

# Bridgend County Borough Council Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) Report September 2025



## 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the performance duties under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Bridgend County Borough Council (Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-Y-Bont ar Ogwr) commissioned a Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) via the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).
- 1.2 The onsite assessment was completed over a four-day period concluding on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025 with a feedback presentation provided to the Council outlining the key findings detailed within this report.
- 1.3 The assessment was undertaken based on the Council's agreed scoping document and the WLGA's PPA methodology, which was developed with the sector. The PPA methodology provides an overarching framework: the lines of enquiry are not prescriptive but provide guidance to the Panel on the areas that could be explored to meet the statutory duty. However, the extent to which the Panel explores those areas should be proportionate to the Council's scope but sufficient to enable the Panel to form a conclusion.
- 1.4 In accordance with the statutory guidance the PPA is not an audit or an inspection and does not seek to duplicate work undertaken by regulators and other bodies. Whilst the Panel has undertaken a corporate assessment, this assessment was not in-depth and should be considered alongside other sources of assurance such as the Council's own self-assessment, internal audit reviews, external audit, and regulatory reviews.
- 1.5 In preparing for the PPA, the Council scoped their requirements to maximise the value and impact of the assessment to the Council. The specific areas of focus identified by the Council are reflected in paragraph 3.2.
- 1.6 This report provides a summary overview of the conclusions of the Panel reported by exception.

## 2. Peer Team

- 2.1 The following Peers were commissioned by the WLGA to undertake the assessment. Selection of the Peers was agreed and at the discretion of the Council, based on suitability of skills and experience:
  - Independent Chair: Sally Loudon - Former Chief Executive of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), former Chief Executive of Argyll and Bute Council.
  - Senior Member Peer: Cllr Andrew Stevens - Serving Councillor and Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure at Swansea Council.
  - Senior Officer Peer: Gareth Newell - Head of Performance and Partnerships, Cardiff Council.
  - Wider Public, Private, or Voluntary Sector Peer: Anne-Louise Clark, former Executive Director – Communication and Change for Audit Wales & Chair of the Board of Trustees for Platform for Change Ltd.
- 2.2 The Panel was supported by, Cerith Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Improvement – Democratic Services) and Lyndon Puddy (Panel Performance Assessment Manager, both from the WLGA's Improvement Team.

### 3. Scope and Approach

- 3.1 The Panel is required to assess the extent to which the Council:
- Is exercising its functions effectively.
  - Is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; and
  - Has effective governance in place for securing the above.
- 3.2 The Council identified the following three areas where peer insight would be valued as part of the Panel assessment: **Transformation, Addressing Workforce Challenges and Improving Engagement**. The Council welcomed the Panel's support in providing high-level insights on these priority areas which encompass the whole Council and involve all directorates.
- **Transformation** – The development of the Council's approach to transformation that meets political and key stakeholder aspirations, including how effective arrangements are for delivery, performance management and the culture underpinning transformation. The Council had identified a clear need to focus on mechanisms and capacity for transformation that would improve citizens experience and create an organisation that is sustainable in the medium and long term.
  - **Addressing Workforce Challenges** – Building on strengthened workforce planning, consider the Council's approach to address challenges in recruitment in key areas, and improve succession planning, to help create a long-term workforce strategy.
  - **Improving Engagement** – Building on improvements to strategic communication, identify what further the Council can do to improve engagement and relationships internally with Councillors and externally with local communities and Town and Community Councils to help it become more citizen focused.
- 3.3 To prepare for the onsite assessment, the Panel first conducted a desktop review of Council documentation, data, external reports, and other relevant intelligence. The Peers also participated in preliminary online meetings.
- 3.4 The Panel spent approximately 240 hours plus, during onsite stage of the review involving a series of individual meetings and focus groups with the following stakeholders:
- Leader of the Council
  - Chief Executive
  - The Cabinet – Focus Group
  - Cabinet Member for Health & Social Services and Deputy Leader
  - Cabinet Members for Resources (Job Share)
  - Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
  - Focus Group, Elected Members - non-executive
  - Leaders of the Opposition Groups (Bridgend County Independents & Democratic Alliance)
  - Focus Group - Scrutiny Chairs
  - Chair of Democratic Services Committee
  - Independent Chair of the Governance & Audit Committee

