

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

26 JANUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF THE REGIONAL INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the skills & knowledge self assessment questionnaire feedback provided by Governance and Audit Committee Members to inform the development of a learning and development plan for the Committee.

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**:
- **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 Establishing a training programme and ongoing support for Governance and Audit Committee members is essential to ensure that they can confidently and effectively discharge their responsibilities. Exact needs will depend on the composition of the committee and members' existing knowledge and experience.
- 3.2 A self-assessment questionnaire, based on the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) publication 'Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities & Police', was circulated to members of this Committee in order to assess the existing skills, knowledge and areas of expertise of members and to identify any gaps or training requirements.
- 3.3 This skills and knowledge self-assessment questionnaire has been completed by ten out of twelve members and the results will assist in developing a learning and development plan.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Governance and Audit Committee members were requested to consider ten statements and to indicate whether their level of knowledge / experience was either 'good', 'satisfactory' or 'little' knowledge in relation to each.

- 4.2 The Self-Assessment Questionnaire is attached at **Appendix A** and the responses from the ten returned questionnaires are at **Appendix B** and have been summarised below.
- 4.3 The feedback results include:
- 88% of responses from members of this Committee indicated that their level of knowledge and experience was at least reasonable.
 - For two statements two members of the Committee indicated they had little knowledge / experience, these areas were
 - statement 6, Risk Management
 - statement 7, Counter Fraud
 - For the remaining eight statements, one member of the Committee indicated they had little knowledge / experience, these areas were:
 - Organisational Knowledge
 - Governance and Audit Committee Role and Functions
 - Internal Audit
 - Financial Management and Accounting
 - External Audit
 - Values of Good Governance
 - Council Performance Self Assessment
 - Complaints Handling
- 4.4 The results indicate that Governance and Audit Committee members have an overall sound base of knowledge and experience in the areas of responsibility for this Committee.
- 4.5 The questionnaire also asked Governance and Audit Committee members to indicate what knowledge and skills they had which will add value to the work of the Governance and Audit Committee.
- 4.6 The table below provides a summary of the feedback received in respect of areas of knowledge / skills.

Table 1 – Areas of Knowledge / Skills

| Knowledge Area | No. of Responses | |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| | Yes | No or No Response |
| Accountancy | 1 | 9 |
| Internal Audit | 2 | 8 |
| Risk Management | 2 | 8 |
| Governance and Legal | 2 | 8 |
| Service and Organisational Knowledge | 2 | 8 |
| Programme and Project Management | 2 | 8 |
| IT Systems and IT Governance | 1 | 9 |
| Other | | |
| Working Knowledge of housing legislation and practice, political understanding | | |

4.7 The self-assessment questionnaire has indicated that there is experience and knowledge, at varying levels, across all key areas.

4.8 This information can now be used to inform the compilation of a programme of learning and development for the Governance and Audit Committee. It is proposed the following areas form the basis of the plan noting this is a live document and will be subject to review by the Committee on an on-going basis.

- Risk Management
- Counter Fraud

4.9 Subject to Governance and Audit Committee's consideration of the proposed next steps, officers will draft a learning and development plan for reporting to the next meeting for review and, if deemed appropriate, sign off.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect upon 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. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. 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 resource implications as a direct consequence of this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 That members of the Governance and Audit Committee review the self-assessment questionnaire feedback information and discuss and confirm the learning and development areas required.

9.2 Officers draft a learning and development plan reflecting the views of the Committee.

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Background Documents :

None