

COUNCIL: 22 OCTOBER 2015

CABINET PROPOSAL

CITY OF CARDIFF COUNCIL ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2014/15

Reason for this Report

1. This report has been prepared to enable the Council to approve the Council's Annual Improvement Report, a document required under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, for publication by 31st October 2015.

Background

2. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires that we publish our Improvement Objectives and how we plan to achieve them. The Auditor General for Wales in previous assessments of how we do this highlighted the need for the Council to be more focussed on our key priorities and on the delivery of these. In recognition of this opinion, and the growing pressure on the Council's finances available to deliver services to the citizens and communities of Cardiff in 2014 we continued with the following 3 priorities:-
 - Economic development as the driver for growth and jobs
 - Education and skills for people of all ages to fulfil their potential and to well prepared for employment in the Cardiff economy
 - Supporting vulnerable adults, children and young people
3. The Council's Corporate Plan 2014/17 focussed on what the Council would deliver to achieve these 3 priorities, and in turn they helped to shape our Improvement Objectives for 2014/15 and the content of our Outcome Agreement with the Welsh Government for 2013/16.
4. Our Improvement Objectives for 2014/15 focussed on:-
 - Increasing the number and quality of jobs in the city economy
 - Establishing Cardiff as a Digital City
 - Helping people to make positive choices about the affordability of their accommodation
 - Increasing independence by providing aids and adaptations to homes
 - Improving educational outcomes
 - Increasing school attendance

- Decreasing the number of young people not in education, employment or training
 - Undertaking a programme of Organisational Development to ensure the resilience and sustainability of services, structured around the core needs of citizens and communities.
5. We are also required under the Measure to assess our performance against the National Strategic Indicator (NSI) and Public Accountability Measures (PAM) data sets. These are set by the Welsh Government. Where these indicators and measures are relevant to the progress we made against our Improvement Objectives and Outcome Agreement they are included in this Improvement Report. Our performance against the full range of NSI and PAM data sets is shown in the 'How We Measure Up' section.

City of Cardiff Council's Annual Improvement Report 2014/15

6. The Council's Annual Improvement Report provides a retrospective summary evaluation of performance for 2014/15 and Members should note that the Report attached at Appendix 1 is a 'near final' draft. It contains the key elements to meet the statutory requirements, but will be subject to some minor amendment or updating prior to submitting to Council on 22 October 2015.
7. The City of Cardiff Council Annual Report 2014/15, attached as Appendix 1, is a text document which once approved will be translated into Welsh prior to publication by 31 October 2015.
8. The Improvement Report should:-
- provide a picture of the Council's performance for the reporting year against the agreed outcomes, activities (improvement objectives), and targets
 - communicate improvement information that is timely and accurate to members, officers, citizens, communities, stakeholders, other Councils, the Welsh Government and regulators
9. The Wales Audit Office feedback on the Council's Annual Improvement Report 2013/14 suggested a number of areas for Improvement. These improvements were in relation to ensuring that:
- there are actions and targets to support the delivery of, and determine progress against the improvement objectives
 - baseline data and targets are included for all improvement objectives
 - comparative data is represented for all performance indicators and is consistently presented
 - progress against the Outcome Agreement be presented to support the explanation of progress against the improvement objectives
 - an assessment of performance for each of the improvement objectives is provided

- performance indicators have a target and that where targets have not been set that there is an explanation
10. The Council's Annual Improvement Report 2014/15 seeks to address these issues.

Wales Audit Office Corporate Assessment of the City of Cardiff Council

11. In September 2014, the Auditor General published his report on the full Corporate Assessment. This report concluded at that time 'Fragmented leadership and management have meant that weak performance in key service areas has not improved'. The outcome of this work was a proposal for improvement to ensure that the implementation of our Organisational Development Plan in order to resolve the range of issues identified in the assessment.
12. Part of the Council's Organisational Development Plan is focused on improving the linkages between leadership and management. The Council has developed its performance management arrangements to ensure that good quality discussion about performance at both operational service delivery and individual staffing levels happen. This has been supported by the implementation of a robust challenge regime in both the managerial and political environment through
- Service Improvement Boards held by Directorate and this provides the Chief Executive with opportunity to understand the level of directorate performance, the arising issues, and puts in place a robust challenge to the Directors and their Management Teams
 - Star Chambers which are divided into People, and Place to facilitate a greater understanding, discussion and challenge between Cabinet Members and Directors on levels of performance and refreshing priorities for improvement as a result
13. The purpose of the corporate assessment follow-on is to seek the answer to the question *'Is the Council effectively addressing the issues raised in the corporate assessment?'*
14. The Council's Annual Improvement Report, as outlined earlier, provides a picture of the Council's performance for the reporting year against the agreed outcomes, activities (improvement objectives), and targets and is therefore a key strand of our performance arrangements.
15. The output for the Wales Audit Office work will be a published report, planned for issue in early 2016.

Role of the Auditor General for Wales

16. The Auditor General for Wales through the Wales Audit Office (WAO) audit each authority's Improvement Report to assess the extent to which the Report has been prepared and published in accordance with statutory requirements and will determine whether or not to issue a

Certificate of Compliance. Recommendations will also be put forward in the Auditor General's Annual Improvement Report which will form part of the Corporate Assessment being undertaken in October 2015.

Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee

17. The Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Statutory Improvement report on 8 September 2015 and the Chair's letter, together with the Cabinet Member's response is attached at Appendix 2.

Reason for Recommendations

18. To recommend the Council's Annual Improvement Report 2014/15 to Council in time for the Plan to be published by the statutory date 31 October 2015.

Financial Implications

19. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report, however action on identified priorities for improvement may well have financial implications which would need to be addressed in the budget setting process.

Legal Implications

20. The recommendation is made for the purposes of enabling the Council to comply with its legal duties as outlined in this report

HR Implications

21. There are no HR implications arising directly from this report.

CABINET PROPOSAL

Council is recommended to approve the Annual Improvement Report

THE CABINET

1 October 2015

The following appendices are attached:

Appendix 1 – Statutory Improvement Plan

Appendix 2 – Letter and Response to Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee