

WALES AUDIT OFFICE CORPORATE ASSESSMENT FOLLOW ON REPORT – STATEMENT OF ACTION

The Council welcomes the Wales Audit Office’s assessment of progress over the last two years, and recognises that, while progress has been made, momentum must be maintained to enable the Council to deliver improved services and better outcomes for the citizens of Cardiff.

R1: Recommendation

The Council must ensure that it addresses the proposals for improvement as set out in this report to deliver improved outcomes within the next 12 months

This Statement of Action has been developed in response to the single statutory recommendation of the Corporate Assessment Follow On report and addresses each of the 14 Proposals for Improvement identified by the Wales Audit Office. In addition, the Council will bring forward a report on the review and reshaping of the Council’s Organisational Development Programme (ODP) for consideration by the Cabinet in June 2016.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer(s)
R1	Undertake a review of the Council’s Organisational Development Plan (ODP)	June 2016	Chief Executive

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

P1: Proposal for Improvement

Develop further engagement opportunities with staff and Members to consistently embed a constructive performance management culture across the organisation to help deliver improved outcomes.

The recent staff and members’ survey results highlight the potential for further engagement opportunities to be rolled out in the next twelve months.

In terms of staff, this will involve implementation of the Programme for Engagement for 2016/17 with a strong emphasis on increased activity at directorate and team levels. Senior management roadshows; Have Your Say sessions; back to the floor meetings for managers; staff briefings; the work of staff ambassadors; and the Make the Difference social media campaign will continue to raise the profile of staff engagement and provide staff with a platform for engaging with management about the key issues facing the Council.

In relation to members, the results of a recent survey of members undertaken by the communication team is being used to focus improvements in priority areas, such as the dedicated intranet pages, consolidated weekly updates and improving technology. This will be consolidated into a Programme for Member Communications and Engagement.

The Council's Performance Management Strategy will be revised (see Proposal for Improvement 6) and launched proactively to staff and members, and represent a core theme of forthcoming engagement activity. Furthermore, the revised Strategy will focus specifically on engaging with and developing the Council's wider performance management community and with all Operational Managers. The workforce strategy strand of the Organisational Development Programme (ODP) will further ensure that engagement activities are integrated with ongoing work dealing with performance development reviews, learning and development, and workforce planning.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer(s)
	Review and refresh of the Council's programme of staff engagement	April 2016	Chief Executive
	Development of a new programme for member communications and engagement	June 2016	Monitoring Officer

GOVERNANCE

P2: Proposal for Improvement

Clarify the roles and responsibilities within the Council's decision making framework. In particular:

- a ensuring that meetings of the Informal Cabinet meetings are recorded appropriately;
- b ensuring that the title and roles of Assistants to Cabinet Members' are applied consistently ensuring that their limited roles and responsibilities do not cloud any accountabilities;
- c review the role and membership of Cabinet Advisory Groups to ensure that those members involved do not sit on any Scrutiny Committee responsible for scrutinising the same/similar issues; and
- d ensure that a decision is made on the issue about whether to delegate executive decision-making to individual Cabinet Members.

The governance and engagement work-stream of the ODP will be reviewed and geared towards addressing areas of improvement identified by the Wales Audit Office (WAO), supporting further improvements in decision making, scrutiny, and public engagement.

A key focus will be on ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clarified to ensure clear accountabilities in decision-making.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer(s)
P2a	Key action points from informal meetings of the Cabinet will be recorded by the Cabinet Office	May 2016	Monitoring Officer
P2b	Role description for Assistants to Cabinet Members will be included within the Council's Constitution and provided to all post-holders to assist in clarifying roles and responsibilities	July 2016	Monitoring Officer
P2c	Terms of Reference for Cabinet Advisory Groups will be agreed	July 2016	Monitoring Officer
P2d	Constitution Committee to undertake a further review of the volume and category of decisions taken by the Cabinet over the last 12 months and consider making provision within the Council's Constitution for executive decision-making to be delegated to individual Cabinet Members	September 2016	Monitoring Officer

P3: Proposal for Improvement

Further strengthen the Council's scrutiny function by:

- a** developing an approach to scrutinising cross cutting issues; and
- b** ensuring that any vacancies on scrutiny committees are filled quickly.

The Council's Improving Scrutiny report, which was jointly commissioned by scrutiny committee chairs and supported by the Centre of Public Scrutiny, proposed a range of improvement actions that are currently being implemented.

