

## **Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Cabinet Meeting: 5 March 2018**

#### **Report of the Leader**

## **Vale of Glamorgan Council Annual Self-Assessment**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Cabinet with a strategic self-assessment of the Council's performance for the period April 2016 - December 2017 that identifies our achievements and our key priorities for 2018/19.

### **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet consider and endorse the Council's Annual Self-Assessment Report including identified priorities for 2018/19 onwards.
2. That Cabinet endorse the use and contents of the Self-Assessment as the basis for service planning for 2018/19 incorporating the views and recommendations from Scrutiny Committees following their consideration in February 2017.
3. That Cabinet review the current progress reported against previous regulatory recommendations/proposals for improvement arising from local and national Local Government Studies for the period 2011-2015, incorporating the views and recommendations from Scrutiny Committees following their consideration, in order to enable completed actions to be closed down and the remaining actions incorporated in and monitored via the Council's Insight Action Tracker for 2018/19.

### **Reasons for the Recommendations**

1. To meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to undertake a self-assessment of all Council services and use this information as the basis to drive continuous improvement of Council services and maximise their contribution to achieving the national well-being goals.
2. To ensure the Annual Council Self-Assessment reflects the key challenges facing both the Council as whole and informs the Council's plans for improvement for 2018/19.
3. To ensure the Council implements its regulatory recommendations/ proposals for improvement and responds appropriately to the recommendations/ proposals for improvement identified through the WAO's programme of national Local Government Studies for the period 2011-2015.

## **Background**

2. Self-assessments form a core part of the statutory local government inspection processes in Wales. Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, the Council is required to undertake a self-evaluation of all its services and use this information to inform planning for improvement. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 also requires the Council to set and review annually its Well-being Objectives and maximise its contribution to achieving the Well-being goals for Wales.
3. Self-assessment processes are used throughout the Council as required by regulators. The Annual Council Reporting Framework for Social Services also requires reporting annually on progress, outcomes and plans for improvement. This builds on the Council's internal assessment of performance. Self-evaluation and reporting also forms a core element of Estyn's Common Inspection Framework and annual self-evaluation.
4. The Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment is a position statement on the Council's performance over the past year in delivering its priorities. It is intended to provide an honest and balanced account of the Council's achievements and identifies areas where further progress is required. The information contained in the report, in particular the Service Self-Assessments, will be used to inform the Council's Service Plans for 2018/2019.

## **Relevant Issues and Options**

### **Council Annual Self-Assessment**

5. The Annual Council self-assessment process is an evolving one reflecting the ongoing work to ensure that the process dovetails with our other forms of self-assessment (such as the Improvement Plan, Service Plans, the Annual Local Authority Education Service Evaluation Report and Director of Social Services Annual Report) and the developing audit requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG).
6. The self-assessment format for 2017 builds on our Performance Management Framework developments in 2016/17 and reflects the Council's outcome focussed approach in line with its duties under the WBFG Act.
7. The Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes form the framework for evaluating our performance and achievements, thus enabling the Council to demonstrate its ability to achieve positive outcomes for our residents and secure continuous improvement. These are supported by service based position statements covering all Council services.
8. This is the second year of reporting performance against the Corporate Plan 2016-2020 and progress is now available for a full year. Consequently, it has been possible to undertake a comprehensive self-assessment presented by the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcome areas for the first time. The self-assessment covers the period April 2016 to December 2017. The report draws on: the individual service self-assessments covering the 14 Service Plan areas; our progress to date in achieving the Year 2 priorities of our Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and Corporate Health priorities; the views of our regulators in the Annual Improvement Report and our progress to date in relation to our audit recommendations/ proposals for improvement.

9. The Vale of Glamorgan Council Annual Self-Assessment can viewed via the following link:

[Vale of Glamorgan Council Annual Self-Assessment](#)