- Independent Chair of the Standards Committee
- Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy
- Chief Officer Finance Housing & Change (Section 151 Officer)
- Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing
- Corporate Director, Communities
- Corporate Director, Education, Early Years and Young People
- Interim Head of Operations - Community Services (recently seconded from Head of Partnerships and Housing)
- Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Group Manager for Communications and Public Affairs, Marketing, Consultation and Engagement
- Deputy Head of Finance and Deputy Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager and Corporate Performance Manager
- Group Manager Economy, Natural Resources & Sustainability
- Group Manager Planning & Development (Head of Planning)
- Staff Focus Group - Heads of Service and Deputy Heads of Service
- Staff Focus Group (Group Managers)
- Staff Focus Group – (Frontline staff)
- Headteachers - Focus Group
- Youth Council Representatives – Focus Group
- Leader and Chief Executive of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
- Leader and Chief Executive of the Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Chief Executive of Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
- South Wales Police – Chief Superintendent
- Town and Community Councils – Focus Group
- Trade Unions – Focus Group
- Business Community – Focus Group
- Citizens Panel Focus Group
- Stakeholder Focus Group - Older people
- Chief Executive of Halo Leisure – Community focussed social enterprise

#### 4. Overall Conclusion

- 4.1 Bridgend is a good Council with untapped potential. The political and managerial leadership is ambitious for the whole County and they have the full support of a dedicated and enthusiastic workforce. The staff are deeply committed to the Council and the communities it serves, demonstrating a high level of self-awareness and a shared understanding of both the Council's strengths and the challenges ahead.
- 4.2 The Council has already demonstrated its capability with impressive turnarounds in key areas, particularly Children's Services, and is well positioned to build on this success for the benefit of the wider Council. The assessment findings show that Bridgend is ready and ambitious for change and has a positive outlook on its future.
- 4.3 The Council is, however, at a "crossroads" in terms of its development and now is the time to act at pace. By making the necessary changes now, the Council can ensure it can sustain services and continue to deliver for its communities for years to come.

#### 5. Local Context (*source PPA scoping document*)

- 5.1 Bridgend County Borough Council covers around 110 square miles, stretching from the Ogmore, Garw, and Llynfi valleys in the north to the Bristol Channel coastline in the south. The main commercial centres are Bridgend, Maesteg, and the seaside resort of Porthcawl. The county borough is divided by the M4 and boasts main-line rail links going east to London and west to Swansea.

#### Population and Community Demographics

- 5.2 Bridgend had a population of 145,760 at the 2021 census, a 4.5% increase from 2011. The population is projected to grow by 7.5% in the next 20 years. In its population:
- 50.6% are female and 49.4% are male.
  - 96.78% identify as white. 1.48% of people identify as Asian. 1.16% identify as mixed race. 0.29% identify as black. 0.29% identify as other ethnic group
  - 22.64% have disabilities that limit their day-to-day activities a little or a lot.
- 5.3 Similar to the rest of Wales, the borough has an aging population with the fastest growing age category being over 65 which increased by 21.5% between 2011 and 2021. During the same time, under 15s only increased by 2.6%. This can present challenges to the Council's services including health, social care and housing.

### **Health and Deprivation**

- 5.4 In 2021, 46.3% of residents described their health as “very good,” up from 45.1% in 2011. However, there are significant health disparities. Bridgend has 7 areas identified as having ‘Deep Rooted Deprivation’. These are areas that have remained within the top 50 most deprived areas in Wales for the last five publications of Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks. In Bridgend 70% of people aged 16+ are in “good or very good” general health, which is the national average. Physical activity uptake and healthy eating rates are below the national average and Bridgend is home to some of the most materially deprived places in Wales. Bridgend has an obesity rate above the national average. The healthy weight in under 25s is also slightly below the Wales average. 18% of adults in Bridgend smoke, slightly above the national average (17%). Mental wellbeing is slightly better than the Wales average.

### **Employment and Skills**

- 5.5 Bridgend has around 3,770 enterprises, with a significant number of micro-enterprises (up to nine employees). Key employers include Bridgend County Borough Council, which employs around 6,000 people, and major public and private sector employers in manufacturing and medical device engineering. The employment rate (ages 16 to 64) is 67.1% and employment in Bridgend has decreased compared with the previous year. Bridgend's employment rate was lower than Wales as a whole in the year ending December 2023.