Arrangements to scrutinise cross-cutting issues have been developed by the Council, including:

- Joint meetings to scrutinise cross-cutting issues including: Social Services Reporting Framework; Community Hubs; Alternative Delivery Mechanisms; and Human Trafficking.
- Joint task and finish groups, for example to consider Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Joint scrutiny with neighbouring authorities on issues including Regulatory Services and the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service.

In September 2015 it was agreed that the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee would take lead overview role for scrutinising the work of Cardiff Partnership Board, with the other four Committees undertaking detailed scrutiny of Partnership Board work streams. The Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of the What Matters strategy in January 2016.

Vacancies are allocated to political groups under political proportionality rules, are discussed on a monthly basis with Party Group Whips, and have been offered to other political groups and independent councillors.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
	Implementation of the recommendations of the Improving Scrutiny Report	May 2017	Monitoring Officer
	Review of Scrutiny to be undertaken, with recommendations to be implemented from the start of the next political term	December 2016	Monitoring Officer
	Appointments to vacancies on committees to be considered as a standing item on all council meeting agendas	May 2016	Monitoring Officer
	Examine reasons why vacancies exist on committees as part of the Annual Member Survey	May 2016	Monitoring Officer

P4: Proposal for Improvement

Ensure that all committee agendas, minutes and decision-logs are published in a timely manner on the Council's website, and increase the number of committees that are webcast.

The deployment of modern.gov has significantly improved the Council's publication arrangements. However, it is essential that the timeliness of publication of agendas, minutes and decision logs are reviewed frequently to address any areas of outstanding concern.

Webcasting facilities are in place in County Hall and in the City Hall Chamber, allowing some Scrutiny committee meetings and Full Council meetings to be webcast. Additional cameras and equipment will be provided in City Hall to allow Cabinet and other committees to be webcast.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
	All committee agenda, minutes and decision logs to be published in a timely manner	April 2016	Monitoring Officer
	Extend the webcasting of committee meetings to include one scrutiny committee meeting per month	December 2016	Monitoring Officer

P5: Proposal for Improvement

Enhance Member accountability by:

- a** ensuring that the Standards and Ethics Committee plays a more proactive role in promoting and enforcing the Cardiff Undertaking for Councillors and supporting policies in relation to Member conduct and behaviour; and
- b** strengthening member development and learning programmes based on competency assessments to improve skills and understanding to enable them to undertake their roles more effectively; and
- c** determining what training should be considered essential for Members to discharge their role effectively.

The Chair of Standards and Ethics Committee is committed to taking steps to raising proactively the profile of the Cardiff Undertaking for Councillors and to highlighting the importance of appropriate Member conduct and behaviour.

New Hearing Panel Rules will be adopted by the Standards & Ethics Committee for dealing with consideration of complaints made under the Council's Local Resolution Protocol. Training is in place for members of quasi-judicial Public Protection; Licensing and Planning Committees, which members must have attended before they can participate in these committees. Annual refresher training on the Code of Conduct and Information Governance has also been provided.

Democratic Services Officers will review Member training provision and agree a new programme to commence at the start of the new Council term in May 2017 and will also work with the WLGA on the development of new member induction information and training for 2017/18.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P5a	Standards & Ethics Committee to publish biannual Member Briefings on the work of the committee, underlining the importance of the Cardiff Undertaking and member conduct and behaviour	August 2016	Monitoring Officer
P5b	Democratic Services Committee to review Member Development & Training and agree new approach and programme to commence in May 2017	December 2016	Monitoring Officer
P5c	Democratic Services Committee to agree essential training and frequency of training prior to start of new council term in May 2017	December 2016	Monitoring Officer

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

P6: Proposal for Improvement

Further strengthen performance reporting arrangements to support decision making by:

- a including SMART performance measures within directorate delivery plans, and ensure that these are reported to Cabinet and scrutiny to demonstrate progress;
- b consistently using and reporting on a Red/Amber/Green rating for Corporate Plan commitment actions and Directorate Plan actions in quarterly reports provided to Scrutiny;
- c mandating consistent service level plans; and
- d prioritising key performance indicators (KPIs) where the Council will seek to demonstrate improved performance and outcomes.

The Council accepts the WAO analysis that, despite the additional challenge and rigour introduced, the application of performance management systems remains inconsistent across the Council. This will be reflected in a refresh of the Council's Performance Management Strategy, which will be launched proactively to staff and members.