10. Under the WBFG Act, the Council is required to review its Well-being Objectives annually to ensure they remain relevant and maximise its contribution to the national well-being goals. In order to strengthen and evidence our integrated approach both internally and with our partners, this year as part of the Council's Annual Self-Assessment, we have incorporated challenge sessions with Sponsoring Directors and key contributors for each of the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and Objectives. These sessions have enabled us to consider the priorities emerging from the draft Annual Council Self-Assessment along with proposed activities to address these in order to help us determine whether our Well-being Objectives remain relevant and reflect the Well-being Objectives of the Public Services Board (PSB). The PSB has published its draft Well-being Objectives pending agreement and publication by May 2018. Having reviewed our progress to date in relation to the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and corresponding Objectives, we are assured that the priorities we have identified continue to be relevant priorities going into 2018/19.
11. As part of the annual Self-Assessment, we identify a series of actions to drive improvement in the following year. **Appendix B** of the above link contains the Insight Action Tracker which provides a summary of our progress to date in relation to the Council's integrated planning priorities identified in last year's Annual Self-Assessment and also incorporates all our regulatory recommendations/ proposals for improvement. The Insight Board is the primary channel through which all integrated planning related activities are reviewed and monitored. Meeting on a monthly basis, the Insight Board comprises Council officers from across service and corporate areas of the Council and reports to CMT and Cabinet. As at January 2018, of the 61 actions contained within the Insight Action tracker, 27 have been completed and 34 remain ongoing. Of the 34, 12 have been attributed a Green performance status, 21 an Amber status and 1 a Red status.
12. The Self-Assessment process is also used to identify priorities for the coming year that will be implemented via Service Plans for 2018/19. In addition, the Corporate Health priorities will feed into the work of the Insight Board to ensure an integrated approach to planning for improvement. Work has already commenced in implementing some of these priorities, which incorporate existing areas of improvement activity.
13. Prior to the establishment of the Insight Board in 2016, all Regulatory reports were considered by Audit Committee, relevant Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet. Actions arising out of regulatory reports were also included in Service Plans with progress reported quarterly to respective Scrutiny Committees. This was supplemented with a Regulatory Tracking report which was considered by Audit Committee then Cabinet twice a year. The Regulatory Tracking report brought together in one report progress by the Council to date in addressing all current regulatory recommendations and improvement proposals.
14. On the establishment of the Insight Board, it was agreed that a review would be undertaken of all previous regulatory recommendations/proposals for improvement with any outstanding being incorporated within the new Insight Action Tracker to ensure ongoing review and monitoring. **Appendix C** of the above link outlines in detail our progress against previous regulatory recommendations/ proposals for

improvement between 2011 and 2015. It must be noted that the majority of actions arising from recommendations/ proposals between 2011 and 2015 have been completed and it is proposed that these are closed down. A number have been superseded by new proposals in more recent audit work and these have been incorporated within the Council's Insight Action Tracker with the exception of the work relating to the Joint Education Central South Consortium, which is being monitored via the Joint Committee and Working Group on a termly basis. Cabinet is being asked to review the progress reported against the previous regulatory recommendations/proposals alongside the views of the respective Scrutiny Committees in order to enable completed actions to be closed down and the remaining actions incorporated within the Council's Insight Action Tracker for 2018/19

15. In his recent letter to the Managing Director (11 January 2018), the Auditor General for Wales has indicated that the performance audit programme for the Council for 2018/19 will include a follow-up on our progress with previous recommendations/ proposals for improvement in relation to both local and national Local Government Studies. This review will enable us to provide our Regulators with an up to date position on all our regulatory recommendation/proposals for improvement from October 2011 to January 2018.
16. Going forward, an annual review of regulatory recommendations/ proposals for improvement will form part of the Council's Annual Self-assessment process enabling us to demonstrate progress on implementation of these in line with our duties under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.
17. The Council's self-assessment process will continue to evolve in line with the wider Local Government agenda as proposed in the recent draft Local Government (Wales) Bill and the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act. In this respect, the annual Self-Assessment sets out our key priorities for improvement and will be published and made available to our regulators to inform their work programme.

## **Service Self-Assessments**

18. **Appendix A** of the above link contains service position statements covering all Council services. These provide an overview of performance covering the period April 2016 - December 2017 and identify the priorities for improvement for services going forward into 2018/19.
19. 14 service position statements have been completed at Head of Service level in line with the Council's Performance Management Framework and will be reported at all Scrutiny Committees in order to inform Council plans for improvement including the 2018/19 Service Plans as well as the annual work programme of Scrutiny Committees.
20. All Scrutiny Committees have been presented with the Self-Assessment report and Members requested to consider the content of the report overall as well as for their respective Well-being Outcome areas; and to confirm that the issues identified within the self-assessment are a fair reflection of the challenges facing both the Council as a whole and the services contributing to the respective Corporate Well-being Outcomes and Corporate Health priorities. Following consideration, Members have been asked to confirm that the information contained in the report is appropriate to form the basis for service planning for 2018/19 for the Council's services.

