capacity Act 2005)
- d. They have been asked to do so by the person affected.

In the case of (b), (c) and (d), the Council must satisfy itself, as far as the circumstances of the person affected allow for it, that the representative is acting with the authority of that person and if possible obtain their signature to confirm this.

#### Time Limit

The Council will only be obliged to consider complaints within six months of the complainant becoming aware of the problem. If a complaint is received after more than six months, the Council's Monitoring Officer or his deputy will consider whether there are valid reasons to support consideration, and whether information is still available to make consideration possible.

#### When To Use This Policy

This policy only applies to complaints as described above. It does not apply to:-

##### 1 A Request For Service

If you are telling us about something which you think needs to be done, for example, repairing a pothole, then you are requesting a service. This policy does not apply to requests for service.

However, if you make a request for service and you aren't happy with our response, you will be able to complain using this policy as we describe below.

##### Others

2. Issues where there is a statutory right of appeal, e.g. a refusal to grant you planning permission, or a decision not give your child a place in a particular school. In such cases the Council will explain the appeals process.
3. Concerns about policy decisions made by other public sector organisations, e.g. Welsh Government. In such cases the Council will advise you how to make your concerns known.
4. Complaints regarding Social Services: For Social Services complaints please contact Social Services Complaints, Penallta House, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, CF82 7PG; [telephone 0800 3284061](tel:08003284061), email [socialservices@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices@caerphilly.gov.uk)
5. Complaints about schools, please approach the school direct.
6. Concerns/complaint in relation to Freedom of Information or Data Protection issues. Please contact the Council's Information Unit, Penallta House, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, CF82 7PG; [telephone 01443 864320](tel:01443864320), email [foi@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:foi@caerphilly.gov.uk)
7. Employment matters. Although we can consider complaints such as recruitment or appointment procedures under this policy we cannot look into other staff matters such as discipline, which may include the conduct of an officer. Where such issues are referred to as part of a complaint, these matters will be referred to the appropriate service area for separate consideration outside of the complaints policy.
- 6.

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## How To Make Your Complaint

You can express your complaint in any of the ways below:-

- Ask for a form from the person with whom you are already in contact. Tell them that you want us to deal with your complaint formally.
- You can get in touch with us by telephoning 01443 864221.
- You can use the form on our website by following this link: [www.complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:www.complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk).
- You can e-mail us at [complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk).
- You can write to the Corporate Complaints Officer, Mrs Andrea Jones, Legal Department, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Penallta House, Ystrad Mynach, CF82 7PG.

We aim to have complaint forms available at all of our service outlets and public areas such as local offices and libraries

If you would like this policy and the complaint form in Welsh or another language or format (perhaps Braille or large print), please contact the Corporate Complaints Officer.

A copy of the form is attached at Appendix 1.

## Dealing With Your Complaint

**We have a two-stage approach for dealing with your complaint.**

### Stage 1

We will formally acknowledge your complaint within five working days and let you know how we intend to deal with it.

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If possible, we believe it is best to deal with things straight away rather than try to sort them out later. If you have a complaint, raise it with the person you are dealing with. He or she will try to resolve it for you there and then. If there are any lessons to learn from addressing your complaint then the member of staff will draw them to our attention. We will aim to achieve this within ten working days of your complaint being raised. If the member of staff can't help, they will explain why and you can then ask for a formal investigation.

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If you have asked us to communicate in a specific way, perhaps by e-mail or letter, we will honour your wish if possible.

We will deal with all complaints in an open and honest way

We will make sure that no one is disadvantaged because they have made a complaint.



Normally, we will only be able to look at complaints if you tell us about them within six months. This is because it is better to look into your complaints while the issues are still fresh in everyone's minds.

We may, in exceptional circumstances, be able to consider complaints raised later than that. However, you will need to have a strong reason for the delay, and the information must still be available to allow us to investigate properly. A decision on whether or not to investigate in these circumstances will be made by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his/her deputy.

If your complaint covers more than one organisation, we will usually work with them. We will then give you the name of the person responsible for communicating with you while the complaint is dealt with.

If the complaint is about someone working on our behalf, we will look into your complaint ourselves unless we have agreed a contractual complaints process with the body providing the service. If a contractual complaints process is in place, we will still monitor complaints received and how the contractor deals with them.

#### Formal Investigation – Stage 2

**The relevant Head of Service or a person nominated on his/her behalf will deal with your complaint at Stage 2. We will tell you who we have asked to look into your complaint. If your complaint is straightforward, we will usually ask the nominated Complaints Officer from the service area to look into it and get back to you. If it is more complicated, we may use someone from elsewhere in the Council.** We may seek advice from both within and outside the Council. If the complaint involves more than one Head of Service's area of responsibility it will be dealt with by the Council's Monitoring Officer **or his/her deputy** or the Corporate Solicitor

We will set out to you our understanding of your complaint and ask you to confirm that we have got it right. We'll also ask you to tell us what outcome you are hoping for. The person looking at your complaint will usually need to see the files we hold relevant to your complaint, but we will always protect your personal data from improper use.

If there is a simple solution to your problem, we may ask you to accept this. For example, where you asked for a service and we see straight away that you should have received it, we will offer to provide the service rather than investigate and produce a report.

We will aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. The formal stage complaints process should normally be concluded within **20** working days, commencing on the day following the day that the exact complaint is agreed between the complainant and the Corporate Complaints Officer. Where this deadline cannot be met we will

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- Let you know within this time why we think it may take longer to investigate.
- Tell you how long we expect it to take.
- Let you know where we have reached with the investigation, and
- Give you regular updates, including telling you whether any developments might change our original estimate.

The person who is investigating your complaint will aim first to establish the facts. The extent of this investigation will depend on how complex the issues you have raised are.

We may ask to meet you to discuss your concerns. Occasionally we might suggest mediation to try to resolve disputes.

We will look at relevant evidence. This could include files, notes of conversations, letters, e-mails or whatever may be relevant to your particular complaint. If necessary, we will talk to the staff or others involved and look at our policies and any legal entitlement and guidance.

### **Equalities Issues**

We will deal with all complaints fairly and without prejudice, irrespective of the background, language needs and circumstances of the person making the complaint. This does mean we will need to ask relevant questions to ensure that there is no discrimination occurring in our complaints process, but you only need to answer the questions if you wish to do so, all we ask is that you understand that we have to ask them.

### **Outcome**

If we investigate your complaint, we will let you know what we have found in keeping with your preferred form of communication. This could be by letter or e-mail, for example. If necessary, we will produce a detailed report. We will explain how and why we came to our conclusions.

If we find that we got it wrong, we will tell you what happened and why.

If we find there is a fault in our systems or the way we do things, we will tell you what it is and how we plan to change things to stop it happening again.

If we've got it wrong, we will always apologise.

### **Putting Things Right**

If the Council didn't provide a service you should have had, we will aim to provide it if that is practical and sensible.

If the Council didn't do something well enough, we will aim to do it better and if our investigations show you have lost out as a result of a mistake on the Council's part, we will try to put you back in the position you would have been in if we had got it right in the first place.

### **Ombudsman**

If we do not succeed in resolving your complaint, you may complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The Ombudsman can look into your complaint if you believe that you personally, or the person on whose behalf you are complaining,

- Have been treated unfairly or received a bad service through some failure on the Council's part, or

- Have been disadvantaged personally by maladministration or service failure.

The Ombudsman expects you to bring your concerns to our attention first and to give us a chance to put things right. You can contact the Ombudsman by -

- Phone 0300 790 0203
- E-mail [ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)
- The website [www.ombudsman-wales.org](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org)
- Writing to Public Services Ombudsman for Wales,  
1 Ffordd Yr Hen Gae,  
Pencoed,  
CF35 5LJ

#### Learning Lessons

We take your concerns and complaints seriously and try to learn from any mistakes we have made. A summary of all complaints will be considered by the Council's Leadership team on a regular basis. Complaints will also be monitored by the Council's Audit Committee.

When we identify a significant need for change we will develop an action plan setting out what we will do, who will do it and when we plan to do it by. We will let you know when promised have been implemented.

#### What If I need Help?

Our staff will aim to help you to make your complaints known to us. If you need extra assistance, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can help.

In all circumstances, we will pay due regard to your particular circumstances in the light of protected characteristics defined by the Equality [Act 2010](#).

#### Appendices

Complain/concern form.

### About your complaint?

- 1 Name of the service you are complaining about  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 What do you think they did wrong, or failed to do  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 When did you first become aware of this problem  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Have you already raised concern with a member of staff? If so, please give brief details of how and when you did so.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Describe how you personally have suffered or have been affected.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 What do you think should be done to put things right?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 7 If it is more than six months since you first became aware of the problem, please explain why you have not complained before.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Please attach any relevant supporting documents.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Contact:

Caerphilly County Borough Council,  
Penallta House,  
Tredomen Park,  
Ystrad Mynach,  
Hengoed,  
CF82 7RG.

E-mail [complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01443 854221

Let us know if you have a complaint about our services we want to hear about it.



This publication is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.

Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn lleithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.

### What is a complaint?

A complaint could include:

- Failure of the Council to deliver a service.
- A delay in responding to your request within a specified timescale.
- Failure of the Council to follow their agreed rules, statutory obligations or a published service standard.
- An unhelpful attitude of someone who works for the Council.
- If you feel you have suffered any form of bias or discrimination.

### Who can complain?

Anyone who has used or requires a Council service. You can also complain on behalf of someone else, as long as you have their permission.

### How long will you wait?

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five working days, and your complaint will be fully resolved within a maximum of 20 working days.

### What will happen?

If your complaint is new it will be dealt with as part of Stage 1 of the Council's complaints policy. If you are unhappy with the response you receive to your complaint you can escalate it to Stage 2.

### Your details

Name

Address

Post Code

Telephone

Email

Preferred method of contact:

Post

Phone

Email

If contacting on behalf of someone else  
Please provide their details



**CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE,  
PERSISTENT OR UNREASONABLE ACTIONS BY COMPLAINANTS UNDER  
THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Contents

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- Unreasonable Persistence

Managing Unacceptable Conduct by Complainants

Deciding to Restrict Complainant Contact

Dissatisfaction about a Decision to Restrict Contact

Recording and Reviewing a Decision to Restrict Contact

Policy Review

## **1. Introduction**

This policy document sets out the approach by Caerphilly County Borough Council (“the Council”) to the rare instances where persons who complain under the Council’s Corporate Complaints Policy do so in such circumstances that their actions or behaviour do not justify expending further resources.

Such instances are very rare but typically involve persons who refuse to accept ‘closure’ and constantly write in or verbally reiterating the same complaint and thus waste time and effort and consequentially public monies on unnecessary and/or disproportionate investigation. The term complainant includes anyone acting on behalf of a complainant or who contacts the Council in connection with a complaint.

## **2. Policy Aims**

To deal and respond fairly, honestly, consistently and appropriately with all complainants, including those whose actions we consider unacceptable. The Council believes that all complainants have the right to be heard, understood and respected and receive an appropriate response in line with the Council’s Complaints policy and to comply with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) – freedom of expression. To advise all complainants, both at initial contact and throughout their dealings, what we can or cannot do in relation to their complaint. In doing so, we aim to be open and not raise hopes or expectations that we cannot meet or would not be a proportionate outcome. We also aim to ensure that other complainants and Council officers do not suffer any disadvantage from those complainants who act in an unacceptable manner. To have a stated position, policy and procedure that explains how and why the Council will disengage with complainants who act in an unreasonable or unacceptable manner.

## **3. Defining Unacceptable Actions by Complainants**

People may act out of character in times of trouble or distress. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a complaint received. There may also be occasions where medical, mental health or disability-related issues are involved whereby people appear aggressive through no fault of their own, leading to misunderstandings that can escalate complaints seemingly out of nowhere.

It is accepted that being persistent can be a positive advantage when pursuing a complaint, however, the actions of complainants who are ‘unreasonable’ and/or have unrealistic expectations places unnecessary demands on the Council and its officers. It is only those actions that we



consider to be unreasonable or unacceptable that we aim to manage under this policy. \*\* Officers are reminded that where the actions of a complainant are not covered in this policy they must refer to the Health and Safety policies and seek appropriate guidance from their Head of Service in conjunction with the Corporate Health and Safety Division. Contact the Equalities and Welsh Language team for any equalities related issues (including relevant training).

For ease of reference the unreasonable actions covered by this policy are grouped under three broad headings: -

### **3.1 Abusive Correspondence**

- (a) This includes correspondence that may cause staff to feel afraid, abused or adversely affects their dignity in the workplace. On occasions such correspondence may amount to harassment and may require a referral to the Health and Safety Division. Officers should first seek guidance from their Head of Service if such circumstances arise.

### **3.2 Unreasonable Demands**

- (a) A Complainant may make what we consider unreasonable demands through the amount of information they seek, the nature and scale of service they expect or the number of approaches they make. What amounts to unreasonable demands will always depend on the circumstances surrounding the behaviour and the gravity of the issues raised by the complainant.
- (b) Examples of actions grouped under this heading include demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale, insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff, continual phone calls or letters, repeatedly calling at offices seeking personal contact, repeatedly changing the substance of the complaint or raising unrelated concerns with the intention of prolonging the outcome or diverting enquiries.
- (c) We consider these demands as unacceptable and unreasonable if they: -
- Take up an excessive and disproportionate amount of staff time and resource implications;
  - Disadvantage other complainants or departmental functions
  - Are judged as intended to disrupt;
  - Deliberately exaggerate the impact of the issue complained of

It is acknowledged that some complaints will require substantial investigation and resources, which are entirely necessary and proportionate.

