

## ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Issue	Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale	Current Position
<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy – the economic uncertainty and increasing public expectations and demands facing public sector organisations continue to challenge and place pressures on the Council, impacting on its ability to deliver the required efficiencies.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to monitor external economic and fiscal information to ensure that it can respond quickly to unexpected events. This is particularly important in the post-Brexit era. Alongside this the Council will continue to transform how services are delivered and manage public expectations. All savings proposals will be closely monitored and mitigating action put in place to address any shortfalls</p>	<p>S151/Head of Finance</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The external fiscal climate is kept under continuous review, with regular information on the economic climate, including interest rates and inflation predictions received from our Treasury Management advisors. Assumptions built into the MTFS are adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>All current and proposed budget reductions are monitored closely to ensure that they remain deliverable. Any deviation from plans are highlighted through quarterly monitoring reports to Cabinet, and more regular reports to Directors, to ensure plans are put in place to mitigate these. A budget reduction contingency reserve is also available to draw on for one-off delays to proposals that are outside of officers' control.</p>
<p>The findings from the HMIP report on Western Bay Youth Offending Service concluded that the overall rating was inadequate and that <i>'The governance and leadership of the service are ineffective. There is no vision, understanding of purpose or the strategy to provide a high-quality personalised responsive service to children and young people.'</i></p>	<p>The Western Bay Youth Offending Service has been disaggregated and a Bridgend Youth Justice Management Board set up with senior multi-agency representation, including the Cabinet Member – Communities and the Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help to take forward services within Bridgend. The Council has produced a Post Inspection Action Plan in response to the full joint inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation. This further builds upon the list of priorities that were</p>	<p>Group Manager, Integrated Working and Family Support</p>	<p>31 March 2020</p>	<p>Staff restructure of the service has recently concluded. Currently out to advertisement for two operational leads (existing operational manager still in post). An additional social worker has been appointed to the service to strengthen the existing arrangements.</p> <p>Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB have agreed to recruit a full time equivalent health visitor post to sit with the new service. This post holder will act as the conduit for all health issues in the service.</p>

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	<p>developed on receipt of the minutes from the Ratings Panel, which was held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018. The Action Plan will be monitored on a fortnightly basis by the YOS Strategic Lead and Operational Manager, and the Youth Justice Board (YJB)</p>			<p>Task and finish groups (x4) are being formed to progress key priorities. Membership will be drawn from the management board and YJS staff team.</p> <p>Management board – jointly chaired by the Chief Executive (BCBC) and Cabinet Member for Communities will hold its next meeting of the Board on 7 October 2019.</p> <p>A joint management board and staff development day is scheduled for the 18 November 2019.</p>
<p>Outcome of the Estyn Inspection on Education Services</p>	<p>The report was reported to Council on 19 June 2019. The recommendations made will be incorporated within a post-inspection action plan which will be monitored by the School Improvement Group</p>	<p>Corporate Director – Education and Family Support</p>	<p>31 March 2020</p>	<p>The post-inspection action plan has been submitted to Estyn following discussion at full Council and Scrutiny.</p> <p>Progress against targets within the local authority’s post-inspection action plan has been presented to School Improvement Group and Scrutiny.</p> <p>Updates have been provided to key stakeholders via ‘Team Bridgend’ (cross-phase, headteachers’ group), Bridgend Association of Secondary Headteachers and Primary Federation.</p> <p>Two termly progress review meetings have been held with Central South Consortium to report on progress against the first three recommendations in the Estyn report.</p> <p>The local authority will be meeting with Estyn Local Authority Link Inspectors on 8 November 2019 to</p>

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				report on progress against the targets and agree next steps.
The role of the s.151 Officer is filled on an interim basis pending decisions on way forward with the post in light of the appointment of the Chief Executive	The Chief Executive post was appointed in May 2019 and the appointment of the s151 Officer will be sought to be filled on a permanent basis at the earliest opportunity. A temporary Deputy Head of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer has been appointed to strengthen resilience within the Finance function	Chief Executive	31 March 2020	A re-designation and regrading of the current post of Head of Finance and Performance and s151 Officer to Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change and s151 officer was approved by full Council on October 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2019. The new post will be advertised nationally once the normal staff and trade union consultation processes have been completed.
The impact of the Health Boundary change from the Western Bay Region to the Cwm Taf Region	The Council has endeavoured to minimise the potential impact of the transition to the new Health Authority during 2018-19 and will continue to monitor arrangements during 2019-20 to ensure that all processes are bedded in.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	31 January 2020	The Council has now formally joined the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board and the associated groups. The Council has contributed to the planning and review of the current partnership to ensure that the new arrangements reflect the changes as a result of Bridgend joining. This will continue to be monitored during the transitional year.
The impact of Brexit on services and finances could place increased pressures on Council resources	The Council will develop a strategy and action plan to identify potential impacts to the communities it supports, and have in place preparations for any financial consequences. The Council has established an internal cross-Directorate Brexit Forum, chaired by the Chief Executive, to explore the potential impact of Brexit on service	Chief Executive	Ongoing – 31 March 2020	The cross Directorate Brexit forum has continued to meet on a regular basis and has also included 3 Cabinet members to ensure political awareness and involvement. The risk register has been updated regularly to take account of ongoing changes and the effect of mitigating actions that have been put in place. The Council continues to work closely with Welsh Government and the WLGA to ensure that it is as prepared as possible for any eventuality. The main difficulty remains that it is still unclear exactly when

