

Directors Summary

6 Month Summary

The performance period under review aligns with the first six months of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to recognise that during this time, Caerphilly Council and the communities it serves have been severely impacted by the virus with some services ceased, some delivered in alternative ways and many of the Council's staff redeployed in support of services that had not existed prior to the beginning of the financial year. The reintroduction of many of those services only a matter of months on, along with key governance processes such as the Council's DPA process, demonstrates how the Council has begun to return to a semblance of normality while also continuing to protect our people and place from COVID-19. I would like to record my appreciation of the staff of Corporate Services for the way in which they have adapted, transformed working practices and done whatever has been asked of them during this time.

In terms of specific performance updates during Q1 and Q2, I would like to commend officers for continuing to progress the Directorates agreed strategic priorities as well as contributing to the Council's now expanded TeamCaerphilly Programme. The progress made has been strong. I would also like to highlight a number of specific performance indicators that have been unsurprisingly negatively affected by COVID-19 as well as highlighting some positive and somewhat unexpected consequences. Firstly, the Council has not met its obligations in respect of targets around response times for Freedom of Information, Subject Access Requests and Council Tax collection rates as access to buildings were severely restricted and many staff were actively redeployed to services such as the Council's 'Buddy' scheme. In terms of the positives identified, the Council has seen staff from across the organisation working together for the good of all; the introduction of agile working significantly accelerated, and the concept of TeamCaerphilly very much brought to life.

In response to COVID 19, the Buddy Scheme was set up beginning on the 16th March 2020 to deliver a community response to support vulnerable people and those who were self-isolating. The Corporate Policy Unit managed the system with assistance from across all Council Services, including Services that had effectively shut down mainstream activity and offered staff to the Buddy scheme as part of the normal working week. 590 staff responded to the request for volunteers to support this group to provide support with shopping, prescription pick-up, keeping in touch etc. At the peak 1560 Vulnerable People were registered on the scheme.

Priorities

Title	Completion Date	RAG	Progress - Achievements - Impacts
ALL Services			
To identify savings proposals to ensure that a balanced budget for the 2020/21 financial year can be approved by Council in February 2020.	February 2020	●	Complete - The 2020/21 budget proposals were approved by Council at its meeting on the 20th February 2020. Total savings of £3.007m were approved of which £581k were for the Directorate of Corporate Services. Progress in delivering these savings is being monitored through our established budget monitoring processes.
Customer & Digital Services			
Deliver a revised Staffing structure for Customer and Digital Services.	December 2019	●	Complete (but ongoing) - The original restructure of the Digital Services Team was concluded early in 2020 but further adjustments have been made to the structure since as a result of normal operational churn. Work has also continued with regard to refining and improving the structures attached to Procurement and Customer Services.
Implement the Programme for Procurement within agreed timescales [to generate whole life benefits to the organisation and society]	2023	●	Ongoing - Significant progress has been made on the implementation of Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) and their formal adoption via the Social Value Portal. From early 2020/21 the TOMs methodology is being included in all relevant procurement processes. In addition, Caerphilly CBC continue to be actively involved with a National TOMs Framework for Wales via the WLGA and supported by the National Social Value Taskforce Wales (NSVT Wales). Caerphilly CBC specific and National TOMs for Wales have been designed to help Caerphilly CBC and other organisations measure and maximise the Social Value they create through the delivery of their services across the 7 Well-being Goals and importantly they will allow organisations to report Value created as a financial contribution to society. A draft of the Council's Social Value Policy has been developed and is being readied for consultation.
Implement the Customer and Digital Strategy within agreed timescales to meet the changing needs of our customers.	5 year programme	●	Ongoing - Strong progress being made across all elements of the strategy. The progress being made in terms of automation is particularly pleasing and is attracting national interest. The requirement to close front of house customer first offices as a result of the pandemic has also seen a steady channel shift toward digital engagement which the Council will now seek to retain and build on further over coming years.
Purchase & Implementation - Abavus Customer Portal	4 year programme	●	Ongoing - 8751 new customers have registered for an Abavus account. 28,334 service requests have been submitted through the Abavus platform. Due to Covid-19 the scheduled workplan has been delayed as services have been developed to specifically support the current pandemic response. Mayrise and Civica App forms are now in development. Waste Management service redesign and full end to end implementation onto the Abavus platform has been agreed with work restarting in September 2020. Self Service Scanning is now built and will be rolled out at Customer Service Offices when they reopen. Appointment bookings and Room Bookings are both being built in readiness for reopening to replace existing systems. Whilst we are behind on our current work plan, without the platform we would not have been in a position to build the reactive forms that have been needed by service areas during these unprecedented times. A total of 9814 service request have been raised specifically in respect of Covid-19 services such as Business Rate Grants, Key worker childcare applications, rescheduling of Council Tax Payments etc. The focus now is to pull the work programme back on track and refocus on delivering the original plan.
Purchase & Implementation - Thoughtonomy Virtual Workers Business Process Automation	4 year programme	●	Ongoing - A new automated Supporting People process is live. Free school meals is in UAT and will be developed and implemented as soon as resource allows. Expetced to be live by December 2020. Blue Badge - Automated entitlement process is in development. Payment of Pupil Development Grants (PDG) process is currently being explored with further processes to follow.
Revise Information Governance Work Programme to focus on deriving best value from	October 2019	●	Ongoing - Work programme revised by Oct 2019 deadline, and currently being implemented.
Agree Hwb ICT Investment Programme - Develop sustainability and Programme Plan - Plan in line with WG Timescales.	October 2019	●	Ongoing - WG Funding secured to the value of £2.9 million covering infrastructure, end user devices and capital grant on behalf of our Schools. The impact will be the upgrading and replacement of existing network infrastructure within Schools via the secured funding. This will ensure the Local Authority meets the Educational Digital Standards that have been introduced by WG. The investment allows Schools to future proof their digital environment to meet the needs of a more digitally focused learning environment and school curriculum. EdTech Programme Update report to be presented to CMT and PDM in October 2020 which will provide an overview on the current status and next steps.
To Purchase and roll out Office365 (O365)	2 Year Programme	●	Ongoing - Covid-19 has accelerated the roll out of O365 and all officers who have requested a license have now been allocated. HoS have been asked to identify any further requirements.