### **3.3 Unreasonable Persistence**

- (a) We recognise that some complainants will not or cannot accept that the Council is unable to assist them further or provide a level of service other than that provided already. Complainants may persist in disagreeing with the action or decision taken in relation to their complaint or contact the service/organisation persistently about these issues. The final letter to a complainant will include a signpost to the Public Services Ombudsman For Wales (the Ombudsman). It is recognised that some complainants may have already sought a complaint handling review from the Ombudsman and received a response but continue to pursue the matter with the Council.
- (b) Examples of actions grouped under this heading include: -
- Persistent refusal to accept a decision made in relation to a complaint;
  - Persistent refusal to accept explanations relating to what the Council can or cannot do;
  - Continuing to pursue a complaint without presenting any new or relevant information;
  - Providing fictitious or manufactured evidence to pursue what may have been a true complaint;
  - Manufacturing complaints against members of staff when the complainant disagrees with an outcome;
  - Endeavouring to pursue a complaint by multiple approaches to different service areas of the Council. The way in which the complainant approaches the Council may be entirely reasonable, but it is their persistent behaviour in continuing to do so that is not.
- (c) We consider the actions of persistent complainers to be unacceptable when they take up what the Council regards as being a disproportionate amount of time and resources.

## **4. Managing Unacceptable Conduct by Complainants**

There are relatively few complainants whose conduct we may consider unacceptable. How we aim to manage this conduct depends on its nature and extent. Where Officers have concerns about or difficulties with their

dealings with any complainant, in addition to the provisions below they are also advised to complete a chronology of contacts utilising the form attached at Appendix 1.

If it adversely affects the ability of an officer to do his/her work and provide a service to others, the Council may need to restrict complainant contact in order to manage the unacceptable conduct. We aim to do this in a way, wherever possible, that allows a complaint to progress to completion through the established corporate complaints process.

We may restrict contact in person, by telephone, fax, letter or electronically or by any combination of these, examples of which are set out below. We will try to maintain at least one form of contact. In extreme cases and where it is appropriate, we will advise the complainant in writing that their name is on a 'no personal contact' list. This means that they must restrict contact with the organisation in relation to any complaint matter to either written communication or through a third party.

These steps should only be taken after careful consideration of the situation by the relevant Head of Service.

It is acknowledged that unreasonable people may make reasonable complaints and it is important that Officers take note of the matters being referred to ensure that they do not overlook a genuine concern. The threat or use of physical violence, verbal abuse or harassment towards any member of staff is likely to result in the ending of all direct contact with the complainant and must be dealt with under the Council's Health and Safety Policies. We do not accept correspondence (letter, fax or electronic) that is abusive to staff. When this happens we will tell the complainant that we will not respond to their correspondence.

If they do not stop, the complainant will be advised that we may require future contact to be through a third party. Staff may end telephone calls if the caller is considered aggressive, abusive or offensive. The staff member taking the call has the right to make this decision, tell the caller that the behaviour is unacceptable and end the call if the behaviour does not stop. Officers are advised to report this type of behaviour to the relevant Head of Service.

Where a complainant repeatedly phones, visits any of the Council offices sends irrelevant documents or continually raises the same issues, we may decide to: -

- Only take telephone calls from the complainant at set times on set days and/or appoint a single point of contact to deal with calls or correspondence from the complainant in the future

- Require the complainant to make an appointment before visiting the Council offices or restrict contact to written correspondence only
- Return 'irrelevant' documents to the complainant
- Take other action that we consider appropriate

We will, however, always tell the complainant what action we are taking and why.

Where a complainant continues to correspond on a wider angle of issues, and this conduct is considered unreasonably excessive, then the complainant may be told that only a certain number of issues will be considered in a given period and asked to limit or focus their requests accordingly. The Council's response will be proportionate to the nature of the given allegations.

Complainant action may be considered unreasonably persistent if the Council's corporate complaints policy has been exhausted and the complainant continues to persistently dispute the decision relating to their complaint. The complainant may be told that no future phone calls will be accepted or interviews granted concerning this complaint. Any future contact by the complainant on this issue must be in writing. Future correspondence may be read and filed, but only subject to further enquiry or review if the complainant provides significant new information relating to the same complaint.

The complainant will receive a written acknowledgement that their correspondence has been read, assessed and placed in their file. Officers who propose this course of action should first consult with the Head of Service.

## **5. Restricted Contact**

Wherever possible, we will give a complainant the opportunity to modify their behaviour or action before a decision is taken. Complainants will be told in writing why a decision has been made to restrict future contact and what the restricted contact arrangements are.

## **6. Dissatisfaction about a Decision to Restrict Contact –**

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the decision to restrict then the complainant may refer the matter to the Council's Monitoring Officer to review the decision.

Once restriction of contact has been notified, subsequent correspondence from complainants should be carefully considered to ensure that no new circumstances are being reported which should otherwise be subject to

separate complaint or significantly affect any decision on the matter complained of.

## **7. Recording and Reviewing a Decision to Restrict Contact**

- 7.1 We will record all incidents of unacceptable actions by complainants. Where it is decided to restrict complainant contact, an entry will be made in the relevant Complaints file, setting out the decision and the revised contact arrangements. A decision to restrict complainant contact may be reconsidered if the complainant is prepared to appropriately engage with the Council's procedure and protocols as set out in this document. The relevant Head of Service will review the status of all complainants with restricted contact arrangements on a regular basis should that person continue to correspond with the service.

## **8. Notification to Local Members**

- 8.1 In addition the Council's Monitoring Officer will notify the relevant Ward Member (on a confidential basis) that a constituent has been designated as a complainant with restricted contact under this Policy.

## **9. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Next date for review is November 2015.

Appendix 1

Chronology of Contact

DATE / TIME	INCIDENT/OBSERVATION/CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES	ACTIONS/OUTCOMES	SOURCE OF INFORMATION



## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

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

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

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on progress against the proposals made by all regulators since the last Audit Committee (in May 2015).

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Since May 2015 10 proposals have now been addressed and 4 new ones have come onto the proposal register, 2 from the Financial Resilience Report and 2 that were transferred in from the Improving Governance Group, who have now disbanded following successful completion of their action plan.
- 2.2 Currently we have **24** proposals. We believe **10** proposals have been addressed and should now be closed following consideration by Audit Committee. Closing the 10 proposals would leave **14** outstanding as of end of November 2015.
- 2.3 There are only 4 new proposals to add to this update (included in the above figures). 2 of the new ones (from the Financial Resilience work) are not statutory recommendations rather suggestions for improvement and are included for the first time into this register for monitoring at the Audit Committee.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Both the Corporate Assessment and the Annual Improvement Report (WAO) are designed to assess and report on the Council's compliance with the Local Government Measure 2009. In addition it encapsulates other regulatory and inspection outcomes.

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 At Nov **2015** reporting against the individual categories is as follows:

Customer Services Review	Asset Management	Information Management Review	Safe-guarding	Financial Position Assessment	Improving Governance (new and C/F)	Total
8	6	1 (see 4.7)	5 (see 4.9)	2 (new)	2 (new)	<b>24</b>

4.2 As of Nov **2015** the following figures are reported as outstanding:

Outstanding	New proposals added	Sub total outstanding	Recommend closure as of DEC 2015	Total Outstanding	Total outstanding last time reported
20	4	24	10	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>

- 4.3 This time last year there were 26 proposals on the register that had been on the register for more than a year. Now there are 15, although with the anticipated closure of 10 this would leave 12 that are more than a year old. There have been 88 proposals since the register began.
- 4.4 The reductions in the proposals represent good progress since the last report however of the remaining 14 proposals 12 have been outstanding for more than 2 years. Some of the proposals have had many actions and are more complex and cannot be easily resolved within a year however progress is being made and the specific reviews updates are given below.
- 4.5 The Customer Service strategy has been delayed for some time waiting on clarification of what the budget impacts would be on corporate services and how much Customer services would need to save. This would have dictated the types of services that could be offered and this has changed often over the last two years. The Strategy has now been finalised and is going to P&R in January 2016 as part of a wider consultation. It is due to be published as a final document early spring. One proposal of the 8 is recommended to be closed and 5 of the remaining 7 will be completed once the strategy is agreed by Cabinet. This will reduce the number that has been outstanding for more than 2 years down to 7 by the next report.
- 4.6 As all the recommendations from the 'Review of Management Arrangements following a Homicide Report' have been actioned this piece of work has now been deleted as agreed in Audit Committee June 2015.
- 4.7 Asset Management has 6 proposals outstanding and remains static from the last time the figures were reported. P & R Scrutiny Committee agreed (30 September 2014) that the current financial climate and lack of clarity over the levels of future WG funding has rendered it no longer possible to develop a comprehensive Asset strategy. It needs to be agreed as to whether this recommendation should stay or be removed. In the interim the service would like to merge recommendation 44 and 45 into 42. The reason for this is that 44 and 45 are components of a strategy, for example (45) 'the strategy should be approved by members'; this would automatically happen as part of approving a strategy so we believe there is no need to have these as a separate recommendations.
- 4.8 The Information Management Review (IMR) Nov 2012 had one outstanding improvement for response times to Freedom of Information requests. Much work has progressed on this proposal and it is recommended for closure. The actions to address this proposal had been to find long-term solutions and it is now normal day-to-day business. It is recommended to be closed. This would remove the IMR from the register.
- 4.9 Arrangements for Safeguarding proposals are now complete as a comprehensive strategy was approved by Council 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The strategy contains actions for delivering aspects of the other proposals such as awareness raising, training etc. however whilst the strategy is complete (which addresses the WAO recommendation and therefore can be removed from the register) the work goes on to become normal part of business implementation and progress will be reported to members in a formal capacity as noted within the strategy. We recommend the 5 proposals are now closed.



- 4.10 Wales Audit Office has stated that the decision on whether a proposal is completed is an internal matter and is for the organisation to decide, (although it is within their remit to make more proposals if they do not believe it has been addressed). We will forward the register onto the Wales Audit Office for their information and update once seen and agreed by Audit Committee.
- 4.11 We recommend 10 proposals be closed down as they have been completed and encourage members to view the specific proposals attached within Appendix A and judge if they concur that these proposals are now completed.
- 4.12 The Improving Governance board has been concluded following the successful completion of the action plan, as this has been wound up; the two outstanding actions that are approaching completion have been now placed on this register to keep track of their progress. A report that provided an update of the proposals for the Corporate Governance action plan was presented to Cabinet on 28th October 15 which recognised and evidenced the good progress made to date
- 4.13 In future not all reports will formally come to the Audit committee although all will be available. The thinking behind the change is that there maybe other committees that are a more appropriate route, for example Corporate Safeguarding is a whole authority report so this type of report may be more appropriate to go to another committee or to go to Cabinet.
- 4.14 This means that not all reports will be presented to Audit Committee although they will always be available. However as an assurance function the recommendations will still continue to come to audit committee. In order to ensure there is continuity between the two, future proposals reports will show what reports have come in and where they have been reported to and they will be placed on the intranet on the relevant page so members can view the reports and understand what work the recommendations relate to.
- 4.15 See example below. This will be on the front page of future covering reports for all reports particularly for those that were not presented to Audit committee.

Name of Report	Where it was presented to?	When	Where can it be found on the Intranet?

- 4.16 When monitoring progress against the proposals, members are advised to consider what value the proposals are making and what difference the activity in addressing them has made for our citizens in creating more efficient, customer focused services.

**5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

**6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

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

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

9.2 Audit Committee agree to the merging of recommendations as per para 4.7.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009

Author: Ros Roberts Corporate Performance Manager [roberr@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:roberr@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services  
Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property  
Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive  
Dave Street, Director of Social Services  
Lynton Jones, Acting Head of ICT and Customer Services  
Lynne Donovan, Acting Head of HR  
Dave Titley, Customer Services Manager  
David Hardacre, Cabinet Member, Performance, Property and Policy

Appendices:

Appendix A: Update of proposal register November 2015.

