

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>28 NOVEMBER 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>HALF YEAR REVIEW OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>NIGEL SMITH, GROUP MANAGER – CHIEF ACCOUNTANT</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>Regulation 5 (2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires an authority to undertake, as part of its arrangements for corporate governance, an annual review of governance and report on internal control.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Annual Governance Statement provides an overall assessment of the Council’s corporate governance arrangements and an appraisal of the controls in place to manage the Council’s key risks and identifies where improvements need to be made.</b></li> <li>• <b>The key risks and improvements are incorporated into an annual Action Plan, which is monitored during the year and progress on actions at the half-year review is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee.</b></li> </ul>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Action Plan that accompanied the Annual Governance Statement 2023-24 (AGS), setting out how the significant issues identified are being addressed in 2024-25.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Regulation 5 (2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires an authority to undertake, as part of its arrangements for corporate governance, an annual review of governance and report on internal control.
- 2.2 The Annual Governance Statement 2023-24 was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on 26 September 2024.

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

- 3.1 Good corporate governance requires the active participation of Members and Officers across the Council. These arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis and the findings used to update the AGS. This helps to ensure the continuous improvement of the Council's corporate governance culture.
- 3.2 The AGS provides an overall assessment of the Council's corporate governance arrangements and an appraisal of the controls in place to manage the Council's key risks and identifies where improvements need to be made. The AGS 2023-24 is attached at **Appendix A** and has been updated to reflect the inclusion of the review of the Council's Digital Strategy.
- 3.3 Local authorities are required to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their governance arrangements in the year. A review of the Action Plan for the year provides a basis for reviewing progress against each significant governance issue identified. The Action Plan is included at **Appendix B** together with an update on progress against each significant governance issue.

### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 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.

### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

- 5.1 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 because of this report.

### **6. Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 The Climate Change implications were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the environment because of this report.

### **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 The Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting implications were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon Safeguarding and Corporate parenting because of this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Consider the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan 2024-25 and progress on the actions to 30 September 2024.

## **Background documents**

None