



AUDIT COMMITTEE – 8TH JUNE 2016

SUBJECT: REGULATOR PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRESS UPDATE

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

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 (Dec 2015).

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Since December 2015 there has been 1 proposal addressed and no new proposals onto the register.
- 2.2 There have been 2 new reviews received from the Wales Audit Office, Financial Resilience (local) Report (May 2016) and the Leisure Review that are coming on to the Cabinet Programme and will be included in future updates.
- 2.3 There have been no reviews, proposals or recommendations reported from Estyn and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate of Wales at this time.
- 2.4 Currently we have **14** proposals outstanding. Of the 14, 1 is recommended for closure and 2 are recommended to be merged. This will leave **11** outstanding in total.

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.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 There are no new finalised reports to include on this occasion, however please see para 4.8 for new reports about to enter the system in the summer of 2016. These will be reported on at the next progress update.

4.2 As at May 2016 reporting against the individual categories is as follows:

Customer Services Review	Asset Management	Financial Position Assessment	Improving Governance	Total
7 (1 recommended to be closed)	5 (2 to be merged)	1	1	14

4.3 As of May 2016 the following figures are reported as outstanding:

Outstanding	New proposals added	Sub total outstanding	Recommend closure as of DEC 2015	Recommend Merging Asset Management	Total Outstanding	Total outstanding last time reported
14	0	14	1	2	11	14

4.4 The last time the proposals were reported on (Dec 2015) there were 24 proposals with 10 recommended to be closed and this left 14. This has now been reduced to 11. This time last year there were **28** proposals outstanding. Of the 14 proposals 12 have been on the register for more than 2 years and it is expected that they will be completed and closed down this year. There have been 95 proposals since the register began.

4.5 Some of the proposals have had many actions and have been more complex making them not easily resolved within a year however progress is being made and specific updates are given below.

4.6 The **Customer Service** strategy went to P&R as planned in January 2016 and Cabinet in April where it was approved. Although published with Cabinet papers it now needs to be publicised as part of an awareness raising process. As the proposals relate to 'develop and implement' we have kept the proposals on the register (except 1) until the implementation is fully underway this spring. Although the numbers of proposals have only reduced by 1 the percentage of those outstanding has improved considerably. When we next report to Audit Committee nearly all of the proposals will be completed.

4.7 **Asset Management** has 5 proposals outstanding. Although the numbers of proposals have not overly reduced, considerable progress has been made on the percentage completions. 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 and it was recommended for closure. However Audit Committee wanted to see if an Asset Management Strategy could be pursued prior to any such closure. As such a meeting was held with the Regulators where CCBC shared a style of Asset management strategy and WAO agreed this as a good practice style.

A draft Asset Management Strategy has been developed and is in the process of being shared with others at the Corporate Asset Management Group. By the next time of reporting it is expected these will all be completed after final consultation and approved. We will merge recommendation 44 and 45 into 42. The reason 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 proposals. This will leave 3 proposals outstanding and they will be addressed if the strategy receives member approval at P&R Scrutiny 4th October 2016.

4.8 **HR strategy** (Improving Governance). The HR strategy is going to P&R in July 2016 and then onto Cabinet (date to be agreed). The Strategy needs to be updated to reflect the 3 year MTFP period as it was originally planned for implementation within a year, but this change of dates will not delay the strategy's journey through the process. Once approved, the Strategy will be made available via the intranet. This proposal will be completed and recommended for closure at the

next reporting period.

- 4.9 There are two new reports coming into the system and their proposals or recommendations will be reported on the next Audit Committee update. They are:

Name of Report	Where will the report be presented to?	Comment
Financial Resilience	CMT 2 nd June, Cabinet July. This was delayed in part due to purdah. This has 6 proposals for improvement.	Proposals to be reported on in September Audit Committee
Leisure Review	Final yet to be agreed, therefore number of recommendations / proposals yet to be determined	To be reported in September Audit Committee

- 4.10 The service advises there are no Social Services Reports to Include and the CSSIW Annual Performance Evaluation of Social Services was reported to HSC&WB Scrutiny Committee on 1st December 2015.
- 4.11 The service advises there are no ESTYN reports or recommendations to report on this occasion.
- 4.12 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.
- 4.13 We recommend 1 proposal be closed down as this has been completed and encourage members to view the specific proposals attached within Appendix A and judge if they concur that the proposal is now completed.
- 4.14 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 Assessments have been undertaken on this report, however the Local Government Measure 2009 cites fairness and accessibility as part of the 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.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To ensure members are aware of progress against 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.

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Dave Titley, Customer Services Manager
Liz Lucas, Head of Procurement
Lynn Donovan, Interim Head of Human Resources
David Hardacre, Cabinet Member, Performance, Property and Policy
Robert Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection

Background Papers:

Appendices:

Appendix: Update of proposal register May 2016