## Action Plan 2015 Response to Regulator Proposals

Number and reference of action	Original Document	Regulator Proposal	Action	April/May 2015	By When	Update November 2015	Status	Percentage completed	Result from Audit committee
32	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P1: Governance and performance management.</b> Develop a more co-ordinated strategic approach to customer services. This should include developing and implementing a customer service strategy that supports the Council's strategic vision and improvement priorities.	To develop and implement a Customer Services Strategy.	A detailed Customer Services Strategy has been written and is in the first round of consultation. It has been shared with the customer service project group and is being prepared to go to P&R Scrutiny in June. The strategy covers a wide range of areas and provides a strategic approach to Customer services and clearly provides a vision and ways to achieve that vision within the current financial climate.	Report to P&R Scrutiny Committee in March 2014 explaining delayed till June.	Customer Service Strategy still in draft form. Currently out to consultation with officers. Scheduled to be presented to P&R committee in January 2016	In progress	50%	
33	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P1: Governance and performance management.</b> Develop a more co-ordinated strategic approach to customer services. This should include establishing clear links between the customer service strategy document, Improvement Objectives and departmental service improvement plans.	To develop and implement a strategy.	The CS strategy clearly identifies other Council and Partner Strategies of where customer services can help the other strategies to meet their outcomes, such as the draft Anti Poverty Strategy, The Single Equalities Plan and the Single Plan called 'Caerphilly Delivers'. There are specific links shown to the objectives in these and other strategies noted above. The new Council service evaluation process is an evidence based process subject to challenge which asks services to evaluate themselves against how they provide customer services. When the strategy is formalised this link will be clear.	Report to P&R Scrutiny Committee in March delayed till June 2014.	Customer Service Strategy still in draft form. Currently out to consultation with officers. Scheduled to be presented to P&R committee in January 2016	In progress	50%	
Page 47	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P1: Governance and performance management.</b> Develop a more co-ordinated strategic approach to customer services. This should include ensuring the customer service strategy clearly sets out appropriate performance measures that enable the Council to manage, monitor, report and evaluate its strategy and other related strategies including its customer charter.	To develop and implement a strategy that includes performance management information.	The strategy clearly defines the purpose and measures will be set to show how near or far we are from that purpose.	Report to P&R Scrutiny Committee in March delayed till June 2014.	Customer Service Strategy still in draft form. Currently out to consultation with officers. Scheduled to be presented to P&R committee in January 2016	In progress	50%	
35	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P1: Governance and performance management.</b> Develop a more co-ordinated strategic approach to customer services. Including customer services' performance measures in the Council's corporate performance reporting arrangements and ensuring they are subject to effective self-evaluation, challenge and scrutiny.	Review customer service standards then develop suite of performance managers based on the objectives of the strategy 10 links to 12	Performance Measures already exist and are reported on within the Corporate Management Team cycle, however they will be reviewed in line with the new strategy and developed into a more rounded suite of indicators. This should be completed by the end of the year. The Council has set up a customer project group that has a wide range of representatives who forms part of the a self-evaluation and challenge process and is a mechanism for raising issues of development in customer care.	Sept 14 (to go into performance report Oct 14	Customer Service Strategy still in draft form. Currently out to consultation with officers. Scheduled to be presented to P&R committee in January 2016	In progress	50%	
36	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P1: Governance and performance management.</b> Develop a more co-ordinated strategic approach to customer services. This should include ensuring that the Council's equalities and Welsh language objectives are being delivered and reflected in the customer service strategy.	The customer service strategy will include joint work with the Equalities, Policy and Translation unit to ensure there is input at the beginning of the process and during the process.	The Equalities and Welsh language objectives are reflected in the new strategy and this will be clear when the strategy is sent out for formal consultation towards the end of May 2015.	Nov-14	Customer Service Strategy still in draft form. Currently out to consultation with officers. Scheduled to be presented to P&R committee in January 2016	In progress	50%	
37	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P1: Governance and performance management.</b> Develop a more co-ordinated strategic approach to customer services. This should include ensuring that the lead Cabinet Member for customer services has clearly documented responsibilities and is provided with regular performance information.	Proposal to set up Customer Services Customer service programme board with cabinet member as lead.	The Cabinet Member for Customer Services sits on the newly formed Customer Services Project group which has terms of reference and responsibilities. One of the later activities for the group will be to view performance information. Performance Information based on the Corporate Management Scorecard is now being presented to Cabinet and this includes some customer service information although this will be reviewed to ensure the most relevant performance measures are included.	Nov-14	Customer Service Strategy still in draft form. Currently out to consultation with officers. Scheduled to be presented to P&R committee in January 2016	In progress	50%	

38	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P1: Governance and performance management.</b> Develop a more co-ordinated strategic approach to customer services. This should include ensuring business cases are developed for service improvements that clearly set out and analyses the costs and benefits of the service improvement, and the expected improvements and the outcomes to be delivered.	To set up customer services board in which all cases would go to the board, not everything needs a case - so guidelines are needed for when case should be used and this will be included in the terms of reference of the board.	As noted above a project group has been set up with cabinet and service representation. This is an operational group. It was decided to use the existing corporate information technology group to receive business cases and approve cost / benefit analysis and act as the Strategic board with input from the more operational working sub-group. This action should be closed once the Strategy is adopted.	Nov-14	The Project Group and CITSG are now in place to monitor the strategy	Complete	100%	Recommend closure
39	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	<b>P2: Information and data.</b> Strengthen the approach to evaluating and improving customer services in a proactive way. This should include collecting and analysing customer views and satisfaction data for e-mail and telephone correspondence.	1) Review the Customer Service standards and measures. 2) Implement survey forms for one-stop-shops and survey of contact centre 3) Broaden to other contact e.g Housing repairs to find out what they do 4) add performance data to Ffynnon CMT scorecard	This recommendation is 70% complete with regard to the methods for recording satisfaction, however the standards still need to be reviewed and addressed and performance from the satisfaction data needs to be included within the reporting cycle.	Nov-14	A review of customer service standards will be implemented once the CS Strategy has been agreed.	In progress	70%	
42	Asset Management (Land and Property) Strategy Review (September 2013)	<b>P1: Develop a robust Asset Management Strategy for its property and associated infrastructure.</b> The strategy should set out a vision for each type of asset that shows how it contributes to the delivery of the Council's priorities.	Further develop the existing draft strategy	P & R Scrutiny Committee agreed (30/9/14) that the current financial climate and lack of clarity over the levels of future WG funding has rendered it no longer possible to develop a comprehensive Asset Management Strategy. Individual strategies are in place but it is difficult to bring those together into a coherent strategy.	Apr-14	There has been no further progress on this recommendation as previously agreed with P&R Scrutiny. Until the financial/political future for the authority becomes clearer it is difficult to foresee any immediate progress. Individual strategies are being formulated as part of the council's MTFP considerations and hence not having an overarching Asset Strategy is not considered a risk to the authority at this time.	Partially Complete - On hold	40%	Agreement sought as to whether to keep or close
Page 48	Asset Management (Land and Property) Strategy Review (September 2013)	<b>P1: Develop a robust Asset Management Strategy for its property and associated infrastructure.</b> The strategy should set targets for assessing progress, including the condition and suitability of each asset.	Complete update of building conditions survey	All property condition surveys are now complete and the information provided is being acted upon.	Apr-14		Complete	100%	Recommend closure
44	Asset Management (Land and Property) Strategy Review (September 2013)	<b>P1: Develop a robust Asset Management Strategy for its property and associated infrastructure.</b> The strategy should describe an overall plan for implementing the Strategy.	To form part of development proposals as above (item 42)	P & R Scrutiny Committee agreed (30/9/14) that the current financial climate and lack of clarity over the levels of future WG funding has rendered it no longer possible to develop a comprehensive Asset Management Strategy. Individual strategies are in place but it is difficult to bring those together into a coherent strategy.	Apr-14	Given the comments above it is suggested that this recommendation be integrated into number 42 above	Incomplete - On hold	0%	Recommend Integrating
45	Asset Management (Land and Property) Strategy Review (September 2013)	<b>P1: Develop a robust Asset Management Strategy for its property and associated infrastructure.</b> The strategy should be approved by members.	Further develop the existing draft strategy	P & R Scrutiny Committee agreed (30/9/14) that the current financial climate and lack of clarity over the levels of future WG funding has rendered it no longer possible to develop a comprehensive Asset Management Strategy. Individual strategies are in place but it is difficult to bring those together into a coherent strategy.	Council Apr-14	Given the comments above it is suggested that this recommendation be integrated into number 42 above	Incomplete - On hold	0%	Recommend Integrating
46	Asset Management (Land and Property) Strategy Review (September 2013)	<b>P2: Ensure that the individual service asset management plans are developed as soon as possible and are used to inform the Council's financial planning process.</b>	Develop Service Asset Management Plan (SAMP) and consider impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	For the same reasons described above services are having difficulty understanding and planning their Property Asset needs. Having said that Building Rationalisation has been accepted by Council as an MTFP saving proposal and hence that will necessitate the need for some planning	Jan-Mar '14	Current MTFP issues gives priority to service savings so services are unable to set definitive plan on their property requirements - this action is <b>delayed until Oct / Nov. The completion date has been changed</b> from Jan-March 14	Partially Complete - On hold	30%	Agreed that after MTFP agreement in autumn will be in better position to update or remove this proposal
48	Asset Management (Land and Property) Strategy Review (September 2013)	<b>P4: Develop and implement arrangements to monitor the delivery of the strategy.</b>	Agenda updates on progress to Asset Management Group (AMG)	P & R Scrutiny Committee agreed (30/9/14) that the current financial climate and lack of clarity over the levels of future WG funding has rendered it no longer possible to develop a comprehensive Asset Management Strategy. Individual strategies are in place but it is difficult to bring those together into a coherent strategy.	Nov-14	Current MTFP issues gives priority to service savings so services are unable to set definitive plan on their property requirements - this action is <b>delayed until Oct / Nov. The completion date has been changed</b> from Jan-March 14	Incomplete - on hold	0%	Agreed that after MTFP agreement in autumn will be in better position to update or remove this proposal

66	Information Management Review (November 2012)	P6: Further improve the response times for Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.	Continue ongoing Corporate Information Governance Unit actions of finding and implementing methods of improvement, including improvements to Publication Scheme.	FOI compliance rates have improved during the 2014 calendar year since inclusion in AGS. A number of procedural changes took effect at the end of 2014 inc reporting late/poor quality responses to the Chief Exec in order for a reminder to be sent, reduction of internal deadline to 12 days, quarterly service area reports on compliance rate, awareness raising sessions for senior management teams and training sessions for staff, so further improvements are anticipated to be in evidence over the coming months. Compliance has improved in the first quarter of 2015, but a lower number of requests were also received in this period. It has been decided to maintain this action in the Council's Annual Governance Statement to ensure improvements are sustainable.	Mar-14	The changes made a year ago have had the effect of raising compliance rates to 82%. Corporate Governance Panel decided to remove this action from the Annual Governance Statement to reflect this improvement. Continuing to maintain a reasonable compliance with the 20 working day response requirement is an ongoing challenge for any public sector body, particularly as request numbers increase year on year and number of staff to deal with the request in service areas reduces. It is also reasonable to accept that a certain number of complex requests will be received which will exceed the 20 working days for unavoidable reasons. For these reasons Information Governance Project Team and Corporate Governance Panel continue to maintain regular oversight of compliance rates which gives the opportunity to address any decrease and continue to find ways to improve, and it is recommended that this action is now complete.	Complete	100%	Recommend closure
SG2015/01	Local Authority arrangements for Safeguarding Children Issue date October 2014	P1 Develop a Corporate Safeguarding Policy that clearly specifies roles, responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding	Corporate Safeguarding Group established - Gareth Jenkins	Working Group set up and split into 3 Task Groups. Group 1 was set up to develop a corporate policy and research good practice, work is ongoing to define the audience, so the correct format is used i.e an easy read for awareness and a more detailed policy for professionals and those with greater involvement. Anticipated Policy to be consulted on and published by the autumn. The working group received familiarisation training in safeguarding so they are better able to understand their roles	Final draft for consultation by end of June. Political endorsement and publication during the autumn 2015.	Corporate Safeguarding Policy endorsed at Council on 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Complete	100%	Recommend closure
Page 49 SG2015/02	Local Authority arrangements for Safeguarding Children Issue date October 2014	P2 Agree Designated Safeguarding Officers within all of the Council's service areas.	Sub group set up to work on safer recruitment/HR policies – Lynne Donovan	The agreement of designated officers will form part of the policy. Task Group 2 is looking at aspects of safer recruitment and other HR policies such as Code of Conduct, DBS checks and references, Job Descriptions and Person Specifications to help all understand their safeguarding responsibilities.	Final draft for consultation by end of June. Political endorsement and publication during the autumn 2015	Corporate Safeguarding Policy endorsed at Council on 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Complete	100%	Recommend closure
SG2015/03	Local Authority arrangements for Safeguarding Children Issue date October 2014	P3 Improve the range, quality and coverage of safeguarding performance reporting to provide adequate assurance that corporate arrangements are working effectively	Sub group set up to work on corporate governance - Gail Williams	Task Group 3 has been established to explore what other authorities report and how. It is proposed that performance measures are agreed and that monitoring, reporting and governance arrangements are strengthened to meet the recommendations. Please cross reference with P5 below.	Final draft for consultation by end of June. Political endorsement and publication during the autumn 2015	Corporate Safeguarding Policy endorsed at Council on 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Complete	100%	Recommend closure
SG2015/4	Local Authority arrangements for Safeguarding Children Issue date October 2014	P4 Ensure all elected members and staff who come into contact with children on a regular basis receive training on safeguarding and child protection issues and the Council's corporate policy on safeguarding. This should also include volunteers.	Training is Safeguarding sub group established - Jane Haile	Following establishment of the Corporate Safeguarding Group, it became evident that a 4th Task Group was required to specifically look at the training requirements across the Council. The Task Group will research and implement appropriate training including for Elected Members. There is a need to map who needs training and at what level.	Final draft for consultation by end of June. Political endorsement and publication during the autumn 2015	Corporate Safeguarding Policy endorsed at Council on 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Complete	100%	Recommend closure
SG2015/5	Local Authority arrangements for Safeguarding Children Issue date October 2014	P5 Identify and agree an appropriate internal audit programme of work for safeguarding.	this action is covered under proposal 3	The new Corporate Working Group decided to subsume P5 into P3 in terms of dealing with the actions as there is strong correlation between the audit and the governance of the work programme and the assurance that regulators look for.	As above.	Corporate Safeguarding Policy endorsed at Council on 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Complete	100%	Recommend closure





## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE RISK MONITORING**

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

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

- 1.1 To provide an update of the Corporate Risk Register in accordance with the recommendations to Audit Committee at their meeting 17th September 2013.
- 1.2 To afford Audit Committee the opportunity to satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements are in place for the council's risk management processes to be regularly and robustly monitored and scrutinised.
- 1.3 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. Risk Management is crucial to the effective delivery of council services.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 At its meeting on the 17th September 2013 Audit Committee accepted the council's new Risk Management Strategy and supporting Guidelines, which were subsequently approved by Cabinet on the 2nd October 2013.
- 2.2 The Strategy identified the role of Audit Committee in the risk monitoring process as being:
  - Review the effectiveness of the risk management and internal control framework
  - Review the Council's Risk Management Strategy and how it is being implemented
  - Review and challenge the risk register and resultant action plans for the council's key strategic and corporate risks
  - Satisfy itself that robust processes and procedures exist and are applied for the management of operational risks including health & Safety risks.
- 2.3 For some time Corporate Management Team (CMT) has identified and monitored the council's key corporate risks. Monitoring arrangements have been strengthened following the introduction of the Risk Management Strategy. CMT now monitor the Council's Corporate Risks on a monthly basis and report progress to Cabinet on a regular basis. The Strategy identifies that the Corporate Risk Register should be owned and understood by Cabinet and CMT. It also recognises that Audit Committee would be the guardians of the risk management strategy and should satisfy itself that it is being adhered to.
- 2.4 A programme of Risk Management training has been introduced for members commencing with Audit Committee (30<sup>th</sup> October 2013). Cabinet Members have also received training. Further and continuous training will be provided to satisfy one of the Proposals for Improvement identified in the Auditor General's Corporate Governance Follow Up Report.

