

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

28 JULY 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 updated 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 issue 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 updated 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 28 September 2022.

Proposed Agenda Items – 28 September 2022	
1	Governance and Audit Committee Action Record
2	Audit Wales Governance and Audit Committee Reports
3	Audited Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement
4	Audited Harbour Return (if amended)
5	Complaints Process
6	Disabled Facilities Grants
7	Annual Self Assessment of the Council's Performance
8	Updated Forward Work Programme 2022-23

4.3 There will be additional agenda items presented to the Committee in line with the implementation of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, particularly in respect of the Committee's new responsibilities in relation to performance and self-assessment, and this has currently been included in the Forward Work Programme for discussion at each of the upcoming meetings of the Committee, but will depend on where the Council is in relation to bringing together its annual self-assessment report. Consequently these items may be deferred, or may only be short updates.

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.

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 updated Forward Work Programme for 2022-23.

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

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Background Documents: None