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Develop and lead All Wales ICT Procurement for Hwb Programme	October 2019	●	<p>Ongoing - Caerphilly established a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) on behalf of all twenty-two local authorities in October 2019 in accordance with UK Public Contract Regulations. The DPS offered an opportunity to develop a national, strategic relationship with Suppliers in order to maximise the current and future investment that schools and local authorities in Wales make in education technology. The DPS will be a "live" market for Suppliers able to demonstrate they fully meet our requirements. The DPS will be continually refreshed to take account of and keep pace with changes in related technologies and associated services. Currently undertaking scoping exercise to establish Lot 3, Teaching and Learning Tools of the DPS and a separate exercise being undertaken for Adobe software.</p> <p>Spend to date via the DPS is circa £72million since implementation on behalf of Welsh Government and Local Authorities. Circa £25.5million of spend during FY20/21 (circa £25m within Lot 2) which included WG and LA funded purchases thus meeting the requirements of WG funding for FY20/21. Quotes received from manufacturers and suppliers "Cisco's Highest % Discount in UK Public Sector History & Largest ever Public Sector Order", "Largest UK Public Sector Order ever – Aruba" and "Lowest Apple Education Pricing on Record". Significant on going work undertaken with manufacturers and suppliers in relation to product manufacturing and expediting of deliveries.</p> <p>Digitally Excluded Leaners connectivity and Mifi Devices commenced in May 2020 due to the Covid-19 emergency, the initiative currently continues with a spend of circa £1.5 million to date. Approx. 11,000 devices and SIMS deployed and secured 9000 Neverware Cloud Ready licences.</p> <p>In relation to Abavus and Thoughtonomy the Procurement aspect is complete and achieved, however supporting narrative will be needed from Karen.</p>
Legal & Governance			
Complete Scrutiny Review and implement actions that improve the Scrutiny function. The purpose is to address recommendations from the WAO "Fit for the future" report	April 2020	●	Complete - Full Council is expected to resolve that it should retain 5 scrutiny committees at its meeting on 6th October. A corporate review on Decision Making has been commissioned with the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer leading the review.
Deal with the Air Quality situation at Hafodyrynys - Working in partnership	2023	●	Ongoing - Work continues to support the organisation through the process of purchasing the houses in Hafodyrynys and making the necessary improvements to air quality within the area.
Review Childcare workload following appointment of 2 new lawyers.	Spring 2020	●	Ongoing - The demand for public childcare law services remains high and comparable with the previous 2 years. Review on hold due to COVID-19 workload pressures.
People Services			
Develop a Well-being Strategy to support people to be well and to be in work		●	Ongoing - The Well-being Strategy is being developed and will take account of matters arising as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. It is expected to be ready for adoption by the end of the 2020/21 financial year.
Develop and implement an Organisational Development Strategy to have the right people in right place with the right skills		●	Ongoing - The Workforce Development Strategy is being developed in line with the Corporate reviews and a draft will be available December 2020 / January 2021 for consideration.
Service Improvement and Partnerships			
