

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

15 MARCH 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER - FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed Forward Work Programme for 2022-23.

2. Connections 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**:

- **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 The core functions of an effective Governance and Audit Committee include the responsibility to:

- review, scrutinise and issues reports and recommendations in relation to the Authority's financial affairs.
- consider the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting, governance processes, performance assessment and complaints arrangements.
- seek assurances that action is being taken on risk-related issues identified by auditors and inspectors.
- consider the effectiveness of the Council's anti-fraud and corruption arrangements.
- be satisfied that the Council's assurance statements properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.
- oversee the work of internal audit (including the annual plan and strategy) and monitor performance.
- review summary internal audit reports and the main issues arising, and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary.
- receive the annual report of the Head of Audit.
- consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies, where applicable.
- ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.

- review and approve the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to Members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.
- review and make any recommendations for change to the Council's draft self-assessment report.
- consider panel performance assessment reports into how the Council is meeting its performance requirements.

3.2 Effective Governance and Audit Committees help to raise the profile of governance, internal control, risk management and financial reporting issues within an organisation, as well as providing a forum for the discussion of issues raised by internal and external auditors. They enhance public trust and confidence in the financial governance of an authority.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 In order to assist the Committee in ensuring that due consideration is given to all aspects of their core functions the proposed Forward Work Programme for 2022-23 is attached at **Appendix A**. Committee Members are asked to endorse this schedule, confirm the list of people they would like to invite for each item (if appropriate), and indicate whether any additional information or research is required.

4.2 Shown below are the items scheduled to be presented at the next meeting on 9th June 2022.

Proposed Agenda Items – 9 June 2022	
1	Governance and Audit Committee Action Record
2	Governance and Audit Committee Terms of Reference
3	Audit Wales Governance and Audit Committee Reports
4	Annual Governance Statement 2021-22
5	Annual Internal Audit Report 2021-22
6	Internal Audit Shared Service Charter 2022-23
7	Internal Audit Annual Strategy and Audit Plan 2022-23
8	Disabled Facilities Grants
9	Updated Forward Work Programme 2022-23

4.3 There may be additional agenda items presented to the Committee as the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 comes into effect, particularly in respect of the Committee's new responsibilities in relation to performance and self-assessment, and these will be added to the Forward Work Programme as necessary. The Governance and Audit Committee has a statutory responsibility to review the Council's self-assessment report and may make recommendations for changes to the conclusions or action the Council intends to take. It is anticipated that the self-assessment report for the 2021-22 financial year will be presented to Committee at a meeting to be held during October 2022, but this will be confirmed at a later date.

4.4 The schedule of items for discussion at specific meetings may be subject to change, to take into account other items that need to be considered, and operational factors. It should be noted that the meeting dates are subject to approval by Council at its Annual Meeting to be held on 18th May 2022.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being 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 arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 That the Committee considers and approves the proposed Forward Work Programme for 2022-23.

Carys Lord
Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change
March 2022

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Background Documents: None