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

- 3.1 Service improvement and delivery is key to delivering council priorities and risk management is a crucial element.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 Attached as Appendix 1 is the most recent version of the council's Corporate Risk Register. These risks are reviewed on a monthly basis by CMT and include:

- A description of each individual risk
- An assessment of the risk using the normal Red/Amber/Green (RAG) identification
- Details of mitigation measures put in place
- Identification of the risk owner

- 4.2 The Corporate Risk Register is compiled generally in the following ways:

1. CMT collectively identify organisational risks that arise from such sources as national/regional agendas, changing legislation, budget settlements, partnership risks, project risks etc.
2. CMT collectively identify whole authority operational risks that could result from Regulatory inspections/reviews, political influences, work force planning, performance management etc.
3. Directors escalate operational risks that in their opinion require a corporate approach to their management.

- 4.3 The Corporate Risk Register is a 'living document' and changes at every review as new risks are introduced, existing risks are closed, or existing risk's RAG assessment is updated.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

### **8. CONSULTATIONS**

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

### **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 It is recommended that Audit Committee accepts the Corporate Risk Register update as part of their ongoing commitment to regularly reviewing the Register.



## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 To ensure compliance with the Council's Risk Management Strategy.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

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

Author: Colin Jones: Head of Performance Management & Property Services  
Consultees: Nicole Scammell: Acting Director of Corporate Services  
Ros Roberts: Performance Manager  
Angharad Price: Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Cllr Barbara Jones: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services  
Cllr David Hardacre: Cabinet Member for Performance, Property and Asset Management

Background Papers:  
Risk Management Policy & Guidelines

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Corporate Risk Register (Oct 2015)

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Ref	Area	Background information	Actual Risk	Mitigation actions - what we are doing to reduce the risk and by when.	Additional Resources Required	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (Apr 2015)	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (July 2015)	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (Oct 2015)	Comments from latest risk review
CMT01	Medium Term financial budget planning 2016-17	Budget pressures will potentially have a negative effect on service delivery across all services, if appropriate mitigation measures are not put in place.	1. Workforce Planning: less staff to deliver services. 2. Failure to maintain and/or improve service delivery 3. Managing staff morale in light of cuts 4. Failure to take early decisions on which services should be cut could lead to poor planning	1. HR have a suite of policies agreed by Cabinet/Council to help downsize the workforce, although these will need to be kept under review. 2. Report presented to Council 25th feb 2015 outlined revised MTFP for 2016/17 and 2017/18 and a set of 5 key principles agreed by members that would be used in the first instance to identify savings proposals. This was agreed by Council. 3. CMT met on 26th February to agree timetable for the next £26m of savings. Meetings will be held with finance staff and CMT prior to Leadership Team and PDM. A July seminar is planned for a list of savings proposals.	1-4 None	High	High	Medium	As detailed in the mitigation actions.
CMT03	Performance Management Culture	The WAO Annual Improvement Report (AIR) 2013 has identified weaknesses around the council's Performance Management Framework. In particular the council is considered to present performance in an unbalance way and member involvement/challenge should be improved. The council's approach to self-evaluation has also been identified as an area for improvement by both Estyn & WAO	1. An unbalanced evaluation of the council's performance can lead to complacency and reduce the drive to improve performance, particularly during these difficult financial times. 2. Members lack of understanding of performance management will reduce their capacity to mount effective challenge. 3. Failure to provide members with adequate and appropriate performance information on a regular basis will render Governance arrangements less effective. 4. Although a relatively new concept, other authorities are further advanced in self evaluation and this reflects poorly on the council	1. Efforts have been made to make reports more balanced by reflecting and explaining the reasons behind poor performance as well as highlighting good performance e.g. Annual Performance Plan published Oct 2014. A survey by WG has identified a public opinion view that the council is best in Wales at informing the public how we are performing. 2. Performance Management training identified as part of the Member Training Programme. 3. New programme of presenting performance information to Scrutiny meetings being developed by CMT. Risk Management monitoring arrangements have been strengthened. 4. A self evaluation model has been rolled out as part of the council's performance management planning process. Self evaluations are scheduled for completion by mid March 2015.	1. None. 2. None 3. None 4. Support being provided by WLGA at no cost. Additional cost recovered from identified Improving Governance budget	Medium	Medium	Low	CMT/Cabinet arrangements have been strengthened. There now needs to be a focus upon improving scrutiny arrangements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk management has been strengthened – Corporate Risk Register reviewed by CMT monthly. Report to Audit Committee 10th September 2014.</li> <li>• Self-Evaluation to be completed by services by mid March 2015.</li> <li>• Performance reporting to CMT/Cabinet re-structured with quarterly meetings.</li> <li>• Review of Scrutiny to be completed by October 2015.</li> </ul>
CMT09	Business Continuity Planning	Business Continuity Planning is well established in some key services, but there is a lack of consistency of approach across the Authority, and there are some gaps in respect of some services.	1. The risk is the possible disruption to service delivery during emergencies.	1. A Business Continuity Strategy has been agreed by CMT and a pilot study is currently underway to evaluate the feasibility of the agreed approach, once satisfactorily completed the strategy will be implemented across the Authority. 2. Progress update along with a delivery programme to be presented to Audit committee March 2014	1-2 None	Low	Low	Low	Progress report presented to Audit Committee

Ref	Area	Background information	Actual Risk	Mitigation actions - what we are doing to reduce the risk and by when.	Additional Resources Required	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (Apr 2015)	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (July 2015)	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (Oct 2015)	Comments from latest risk review
CMT16	School Attainment	School attainment levels are still below the all Wales average, along with pupil attendance. Low levels of attainment and relative achievement are continual risks for the borough.	1. There is a gap between the attainment of Free School Meals pupils and Non Free School Meals pupils which must be addressed.	1. Standards of attainment are monitored and reported to SMT / CMT / Scrutiny through an annual programme of reporting described in the Directorate Plan Handbook.	1 None	Medium	Medium	Medium	Improvement has been continuous in the majority of key indicators for several years but remains a priority, especially at L2+ KS4.
CMT17	Sustainability of staffing via grant funded resources	Heads of Service and Directors are aware of all the grant funded schemes within their service areas.	1. There is lack of security or sustainability in maintaining staff and skills as grants can be removed or not renewed.	1. Staff are placed on temporary contracts. 2. This risk needs to be closely monitored in the light of the worsening settlement from Central Government to WG.	1-2 None	Medium	Medium	Medium	There has been a cut to the Adult Learning Grant, the affect of the cut has not yet been established.
CMT18	Secondary school surplus places in top quartile across Wales.	Too many school places with falling pupil roles locally and nationally	1. Falling pupil roles will affect the funding available to schools and put budgetary pressure on the LEA	Council (23 July 2013) approved proposals to proceed with Phase 1 of a secondary rationalisation programme.	1 None	Medium	Medium	Medium	Letter from Minister questioning our Education Plan for surplus places. The Minister responded to the Cabinet Member's letter accepting we would re-evaluate our strategy later this year on Secondary surplus places in light of LDP.
CMT 29	WHQS programme	Everyone in Wales should have the opportunity to live in a good quality home within a safe and secure community. To help achieve this, the physical standard and condition of existing housing must be maintained and improved to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).	1. Behind schedule. Completing programme in time allocated and within budget.	• The WHQS programme has its own specific risk register which was reviewed and updated by the Project Board on 10th March 2014.		High	High	High	Project update report (13/02/14) has identified issues around procurement leading to potential contract delays and wall cavity insulation issues that could have budget implications. Challenge to tender process remains a risk particularly given the large scale of contracts. <b>Key personal additions made &amp; Deputy Head of Programmes appointed 14-10-14. All major contracts have now been let and contractors are on site.</b>

Ref	Area	Background information	Actual Risk	Mitigation actions - what we are doing to reduce the risk and by when.	Additional Resources Required	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (Apr 2015)	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (July 2015)	Current Risk Level 2015-16 (Oct 2015)	Comments from latest risk review
CMT 30	Information Governance		Risks to the authority of poor information governance are <b>1</b> ) insufficient protection of information leading to negative effects for the Council (monetary penalties; adverse publicity; impaired services) and negative effects for the public (embarrassment; identity fraud); and <b>2</b> ) poor management of information reduces service efficiencies due to excessive information being maintained, which increases duplication and storage costs; reduction in information quality and ability to find information; and legislative breaches (e.g. data protection and FOI).	<b>1.</b> Mitigation measures include staff training and awareness raising; quarterly reports from Heads of Service on information risk assurance; development of a corporate information asset register which will enable the Council to assess suitability of storage, access, retention, and protection for specific types of information; formalising information sharing using WASPI; and ongoing development of policies and procedures on records management, data protection and public access to information. <b>2.</b> Information Governance Stewards work with the Senior Information Risk Owner and Corporate Information Governance Unit to cascade information governance messages and initiatives to all staff.	1-2 None	Low	Low	Low	Failure to make progress in Information Governance will impact on service delivery council wide as information quality and location is unreliable; there is a risk of up to £500,000 fines for breaches of the Data Protection Act; and failure to comply with the Freedom of Information Act could lead to decision and enforcement notices from the Information Commissioner's Office. These risks could also result in adverse press, loss of trust by the public, and criticism from the Council's auditors. Mandatory Protecting Information training is done and will take place annually. The Information Governance Communications Plan is complete and Member training continues. The information risk policy and register is place and is reported to SIRO quarterly. The Records Management policy is also in place. Work is ongoing with ICO.
CMT 31	Governance Arrangements	The Wales Audit Office Public Interest report has identified significant governance issues.	<b>1.</b> This is a risk to robust decision making and proper accountability.	<b>1.</b> The Improving Governance Arrangements Board has been set up, also the Action Plan has been developed and agreed. <b>2.</b> The action plan has been reviewed by CMT and PDM. <b>3.</b> Regular reports to Cabinet in respect of progress on delivering the Action Plan.	Improving Governance budget established	Low	Low	Low	Corporate Governance improvements underway and progress regularly reported to Cabinet. WAO Corporate Governance Inspection has recognised improvement. The Annual Improvement Report (AIR) has been positively received, with reference made to the significant amount of work already undertaken. <b>Report going to Cabinet 28/10/15, look to remove thereafter.</b>
Combination of CMT 12 & CMT 37	Waste Management Service Continuity & Target Achievement	Significant changes in the Waste Management arena and substantial change to the recycling MRF market could potentially affect service delivery to the public and/or target achievement if mitigation measures are not put in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing strategy and service delivery model does not enable us to meet future waste/recycling targets, these include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High contamination rates in the co-mingled recycling bin.</li> <li>Short term contract for recyclate which only realises 70% recycling</li> <li>Loss of food waste into residual waste</li> <li>Food and green waste not collected separately</li> <li>Transfer station not of sufficient capacity for future tonnages.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection, treatment and disposal modelling being undertaken with WG consultants.</li> <li>WAO review planned end of 2015</li> <li>Cabinet report scheduled for Spring 2016 for implementation by April 2018 – agreeing collection methods, treatment and disposal methods, transport and staff requirements, including a financial plan for implementation.</li> <li>Communication campaign underway to address recycling contamination</li> <li>Approval obtained to use bottom ash from Project Gwrydd towards 15/16 target</li> <li>Exploring alternative outlet for wood CA site recycling</li> <li>Working with Cardiff CC to maximise recycling % from existing 70% contractual arrangement</li> <li>Quarterly performance reports to CMT</li> </ul>	Yes	High	High	High	1.Waste transfer station planning application approved by planning committee 2. Interim organics contract finalised but 2nd Heads of Valleys contract procurement yet to commence. 3.Council report prepared and considered by full council on collection of recyclables. <b>CMT to receive quarterly reports on performance.</b>

<b>Risk Owner</b>
<b>Corporate Management Team</b>
<b>Acting Director of Corporate Services</b>
<b>Corporate Management Team</b>

<b>Risk Owner</b>
<b>Interim Chief Executive</b>
<b>Corporate Management Team</b>
<b>Interim Chief Executive</b>
<b>Interim Chief Executive</b>

<b>Risk Owner</b>
<b>Acting Director of Corporate Services</b>
<b>Acting Director of Corporate Services</b>
<b>Corporate Director / Head of Community and Leisure Services</b>





## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: UPDATE IN RESPECT OF THE AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR 2014/15**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION 151 OFFICER**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Audit Committee of progress in respect of the area for improvement agreed in the Annual Governance statement for 2014/15 'to improve the effectiveness of current scrutiny arrangements'.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In June 2015 Audit committee agreed an area for improvement 'The effectiveness of the current scrutiny arrangements' this report provides an update on progress to date. Council approved 20 recommendations to improve the effectiveness of Scrutiny on 6 October 2015 following the Scrutiny Review. These will be implemented following a careful plan between October 2015 and May 2016, and will be reviewed via a self-evaluation process after 12 months.
- 2.2 Each Scrutiny Committee will discuss their forward work programme in detail at their meeting in February 2016 and the limit of no more than 4 agenda items will commence from the Committee meetings after April 2016.
- 2.3 Communication, engagement and training as well as detailed protocols and guidance will be essential to ensuring successful implementation.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation.