### **Skills and Unemployment Welfare**

- 5.6 As of May 2024, Bridgend has an unemployment rate of 3.5%, though people looking for work has risen since a year earlier. The most recent unemployment rate for Bridgend was lower than Wales as a whole. Economic inactivity has increased since the previous year; these are people who are neither employed nor seeking work. The Claimant Count measures the number of people who are claiming unemployment-related benefits between the ages of 16-64 is 2.8%. Claimant Count was lower in March 2024 compared with a year earlier.

### **Infrastructure and Transport Links**

- 5.7 The county benefits from excellent transport infrastructure, including the M4 motorway, which provides quick access to Cardiff and Swansea. There are also high-speed rail services and proximity to Cardiff Airport. Active travel routes are being developed to improve walking and cycling infrastructure. The Council has recently adopted a new [Local Development Plan \(LDP\)](#), which will shape development up to 2033.

### **Housing and Affordability**

- 5.8 The average house price in Bridgend is approximately £187,812. 71% of households in Bridgend County either own their home outright or via a mortgage. A further 15% rented privately, while 14% rented socially. Porthcawl has the highest levels of home ownership and the Pyle/Kenfig Hill area the lowest. The Ogmore Valley had the highest proportion of private tenants (21%). The Council manages a common housing register to allocate social housing and offers various support services to prevent homelessness. The Council's [Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022-26](#) sets out six new priorities and associated objectives.

The proportion of properties liable for council tax that are second homes (0.1%) is well below the all-Wales average (1.8%).

### **Local Climate Challenges**

- 5.9 Bridgend has committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. The Council has a comprehensive [strategy](#) to address climate change, including decarbonising its operations and promoting sustainable practices. Achievements to date include LED street lighting, retrofit programme for energy efficiency, the expansion of local nature reserves, tree planting and a sustainable procurement strategy.

### **The Council**

#### **5.10 Political Leadership**

At the last local elections in May 2022, there were 51 seats contested in the election, 3 fewer than in 2017. The next Bridgend County Borough Council elections are due to take place in May 2027.

- 5.11 The current administration is a Labour majority with 26 Councillors, 23 independents (13 Bridgend County Independents, 8 Democratic Alliance and 2 Independent), 1 Conservative and 1 Reform.

- 5.12 The Leader of the Council is Councillor John Spanswick and Councillor Jane Gebbie is the Deputy Leader.

#### **5.13 Senior Management**

The Council's senior management comprises the Chief Executive, Jake Morgan, who started in post in July 2025. He is supported by three Corporate Directors who are responsible for services delivery. There are two Chief Officers in the Chief Executives' directorate, and a Head of Internal Audit.

## **6. Strengths and Areas of Innovation**

- 6.1 Bridgend County Borough Council demonstrated a consistent alignment of ambition for the area. The Panel noted that Cabinet, Officers, backbench Members, opposition Members and stakeholders were positive and ambitious for the County, promoting a positive, welcoming and friendly culture. This is supported by enthusiastic, committed and caring staff who are optimistic about the future. The Council shows a tangible appetite for change that was evident to the peer panel members.

- 6.2 A prime example of this is the successful turnaround in children's services. This achievement highlights strong political and officer leadership and remarkable resilience, providing valuable lessons that can be shared throughout the organisation to drive future success.

- 6.3 The Council also exhibits a high level of self-awareness with a clear and shared understanding of both its strengths and its areas for improvement. This is further reinforced by the establishment of a new **budget working group** which demonstrates a proactive and collaborative approach to financial management and strategic planning that involves a substantial number of elected members from across the Administration and Opposition parties.

- 6.4 The Panel noted that Bridgend Council has the highest recycling rate in Wales, 73% in 2023-24. That exceeds the Welsh Government's statutory target for all Councils to reach a recycling rate of 70% by 2024-25, a target that Bridgend and a few other Councils have already exceeded.
- 6.5 Schools in Bridgend are rated as strong in inspections, with only one school currently requiring follow up by Estyn. There have been 18 spotlights of effective practice were identified by Estyn from the 15 core inspections in the 2024-2025 school year.

