

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO COUNCIL

24 JULY 2013

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

#### WALES AUDIT OFFICE – ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT (AIR)

##### **1. Purpose of Report.**

1.1 To introduce the report of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) attached at Appendix 1.

##### **2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority.**

2.1 Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, the Auditor General is required to report each year on how well Welsh councils and a number of other public bodies are planning for improvement and delivering their services. The work undertaken by the WAO tests the basis of the Council's improvement objectives and how they support the Council in securing continuous improvement.

##### **3. Background.**

3.1 Each year, the WAO, on behalf of the Auditor General, carries out an improvement assessment for each improvement authority in Wales. The annual improvement assessment consists of two parts:

- a corporate assessment that reviews the council's likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement; and
- a performance assessment that reviews the previous financial year's progress of planned improvements as set out in the council's forward looking plan (in this case, the Council's Corporate Plan 2010-13).

The attached Annual Improvement Report is informed by the findings of these two assessments.

3.2 The report has also drawn on the CSSIW<sup>1</sup> *Annual Review Evaluation of Performance 2011-12*; the findings of the Estyn inspection that was carried out in October 2012; and the Council's self-assessment of performance (Annual Report 2011-12).

##### **4. Current situation / proposal.**

4.1 The overall conclusion of the report is positive, acknowledging that the Council continues to enhance its arrangements to deliver improvement, developing a more robust and balanced approach to evaluate and report its performance.

4.2 The report recognises the "good progress" the Council made in delivering its improvement objectives in 2011-12.

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<sup>1</sup> CSSIW – the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales.

- 4.3 The report notes that the Council is improving the way in which it evaluates performance and aligns service improvement with financial planning.
- 4.4 The report also recognises the challenges the Council faces, including improving the standard of educational attainment at both primary and secondary levels; addressing some operational weaknesses within Children's services; large-scale regeneration; and improving information management processes.
- 4.5 Finally, the report sets out the Auditor General's view on how well the Council is planning for, and making arrangements to support, improvement. The conclusion is that the Council's arrangements to support improvement are sound, although it faces a period of change within its senior management.
- 4.6 The report has not made any statutory recommendations for the Council to consider, nor specific proposals for improvement. A comprehensive summary is included on pages 4 and 5 of the report.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.**

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and the Procedure Rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment.**

No equality impact assessment has been undertaken as the Auditor General's Annual Improvement Report is essentially a retrospective assessment of the Council's performance.

## **7. Financial Implications.**

There are no financial implications in this report.

## **8. Recommendation.**

- 8.1 That Council notes the Annual Improvement Report produced by the WAO.

**Ness Young**  
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**8 July 2013**

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## **Background documents**

The WAO Annual Improvement Report – Issued May 2013