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 This report outlines the arrangements to implement the recommendations from the scrutiny review report that were endorsed by Council on 6th October 2015 (appendix 1).
- 4.2 The scrutiny review was carried out to identify possible improvements to the operation of scrutiny following recommendations from the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015.
- 4.3 Council recommendations in the scrutiny review were as follows:
- (i) That a limit of no more than 4 items is placed scrutiny agendas.

- (ii) That there is a limit placed on the number of special scrutiny meetings held per scrutiny committee, of two additional meetings per annum, with priority for MTFP.
- (iii) Cabinet and scrutiny forward work programmes to include brief narrative on key issues to be covered in the Reports.
- (iv) Scrutiny committees will discuss their forward work programmes at each meeting and confirm the 4 items to be discussed at the following meeting. The Chair of the relevant Committee will decide whether any additional items are to be added to the agenda if presented urgently before the next meeting, subject to the limit of 4 items per agenda and acknowledging a special meeting can be arranged if necessary.
- (v) Scrutiny Leadership Group will recommend whether referrals of individual Ombudsman reports from Standards Committee should be referred to Scrutiny Committee (and if so which Committee) or Audit Committee.
- (vi) The positions of non- statutory co-opted members (without voting rights) of Health Social Care and Wellbeing & Education for Life Scrutiny Committees are removed and a list of stakeholders and external witnesses is developed for each scrutiny committee and maintained and agreed by Scrutiny Leadership Group. These can be called upon for specific agenda items to give evidence.
- (vii) A expert witness protocol to be developed to ensure that witnesses are fully briefed and in accordance with good practice to ensure that evidence provided to the scrutiny committee is balanced and fair.
- (viii) Information items are removed from scrutiny agendas and instead are placed on the Members Portal in consultation with Democratic Services Committee.
- (ix) A prioritisation matrix is developed for requests for reports from Members and the public.
- (x) Comments from the workshops about report content are fed back to the relevant Directors. The quality of Reports will be reviewed and monitored by Scrutiny Leadership Group for 6 months from implementation of the new arrangements.
- (xi) A protocol is developed for task and finish groups and agreed by Democratic Services Committee with a limit of two task and finish groups to run at a time, to ensure that the burden on limited resources is managed appropriately.
- (xii) The members training programme is further developed to incorporate relevant comments from the workshops including developing cabinet members role to be monitored by Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet Member with responsibility for HR, Governance and Business.
- (xiii) That guidance on the format and content of the Cabinet Members written statement is developed. A new protocol developed to provide that the statement is shared ahead of the relevant meeting with scrutiny committee members and placed on the Members Portal, in advance of the scrutiny meeting. The protocol will give advice on the type of information to be included in the statement.
- (xiv) Good practice for pre-meetings is shared amongst Scrutiny Leadership Group including peer observations.
- (xv) Explore possibility of joint scrutiny committee and publish minutes of joint committees and other information about relevant outside bodies on the Members portal.
- (xvi) Hold a dedicated performance management meeting for each scrutiny committee once per annum.

- (xvii) The protocol for External Audit, Inspection & Regulatory Bodies interface with scrutiny to be presented to Council to consider for adoption once it is completed.
- (xviii) Review the terms of reference and membership of Scrutiny Leadership Group to take into account any changes required as a result of the scrutiny review.
- (xix) Carry out a self-evaluation of scrutiny arrangements within 12 months of changes being agreed.
- (xx) Allow the Monitoring Officer to amend the constitution in line with the above recommendations.

4.4 There was one amendment moved in respect of recommendation (vi) in respect of Co-opted Members that was supported by Council, therefore the co-opted members will continue in their role, although a procedure for their appointment will be developed.

4.5 In order to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements, an implementation plan has been developed and shared with Wales Audit Office who will be monitoring the changes as part of their overall review of the response to their report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest'.

4.6 The scrutiny review implementation plan is planned for completion by May 2016 and then reviewed during Autumn 2016. Initial meetings have already been held to consult on the changes and outline the plan, as follows:

#### **October 2015**

- Discussions of implementation plan at Corporate Management Team (including giving feedback on report content) and with Scrutiny Leadership Group.
- Initial meeting with IT to arrange Members focus group to work on information items.
- Initial meeting with Performance Management to discuss timing of meetings and transition from current process.

#### **November 2015**

- Discussions of implementation plan with Cabinet Member and Democratic Services Committee.
- Minutes of joint committees and other relevant bodies to be placed on the website (following discussion about how to inform members about this as part of the IT focus group meetings).
- Members of Scrutiny Committees to receive initial information about prioritisation and key decisions in their refresher training sessions.
- Scrutiny Manager to attend Senior Management Team (SMT) for each directorate to discuss narratives in Cabinet Forward Work Programme (FWP).
- Initial meeting with Monitoring Officer and Corporate solicitor to discuss changes to constitution.
- Meeting with Communications and Engagement Team to discuss development of external witness & stakeholder list both internally and externally.

#### **December 2016**

- FWP template to be amended.
- Prioritisation matrix to be developed.
- Cabinet Members protocol for written reports to be developed.

#### **January 2016**

- Training to be given on Cabinet Members protocol and detailed Cabinet FWP.

- Requests for reports procedure to be developed – linked to prioritisation matrix.
- Co-opted Members appointments process to be developed.
- Further update to Scrutiny Leadership Group on implementation plan, including discussions about FWP discussions and good practice at meetings, discussion of co-opted members role and appointments.
- New processes for information items to be on Members' Portal (or other methods as suggested by focus group) to be commenced.

### **February 2016**

- Task and Finish group protocol to be developed.
- Scrutiny Committees to begin discussing FWPs at each meeting.
- Cabinet Members protocol to commence at Scrutiny Meetings.
- Amended terms of reference for Scrutiny Leadership Group to be developed.

### **March 2016**

- Democratic Services to discuss training requirements and programme as a result of changes.
- List of stakeholders and external witnesses to be developed and consulted on internally and externally and with Scrutiny Leadership Group. Communication strategy to commence with information being provided about Scrutiny and forward work programmes.

### **April 2016**

- Protocol for expert witnesses to be developed.
- Agenda items limit of no more than 4 meetings to be applied.
- Protocol for AIRs bodies to be considered and adapted if necessary.
- List of stakeholders and external witnesses to be discussed by Scrutiny Leadership Group
- Scrutiny Leadership Group to discuss their new terms of reference and good practice in relation to new processes.
- Scrutiny Leadership to review report content and quality of reports.

### **May 2016**

- Training to be given on new processes before all Scrutiny meetings in their scheduled training sessions and communicated both internally and externally
- Constitution amendments to be agreed at AGM, for any changes required that are not explicit in the original recommendations.
- Engagement with stakeholders and potential external witnesses.
- Performance Specific Scrutiny Meetings to be held.

### **August/Sept/October 2016**

- Self-evaluation process to be undertaken including peer observations of scrutiny committees.

- 4.8 In order to ensure that scrutiny engages and communicates appropriately a communication and engagement strategy will be developed to identify stakeholders and expert witnesses. The aim will be to raise the profile of scrutiny and ensure that its work programmes are understandable and accessible.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The principles of good governance are directly linked to the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives, stemming from duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Equalities Implications

are a standard part of all committee reports in order to ensure that due consideration has been given to the views of individuals and groups from the communities of Caerphilly county borough, regardless of their backgrounds and circumstances. The communication and engagement strategy will consider how to engage with stakeholders and expert witnesses and will incorporate consideration of equalities implications.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications not contained in the report.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no personnel implications not contained in the report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 There are no consultation responses not contained in the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That members note the progress made in respect of this area for improvement identified in the Annual Governance statement for 2014/15.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 In order to ensure that Audit Committee are informed of the arrangements to implement the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review which were outlined in the Councils' Annual Governance Statement Action Plan.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

Author: Catherine Forbes-Thompson Scrutiny Manager  
Consultees: Nicole Scammell Acting Director Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer  
Gail Williams Interim Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services  
Angharad Price Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Richard Harris Internal Audit Manager

Background papers:  
Report to Council 6th October 2015 – Scrutiny Review 2015

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## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT:       AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY:    ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION  
                  151 OFFICER**

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1.     The attached report demonstrates the Audit Committee Forward Work Programme.
  2.     Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Audit Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholders.
  3.     The Audit Committee Forward Work Programme identifies reports that are due to be presented to the Committee until September 2016. The document is a working document and is regularly updated when additional reports are identified.
  4.     The latest Audit Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1.

Author:         C. Evans, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4210

Appendices:

Appendix 1    Audit Committee Forward Work Programme

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## FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR AUDIT COMMITTEE

Deadline (12 Noon) Reports To Committee Services	Meeting Date	TOPIC	RESPONSIBILITY
23/11/15	09/12/15	Regulator Proposals for Improvement Progress Update  Forward Work Programme  Annual Governance Statement – Action Plan Update  Corporate Risk Register – Update  Partially Upheld Complaints Report (Member request at last meeting)  Scrutiny Reporting Process/ Constitutional Arrangements (Member Request at last meeting)  Corporate Complaints Policy and Unreasonable Complainants Policy  Presentation on the Findings of our Data Quality Review  Financial Resilience  Audit of Annual Performance Report  <i>Register- Gifts and Hospitality (Information)</i>	Ros Roberts  Nicole Scammell  <a href="#">Cath Forbes-Thompson</a>  Colin Jones  Lisa Lane  Gail Williams  Lisa Lane  WAO  WAO  WAO  <i>Lynne Donovan</i>
22/02/16	09/03/16	Complaints Report (6 Monthly Basis)  Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000  Forward Work Programme  Business Continuity Arrangements – Update Report  <i>Register- Gifts and Hospitality (Information)</i>	Gail Williams  Gail Williams  Nicole Scammell  Rob Hartshorn  <i>Lynne Donovan</i>
23/05/16	08/06/16	Forward Work Programme  <i>Register – Gifts and Hospitality (Information)</i>	Nicole Scammell  <i>Lynne Donovan</i>
22/08/16	07/09/16	Forward Work Programme  Complaints Report (6 Monthly Basis)  Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000  <i>Register – Gifts and Hospitality (Information)</i>	Nicola Scammell  Gail Williams  Gail Williams  <i>Lynne Donovan</i>

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## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT:       EXAMPLES OF A PARTIALLY UPHELD COMPLAINT UNDER THE CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**REPORT BY:    INTERM HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICE AND MONITORING OFFICER**

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### **1.       PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1       To provide members with examples of partially upheld complaints considered and dealt with under the Corporate Complaints Policy as set out in the Attached Appendix.

### **2.       SUMMARY**

2.1       Attached at Appendix 1 are examples of partially upheld complaints considered under the Corporate Complaints Policy.

### **3.       LINKS TO STRATEGY**

3.1       Monitoring of the Council's corporate complaints and successful resolution of those complaints supports the provision of higher quality and more effective services to the public across all service areas.

### **4.       THE REPORT**

4.1       At the last meeting of the Audit Committee members considered the reports presented in relation to the Corporate Complaints Policy. A request was made for a specific report which set out an example of a partially upheld complaint. Attached at Appendix 1 are examples of partially upheld complaints.

### **5.       EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1       Monitoring of complaints via the Corporate Complaints policy addresses the Council's statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011 in two ways. It addresses specific complaints to the Council around alleged discrimination by service areas and also addresses the monitoring of complaints from people who fall under the categories protected by these statutory duties.

### **6.       FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1       There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 This report is for information only.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 To monitor the complaints process to ensure effective delivery of Council services.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 1972 – 2003.

Author: Gail Williams Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

For information only

Chris Burns Interim Chief Executive

Nicole Scammell Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer

Angharad Price Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Examples of partially upheld complaints

**Complaint 1**

Miss A complained that while a repair was being carried out to guttering on her block of flats, her sky cable was cut and other wires were ripped out and left hanging down. She also complained that moss removed from the old guttering was left and not cleaned up.

Miss A spoke to an officer regarding her sky cable and was promised a call back as she was told she needed to speak to the foreman. Miss A telephoned again that day as she had not received a call back and was concerned that the longer time went on, the less likelihood her sky would be re-connected that day.