## **7. Local and National Challenges**

- 7.1 Bridgend County Borough Council, like all Councils in Wales, is facing significant financial sustainability challenges with a Q1 projection of £898k overspend for 2025/26.
- 7.2 The Council highlighted exceptional demands across some of its key service areas including support for children with Additional Learning Needs, older people's care, complex children's placements and homelessness. There are changing patterns of need in other service areas, for example behaviour in schools and attendance. Some services have worked hard to meet expectations but have limited capacity and resilience following years of budget cuts.
- 7.3 **Financial Performance:**
- In 2024/25 Bridgend underspent by £300,000 against its £361 million budget, which is around 0.1% of the budget. However, the overall position masks significant pressure in some areas of the budget as well as a significant contribution to reserves.
  - Schools' balances fell from £2.4m on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 to a negative balance of £619,000 on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025
  - The Council reported that 88% of the 2024/25 budget savings were achieved in full.
- 7.4 **Strategic Financial Planning:**
- The total budget gap over the four-year period from 2025/26 is approximately £39.5m using a most likely scenario. After identified savings (25/26) a gap of £27.265m remains.
  - The Council reports work will now be undertaken to identify the mitigations required in order to bridge the gap and allow for any required investment over and above the unavoidable pressures already identified.



## 7.5 **Budget Setting:**

- The 2025/26 budget includes a Council Tax increase of 4.5%.
- The 2025/26 Local Government Funding Settlement was better than the Council's initial assumptions.
- The budget required £8.379m of savings. It would have been higher but for the better-than-expected financial settlement from Welsh Government

## 7.6 **Other Issues:**

- The August 2024 Audit Wales Financial Sustainability Assessment review of Bridgend County Borough Council found *'the Council understands its financial position with good arrangements to support its financial sustainability which it flexes and adapts but is at the early stage of developing its long-term approach'*.
- The Council does not have its own housing stock so does not have a Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- Bridgend has a ten-year rolling capital programme that has been set for 2025-26, and on an indicative basis for the nine years thereafter. It has been profiled in accordance with technical advice relating to regulatory processes, timetables and work plans.

## 7.7 **Performance Against its 2024/25 Budget**

- 7.7.1 The net revenue budget for 2024-25 was £360.671 million. The overall outturn at 31st March 2025 was a net under spend of £300,000 which was transferred to the Council's General Fund.
- 7.7.2 This takes into account the setting up of a net £13.063 million of new earmarked reserves in 2024-25 to enable service investment, to mitigate future risks and expenditure commitments. Total Directorate budgets had a net over spend of £2.376 million and Council Wide budgets a net underspend of £15.128 million. The outturn position includes additional council tax income collected over budget of £611,000 during the financial year.
- 7.7.3 The Council states *'the overall under spend on the Council budget significantly masks underlying budget pressures in Additional Learning Needs services, Home to School Transport, and Children's social care'*.
- 7.7.4 The main reasons for the overall under spend in 2024-25 are: -
- Unanticipated Welsh Government grant of £3.290 million towards the teachers' pay award for 2024 25 and NJC pay pressures.
  - A £2.044 million saving from Council agreeing a change in the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy on 23 October 2024.
  - Unanticipated Welsh Government grant of £2.024 million towards revenue cost pressures.

- Not needing to utilise the £1.558 million that was built into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-28 towards emerging budget pressures and as a contingency against non-deliverability of budget reduction proposals.

7.7.5 The budget approved for 2024-25 included budget savings of £13.045 million. At 31st March 2025 there was a shortfall on the savings target of £1.569 million, or 12.03% of the overall reduction target.

7.7.6 During 2024-25 Directorates drew down funding from specific earmarked reserves. The final draw down of revenue reserves was £5.397 million.

## 8. Overview of Findings.

### Local areas, as identified by the Council, where peer insight would be valued as part of the Panel assessment

#### 8.1 Transformation

8.1.1 There is a clear alignment of ambition for change, with a strong appetite and excitement for transformation across the organisation. This shared belief that it is the right thing to do at the right time, coupled with evidence of innovation in some areas, provides a powerful foundation. To fully capitalise on this momentum, the following areas require focussed attention:

8.1.2 **Develop a new Transformation Plan:** The Council should create a clear, comprehensive transformation plan. This process must be highly collaborative, actively involving staff, Members, partners, and communities to ensure buy-in and a shared vision.

8.1.3 **Strengthen Strategic Capacity:** Delivering on this level of change requires greater strategic and corporate capacity within the organisation. The Council should address any gaps to ensure its ability to manage and implement a large-scale transformation programme, maintain or improve its performance and the ability to measure impact.

8.1.4 **Transformation based on Data and Insight:** To be truly effective, the Council's transformation efforts must be grounded in robust data and insight. This will ensure its decisions are evidence based and its efforts are focussed on the area that will deliver the greatest impact.