To further strengthen performance reporting arrangements draft directorate delivery plans will be reviewed and challenged where it is considered that there are not enough SMART performance measures, and steps will be taken to standardise service planning arrangements, with a consistent approach being taken to the use of a balanced scorecard methodology across the Council. The Directorate Delivery Plans should then be considered 'live' documents that the performance management community can work to support throughout the year, meaning further changes can be made as necessary.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P6a	All Directorate Delivery Plans to include SMART objectives	April 2016	Head of Performance & Partnerships
P6b	Guidance on how actions should be Red/Amber/Green rated to be communicated to Improvement community	May 2016	Head of Performance & Partnerships
P6c	Service planning framework to be developed focusing on providing a robust and proportionate approach to collating, analysing and using performance information data not captured within Directorate Delivery Plans	October 2016	Head of Performance & Partnerships
P6d	A Balanced Scorecard approach that focuses on those KPIs which best measure the Council's performance and outcomes will be developed and implemented consistently across the Council	June 2016	Head of Performance & Partnerships

CORPORATE ENABLERS

P7: Proposal for Improvement

Adopt a more cohesive and co-ordinated approach to corporate enabler functions to better help the Council drive improvement.

The Council recognises the need to adopt a more cohesive and co-ordinated approach to corporate enabler functions to better help deliver improved outcomes. This will include a joined up approach to financial and non-financial service performance, including the triangulation of budgetary, contract and cost driver information, with managers understanding the importance of managing this information in a proactive way to ensure services are effective, efficient and on track to meet the Council's strategic objectives. This will require a much greater level of coordination between corporate support services, including the improvement and information governance teams, HR, finance, estates and ICT. Furthermore, the development of the refreshed Performance Management Strategy will not be seen in isolation from the wider needs of the organisation. An integrated approach to the way in which the Council manages performance will be introduced.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P7	Refreshed Performance Management Strategy to focus on role of Corporate Enablers and make recommendations for improvement	September 2016	Head of Performance & Partnerships

P8: Proposal for Improvement

Further develop the Council's performance management arrangements by:

- a enhancing the Council's performance management strategy to include guidelines timescales, processes and procedures to support a consistent approach; and**
- b increasing the level of performance management and challenge undertaken by the central performance team.**

The Performance Management Strategy of the Council will be reviewed and refreshed to ensure clarity around the Council's current process for measuring, reporting and using performance information to drive improvement. In the delivery of the strategy (and before) the Improvement team will be supported to increase the level of challenge to Directorates.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
	Update the framework element of the Performance Management Strategy to reinforce these areas before further development of the overall strategy	May 2016	Head of Performance & Partnerships
	Review and refresh the Performance Management Strategy	September 2016	Head of Performance & Partnerships

P8b	Improvement team to increase level of performance management and challenge	March 2016 onwards	Head of Performance & Partnerships
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P9: Proposal for Improvement

Further develop the Council's Human Resource processes and strategies by:

- a strengthening the Council's staff appraisal process by including explicitly measurable objectives, capturing information on training on a corporate basis, and developing links to staff's future career aspirations to support workforce and succession planning; and**
- b further embedding the Council's workforce strategy and integrating this with financial and service planning.**

Cabinet agreed the Council's Workforce Strategy during 2015 which integrates workforce planning with financial and service delivery planning. In order to implement this strategy a 3-year Workforce Strategy programme is being taken forward as part of the ODP. This programme is divided into 5 Project areas: Performance Management; Learning and Development; Health and Wellbeing; Employee Voice; and Workforce Planning.

To support the '**Performance Management Project**' guidance around Personal Performance and Development Reviews (PPDRs) will be strengthened with an emphasis on behaviours, as well as the achievement of objectives, with a strong emphasis on managers and supervisors conducting appropriate and supportive conversations with staff on a regular basis. Setting SMART objectives will be a Corporate Objective for all managers 2016/17, and an e-learning module will be developed on SMART Objective setting to support this shift.

Under the '**Learning & Development Project**' the Council 'Academy Board' will oversee prioritises for workforce training corporately, including digital skills and the Cardiff Manager Programme will be extended to all managers at Grade 7 and below.