In response Miss A received an apology for the mess left outside her property and arrangements were made for this to be cleaned. In relation to her concerns with the television signal arrangements were made for an aerial contractor to call to check the signal.

On investigation it was confirmed that no cables had been disturbed or damaged and the sky signal was operating correctly.

Her complaint was partially upheld in that;

- (i) part of her complaint that workmen had not cleared up the mess following the works carried out on the guttering was upheld and an apology was given.
- (ii) but the part about the sky cable was not upheld as there was no damage caused.

**Complaint 2**

Mr B complained that the Council had arranged for a contractor to clear hedgerows on a footpath by his property. Mr B stated that he had planted the hedgerows on his property as a planning condition relating to his property which also provided privacy to his property. Mr B stated that no notice was given that the works were taking place and felt that the Council should compensate him.

Mr B advised that the footpath was approximately 4 feet wide but due to the contractors excessive level of clearance the area was now between 9 and 12 feet wide therefore encroaching on his property and causing damage to plants, trees and other vegetation.

In response Mr B was advised that the Council has a duty to maintain public paths which involves the clearing of overgrowth so that it is safe and in suitable condition for public use. An explanation was provided as to why the vegetation and brambles had to be cut back due to the overgrowth and dead vegetation but an apology was given for cutting back beyond the approved remit.

Mr B was informed that he would be notified when any future works are to be carried out but that no compensation would be awarded.

The complaint was partially upheld in that;

- (i) it was upheld that no notice of the works being carried out was given to Mr B and an apology was given for cutting beyond the approved remit.
- (ii) But it was not upheld in that he was not entitled to compensation.

### **Complaint 3**

Mrs C complained about the administration of her council tax account and that the amount of refund given was not what she was expecting to receive.

In response the Council provided an explanation of how changes in entitlement had not been taken into consideration prior to her being informed how much refund she would receive and apologised for not advising her of the changes. Mrs C was also advised that the Council should have written advising that there was a difference and apologised for not notifying her.

A timeline of the administration procedure followed was fully explained to Mrs C.

The complaint was partially upheld in that

- (i) The part of her complaint that was not upheld related to the fact that the correct procedure was followed and the correct refund had been given ,
- (ii) However her complaint was upheld in that an oversight in communication was identified and an explanation was provided along with an apology.



## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000**

**REPORT BY: INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER**

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### **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.

### **2. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 2.1 The Council is under an obligation to comply with legislative requirements - this report helps to achieve that.

### **3. THE REPORT**

- 3.1 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 the Act, advice and guidance is found within the Codes of Practice issued by the Home Office.
- 3.2 The Authority has a corporate policy, which provides guidance on how surveillance should be used by the relevant officers.
- 3.3 Public Authorities undertaking covert surveillance of individual members of the public are subject to inspection by an Assistant Surveillance Commissioner or by a Surveillance Inspector (or in some cases both).
- 3.4 The Appendix to the Report includes details of the RIPA operations undertaken by the Authority for the period September to November inclusive. There have been two RIPA operations undertaken in this period.

### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None, the report is for information only.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

**6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 None.

**7. CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 None. The report is for information only.

**8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 None. Members note the information provided.

**9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 To ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

**10. STATUTORY POWERS**

10.1 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Author: Gail Williams, Interim Monitoring Officer (willige@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Finance

Appendix 1 Details of RIPA Operations



## **Appendix 1**

### **RIPA Investigations**

#### **Trading Standards**

1 investigation into the sale of alcohol and lighter fuel to minors

1 investigation into the sale of alcohol to minors.

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## AUDIT COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: OFFICERS DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

**REPORT BY: ACTING HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Quarterly report to advise members of the Audit Committee of the Gifts and Hospitality declared by officers for the period July to September 2015.

### 2. SUMMARY

2.1 Attached as Appendix 1, is a list of Gifts and Hospitality received by officers of the Council for the 3 months 1 July to 30 September 2015.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The Council acting through this Committee has an obligation to maintain high standards, probity and conduct throughout its workforce.

### 4 THE REPORT

4.1 Heads of Service provide data on a monthly basis to the Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development for collation and monitoring purposes.

4.2 The Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development will continue to monitor the returns and work with Heads of Service to improve their understanding and corporate compliance to the policy.

### 5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

### 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

### 7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development will continue to monitor the declarations to promote best practice and ensure compliance.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no consultations that have not been included in the report. The Improving Governance Project Board and Corporate Management team have been consulted on this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The Members of the Audit Committee are asked to note the information provided in Appendix 1.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To ensure the Audit Committee have an oversight of the position in relation to officers Gifts and Hospitality.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Lynne Donovan, Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development - [donovl@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:donovl@caerphilly.gov.uk)  
Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer (Acting)  
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer  
Colin Jones, Head of Property and Performance Management  
Cllr Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Governance  
Alessandra Veronese, Programme Manager Improving Governance Programme Board

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality

**Appendix 1**  
**Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality – 1 July to 30 September 2015**

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
Corporate Services	Housing	Sheltered Housing Officer	Gift	Flowers from a tenant	Chief Housing Officer	Accepted
Corporate Services	Performance and Property	Policy & Research Manager	Gift	Sirhowy Valley Honey Bee Company Ltd. Visit to bee project as part of Greener Single Integrated Plan Leadership group meeting. Small pot of honey, value under £5	Head of Property and Performance Management	Accepted, as under £25. No conflict
Environment	Public Protection	Senior Fair Trading Officer	Gift	Two bottles of rose wine, approx value £10. Owner of garage employee inspected was grateful for advice given. Employee tried to decline.	Head of Public Protection	Accepted. Given to Mayor's Charity
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict

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
Social Services	Adult Services	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Gift	Raffle Prize at ADSS National Conference in June 2015 - ASUS Zen Pad - organisation: Careworks (UK) Ltd	Director of Social Services	Accepted. Raffle Prize
Social Services	Adult Services	Home Carer	Gift	Gift voucher £15 from a service user and their family	Assistant Director (Adult Services)	Accepted. No Conflict
Corporate Services	Performance and Property	Lead Designer (Building Consultancy)	Hospitality	Mechanical Director - Invitation to attend awards dinner/ceremony as Architect/Lead Designer on project shortlisted for BREEAM National Award. Presence at ceremony to potentially receive award on behalf of Caerphilly CBC Building Consultancy. March 3rd 2015, London. Unlikely to be repeated.	Head of Property and Performance Management	Accepted
Environment	CMT	Director of Communities	Hospitality	Regional Manager of Viridor Waste Management. Hospitality to Wales v Fiji RWC Match on the 01/10/15. Invited along with other Managing Directors & Business Development Directors. Accepted. Viridor have a collaborative 25 year contract with CCBC. Contract terms have already been agreed and contract management is undertaken by Waste HoS. No direct involvement with Contractor.	Chief Executive	Accepted



## Certificate of Compliance

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### Audit of Caerphilly County Borough Council's assessment of 2014-15 performance

#### Certificate

I certify that, following publication on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2015, I have audited Caerphilly County Borough Council's (the Council) assessment of its performance in 2014-15 in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) and my Code of Audit Practice.

As a result of my audit, I believe that the Council has discharged its duties under sections 15(2), (3), (8) and (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

#### Respective responsibilities of the Council and the Auditor General

Under the Measure, the Council is required to annually publish an assessment which describes its performance:

- in discharging its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions;
- in meeting the improvement objectives it has set itself;
- by reference to performance indicators specified by Welsh Ministers, and self-imposed performance indicators; and
- in meeting any performance standards specified by Welsh Ministers, and self-imposed performance standards.

The Measure requires the Council to publish its assessment before 31 October in the financial year following that to which the information relates, or by any other such date as Welsh Ministers may specify by order.

The Measure requires that the Council has regard to guidance issued by Welsh Ministers in publishing its assessment.

As the Council's auditor, I am required under sections 17 and 19 of the Measure to carry out an audit to determine whether the Council has discharged its duty to publish an assessment of performance, to certify that I have done so, and to report whether I believe that the Council has discharged its duties in accordance with statutory requirements set out in section 15 and statutory guidance.

## Scope of the audit

For the purposes of my audit work I will accept that, provided an authority meets its statutory requirements, it will also have complied with Welsh Government statutory guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties.

For this audit I am not required to form a view on the completeness or accuracy of information. Other assessment work that I will undertake under section 18 of the Measure may examine these issues. My audit of the Council's assessment of performance, therefore, comprised a review of the Council's publication to ascertain whether it included elements prescribed in legislation. I also assessed whether the arrangements for publishing the assessment complied with the requirements of the legislation, and that the Council had regard to statutory guidance in preparing and publishing it.

The work I have carried out in order to report and make recommendations in accordance with sections 17 and 19 of the Measure cannot solely be relied upon to identify all weaknesses or opportunities for improvement.



**HUW VAUGHAN THOMAS**

**AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES**

CC: Leighton Andrews, Minister for Public Services  
Non Jenkins, Manager  
Sara-Jane Byrne, Performance Audit Lead



## Tystysgrif Cydymffurfio

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# Archwiliad o asesiad o berfformiad 2014-15 Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sir Caerffili

## Tystysgrif

Rwyf yn ardystio fy mod i wedi archwilio asesiad Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sir Caerffili (y Cyngor) o'i berfformiad yn 2014-15, yn dilyn y cyhoeddiad ar 9 Hydref 2015, yn unol ag adran 17 Mesur Llywodraeth Leol (Cymru) 2009 (y Mesur) a'm Cod Ymarfer Archwilio.

O ganlyniad i'm harchwiliad, rwyf o'r farn bod y Cyngor wedi cyflawni ei ddyletswyddau dan adrannau 15(2), (3), (8) a (9) y Mesur a'i fod wedi ymddwyn yn unol â chanllawiau Llywodraeth Cymru yn ddigonol i gyflawni ei ddyletswyddau.

## Priod gyfrifoldebau'r Cyngor a'r Archwilydd Cyffredinol

Dan y Mesur, mae'n ofynnol i'r Cyngor gyhoeddi asesiad yn flynyddol sy'n disgrifio ei berfformiad o ran y canlynol:

- cyflawni ei ddyletswydd i wneud trefniadau i sicrhau gwelliant parhaus wrth gyflawni ei swyddogaethau;
- cyflawni'r amcanion gwella y mae wedi'u pennu iddo'i hun;
- trwy gyfeirio at ddangosyddion perfformiad a nodwyd gan Weinidogion Cymru a dangosyddion perfformiad a bennwyd gan y Cyngor ei hun; a
- chyflawni unrhyw safonau perfformiad a nodwyd gan Weinidogion Cymru a safonau perfformiad a bennwyd gan y Cyngor ei hun.

Mae'r Mesur yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i'r Cyngor gyhoeddi ei asesiad cyn 31 Hydref yn ystod y flwyddyn ariannol yn dilyn y flwyddyn ariannol y mae'r wybodaeth yn ymwneud â hi, neu erbyn unrhyw ddyddiad arall a allai gael ei bennu trwy orchymyn gan Weinidogion Cymru.

Mae'r Mesur yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol i'r Cyngor ystyried canllawiau a gyhoeddir gan Weinidogion Cymru, wrth gyhoeddi ei asesiad.

Fel archwilydd y Cyngor, mae'n ofynnol dan adrannau 17 ac 19 y Mesur i mi gynnal archwiliad er mwyn penderfynu a yw'r Cyngor wedi cyflawni ei ddyletswydd i gyhoeddi asesiad o berfformiad, ardystio fy mod i wedi gwneud hynny ac adrodd ynghylch a yw o'r farn bod y Cyngor wedi cyflawni ei ddyletswyddau'n unol â'r gofynion statudol a eglurir yn adran 15 ac mewn canllawiau statudol.

## Cwmpas yr archwiliad

At ddibenion fy ngwaith archwilio byddaf yn derbyn, os yw awdurdod yn bodloni ei ofynion statudol, y bydd hefyd wedi cydymffurfio â chanllawiau statudol Llywodraeth Cymru yn ddigonol i gyflawni ei ddyletswyddau.

Ar gyfer yr archwiliad hwn, nid yw'n ofynnol i mi ffurfio barn ynghylch pa mor gyflawn neu gywir yw'r wybodaeth. Mae'n bosibl y bydd gwaith asesu arall y byddaf yn ymgymryd ag ef dan adran 18 y Mesur yn ystyried y materion hynny. Felly, roedd fy archwiliad o asesiad o berfformiad y Cyngor yn cynnwys adolygu cyhoeddiad y Cyngor er mwyn gweld a oedd yn cynnwys yr elfennau a bennir mewn deddfwriaeth. Euthum ati hefyd i asesu a oedd y trefniadau ar gyfer cyhoeddi'r asesiad yn cydymffurfio â gofynion y ddeddfwriaeth, ac a oedd y Cyngor wedi ystyried canllawiau statudol wrth baratoi a chyhoeddi ei asesiad.

Nid yw'r gwaith yr wyf i wedi'i gyflawni er mwyn adrodd a gwneud argymhellion yn unol ag adrannau 17 ac 19 y Mesur yn waith y gellir dibynnu'n gyfan gwbl arno i nodi pob gwendid neu bob cyfle i wella.