## **Summary of Scrutiny Committee Recommendations**

21. The Council's Annual Self-Assessment has been discussed at all Scrutiny Committees between 12th and 15th February 2018 and is now being presented to Cabinet for approval. The outcome of Scrutiny Committees discussions are detailed below.
22. The Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee (12th February 2018) agreed the service priorities identified for their respective Well-being Outcome area and endorsed these as the basis for service planning for 2018/19 onwards. Members also endorsed the removal of completed regulatory actions relevant to the Committee with the remaining actions to be incorporated in and monitored via the Council's Insight Action Tracker for 2018/19.
23. The Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee (14th February 2018) agreed the service priorities identified for their respective Well-being Outcome area and endorsed these as the basis for service planning for 2018/19 onwards. Members also endorsed the removal of completed regulatory actions relevant to the Committee with the remaining actions to be incorporated in and monitored via the Council's Insight Action Tracker for 2018/19.
24. The Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee (15th February 2018) agreed the service priorities identified for their respective Well-being Outcome area and endorsed these as the basis for service planning for 2018/19 onwards. Members also endorsed the removal of completed regulatory actions relevant to the Committee with the remaining actions to be incorporated in and monitored via the Council's Insight Action Tracker for 2018/19.
25. The Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee (12th February 2018) agreed the service priorities identified for their respective Well-being Outcome area and endorsed these as the basis for service planning for 2018/19 onwards. Members also endorsed the removal of completed regulatory actions relevant to the Committee with the remaining actions to be incorporated in and monitored via the Council's Insight Action Tracker for 2018/19 and the Joint Committee and Working Group (Joint Education Central South Consortium) as appropriate.
26. The Corporate Performance & Resources Scrutiny Committee (15th February 2018) noted and endorsed the Council's Self-Assessment as the basis for service planning for 2018/19 onwards. Members also endorsed the removal of completed regulatory actions relevant to the Committee with the remaining actions to be incorporated in and monitored via the Council's Insight Action Tracker for 2018/19.

## **Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)**

27. Our priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes have resources committed to their achievement (via the Medium Term Financial Plan and annual budget review) or the likely prospect of resources being made available in the period of the plan.
28. The "Corporate Health" aspects of the service plans and self-assessment provide Members with an overview of the way in which Council resources (people, financial, ICT and assets) are used to support the delivery of our corporate objectives.

## **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

29. The Corporate Plan 2016-20 emphasises the Council's commitment to promoting sustainable development and our understanding of our duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The many different aspects of sustainability (environment, economy, culture and social) are reflected within planned activities as outlined the Corporate Plan and demonstrates how the Council will maximise its contribution to the Well-being Goals.

## **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

30. Self-assessment is a statutory duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, along with a duty to continually improve.
31. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to set and publish Well-being Objectives by April 2017 that maximise its contribution to achieving the Well-being goals for Wales.

## **Crime and Disorder Implications**

32. Activities to improve community safety are included in the Corporate Plan and one of the Well-being Outcomes is 'An Inclusive and Safe Vale' with a supporting objective 'providing decent homes and safe communities'. The Council's Performance Management Framework supports the delivery of actions associated with these objectives.

## **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

33. 'An Inclusive and Safe Vale' is one of the Well-being Outcomes in the Corporate Plan with a supporting objective 'reducing poverty and social exclusion'. There is also a Well-being Outcome 'An Aspirational and culturally vibrant Vale' with a supporting action 'valuing culture and diversity'. The Council's Performance Management Framework supports the delivery of actions associated with these objectives.

## **Corporate/Service Objectives**

34. The Corporate Plan 2016-20 reflects the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and identifies 4 Well-being Outcomes and 8 Objectives for the Council. These promote improvements in the economic, social and cultural well-being of residents in the Vale of Glamorgan which in turn will contribute to achieving the Well-being goals for Wales. The Council's Performance Management Framework supports the delivery of all of the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and Objectives.
35. The Annual Self-Assessment informs the Council's priorities and plans for improvement. Improving services and outcomes for residents of the Vale of Glamorgan contributes towards effective community leadership.

## **Policy Framework and Budget**

36. Council priorities arising from the Annual Self-Assessment inform Service Plans and the annual Improvement Plan which form part of the Policy Framework and therefore require Executive agreement from Cabinet.

## **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

37. The Annual Self- Assessment Report applies to the whole authority and as such no individual ward Member consultation has been undertaken. The content of the Corporate Plan have been the subject of consultation via Scrutiny Committees.

## **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

38. All Elected Members will be consulted via Scrutiny Committees.

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Contact Officer**

Julia Archampong, Performance Manager Policy & Performance

## **Officers Consulted**

Tom Bowring, Operational Manager Policy & Performance  
Huw Isaac, Head of Performance & Development  
Corporate Management Team

**Responsible Officer: Rob Thomas, Managing Director**