The '**Workforce Planning Project**' will focus on development of a process for succession planning across the Council, including development of Workforce Planning guidelines and toolkit including a technology based solution; development of profile information for service area use in financial and service planning; skills audit including essential skills; and the development of a strategy for the temporary, casual and agency workforce taking account of social inclusion and youth engagement.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P9a	Deliver the Performance Management Project, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of e-learning module on SMART objective Setting Setting SMART objectives is to be a Corporate Objective for all managers 2016/17 	March 2017 March 2017	Chief HR Officer
	Deliver Learning & Development Project, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Cardiff Council Academy Board to oversee priorities for workforce training corporately Cardiff Manager programme extended to all managers Grade 7 and below 	March 2017 March 2017	Chief HR Officer
P9b	Deliver the Workforce Planning Project, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of process for succession planning across the Council Development of Workforce Planning guidelines and toolkit including a technology based solution Develop profile information for service area use in financial and service planning Develop a strategy for the temporary, casual and agency workforce taking account of social inclusion and youth engagement 	March 2018 January 2017 September 2016 March 2017	Chief HR Officer

P10: Proposal for Improvement

Complete the data capture exercise relating to the use of assets and develop a single system to hold appropriate asset management information.

An internal business case for new Corporate Asset Data Management (CADM) system has been developed including detailed business process mapping. Subject to approval of the business case, a new system will be implemented through the OD team, which could take up to 2 years to fully deliver.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
	Submit detailed business case to Investment Review Board for final approval	May 2016	Director – Economic Development
	Subject to approval from Investment Review Board, implement the new Corporate Asset Data Management system	May 2018	Director – Economic Development

P11: Proposal for Improvement

Ensure all outstanding actions from the Construction Excellence Wales review of the Council's building maintenance framework are completed.

An officer board was set up in May 2015 to take responsibility for monitoring and improving the performance of the building maintenance framework following the Construction Excellence Wales review recommendations. An action plan has been developed and a number of actions have already been completed.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P11	Complete all outstanding actions from the Construction Excellence Wales review of the Council's building maintenance framework	March 2017	Corporate Director, Resources

P12: Proposal for Improvement

Further strengthen the Council's financial planning processes by:

- a developing more explicit links between the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Council's improvement planning arrangements;**
- b strengthening links between the Medium Term Financial Plan and service plans;**
- c ensuring that savings proposals owned by Directorates are linked to the Organisational Development Programme where relevant, are fully costed, and that delivery is driven by the Organisational Development Programme Board; and**
- d ensuring all budget savings plans are fully developed as appropriate with realistic timescales when the annual budget is set.**

The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) identifies a budget reduction requirement arising from funding reductions, inflationary and demand pressures. The 2016/17 Budget Report marks an improvement to the Medium Term Planning Process in that it identifies a draft solution to the budget gap for 2017/18 and 2018/19 with a clear direction of travel targeted for 2019/20.

The savings identified as part of this solution were identified as part of an exercise aimed at reshaping the Council's base budget in a way that considered statutory minimum levels of service, the Council's Reshaping Services Programme and Target Operating Model.

The Council's corporate plan, budget and MTFP are developed concurrently, and work is undertaken to ensure their compatibility and consistency. This will be further strengthened.

At a directorate level, as noted above, the Council's approach to identifying a solution for addressing the Medium Term budget gap was based on an exercise that was underpinned by the Council's Target Operating Model. The proposed solution for the medium term should therefore have close synergies with service plans.

Steps have also been taken to ensure that there are clear links between directorates' medium term savings proposals and the Organisation Development Programme's focus on accelerating the shift to online services, facilitating alternative delivery models, increasing revenue from commercial activity and reducing the Council's asset base. Issues arising from both the Organisational Development Programme and the development of budget strategy are considered at Senior Management Team (SMT) on a recurring basis.

In order to ensure that budget savings plans are fully developed with realistic timescales, a series of officer challenge sessions are held following submission of proposals in September. Due diligence considerations are continued throughout the budget setting process. Furthermore, in identifying savings proposals, directorates are required to indicate their planning status, residual and achievability risk along with mitigating actions, and to outline the next steps and key milestones to achieving the saving. They are also asked to outline impacts on capital programme, employee implications and severance costs to give a rounded view of the proposal's implications.

