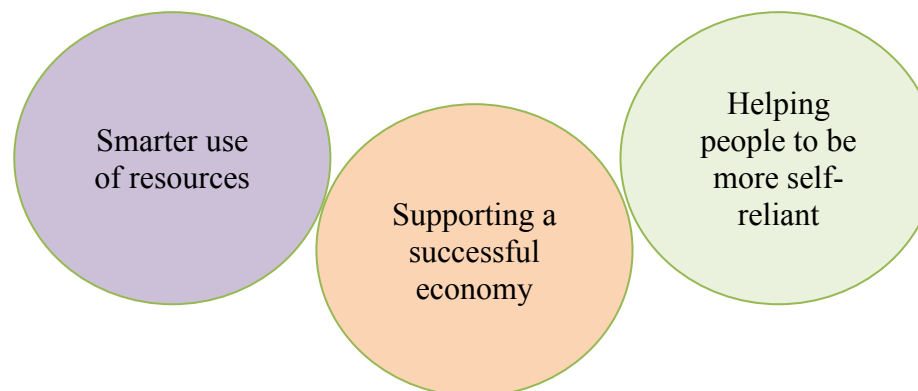


Partneriaeth Pen-y-Bont a'r Fro
Bridgend & Vale Partnership
working together - gweithio ar y cyd



BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE LIVES

**INTERNAL AUDIT SHARED SERVICE - DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN
FOR THE OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIPS SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

2017 – 2018

Bridgend CBC

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Operational & Partnerships Services Directorate is acutely aware that its role is to support the Authority in the achievement of its Corporate Priorities but also to support those functions the Authority is required to undertake whether a priority or not. The impact of the Medium Term Financial strategy not only provides the service priorities of the department but also impact on the ability of the department to provide those services. The department's first priority will be to focus on the stated corporate priorities in the corporate plan and corporate projects that feed into it. The department's assets are its staff and the skills that they hold. Significant reductions in staffing have already been made and it is recognised that chargeable hours and workloads more generally are extremely high. Workforce support and planning will play a significant role in the management of service for the future and it is recognised that uncertainty over the future of local government in Wales is a factor in staff retention.
- 1.2 The Directorate provides a genuine mix of internal, collaborative, joint and external service provision. The Directorate is well placed for the future, has the culture to continuing delivering services.
- 1.3 Improving educational attainment remains very important to the council and ongoing improvement in this area forms part of a wider objective in raising skills and attainment more generally. The Council's Corporate Plan highlights the Council's commitments whilst recognising that core and statutory services will continue to receive attention including the Council's work as a planning authority, maintain highways and public transport; refuse collection, street cleaning, revenues and benefits, public protection and sports, arts and libraries.
- 1.4 The Council continues with its commitment to the Transformation Programme, strong financial management and performance management and robust business planning and service planning.

2. Improvement Priorities for 2016-20

- 2.1 Bridgend County Borough Council recognises that it will have to make significant changes to the way they think and operate in order to meet the significant challenges ahead – not least the increasing demands made on many of the Council's services, against the background of a shrinking budget. The Council has a clear and simple vision and that is, always to act as:-

“One Council working together to improve lives”.

2.2 The Council’s values have not changed and continue to represent what the Council stands for and influences how they work. The Council’s values are:-

- **Fair** – taking into account everyone’s needs and situation;
- **Ambitious** – always trying to improve what we do and aiming for excellence;
- **Citizen-focused** – remembering that we are here to serve our local communities;
- **Efficient** – delivering services that are value for money.

2.3 The Council has also identified three well-being outcomes that will be their focus over the coming four years. These outcomes are intended to improve the quality of life of people in the County while significantly changing the nature of the Council. The three outcomes are as follows:

Supporting a successful economy	Helping people to become more self-reliant	Smarter use of resources
A successful, sustainable and inclusive economy that will be supported by a skilful, ambitious workforce.	Individuals and families that will be more independent and less reliant on traditional Council services.	A Council that has lean, robust processes and a skilful workforce. A supported third/community sector with the opportunity to take on services that meet citizens’ needs.

3. Well-being Objectives

3.1 In April 2016, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into effect. The Act is about improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It places a duty upon all public bodies to apply the principles of sustainable development to ensure that present needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Act sets out seven long-term goals:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales.

3.2 As a public body, Councils have a duty to work towards achieving these seven goals. The Act requires that the Council set its well-being objectives and take steps to realise them. The Act requires the Council to do things differently, applying sustainable development to everything it does. The Council is committed to the sustainable development principles, always acting in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The five ways of working, defined by the Act – long term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement – will underpin everything the Council does and help to improve the well-being of the area and make the County Borough a good place for people to live, work, study and visit.

