



GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE - 15TH FEBRUARY 2024

SUBJECT: DRAFT ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2022/23

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Governance and Audit Committee with the Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report for 2022/23 (Appendix 1) for their consideration and comment prior to its onward submission to Joint Scrutiny on 26th February and Cabinet on 6th March 2024.
- 1.2 To provide Governance and Audit Committee with assurance that the Council's self-assessment process is robust and effective.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The self-assessment report is a statutory requirement under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. It is an important part of the Council's performance framework. This is the second time the Council has been required to produce a self-assessment report which replaces the former Annual Performance Report.
- 2.2 The Council is required to assess its own performance and provide the public with a balanced picture of that performance.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To review the Draft Self-assessment Report (Appendix 1) and if necessary, make recommendations for changes to the conclusions or action the council intends to take.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to publish a self-assessment report which should be made available as soon as reasonably practicable after the financial year to which it relates.

- 4.2 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 replaces the improvement duty for principal councils set out in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The approach as set out in the Act is designed to be a more streamlined, flexible, sector-led approach to performance, good governance, and improvement. The intention is for councils to be proactive in keeping their performance under review and consider whether organisational processes and procedures are as effective as they could be or improved to drive better outcomes.
- 4.3 Under the Act we have duty to keep performance under review the extent to which we are fulfilling the 'performance requirements' that is, the extent to which we are:
- exercising our functions effectively.
 - using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively.
 - has effective governance in place for securing the above
- 4.4 Part 6, Chapter 1, of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 statutory guidance says that councils are responsible for:
- Conducting robust self-assessments and reporting on the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of its local communities.
 - Setting out any actions to increase the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements, including, for example, the role of scrutiny in challenging and driving the extent to which the performance requirements are being met.
- 4.5 The aim is to support councils to build on existing strengths and to support them to achieve a more innovative, open, honest, transparent and ambitious sector, challenging itself and collectively driving up service delivery outcomes and standards.
- 4.6 The guidance states that the Council must make a draft of its self-assessment report available to its Governance and Audit Committee. The committee must review the draft report and may make recommendations for changes to the conclusions or action the council intends to take.
- 4.7 If the Council does not make a change recommended by the Governance and Audit Committee, it must set out in the final self-assessment report the recommendation and the reasons why the Council did not make the change.
- 4.8 Under the Act there is also a duty to carry out a panel assessment where an independent panel, appointed by the Council, will assess, through self-assessment, the extent to which the Council is meeting the performance requirements. The panel are not responsible for holding the Council to account but should offer an external view of how the Council is managing its self-assessment process. There must be at least one panel assessment during an electoral cycle, and it is for the Council to choose the time during the electoral cycle when panel performance assessment is likely to be of most value.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 This report introduces the Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report for 2022/23 (Appendix 1). The self-assessment can be seen as a view on internal organisational effectiveness.

- 5.2 The intention of self-assessment is to provide and act on organisational learning and provide an ongoing process of review about how good our performance is and where it could be better. From this learning we produce a self-assessment report.
- 5.3 The statutory guidance advice is that self-assessment be achieved by using intelligence already held corporately in an insightful way and reflecting at a strategic level on how the council is operating, and what action is needed to ensure it can continue to provide effective services now and for the long term.
- 5.4 The Council's Performance Framework has been developed to meet several strategic and operational needs as well as to meet the new legislation and further the Council's desire to be a high performing learning organisation focused on meeting the needs of its residents.
- 5.5 Much of the information contained within the report is sourced from the Directorate Performance Assessments (DPA's) and the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA), in addition to other council reports, including the Annual Governance Statement and Financial Reports.
- 5.6 The self-assessment process will produce a summary of the learning which has emerged from the self-assessment process. We have chosen a range of information to use that will be reviewed to reach our conclusions under the following headings:
- Corporate Planning
 - Financial Planning
 - Workforce Planning
 - Procurement and Information Technology
 - Assets
 - Risk Management
 - Performance Management
 - Other Key Council Health Checks
- 5.7 Last year Governance and Audit Feedback was to 'provide more 'evaluative statements' in the final document, by showing a greater connection to the source information, which informed the summary 'judgements'. The committee also wanted greater use of data to help understand how judgements were informed. The second self-assessment seeks to address this with more data and trends, without increasing the volume substantially.

Conclusion

- 5.8 The self-assessment provides a platform to celebrate the activity that has gone well, reflect on the areas that need to be improved, and to identify new approaches and interventions to support future progress.

The Council's Performance Framework has been developed to meet several strategic and operational needs, as well as to meet the legislation. It is an ongoing process that allows the Council to act on organisational learning, review its performance and recognise where it could improve.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made or were thought necessary, for this report that are not already contained within the report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 No Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed for this report although individual assessments may have been made to support activity within the Well-being Objectives. Page 35 of the Draft Self-assessment Report provides a brief update on our Welsh Language and equalities work. Delivery of the Well-being Objectives maximises our contribution to all the national well-being goals including 'A More Equal Wales'.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Page 13 of the Draft Self-assessment Report provides information on Financial Planning.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personal implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 All consultation responses have been incorporated within this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and associated statutory guidance

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

Consultees: Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance
Gareth Jenkins, Interim Director of Social Services
Jo Williams, Assistant Director Adult Services, Social Services
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Kathryn Peters, Corporate Policy Manager
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Deborah Gronow, Internal Audit Manager

Background Papers:

[Corporate Plan 2018-2023](#)

[Statutory guidance on Part 6, Chapter 1, of the Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report 2022/23