**HUW VAUGHAN THOMAS**

**ARCHWILYDD CYFFREDINOL CYMRU**

CC: Leighton Andrews, y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus

Non Jenkins, Rheolwr

Sara-Jane Byrne, Swyddog Arweiniol Archwilio Perfformiad



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Councillor Keith Reynolds  
Leader  
Caerphilly County Borough Council  
Penallta House  
Tredomen Park  
Ystrad Mynach  
CF82 7PG

Reference [XXXX]  
Date 27 November  
Pages 1 of 2

Dear Councillor Reynolds

## Annual Audit Letter – Caerphilly County Borough Council 2014-15

This letter summarises the key messages arising from the Auditor General for Wales' statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

### **The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources**

It is the Council's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the accounting statements;
- review the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the accounts.

Local authorities in Wales prepare their accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards. On 30 September 2015, I issued an unqualified audit opinion on the accounting statements confirming that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions. My report is contained within the Statement of Accounts. The key matters arising from the accounts audit were reported to members of the Audit

Committee in my Audit of Financial Statements report on 9 September 2015, and in an update letter on 29 September 2015.

A significant adjustment of £30m was made to the statement of accounts in respect of the valuation of Council Dwellings, which arose when more recent financial information was used to update the valuation.

**I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

My consideration of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed as part of the Improvement Assessment under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. My Annual Improvement Report will highlight areas where the effectiveness of these arrangements has yet to be demonstrated or where improvements could be made.

**I have not yet issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts has been completed, but following the recent court judgement in the proceedings against certain members of the senior management team I intend to issue this certificate in the near future.**

**My work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the 2015-16 accounts or key financial systems.**

A more detailed report on my grant certification work will follow in early 2016 once this year's programme of certification work is complete.

The financial audit fee for 2014-15 is currently expected to be in line with the agreed fee set out in the Annual Audit Outline.

Yours sincerely



**Lynn Pamment**  
For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales



## **AUDIT COMMITTEE- 9TH DECEMBER 2015**

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES**

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

- 1.1 To update Members on Caerphilly County Borough Council's collaboration and partnership work programme. This report is for information only.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Following recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office on the partnership and collaborative work of the Council, an exercise commenced in October 2013 to identify the Council's partner organisations, significant partnerships and collaborations. This led to Cabinet in November 2014 agreeing a Collaboration and Partnership Protocol with twelve month action plan for embedding a structure for partnership working (July 2014 to June 2015) and a Partnership Governance Toolkit.
- 2.2 All actions within the 12 month partnership action plan have been completed.

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

- 3.1 Compliance with recommendations of the Wales Audit Office under the Council's Improvement Plan, and requirements of the Annual Governance Review Panel on partnerships and collaborative working of the Council.
- 3.2 The policy direction from the Welsh Government through the White Paper: Reforming Local Government, and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 for greater partnership and collaborative work.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 The Collaboration and Partnership Protocol with the twelve month action plan (July 2014 to June 2015) has now been fully completed resulting in:
- three reviews of the partnership and collaboration list undertaken through Heads of Service, with the updated list placed on the intranet under the corporate governance link for continued staff reference;
  - spot governance checks as directed by Corporate Governance Review Panel undertaken for the following partnerships and collaborations: Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee, Monmouthshire Farm School Collaboration, Missing Children Collaboration, Welsh Rugby Unit Partnership, Local Investment Collaboration Fund. These spot checks raised no issues for concern.

- 4.2 In lessons learnt through implementing the partnership and collaboration work programme it is not evident whether the Partnership Governance Toolkit is being used. Under the guidance contained in the toolkit partnerships are expected to do annual self assessment health checks. This could be something that could be checked, together with the extent to which the guidance is being used, in future spot governance checks of partnerships/collaborations.
- 4.3 The quarterly reviews through the Heads of Service are working well, with all Heads of Service and their staff engaging fully with the reviews. It is considered that CCBC now has a robust list of partnerships/collaborations with possibly just a few omissions. Over time the more reviews undertaken the greater the validity of this list will be.
- 4.4 The latest review of partnerships/collaborations took place in September 2015. This saw little change to the list, with only one new partnership identified - *the Safer Gwent Regional Partnership*.
- 4.5 The recent review reveals that the Council has 39 formal partnerships, 22 collaborations, and 148 partner organisations. The Council is the collaborative lead in 8 of the ventures (see Appendix 1 for Caerphilly County Borough Council Partnerships Overview October 2015)
- 4.6 To date the process of updating the partnership/collaboration list is working well. Brief data is also collated on all partnerships/collaborations. To ensure partnerships/collaborations are performing well the Corporate Governance Review Panel will continue to select collaborations/partnerships for a review by Internal Audit.
- 4.7 The partnership and collaboration work programme is in keeping with the policy direction from the Welsh Government through the Local Government White Paper – *Reforming Local Government Power to the People*, and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 for greater partnership and collaborative work.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council's partnerships and collaborative working take into consideration the Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Brief information on funding arrangements in place for partnership and collaborative working by the Council has been collated.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Significant staff time is invested in partnership and collaborative working by the Council.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The contents of this report have been subject to consultation with the officers listed under Section 11 of the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1.1 For the Audit Committee to note the contents of this report.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 The report is for information only.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 2000, and the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Part 2) Community Strategies.

Author: Jackie Dix – Policy & Research Manager  
Consultees: Nicole Scammell - Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151  
Colin Jones - Head of Performance and Property Services  
Rob Hartshorn – Head of Public Protection  
Gail Williams – Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
Richard M Harris - Internal Audit Manager

Appendix 1 Caerphilly County Borough Council Partnerships Overview October 2015

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## Appendix 1 Caerphilly County Borough Council Partnerships Overview October 2015

Formal Partnerships (number 39)	Collaborations (number 22)
<p><b>1) Adult Community Learning 5 County Partnership</b>  Lead: Senior Community Education Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>1) Federation Disability Sport Wales</b>  Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>
<p><b>2) Bridges Into Work European Social Fund Partnership</b>  Lead: Senior Community Education Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>2) Greater Gwent Health, Social Care &amp; Well-being Collaborative Partnership</b>  Lead: Torfaen Council  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No information provided</p>
<p><b>3) Caerphilly Adult Community Learning Partnership</b>  Lead: Senior Community Education Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>3) Gwent Collaboration on Recreation and Leisure</b>  Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>
<p><b>4) Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Youth Offending Service</b>  Lead: Assistant Director, Children Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Statutory Partnership  <b>CCBC Lead</b></p>	<p><b>4) Gwent Frailty Programme (joint committee)</b>  Lead: Assistant Director, Adult Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No  <b>CCBC Lead: Lead Commissioner</b></p>
<p><b>5) Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice Bureau</b>  Lead: Policy &amp; Research Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>5) Gwent Multi Agency Missing Children Project</b>  Lead: Assistant Director, Children Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>
<p><b>6) Caerphilly Business Forum</b>  Lead: Group Manager Operations, Asset Based Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>6) Gwent Visually Impaired Service Collaboration</b>  Lead: Service Manager Additional Learning Needs  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: GVIS provides support for the statutory Special Educational Needs process.  <b>CCBC Lead: Host for service</b></p>

<p><b>7) Caerphilly Community Strategy Standing Conference</b>  Lead: Policy &amp; Research Manager, and Programme Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes under community planning guidance.</p>	<p><b>7) Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board</b>  Lead: Assistant Director, Adult Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Statutory Partnership</p>
<p><b>8) Caerphilly Local Service Board</b>  Lead: Chief Executive  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Voluntary arrangement, although Local Service Boards to become statutory in 2016 with the introduction of <i>Public Service Boards</i> through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p>	<p><b>8) Gwent wide Integrated Community Equipment Service</b>  Lead: Assistant Director, Adult Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes</p>
<p><b>9) Caerphilly Learning Partnership</b>  Lead: Chief Education Officer  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>9) Hearing Impaired Service &amp; Communication Intervention Team</b>  Lead: Service Manager Additional Learning Needs, Caerphilly  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: The Service provides support for statutory processes as identified in Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales.</p>
<p><b>10) Compact Partners (to the Compact Agreement with the Voluntary Sector in the borough)</b>  Lead: Policy &amp; Research Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Voluntary arrangement but considered good practice with Welsh Government reserving right to make mandatory in the future.</p>	<p><b>10) In One Place</b> (under development)  Lead: Principal Private Sector Housing Officer &amp; Service Manager (Mental Health and Substance Misuse)  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No information provided</p>
<p><b>11) Communities First Programme</b>  Lead: Community Regeneration Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes this is a Welsh Government funded Anti Poverty Programme.</p>	<p><b>11) Mitigating Welfare Reform Across Gwent</b>  Lead: Customer Services Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No  <b>CCBC Lead: Host employer of staff</b></p>
<p><b>12) Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Local Action Group</b>  Lead: Countryside and Landscape</p>	<p><b>12) Monmouthshire Farm School Endowment Collaboration</b>  Lead: Finance Manager, Monmouthshire</p>

<p>Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes. The Local Action Group oversees the Rural Development Programme (RDP) within eligible Wards of Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent County Boroughs. The programme is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and is managed centrally by the Welsh Government.</p>	<p>County Borough Council Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>
<p><b>13) Early Years Service Areas Partnerships Initiatives – comprising of Flying Start, Early Years and Childcare, the Family Information Services and Family Support</b> Lead: Early Years Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes through the Welsh Government’s Flying Start Programme.</p>	<p><b>13) Prosiect Gwyrdd</b> Lead: Head of Community and Leisure Services (technical lead) and Contracts Manager (procurement lead) Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No information provided</p>
<p><b>14) Families First Board</b> Lead: Families First and Children and Young People's Coordinator and Lead Director for Children and Young People Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: through the Welsh Government’s Families First Programme, Flying Start, Communities First.</p>	<p><b>14) Shared Legal Services</b> Lead: Head of Legal and Democratic Services Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Informal arrangements exist, no formal SLA’s etc, but help and assistance given to Authorities on a reciprocal basis with agreed re charges.</p>
<p><b>15) Football Association of Wales Trust</b> Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>15) South East Wales Adoption Service</b> Lead: Assistant Director, Children Services Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes to meet the requirements and implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.</p>
<p><b>16) Glamorgan Archives</b> (joint committee) Lead: Glamorgan Archivist, Cardiff Council Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>16) South East Wales Adult Placement Scheme</b> Lead: Assistant Director, Adult Services Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No but covered by statutory legislation <b>CCBC Lead: Hosts regional service</b></p>

<p><b>17) Greater Gwent Crematorium (Joint Committee)</b>  Lead: Head of Law &amp; Standards, Newport City Council  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>17) South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre</b>  Lead: Countryside &amp; Landscape Services Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>
<p><b>18) Gwent Archives (joint committee)</b>  Lead: Gwent Archivist, Gwent Archives  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>18) South East Wales Emergency Duty Team</b>  Lead: Assistant Director, Adult Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: <b>CCBC Lead: Host and provided by CCBC</b></p>
<p><b>19) Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations</b>  Lead: Policy &amp; Research Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	<p><b>19) South Wales Waste Management Group</b>  Lead: Head of Community and Leisure Services (technical lead)  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate:</p>
<p><b>20) Gwent Local Resilience Forum</b>  Lead: Emergency Planning Manager /regional/national priorities: Yes  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes this is a UK Government requirement.</p>	<p><b>20) South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board</b>  Lead: Assistant Director, Children Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes Statutory Partnership  <b>CCBC Lead: Hosts the Business Unit that supports the Board</b></p>
<p><b>21) Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board</b>  Lead: Community Safety Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Statutory Partnership  <b>Lead: Community Safety Manager</b></p>	<p><b>21) South East Wales SWIFT Consortium</b>  Lead: Team Manager, SEW Consortia  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: <b>CCBC Lead: Host employer of staff</b></p>
<p><b>22) Heads of the Valleys Organics (agreement to be finalised)</b>  Lead: Head of Community and Leisure Services  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate:</p>	<p><b>22) Welsh Netball</b>  Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>
<p><b>23) Health Challenge Caerphilly</b>  Lead: Health Challenge Wales Team Leader  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Yes</p>	

<p><b>24) Hockey Wales</b>  Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>25) Joint Supplies Service (County Borough Supplies)</b> (under development)  Lead: Head of Procurement  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No information provided</p>	
<p><b>26) Monmouth and Brecon Canals</b> Regeneration Group  Lead: Funding Officer  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>27) Safer Caerphilly Deliver Group</b>  Lead: Community Safety Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Statutory Partnership</p>	
<p><b>28) Safer Gwent</b>  Lead: Community Safety Manager  Takes a regional approach to community safety delivery across Gwent  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>29) Sport Wales</b>  Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>30) Street Games</b>  Lead: Community Regeneration Manager  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>31) Tell Us Once</b>  Lead: Superintendent Registrar  Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate:</p>	

Implementing Tell Us Once was part of the Outcome Agreements Improvement Objectives of 2011-12, and aligned to Welsh Government's objectives of joined up government.	
<p><b>32) Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee</b></p> <p>Lead: Policy &amp; Research Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: Voluntary arrangement but considered good practice.</p>	
<p><b>33) Welsh Purchasing Consortium (joint committee)</b></p> <p>Lead: Head of Procurement Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No information provided</p>	
<p><b>34) Welfare Reform Programme/Universal Credit Pilot</b></p> <p>Lead: Project Manager &amp; Coordinator and Senior Rents Officer Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>35) Welsh Rugby Union</b></p> <p>Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>36) Working Skills for Adults European Social Fund Partnership</b></p> <p>Lead: Senior Community Education Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No</p>	
<p><b>37) Youth Services (CCBC) Partnership with Statutory Sector (with Communities First , Community Safety and Families First)</b></p> <p>Lead: Community Education manager (Participation and Inclusion) Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No information provided</p>	