4. Corporate Priority Outcomes

4.1 The following table outlines the three priority outcomes set by the Council and what will help to achieve these aims.

Priority	Description	Key Projects and Programmes
<p>One – supporting a successful economy</p>	<p>This means the Council will take steps to make the county a good place to do business and to ensure that schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.</p>	<p>City Deal – Working with neighbouring South East Wales Councils, we are seeking a ‘City Deal’ from the UK and Welsh Government which could result in around £1 billion investment in major capital projects in the Cardiff City Region over the next 10-15 years.</p> <p>Strategic Review of Post 16 Education and Training – A strategic review to evaluate education provision and curriculum delivery with Bridgend College to ensure that there are clear options available to provide the best possible opportunities for learners in Bridgend.</p>

		<p>Successful Economy Programme – key regeneration and local development schemes including: - Vibrant and Viable scheme with external funding of £9.6 million, which is redeveloping the Rhiw Car Park in Bridgend and creating a community living in the heart of the town centre by converting vacant space over shops into accommodation.</p> <p>Alignment of the Welsh Government Grants – The Council will streamline and make flexible use of major grants to support families through early help and to address poverty.</p>
<p>Two – Helping people to be more self-reliant</p>	<p>This means the Council will take early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.</p>	<p>Remodelling Social Care:- This is a large programme which includes recommissioning adult home care, developing extra care and information and advice services for people and their carers.</p> <p>Working with partners creating a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub as a single point of contact for all safeguarding concerns. Looking at existing models of residential care for children and young people and respite care for children with disabilities in order to make them more targeted and more effective.</p> <p>Community Asset Transfer – transferring assets to communities to manage while making the most of the assets retained.</p>
<p>Three – Smarter use of resources</p>	<p>This means the Council will ensure that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.</p>	<p>Digital Transformation Programme – changing the way the Council operates to enable customers to access information, advice and services on line.</p> <p>Rationalising the Council's estate – disposing of assets, transferring assets to communities to manage while making the most of the assets retained.</p> <p>Schools' Modernisation Programme – investing in a sustainable education system in school buildings that reduces cost and their carbon footprint.</p>

5. Corporate Priorities – Operational & Partnerships Services Directorate

Council Priority	Objective	Operational & Partnerships Services Directorate - (Actions)
One – Supporting a successful economy	To help local people develop skills and take advantage of opportunities to succeed and to extend that success to every community in the County Borough.	<p>Continue to work with the Cardiff Capital Regional Skills and Employment Board and other BCBC led projects to help shape employment opportunities, including continuing to capture apprenticeship opportunities, and develop a skilled workforce to meet those needs.</p> <p>Work with individuals and families who are unemployed, economically inactive, experiencing in-work poverty, face barriers to work or are in or at risk of poverty, to improve their job opportunities.</p> <p>Work with partners and communities to develop a tackling poverty strategy and better align our anti-poverty efforts to target areas where there is an increasing proportion of workless households with children.</p>
Two – Helping people to be more self-reliant	To reduce demand by investing in targeted early help and intervention programmes.	Work with households and partners to help prevent homelessness, including supporting care leavers to secure appropriate accommodation.
	To support the third sector, town and community councils and community groups to meet local needs.	Work with partners and schools to support carers by providing the right information, advice and assistance where relevant.
Three – Smarter use of resources	To achieve the budget reductions identified in the MTFS.	Implement the planned budget reductions identified in the 2017-18 budgets.
	To improve the efficiency of and access to services by redesigning our systems and processes.	Automate most common internal processes to reduce transaction costs and streamline processes.
	To develop the culture and skills required to meet the needs of a changing organisation.	<p>Support managers to lead through organisational change.</p> <p>Provide the learning and development opportunities for staff to meet future service needs.</p> <p>Improve our understanding of citizens views by developing and promoting mechanisms that increase responses to consultation.</p>
	To make the most of our spend on	Review procurement processes and procedures to ensure best value is achieved

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	goods and services.	through eProcurement and utilising national and regional arrangements. Monitor the corporate contracts register to ensure compliance and opportunities to aggregate spend.
		Workplace Health, Safety & Welfare and effective absence management.

