

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 MARCH 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY PLAN 2023 - 24

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) with early thinking on the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2023-24, evaluate options and consider timescales for development and publication.

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

- 2.1 This report proposes arrangements to support the new wellbeing objective proposed in the Corporate Plan to replace the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:-
- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
 - **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
 - **Smarter use of resources** – ensure 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 Corporate Plan 2023-28 will be considered by full Council at its meeting on 1 March 2023.
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan research showed that around half of Welsh local authorities do not include Performance Indicators (PIs) in their corporate plans at all, instead developing annual delivery plans to cover PIs and targets. This has many benefits, as detailed below, and it was proposed to COSC that this be the approach taken for Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC):
- Providing less rushed timescales for producing the Corporate Plan
 - Enabling the Council to produce a shorter, more accessible Corporate Plan with less technical detail

- Allowing flexibility to change the course of action when needed
- Allowing for additional engagement and involvement of staff, trade unions and members (particularly scrutiny members) in the development of performance indicators in March and April 2023.

3.3 This report provides ideas, options and timescales on the first annual delivery plan 2023-24.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 There are many areas to consider in the development of the first annual delivery plan 2023-24. Some of the key issues include:

- What is the audience for the report
- Size and style of the report
- How to drive forward the new ways of working
- How to drive forward the new wellbeing objectives and commitments and how best to measure progress
- Existing problems the Council is seeking to address in the report
- Timescales for the report

4.2 **Audience** – It is proposed that the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan should be resident focused but not resident facing. The key focus will be on providing accountability and assurance, so the main audiences for the plan will be officers, particularly heads of service and Corporate Management Board (CMB) and members, particularly Cabinet and Scrutiny members but also the full Council. It is proposed that a secondary audience will be regulators, Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Future Generations Commissioner.

4.3 **Size and style** - the Council needs to balance comprehensive coverage of the new ways of working and wellbeing objectives with a manageable, accessible report. Plans from other local authorities in Wales range from around 2 to 100 pages and vary from simple reports using plain English to highly complex and technical reports.

4.4 **How best to drive forward the new ways of working** – the Council needs a clear way of driving forward the new ways of working and measuring progress against them. Most of the ways of working do not lend themselves to developing performance indicators (although where they do – for example on customer service – we will highlight these opportunities). Other ways of driving forward the new ways of working could include having lead officers for each one, undertaking scrutiny deep dives and recommendations on each, or developing a programme of linked projects to support them.

4.5 **How best to measure progress on the wellbeing objectives** - there are various approaches across Corporate Plans and Delivery Plans in Wales. Measurement styles include –

- Objectives with a range of unconnected commitments and PIs
- Objectives with a long list of PIs
- Objectives with linked and complementary aims, commitments and PIs
- Objectives with commitments, PIs, results and status

It is proposed that the Policy and Performance team look more widely for helpful approaches in coming weeks.

4.6 Problems with the current approach – a number of issues have been identified with the Council’s existing approach, both by members, regulators and self-assessment that could be addressed or solved by the new performance framework. Some of the key issues are:

- Binary commitments (completed or not completed) without clear and agreed milestones
- A system of trend arrows and R, A, Y, G ratings that not everyone fully understands
- PIs that don’t fully represent or measure the wellbeing objectives
- Too many annual PIs and lots with long time lags
- PIs without clear and agreed guidance / rationale for calculation and inconsistent verification processes
- PIs without targets / baseline data
- A lack of outcome focused PIs
- A lack of performance information we can benchmark

4.7 To address the identified issues, it is proposed that –

- The council should choose commitments / PIs carefully to ensure they fully measure each wellbeing objective
- Commitments must be long term, with clear milestones over the year
- Each PI must have clear and agreed data and measurement systems, verification processes and responsible officers
- PIs with long data time lags are avoided
- PIs that can be compared with others and over time, with baseline data and clear annual targets are preferable
- R, A, Y, G ratings must be agreed and awareness raising provided for officers working on performance data
- Having multiple tiers of performance data is avoided
- A better balance of input, output and outcome measures is developed

4.8 Timescales – many local authorities are at a similar point in the development of their Corporate Plan delivery plans. Some have delayed the development this year due to late budget settlements. In line with previous years, the Council’s performance system will be updated in July (following Q4 2022/23 reporting) so it is proposed that following Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a further development session is planned with COSC members in late April / early May to discuss an early working draft document, and a final draft be brought to the Committee’s meeting on 26 June 2023 in preparation for Cabinet and Council in July.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 Performance against the Corporate Plan forms part of the Council's Performance Management Framework. The Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2023-24 will propose updates to the Performance Management Framework.

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 EIA 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. Wellbeing Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The wellbeing goals identified in the Act were considered when writing this report. It is considered there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of the existing well-being goals as a result of this report.
- 7.2 The report proposes performance management arrangements for the wellbeing goals / objectives in line with the requirements of the Act.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the key issues, comment upon the report and agree timescales for further engagement on the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2023-24.

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Background documents: None