Enhancements have been made to this process as part of 2016/17 budget setting and directorates were requested by Finance to undertake regular review of the planning status of their proposals, with continued emphasis on moving towards a detailed planning stage. Regular updates on the planning status of proposals were supplied into SMT and Informal Cabinet to ensure ongoing momentum. This is evident in the increase in the percentage of budget proposals that were at detailed planning stage at the time of the 2016/17 Budget Report. A total of 90.5% were realised or at detailed planning stage, compared to 82.4% in the 2015/16 budget report.

A further improvement for 2016/17 is the inclusion within the Budget Report of proposals to fully address the Medium Term budget gap for 2017/18 and 2018/19, with a direction of travel set for 2019/20. Post budget setting, this will enable focus to move directly to development and challenge of proposals for 2017/18, with less time and effort during the early part of the year expended on a detailed target-setting exercise. This should enable directorates to move to a detailed planning stage much earlier in the process.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P12a	Develop more explicit links between the MTFP and improvement planning arrangements as part of the 2017/18 budget process	December 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P12b	Strengthen the link between the MTFP and service plans as part of 2017/18 budget preparation work	December 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P12c	Review, as part of Budget Strategy, the opportunities to enhance linkages between savings proposals from Directorates and the ODP	July 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P12d	Continue - and build upon - approach adopted for 2016/17 budget	March 2017	Corporate Director, Resources

P13: Proposal for Improvement

Further strengthen the Council's IT arrangements by:

- a further developing the draft Digital ICT strategy and formally agreeing this strategic vision for delivering digitally enabled services;**
- b deploying the Customer Relationship Management system fully to appropriate services across the Council;**
- c implementing the mobile scheduling and flexible working technologies where appropriate; and**
- d expanding the number and depth of ICT KPIs measured and reported, to cover the whole ICT service, and benchmark against public service comparators.**

The Council has made significant advances in shifting towards a 'digital first' model, and the Digital Strategy 2016-21 is due to be considered by the Cabinet on 19 May 2016. Mobile & Scheduling deployment to Care Workers is already live and flexible working technologies for Social Workers will soon be rolled out. Phase 1 of CRM is live in the contact centre with portal elements to be completed by April 2016.

Following a CIPFA benchmarking exercise on ICT KPIs an all-Wales SOCITM benchmarking package will commence in the new financial year, with a focus on reviewing ICT cost and quality performance over the previous year. Commencing in April 2016, a number of benchmarking exercises will be conducted through the course of the financial year.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P13a	Digital Strategy 2016-21 to be considered by Cabinet	May 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P13b	Initiate project to deliver phase 2 of the CRM	June 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P13c	Roll out flexible working across the council for those workers who would benefit from delivering their services in a range of locations	December 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P13d	Review the ICT additional performance reporting requirements and establish a revised basket of KPIs	March 2017	Corporate Director, Resources

P14: Proposal for Improvement

Further strengthen the Council's information governance arrangements by:

- a** completing the outstanding actions from the Information Commissioner's Office audit on data protection and information confidentiality;
- b** increasing the level of staff completion of the Council's information confidentiality and data protection e-learning training programme;
- c** fully implementing the Electronic Records Management System across the Council;
- d** improving the Council's response rates against statutory targets in respect of data protection subject access requests and Freedom of Information Act requests; and
- e** completing a Caldicott principles into practice self-assessment.

An Action Plan in response to previous Improvement Commissioner's Office audit is in place and progress is monitored by the Information Security Board on a quarterly basis.

An Electronic Document and Records Management System (ERDMS) has been established and a project is in place for delivery with 8 service areas.

Compliance with statutory timescales in respect of requests for information under the Subject Access provisions of the Data Protection Act (SARs) and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests has improved to 86%. A streamlined process and case management system has been introduced. Compliance where this is used is 89%, compared to 67% where it is not used. Compliance reports are presented as part of the Council's Quarterly Performance & Delivery Reports and to the Information Security Board.

Ref	Action	Timescale	Responsible Officer(s)
P14a	Continue to implement the Action Plan following most recent audit by the Information Commissioner's Office	March 2017	Corporate Director, Resources
P14b	Implement new Information Governance e-learning training programme	May 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P14c	Rollout EDRMS to remaining users (circa 4000)	April 2017	Corporate Director, Resources
P14d	Seek approval to bring all SARs and FOI requests within the corporate responsibility of the Improvement and Information Team	September 2016	Corporate Director, Resources
P14e	Undertake a review of existing information governance monitoring arrangements to provide assurance that they appropriately reflect Caldicott principles	March 2017	Corporate Director, Resources