6. Key Service Data

6.1 Staff

Service	2016/17 (01.05.16)		2017-18 (31.12.2016)	
	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount
Business Support - Legal (in CMB Support)	9.86	10	22.86	24
Human Resources and Organisational Development	115.26	127	98.97	111
ICT	50.37	53	54.24	56
Legal Section	60.22	67	42.36	49
Regulatory and Partnerships	69.79	82	76.39	88
DIRECTORATE	306.50	340	295.84	329

6.2 Finance

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	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
	Approved £,000	Approved £,000	Indicative £,000	Indicative £,000	Indicative £,000
Housing & Homelessness					
Community First	3	3	3	3	3
Community For Works	0	0	0	0	0
Community Safety	112	112	112	112	112

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Housing Options & Homelessness	692	883	883	883	883
Housing Strategy & Solutions	209	234	234	234	234
Supporting People	180	178	178	178	178
Sustainable Renewal	145	146	146	146	146
Human Resources					
Communication & Marketing	476	481	481	481	481
Customer Services	1,369	1,322	1,322	1,322	1,322
Hr & Organisational Dev	1,682	1,630	1,630	1,630	1,630
ICT					
ICT	3,728	3,793	3,743	3,743	3,743
Legal & Democratic Services					
Registration Service	-32	-30	-30	-30	-30
Legal	1,976	1,922	1,922	1,922	1,922
Legal Administration	574	540	540	540	540
Member & Mayoral Services	1,542	1,850	1,850	1,850	1,850
Procurement	276	278	278	278	278
Performance & Partnerships					
Performance & Partnerships	316	277	277	277	277

7. Corporate Risks

The Council assesses on an annual basis the major risks that will affect the ability to achieve the Corporate Priorities, provide services as planned and fulfil its statutory duties. The following high risks are owned by the Service and are shown under each improvement priority.

Risk Description	Score
Healthy Life Styles	16
The impact of homelessness	15

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Collaboration with partners	12
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards	12

8. The Risk Assessment Process

8.1 The information which has been used to prepare the risk assessment and proposed internal audit plan for the Operational & Partnerships Services Directorate has been collected and collated from a number of different sources including the information contained above. The starting point for a risk based audit approach is an understanding of the Council’s priorities and risks. This has been achieved by reviewing the Corporate Plan, Directorate’s Business Plan, Corporate Risk Register and meeting / interviewing Corporate Directors and their Senior Management Teams asking where they perceive to be the main risks within their individual areas and where they would require internal audit to provide assurance that such risks are being effectively mitigated and managed. This information is used to inform and design the audit plan.

8.2 The plan is based on an underlying risk assessment. The inherent risks existing within each area are then identified for audit as part of the audit planning process. The audits which make up the plan have been assessed on priority. Internal Audit will ensure that all reviews classified as “high” risk, will be completed by the end of the year, “medium risk reviews are the next level down, but still require a scheduled review. Although “low” risk reviews still carry a degree of risk, these have not been included on the plan but continue to be risk assessed annually to take account of any changes in their status.

9. Proposed Internal Audit Plan for the Operational & Partnerships Services Directorate 2017-18

OPERATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Area	Identified Risk(s)	Type	Audit Scope	Total Days
Partnerships / Collaboration	H	Governance / Risk	To review the Council’s approach to governance over collaborative working / partnership arrangements. The areas to be covered will be developed during the year and will concentrate on: Evaluation of controls, Consistency of approach (taking into account factors such as proportionality and appropriateness)	20

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			Relevance / meeting strategic (operational) objectives / outcomes.	
Compliance	H	Assurance	A number of reviews will be undertaken to provide assurance over compliance with Council policies, procedures and where appropriate legislation.	20
HR	H	Assurance	Evaluating controls within HR systems designed to prevent and / or detect fraud, irregularity or error, and to ensure that transactions are processed in accordance with Council policy, Finance and Contract Procedure Rules and appropriate legislation.	30
Supporting People Grant	H	Assurance	Internal Audit will undertake the necessary assurance checks and certifications required by the grant conditions.	10
ICT	H	Assurance / Governance	To continue a programme of system review audits, the objectives will be to determine whether the systems and procedures in operation are functioning satisfactorily and are in accordance with legislation and Council Policy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information and facilities is controlled and restricted to authorised users according to their needs. • The potential for fraud and error are minimised; • The system is effectively administered and supported; • All staff using the system have been correctly trained to the level that will allow them to properly fulfil their duties; • The system under review is continually available during working hours 	30
Members	H	Governance	Following the May elections, reviews will be undertaken to ensure that Members comply with the Council's Gifts and Hospitality Policy, Declaration of Interests and Code of Conduct.	20
			<i>Overall Total – Operational & Partnerships Services Directorate</i>	130