8.1.5 **Review Digital and Data Approach:** A critical component of the emerging transformation plan is the Council's approach to digital and data. It should review its current funding, systems, skills and culture to ensure the digital function can be an enabler to the changes it aims to achieve.

#### 8.2 Addressing Workforce Challenges

8.2.1 Bridgend County Borough Council has a strong and positive organisational culture, staff feel appreciated and the culture is perceived as caring. This is further

reinforced by the strong working relationships with Trade Unions. Officers are also proud of the impact the Council has on communities across the County.

- 8.2.2 While the Council has a firm foundation, there are opportunities to become more strategic and forward-thinking. The current workforce plan needs to evolve to be more aligned with a new vision and transformation plan for the organisation. This includes addressing key areas such as succession planning, developing the workforce for the future to meet changing demands, and integrating digital and data capabilities into the workforce strategy.
- 8.2.3 To support this the Council should consider implementing a corporate “grow your own” programme. This would involve strengthening links with local higher and further education institutions to create a pipeline of talent that is specifically developed to meet the Council’s needs.
- 8.2.4 Finally, while staff already feel appreciated, the Council should consider a more formal and corporate approach to staff celebration and appreciation. This could further embed positive feelings across all departments and initiatives.

### **8.3 Improving Engagement**

- 8.3.1 The Council demonstrates a clear commitment to improving engagement with its citizens and communities. This commitment is evidenced by the appointment of a Town and Community Council Liaison Officer and the refreshing of the Citizens Panel – recruiting new members and utilising citizen focus groups. The plan to utilise citizen focus groups is a positive step towards gaining deeper insights into community perspectives. Furthermore, the organisation has a corporate communications function in place and shows evidence of engagement across various departments.
- 8.3.2 However, several areas require attention to ensure a consistent and effective approach to engagement. While there are pockets of good practice, responsiveness to key stakeholders, including Members, scrutiny bodies, Town and Community Councils, and the general public, is not consistent across all parts of the organisation and was frequently reported as being slow and frustrating to those involved. The Council should focus on improving responsiveness to Members and the public as a short-term priority.
- 8.3.3 The Council should consider a more holistic, “whole Council approach” to promoting its work and the wider county of Bridgend. This would help to create a unified message and ensure that all departments are aligned in their communication efforts. While corporate communications are in place, they need to become more forward looking and proactive, especially in a period of change. It is vital that these communications effectively reach all staff, as internal communication is a key element of a successful and responsive organisation.
- 8.3.4 Additionally, there is a need to improve existing consultation and engagement practices. This includes making greater use of local Members, community groups,

and other existing or established engagement or community infrastructure to promote engagement initiatives.

- 8.3.5 A critical component of effective engagement is “closing the feedback loop,” in a timely manner and this needs to be strengthened to ensure that members, citizens and wider stakeholders are informed of the results of engagement and how it has been used to inform decision making.

### **Statutory performance requirements considered by the Panel.**

#### **8.4 The extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively.**

- 8.4.1 Bridgend County Borough Council demonstrates a robust framework in the effective use of its resources, shown by good performance across its services and a consistent performance narrative shared by both Members and Officers. This success is underpinned by the dedication and commitment of its staff and elected Members, who share a genuine eagerness for positive change.

- 8.4.2 While there are commendable examples of cross-Council collaboration, this practice is not yet evident across the entire Authority, suggesting an area for future development. The Council’s self-assessment also identifies key areas for improvement. Specifically, there is a need to strengthen corporate and strategic capacity.

- 8.4.3 The Panel notes from a number of different meetings that unnecessary bureaucracy and procedures are currently stifling empowerment and delaying decision-making, which hinders the agile and efficient use of resources including staff time. The panel heard, for example ‘having to have a business case for all spend’, ‘committee reports having multiple versions as it went through the different layers of the Council’ and that this took significant time and led to frustration. Addressing systematic and potentially unnecessary procedural delays will be crucial for unlocking the full potential of the Council’s workforce.

#### **8.5 The extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively.**

- 8.5.1 Bridgend County Borough Council demonstrates strong financial stewardship, characterised by effective financial management and robust monitoring. This is further enhanced by greater involvement from a wider range of Members in the budget setting process, promoting a more collaborative approach to financial planning. The Council also benefits from good relationships with its partners and stakeholders, who have expressed a strong desire to be more strategically involved in future activities.