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	delivery along with actions to mitigate against risks. The Forum will also explore any potential opportunities that might arise from Brexit. A report was presented to Cabinet in March setting out a Brexit risk register, which will be actively monitored and updated as necessary.			and if any Brexit will happen and specifically what the nature of that Brexit will mean in terms of a deal or no deal. In these circumstances it is very difficult at this stage to consider whether there may be any potential opportunities arising from Brexit.

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<p>The Council's scrutiny functions should seek ways to improve its focus and scrutiny activity to ensure that the Council makes the most effective use of the resources available and improve the impact of scrutiny activity<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Scrutiny Officers will maintain a record of the impact of scrutiny activity in order to both strengthen and learn from this in order to shape the future work of the scrutiny function. Following a recent 'Scrutiny Fit for Future?' review a report is being compiled detailing proposals to implement best practice and innovation used elsewhere. To ensure the Council's scrutiny function is as effective and comprehensive as possible the Scrutiny Chairs will meet quarterly to share learning and intelligence, identify areas of cross-over and discuss where there may be gaps in focus. Consideration is also being given to the skills and training that scrutiny members need to better prepare them for current and future challenges and to developing an appropriate training programme. Scrutiny continue to work effectively with external bodies such as WLGA, neighbouring authorities and third sectors to optimise the resources available to provide good scrutiny of council services</p>	<p>Head of Legal and Regulatory Services</p>	<p>31 March 2020</p>	<p>Refresher training on Scrutiny Questioning Techniques and Scrutiny Chairing Skills is in the process of being arranged to be delivered by the WLGA. The Scrutiny Team keeps a record of conclusions, recommendations and requests for additional information from meetings and a report is presented to the next meeting to ensure they have received a response. Each Committee is requested to review the feedback and allocate a Red, Amber and Green status to each recommendation. The RAG statuses are monitored on an ongoing basis and actioned as the Committee sees appropriate. This process has been highlighted by Scrutiny Officers at a national training event where it was cited as an effective tool for monitoring the impact of Scrutiny. The methodology used by Bridgend has been shared with other authorities as an example of best practice. The Scrutiny Team is an active participant in two Scrutiny Networks, the WLGA Local Government Scrutiny Network and the South East Wales Scrutiny Officers' Network.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report 2017-18 – September 2018

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Digital Transformation and channel shift – the Council needs to continue to develop its online platforms to enable residents and businesses to interact with the Council digitally	The new responsive “Website” and the “Digital Platform” was launched in April 2018 and continues to mature and develop through the addition of new digital channels providing the Citizen the option to engage with the Council digitally alongside the traditional channels such as “face to face” and “telephony”. The progress and success of the “Digital Platform” is dependent on the adoption of digital by the Council which will require cultural change to support transformation and efficiencies savings	Head of Performance and Partnerships	31 March 2020	<p>Since My Account and the new responsive website was launched in April 2018, the following services have been made available online via the My Account self-serve portal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council Tax,</li> <li>2. Housing Benefits,</li> <li>3. School Admissions,</li> <li>4. Blue Badges</li> <li>5. Residential Parking Permissions</li> </ol> <p>Key online statistics in terms of transaction activity as of 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019 is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24,738 My Account registrations</li> <li>• 22,187 council tax payments totalling £3,230,948.62</li> <li>• 11,862 council tax registrations</li> <li>• 8,647 council tax registrations subscribing to e-billing</li> <li>• 1,610 new direct debits created</li> </ul>

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				<p>Alongside the development of the digital channel the Customer Contact Service has been focused on the customer resolution at the “first point of contact”.</p> <p>“Oggie” the Bridgend ChatBot has been launched which has added to the digital front door offering. In June 2019, SocITM (Society of Information Technology Management) rated Bridgend Council’s website 11<sup>th</sup> out of 350 local authority websites that participated in the assessment, it scored 9/10 for accessibility. In the second quarter of 2019, it was the UK’s second most improved website.</p>