

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

28 JANUARY 2021

REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT 2021-22

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Governance and Audit Committee with an updated Corporate Risk Assessment 2021-22 and updated Corporate Risk Management Policy, and to provide an update on Incident and Near Miss occurrences.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

1. **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Good governance requires the Council to develop effective risk management processes, including an assessment of corporate risks.
- 3.2 The Governance and Audit Committee's Terms of Reference require the Committee to review, scrutinise and issue reports and recommendations on the appropriateness of the Council's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements.
- 3.3 The Corporate Risk Assessment is considered and reviewed by the Corporate Management Board (CMB), Senior Management Team, and Governance and Audit Committee, as part of the Council's quarterly Corporate Performance Assessment framework, and is used to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committees' Forward Work Programme and the budget process.
- 3.4 The 2021-22 Corporate Risk Assessment is aligned with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 The Corporate Risk Assessment attached at **Appendix A** has been reviewed in consultation with CMB. It identifies the main risks facing the Council, their link to the corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the likely impact of these risks on Council services and the wider County Borough, and identifies what is being done to manage the risks and who is responsible for the Council's response. The risk assessment is aligned with the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 4.2 As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the Corporate Risk Assessment is being continuously reviewed to take into account any COVID-19 related risks which have occurred due to the pandemic, and identifies how the Council is responding to these risks. As a general consequence of the impact of the pandemic the management of health and safety in services across the Council, and potentially enhanced safeguarding issues, are matters that have had increased focus since March 2020. CMB have considered whether they should be assessed and included separately as part of the Corporate Risk Assessment but have determined that they are matters that are embedded and implicit in the Council's current management practices, whether that is with regard to matters of ensuring appropriate social distancing or use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), or having to adapt operating models to ensure COVID-19 compliance. Specific service risks are captured in the Directorate risk assessments, for example there is clearly an enhanced risk in working in a care home currently. Each Directorate, when the impact of the pandemic necessitates it, completes a weekly situation report (SITREP) setting out the main issues, risks and decisions for consideration and these inform the corporate SITREP submitted to the regional Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG). Additional corporate governance measures have also been agreed to ensure that, where appropriate, risks can be escalated to CMB. The Council has established an operational 'Silver' group, made up predominantly of Heads of Services, to consider appropriate issues and make recommendations to CMB who, when necessary, meet separately as the strategic 'Gold' group to make COVID-19 related decisions and, where necessary, escalate matters to Cabinet/CMB.
- 4.3 As a category 1 responder the authority has a general duty of care to maintain public services and does this by taking a collaborative approach to planning for, and dealing with, emergency situations which could impact on communities in line with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. One of the ways the Council does this is through involvement with the South Wales Local Resilience Forum, a multi-agency group made up of category 1 (Blue Light services, Local Authorities, Health Boards etc.) and category 2 (utility companies, transport companies etc) responders from across the region.
- 4.4 During an emergency the multi-agency response is co-ordinated by the Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG). Each agency is required to submit a situation report to their Information and Briefing Cell each week outlining the position of the agency in relation to the risks identified by the SCG and any pressures it is faced with, as well as details of any mitigating actions taken. The Council currently reports to this group on a weekly basis with regards to risks identified.
- 4.5 The Council is currently experiencing immense pressure across the authority, in particular in Social Care and the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) service and are exploring ways to bolster resources to prioritise and support these critical functions. In addition the authority is working closely with the Health Board to manage the roll

out of the COVID-19 vaccination programme. The Council has recently opened its first COVID-19 Vaccination Centre focused on immunising frontline health and social care workers and this is operating successfully.

- 4.6 The Council is also continuing to experience exceptionally high transmission rates in Bridgend, which is putting immense pressure on all services, inevitably leading to greater periods of absence and self-isolation amongst some staff groups as community transmission remains very high. In light of this the Council is urging members of the public to familiarise themselves with the revised restrictions from Welsh Government and adhere to the guidance provided by Public Health Wales, through the usual communication methods.
- 4.7 The Corporate Risk Management Policy timeline, included in **Appendix B**, has been amended for 2021-22 and has been agreed by CMB.
- 4.8 The Insurance team maintains a log of near misses in line with the current Near Miss reporting procedure. A log of incidents reported during 2020 is attached as **Appendix C**. There were two incidents reported, one green and one amber. There were no red incidents reported during the period.
- 4.9 There are still property incidents and near misses occurring that are not being reported promptly in line with the Near Miss reporting procedures. A new E-Learning module is being developed to raise awareness of the issue and the Council's intranet page is being updated to allow for interactive submissions of incidents and near miss forms.
- 4.10 The Insurance officer has instigated regular contact with Heads of Services to make enquiries within their team of any incident and near misses that have occurred, to try to minimise the late notifications.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There are no implications upon policy framework and procedural rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Equality issues permeate many of the risks identified and, where appropriate, equality impact assessments are completed within the process of approving the mitigating actions.

7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 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 directly associated with the updated Corporate Risk Assessment and updated Corporate Risk Management Policy. Implementation actions will be progressed within approved budgets.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- consider the updated Corporate Risk Assessment 2021-22 (**Appendix A**) and the updated Corporate Risk Management Policy (**Appendix B**), including the timeline at **Appendix 2** within **Appendix B**.
- note the incident and near miss occurrences reported in **Appendix C**.

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Background documents:

None