- 8.5.2 Looking ahead, there are key opportunities for improvement. It is essential to ensure that the budget and Medium-Term financial Strategy (MTFS) are more closely aligned with the new vision and change programme, providing a clear financial roadmap for the Council’s strategic direction. The Council as a whole should also encourage a greater appetite for innovation moving beyond traditional approaches to find new and innovative ways of working.

8.5.3 A significant area for development is cultivating a unified “Team Bridgend” culture. This involves promoting greater cross-service and partner working to break down silos and encourage a more collaborative environment. To support this a whole Council approach to communication is needed, moving beyond the sole responsibility of the Communications Team to ensure a consistent and cohesive message is shared by everyone.

## **8.6 The extent to which the Council has effective Governance in place.**

8.6.1 Overall, the Council demonstrates strong governance arrangements and systems, with a robust performance management framework already in place. The organisation’s engagement with Trade Unions is effective, supporting positive relationships that contribute to a collaborative environment. Furthermore, the existing scrutiny arrangements are well-regarded by the majority of Members, highlighting their value overseeing the Council’s work.

8.6.2 While there are clear strengths, the Panel identified several key areas for improvement to enhance overall effectiveness:

8.6.3 **Leadership and Culture:** There is a continuing need to build a more cohesive leadership team and develop a culture that promotes unity and shared purpose.

8.6.4 **Performance Management:** Although a good framework is in place, it needs to be more deeply embedded across the Council to ensure consistent ownership and accountability for performance goals.

8.6.5 **Stakeholder responsiveness:** The Council’s responsiveness to Members, Scrutiny committees, stakeholders and citizens is inconsistent. Efforts should be made to ensure that communication and action are uniform and reliable across all services.

8.6.6 **Scrutiny Processes:** Scrutiny papers should be more concise, the panel heard of some papers being over 600 pages and lengthy Scrutiny Committees. Additionally, there is a need for greater evidence demonstrating the impact of outcomes of the scrutiny process.

## 9. Opportunities for Improvement – Recommendations

9.1 We have carefully considered the three required performance areas and the additional three areas identified by the Council for local consideration as part of the assessment process. This report contains a number of observations and comments about the Council's performance in each of these areas. They should be considered along with the recommendations set out below.

9.2 Overall, the Panel has concluded that Bridgend is a good Council at a crossroads. Without effective change, service delivery will be impacted; however, this can be avoided and for the Council to take its performance to the next level we recommend it should implement the following recommendations:

1.	The Council has appointed a Chief Executive to lead and deliver change. The Council should now support him to develop an inspiring vision, a Transformation Strategy, underpinning corporate strategies and the cultural shift required to produce both sustainability of services, greater cross-Council working and innovation – which involves staff, communities and partners.
2.	Put in place leadership development for senior staff and Members to support this change.
3.	The Council should, as a whole, increase its appetite for innovation with a focus on the future and delivery of outcomes; supporting staff and Members to do that. This should involve reducing unnecessary bureaucracy to release capacity and empower managers.
4.	Rapidly review corporate and strategic capacity to ensure both sustainability of service delivery and supporting the overall emerging change programme. In addition, the Council should consider bringing together key corporate enablers to unlock the potential of the organisation: e.g. Human Resources, Performance and Communications.
5.	Review and refresh its approach to digital and data to support the emerging Transformation Plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Systems</li> <li>• Skills</li> <li>• Culture</li> </ul>
6.	Consider a whole Authority approach to promoting the work of the Council and the County of Bridgend – with pride.
7.	Consider building on its good relations with partners in the public, private, community and voluntary sector in order to deliver Bridgend's vision and priorities.

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| 8. | As an immediate priority, the Council should improve its responsiveness to Members, stakeholders and citizens as part of building a culture of mutual respect for all. |
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## 10. Improvement Support

If you would like to discuss any further improvement support, please contact Jo Hendy, WLGA Head of Improvement.

## 11. Acknowledgements

- 11.1 The Panel and the WLGA would like to extend their thanks to the Council for its engagement throughout the PPA and we especially appreciate the support and openness from the Leader, Councillor John Spanswick and Chief Executive, Jake Morgan. Our thanks and appreciation also go to the following Council Officers for their invaluable support in coordinating documentation requests, responding to queries, arranging meetings and workshops, and providing onsite assistance:

Alex Rawlin – Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager  
Kate Pask – Corporate Performance Manager  
Michael Spanswick – Information and System Support Officer  
Emma Griffiths – Senior CMB Support Officer  
Michelle Lachetta – CMB Support Officer