



AUDIT COMMITTEE - 14TH JUNE 2017

SUBJECT: CERTIFICATE OF CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S 2017-2018 IMPROVEMENT PLAN

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This is an information item to inform members of the Certificate of Compliance issued by the Auditor General for Wales in April 2017 regarding Wales Audit Office's (WAO) assessment of our compliance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to produce an Improvement Plan.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report presents the Wales Audit Office Certificate of Compliance for 2017-18 under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The Measure requires the Council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. This involves setting Improvement Objectives (called Wellbeing Objectives) and annually publishing an assessment which describes its performance.

The certificate does not give opinion on how well this is done but simply states whether we have or have not met our improvement duty.

The Auditor General's certificate attached states "As a result of my audit, I believe that the Council has discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties".

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Although the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been introduced and replaces Part 2 of the 2009 Local Government Measure, Part 1 is still a legal requirement and this part puts a duty on an authority to 'make arrangements to continuously improve'. These arrangements and their effectiveness are assessed by the WAO.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Under the Measure, the Council is required to prepare and publish an Improvement Plan (Set Improvement Objectives, now changed to Wellbeing Objectives) describing its plans to discharge its duties to:

- make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions;
- make arrangements to secure achievement of its improvement objectives; and
- make arrangements to exercise its functions so that any performance standard specified by Welsh Ministers is met.

The Measure requires the Council to publish its Improvement Plan as soon as is reasonably practicable after the start of the financial year to which it relates, or after such other date as Welsh Ministers may specify by order. In practice the Improvement Plan is published by the 31st of March each year, to additionally comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

- 4.2 The Certificate of Compliance (Appendix 1) known as 'Certificate of Compliance for the Audit of Caerphilly County Borough Council's 2017-18 Improvement Plan' confirms the Council has complied with its duty.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Its aim is to make public bodies listed in the Act to think more about the long term, work better with people, communities and each other. It is about preventing problems and taking a more joined-up approach. The arrangements we have in place to comply with the Act are progressing well and an update on the Council's progress is provided separately to Audit Committee.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 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

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications to this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications to this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

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

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The report is for information only.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The certificate tells members and the public if the council has complied with its statutory duties therefore members need to be advised in order to gain assurance as part of their monitoring role.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Local Government Measure 2009 (Part 1). Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

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Consultees: Nicole Scammell - Acting Director Corporate Services and Section S151 Officer
Rob Hartshorn - Head of Public Protection
Kathryn Peters - Corporate Policy Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Certificate of Compliance for the Audit of Caerphilly County Borough Council's 2017-18 Improvement Plan