<p><b>38) Youth Services (CCBC) Partnership with Voluntary Sector (with Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations, Ystrad Mynach Boy's and Girl's Club, Urdd Gobiath Cymru)</b> Lead: Senior Community Education Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No instruction, although guidance to work in partnership with the voluntary sector is contained in local and national Youth Service Strategies.</p>	
<p><b>39) Ystrad Mynach College/ Coleg y Cymoedd</b> Lead: Sport &amp; Leisure Development Manager Welsh Govt instruction to collaborate: No information provided</p>	

**Table Notes:**

1. The total number of partner organisations is 148 (see Partnership Index below)
2. CCBC is the collaborative lead in 8 of the ventures

Date of compilation 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015

## **Partnership Index**

### **A-Z of Partner Organisations, Partnerships and Collaborations across the Council**

#### **A**

Aberystwyth University  
Abbeyfield Caerphilly Society  
Abertridwr Community Church  
Action for Children  
ACT Training  
Adult Community Learning 5 County Partnership (partnership Community Education)  
Age Concern Gwent  
Alewyd  
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

#### **B**

Bargoed YMCA  
Barnardos  
BAG Credit Union in Bargoed  
Big Lottery  
Black Association of Women Step Out  
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council  
Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Partnership  
Business in the Community Wales  
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority  
Bridgend County Borough Council  
Bridges into Work European Social Fund Partnership (partnership Community Education)  
British Red Cross (South Wales Branch)  
British Telecom  
British Transport Police  
Bron Afon Housing Association

#### **C**

Cadwyn Housing Association  
Caerphilly 50+ Forum (partnership network representative sitting on Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee)  
Caerphilly Adult Community Learning Partnership (partnership Community Education)  
Caerphilly Learning Partnership (partnership Education)  
Caerphilly Borough Compact Agreement (partnership of Compact Partners)  
Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice Bureau (partnership arrangements in place with CCBC Policy Unit, Corporate Services, and Rents, Environment)  
Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Local Action Group (Rural Development Plan Partnership managed Countryside and Landscape)  
Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Education Inclusion Services (partnership representative on Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Offending Service)  
Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Youth Offending Service (partnership Social Services)  
Caerphilly Business Forum (partnership network represented sitting on Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee, Forum supported by Regeneration and Planning)



Caerphilly Community Strategy Standing Conference (Community Planning Partners)  
Caerphilly Home Start  
Caerphilly Local Service Board (partnership)  
Caerffili Menter Iaith  
Caerphilly MIND  
Caerphilly Parents and Carers (partnership network representative sitting on Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee)  
Caerphilly People First  
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales  
Canal Trust for Wales  
Cancercareline  
Cardiff Council  
Cardiff University  
Care and Repair Caerphilly  
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales  
Careers Wales  
Care Council Wales  
Carmarthenshire County Council  
Ceredigion County Council  
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services  
C.H.A.D Independent Living Centre (Bargoed)  
Children in Wales  
Chwarae Teg  
Clybiau Plant Cymru  
Clybiau y Cymoedd  
Coastguard  
Coalfields Regeneration Trust  
Coleg y Cymoedd/Ystrad Mynach College (partnership Education)  
Coleg Gwent  
Communities First Programme (partnership Regeneration and Planning)  
Crossroads South East Wales  
Crown Prosecution Service  
Cruse Bereavement Care

## **D**

Denbighshire County Council  
Department of Work and Pensions (local)  
Disability Can Do Organisation

## **E**

Educ8  
Education and School Improvement Service South Wales

## **F**

Families First (partnership Education and Inclusion Services)  
Fairlake Properties  
Farmers Union Wales

Federation Disability Sport Wales (collaboration Community and Leisure Services, Environment)  
Federation of Small Businesses  
First Choice Housing Association  
Flintshire County Borough Council  
Football Association Wales Trust (partnership Community and Leisure Services, Environment)  
Forensic Service

## **G**

Glamorgan Archives (partnership ICT)  
GO Wales (graduate participants and funding)  
GOFAL  
Greater Gwent Crematorium Joint Committee (partnership Community and Leisure Services)  
Greater Gwent Health Social Care Collaborative Partnership (collaboration Social Services)  
Groundwork Caerphilly Trust (partnership arrangements in place with Policy Unit, Corporate Services)  
Grŵp Gwalia Cyf  
Gwent Archives (partnership ICT)  
Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (partnership arrangements in place with Policy Unit, Corporate Services, Communities First)  
Gwent Frailty Programme (collaboration Social Services)  
Gwent Local Resilience Forum (partnership Public Protection, Environment)  
Gwent Multi Agency Missing Children Project (collaboration Social Services)  
Gwent Police  
Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner Office  
Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board (partnership Caerphilly Safer Delivers)  
Gwent Visually Impaired Service Collaboration (Collaboration Education Additional Learning Needs)  
Gwent Wildlife Trust  
Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (collaboration Social Services)  
Gwent Wide Integrated Community Equipment Services (collaboration Social Services)

## **H**

Heads of the Valley Organics (a Procurement, Corporate Services and Environment partnership agreement not yet finalised)  
Health Challenge Caerphilly (partnership Public Protection, Environment)  
Hearing Impaired Service & Communication Intervention Team (collaboration Education Additional Learning Needs)  
HM Prisons  
Hockey Wales (partnership Community and Leisure Services, Environment)  
Home Office  
Homestart

## **I**

In One Place initiative (collaboration Housing, Environment)  
Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs  
Islwyn Canals Association

Islwyn Credit Union  
ITEC Training Solutions Ltd

## **J**

Job Centre Plus  
Joint Emergency Services Group  
Joint Supplies Service (County Borough Supplies) (formal partnership agreement  
Procurement, Corporate Services)

## **K**

## **L**

Llamau  
Linc Cymru

## **M**

Melin Homes  
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council  
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service  
Mitigating Welfare Reform Across Gwent (collaboration ICT and Customer Services,  
Corporate Services, Caerphilly LSB led)  
Monmouthshire and Brecon Canals Association  
Monmouth and Brecon Canals Regeneration Group (partnership Regeneration and Planning)  
Monmouthshire County Borough Council  
Monmouthshire Farm Schools Endowment Collaboration  
Monmouthshire Housing Association  
Monmouthshire and Torfaen Youth Offending Service

## **N**

National Grid  
National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth  
National Probation Service  
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
Natural Resources Wales  
New CLURV  
Newport City Council  
Newport City Homes  
Newport Housing Trust  
Newport Youth Offending Service

## **O**

## **P**

Pembrokeshire County Council  
Personal Information Sharing Project (collaboration ICT, Caerphilly Local Service Board led)  
Powys County Council  
Pontypool Park Estate  
Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years

Prosiect Gwyrdd (collaboration Procurement/Scrutiny and Directorate of the Environment)  
Public Health Wales

## **Q**

## **R**

Regional Domestic Abuse Forum (categorised as partnership sits on Social Services safeguarding boards)

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

Right from the Start

Royal Agriculture College of Cirencester

Royal Voluntary Service

## **S**

Safer Caerphilly Delivery Group (Single Integrated Plan multi agency delivery group)

Safer Gwent (Regional Partnership)

Senghenydd Youth Drop In Centre

Seren Housing Group

Scottish Power

Shared Legal Services South East and Mid Wales (collaboration Legal Services, Corporate Services)

Shelter Cymru

Sight Support (Pontypool)

South East Wales Adoption Service (collaboration Social Services)

South East Wales Adult Placement Scheme (collaboration Social Services)

South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (collaboration Regeneration and Planning)

South East Wales Emergency Duty Team (collaboration Social Services)

South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (collaboration Social Services)

South East Wales SWIFT Consortium (collaboration Social Services)

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service

South Wales Police

South Wales Trunk Road Agency

South Wales Waste Management Group (collaboration Procurement, Corporate Services)

Sports Wales (partnership Community and Leisure Services, Environment)

St. Johns Ambulance

Street Games UK (partnership Community and Leisure Services, Environment, Regeneration and Planning)

Strengthening Families

Swansea Council

## **T**

Tai Calon

Tell Us Once Birth (partnership Registrars)

The Parents Network (partnership network represented sitting on Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee)

The Settlement

Torfaen County Borough Council

Torfaen Voluntary Alliance

## **U**

United Welsh Housing Association

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

## **V**

Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council

Valleys to Coast Housing

Valleys Regional Park (collaboration Regeneration and Planning)

Vanguard Caerphilly

Van Road United Reform Church

Vision Products

Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee (partnership of Compact Partners and Voluntary Sector Representatives)

## **W**

Wales Audit Office

Wales European Funding Office

Wales Cooperative Centre

Wales Probation Trust

Wales Pre-school Providers Association

Welsh Purchasing Consortium (partnership Procurement, Corporate Services)

Wales Strategic Migration Partnership

Wales and West Housing Association

Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Welsh Government

Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Rugby Union (partnership Community and Leisure Services, Environment)

Welsh Netball (collaboration Community and Leisure Services, Environment)

Western Power Distribution

White Rose Information and Resource Centre

Wrexham County Borough Council

Working Skills for Adults European Social Fund (partnership Community Education)

## **X**

## **Y**

Youth Offending Family Support

Youth Service (CCBC) Partnership with Statutory Sector

Youth Service (CCBC) Partnership with Voluntary Sector

Ystrad Mynach Boy's and Girl's Club (partnership Education)

Ystrad Mynach College/ Coleg y Cymoedd (partnership Education)

## **Z**

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## CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL MINUTES 22nd May 2015 Executive Boardroom 10.00 a.m.

Attendees: Nicole Scammell, Colin Jones, Lynton Jones, Cllr Forehead, Richard Harris.

1. Apologies were received from Gail Williams and Angharad Price.
2. The minutes of the meeting held on the 23.4.2015 were agreed
3. LJ provided a verbal update of the position in respect of the FOI actions which complimented an email he had already provided to the panel members. A discussion took place to determine whether or not progress made to date was enough to allow this action point to be removed from the current years AGS. The up to date statistics appear to show an improving trend indicating that measures put in place during the year are having a positive effect. It was however agreed that the Review Panel would continue to monitor progress over the coming months to ensure that the improvement in performance continues but the risks/ concerns that had initially led to the issue's inclusion in the AGS had significantly been reduced. As a result it was agreed to recommend the removal of this issue from the 14/15 AGS.
4. It was confirmed that the draft AGS had been updated for comments received by panel members and once finalised by NS it would be recirculated to panel members prior too inclusion in the Audit Committee agenda.
5. RH confirmed that all outstanding checklists had been completed and Director assurance statements were in the process of being signed off. A general discussion took place around the checklist format and procedure which included a revisit of the issue of ongoing contract non compliances. The monitoring and recording process was outlined to panel members and it was accepted that numbers of non compliances were relatively low and many of the ongoing issues were regarded as procedural non compliances which when dealt with on an individual basis would not warrant escalation to a corporate level for governance purposes.
6. RH confirmed that no comments or suggestions had been received from panel members in respect of the review of the Code of Corporate Governance. Panel members were asked to provide an email response even if they have no comments.
7. It was agreed that the next scheduled meeting on 17th July was to be cancelled and RH was to organise with Sue Thomas.

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## CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL MINUTES 28th September 2015 Executive Boardroom 3.30 p.m.

Attendees: Nicole Scammell, Colin Jones, Lynton Jones, Cllr Forehead, Richard Harris.

### 1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Gail Williams.

### 2. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 22.5.2015 were agreed.

### 3. **FOI & CCTV POSITION UPDATE**

Joanne Jones attended to update the panel on the position with the work undertaken looking at our CCTV usage and the review of the information risk returns process. Handouts were provided on both topic areas and JJ talked through the key points on each. The panel acknowledged the progress made and in respect of progressing the development of an information risk appetite NS is to raise in CMT.

LJ provided a verbal update of the position in respect of the FOI actions. Although it is still early to assess the impact of some of the changes made to our processes the overall performance trend is improving, numbers of requests are still increasing but at a slower rate than previously and we are still looking for further improvements that could be made however resource may become an issue going forward due to temporary arrangements coming to an end.

### 4. **2014/15 ACTION PLAN**

The draft action plan was discussed and NS updated the group on the progress made to date. RH to update the action plan.

### 5. **REVIEW OF CODE, CONSULTATION DOCUMENT & INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK**

RH outlined the format and style of the new draft document and explained that a matching exercise had been undertaken which had confirmed the changing style and emphasis. It was agreed that we would revisit once the consultation has finished and the results are known. RH also stated that as the International Framework had been subsumed by the consultation document that no further work would be undertaken looking at compliance with the International Framework.

### 6. **CHECKLIST UPDATE**

The checklist for use in this years review was considered, no new areas were identified but some minor alterations to wording agreed, RH to update.

7. **AOB**

- 7.1 RH informed the group that the new director Christina Harray had been briefed on the AGS process and that the inclusion of schools within our process was discussed. Prior to the meeting with CH Keri Cole had been consulted and both are in agreement with the panel as to schools being brought into line with the corporate process.
- 7.2 It was agreed that Jackie Dix and Rob Hartshorn be invited to the next meeting RH to update on the progress made with BCP prior to a report going to the Audit Committee. JD to update and review last years progress and discuss any future direction.
- 7.3 RH presented a statistical summary of non compliance reports received via NS as s151 officer. After discussing it was agreed that the overall picture presented did not appear to be materially significant in terms of the AGS review process. RH to continue to monitor.
- 7.4 It was confirmed that the next scheduled meeting was on 19th November.