a. Draft the #Team Caerphilly Future Transformation Strategy b. Strategic action plan to be written. c. Ensure delivery of key action plan and evaluate effectiveness	Key deadlines are included in the Strategic Action Plan.	●	Ongoing - The Transformation Strategy and Action Plan was published in 2019. An update in the form of the "Strengthening Team Caerphilly" report was presented to Cabinet on 22nd July. The action plan is progressing but progress has been limited due to Covid-19 lockdown. The implementation of the 10 corporate reviews set out within the Strengthening Team Caerphilly report is now underway. The "Strengthening Team Caerphilly" report will be presented to P&R Scrutiny on 11th November.
Support the ongoing process of embedding Future Generations across the Authority and further improve the quality of Equalities Impact Assessments (EIA's)	Ongoing	●	Ongoing - Progress has been made with the implications for the Well-being of Future Generations now considered in all Committee Reports and embedded in other policies and processes across the authority. A new Policy Officer is being recruited and part of their role will be to look at training and awareness raising of the Well-being of Future Generations Act for more of our employees.
Implement a new Corporate Performance Framework including the Directorate Performance Assessments, so the organisation has correct information on how it is performing.	Quarterly	●	Complete - The new framework has been implemented and was agreed by Cabinet 26th Feb 2020. Due to Covid the work 'paused' but has now started again with a full assessment going to Cabinet 19th November. Continuing to refine the content, the analysis and potential automation will be ongoing as part of the Corporate Review on 'intelligence and insight'. In its current form the priority is now complete.
Corporate Finance			
Progress completion of the 2017/18 ISA260 recommendations for Internal Audit to ensure the recommendations from external auditors are implemented.	Targets to be reviewed when 2018/19 ISA260 report is received.	●	Ongoing - The ISA260 report for the 2019/20 financial year contains one outstanding recommendation for Internal Audit. This relates to the tracking of recommendations in audit reports and reporting to the Audit Committee. The current position is that new audit management software (MK insights) was successfully implemented in September 2019. Work was then undertaken to develop and tailor the individual audit programmes for the various audit areas. Work was also being undertaken to develop and tailor the various management reporting functions and audit report formats, and to set up notifications for recommendation tracking (due dates and overdue) and reporting to the Audit Committee. This work has been temporarily suspended due to Covid-19 but will restart as soon as practically possible. Work had also commenced developing the business user integrated portal to allow users to update progress on recommendations online and it is planned to continue this with a view to going live sometime in the second half of the 2020/21 financial year.
Coordinate and facilitate balanced budget proposals for 2020/21 with higher savings targets for discretionary services to deliver a balanced budget.	Initial lists to be submitted by the end of June.	●	Complete - The 2020/21 budget proposals were approved by Council at its meeting on the 20th February 2020. This included total savings across the Council of £3.007m.
PFI Review – progress the review of school Private Finance Initiative.	Next steps to be agreed at the meeting scheduled for the 19th June.	●	Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak the Council was working with Local Partnerships to prepare a business case by the end of March 2020. Work has been suspended due to the pandemic but a meeting has now been scheduled to agree the next steps and revised timescales.

Count No's **RAG** Status
0 **Black** Not yet started or too early to report any progress (achievements/changes)

Title	Completion Date	RAG	Progress - Achievements - Impacts
	0	Red	Started but not progressing well
	11	Amber	Started with reasonable progress achieved
	10	Green	Going well with good progress
	21	Total	