

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO AUDIT COMMITTEE

14 NOVEMBER 2019

### REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

#### PORHCAWL RESORT INVESTMENT FOCUS PROGRAMME

#### 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to submit the final report produced by Wales Audit Office (WAO) in relation to an examination of the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus (PRIF) Programme, attached as **Appendix A**, for noting.

#### 2. Connections to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priority:

- Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
- Smarter use of resources – ensuring 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.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act) the Auditor General for Wales (the Auditor General) is statutorily required to examine public bodies to assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when:

- a. setting their well-being objectives; and
- b. taking steps to meet them.

- 3.2 In May 2018, the Auditor General published his report, 'Reflecting on Year One – How have public bodies responded to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)'. He concluded that, public bodies support the principles of the Act and are taking steps to change how they work.

3.3 The findings in the WAO report are based on fieldwork that was undertaken during the period February to March 2019.

#### **4. Current Situation / Proposal**

4.1 The report sets out the findings from the WAO examination of 'Deliver the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus (PRIF) Programme', a step the Council has taken to meet its Wellbeing Objectives. It also sets out the Council's initial response to its findings.

4.2 The WAO examined the extent to which the Council is acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle in Delivering the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus Programme.

4.3 The PRIF programme aims to grow the value of tourism in the economy, increase employment and business opportunities and support a range of cultural, sporting and business events. It sits under the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of 'Supporting a successful economy' and 'Smarter use of resources'.

4.4 In order to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle public bodies must take account of the following 'ways of working', namely:

- Long-term
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

4.5 The WAO examination found that there are positive aspects in how the Council has taken account of the sustainable development principle in its approach to delivering the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus (PRIF) programme. However the Council has further work to do to consistently embed the five ways of working.

#### 4.6 The main findings of the report are:

- The Council has considered long-term data and aspirations for the town to successfully access funding but would benefit from developing a long-term and holistic vision for the town.
- The Council has designed the step to prevent further decline in the town as a tourist destination. However, there is limited understanding of the root causes of this decline.
- The Council has designed the step to integrate plans with partners to access EU funding, but having a clearer vision for the town would facilitate a more integrated approach with partners.
- The Council has considered how to collaborate with partners to deliver the PRIF projects. However, its approach to collaboration could be more strategic.
- There is limited formal involvement and input to ensure that the full diversity of stakeholders is represented.

#### 4.7 The Council responded in the following ways:

##### **Long Term**

- A review of the Masterplan for Porthcawl is now underway. This audit is welcomed and its findings will be integrated into that process.
- The Council will take forward consideration of long-term transport solutions through the development of the Strategic Transport Plan and the Local Development Plan review process.

##### **Prevention**

- With its PSB partners the Council is welcoming of opportunities to learn of best practice from other PSBs that can be shared and will feed these through its review processes.
- The Council will regularly review how to integrate local and national Wellbeing Goals as early as possible in decision-making processes.
- The Council will continue to build on its already close working relationship with NRW on all areas of work relating to coastal erosion.

##### **Integration**

- The audit findings will be presented to the Council's engagement team and PSB Co-ordinator to consider ways in which the Council can better articulate the wide variety of approaches it takes when involving citizens in its decision-making processes.
- The Council is welcoming of any opportunities to learn from best practice in other areas.

##### **Collaboration**

- A review of the Masterplan for Porthcawl is underway and the findings of this audit will be integrated.

- Long-term transport solutions will be considered as part of the Strategic Transport Plan and the Local Development Plan review process.

### **Involvement**

- The opportunity to take forward this area of work will be explored with Visit Wales on a pan-Wales level.
- The evaluation of the PRIF will be tasked to clearly articulate how mechanisms for supporting socio-economic challenges and the targets for the PRIF project that were outlined in the business plan, the funding application and approved by the funder have been delivered.

### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.

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

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

### **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications**

7.1 The WAO report was focussed on the Act and implementation of the recommendations will further embed the sustainable development principle and 5 ways of working. The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

### **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications relating to the report.

### **9. Recommendation**

9.1 It is recommended that Audit Committee:

- Note the WAO report 'Well-being of Future Generations: An examination of delivering the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus Programme – Bridgend County Borough Council' (**Appendix A**).

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**November 2019**

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**Background documents:** None

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