Draft Annual Governance Statement 2017/18

1. Scope of Responsibility

1. The City of Cardiff Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

2. The Council is responsible for the Cardiff Harbour Authority, which is subsumed in the Council. The Council is also the Administering Authority for the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Pension Fund (the Pension Fund) and Cardiff Port Health Authority (CPHA), and is the Accountable Body for the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal. The governance arrangements detailed in this Annual Governance Statement (AGS) are documented in consideration of the Council's areas of responsibility, and the extent to which the Council is charged with governance.

3. The Council has adopted the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' framework, developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE). This statement explains how the Council has complied with the Governance Framework and meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.

4. The governance arrangements in the Council's three wholly owned subsidiary companies which traded in 2017/18, namely Cardiff City Transport Services Ltd. (Cardiff Bus) Cardiff Business Technology Centre (CBTC) and Atebion Solutions are subject to periodic review. These were not reviewed by the Council in 2017/18. The Council also has an interest in a special purpose vehicle (CSC Foundry Limited) which is governed by a Joint Committee for the CCR City Deal.

2. The Purpose of the Governance Framework

5. The Governance Framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Council is directed and controlled and the means through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services. The Council's Constitution sets out how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed through rules, codes of practice and protocols.

6. The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives but is based on an ongoing process to identify, prioritise and appropriately manage risk.

7. A draft Code of Corporate Governance (Code) has been developed this year which documents how we apply the principles of good governance *(as summarised in Section 4 of the AGS – Assessment Process and Summary)*. The draft Code was reviewed by the Audit Committee in January 2018 and will be considered by the Constitution Committee following the financial year end. Once the full approval process has completed, the Code will be included in the Council's Constitution.

3.   The Governance Framework

8.   The Framework comprises two core principles and five supporting principles. Principles A and B permeate implementation of principles C to G but good governance is dynamic, and the Council as a whole is committed to improving governance on a continuing basis through a process of evaluation and review.

Core principles

   a. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
   b. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

Supporting Principles

   c. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits;
   d. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
   e. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
   f. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management;
   g. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

4.   Assessment Process and Summary

9.   The AGS summarises the assessment of governance against the governance framework and comprises three elements:

   1) Statements from Senior Management, the Audit Manager and the Audit Committee;
   2) Supporting information and evidence mapped to the core and supporting good governance principles;
   3) A Senior Management review of the Council's significant governance issues.

10. The three elements above when taken together represent the assessment of governance, through the perspectives of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the independent opinions of the Internal Audit Manager and Audit Committee based on their respective programmes of work and an assessment of the system of internal control.

11. For further information and detail, supporting information is mapped to the governance framework principles (a-g) within the AGS and followed by an open disclosure from the senior management team (SMT) of the significant governance issues affecting the organisation as summary actions to take forward and address.

12. The diagram below sets out the components of this assessment.

i) Assurance Statements

13. The following statements are made at the year-end, upon consideration of the performance information, governance disclosures and audit and regulatory report findings from assessors both internal and external to the Council.

Senior Management Statement

To be completed following the financial year end 2017/18

Audit Manager Statement

To be completed following the financial year end 2017/18

Audit Committee Statement

To be completed following the financial year end 2017/18

ii) Governance Framework - Supporting Information

A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.

14. All Members and Officers in the Council are required to comply fully with Codes of Conduct as set out in the Constitution, which sets out the particular roles and responsibilities of Officers and Members and provides clarity on the interfaces between these roles. These include:

    - Functions and subsections delegated to officers;
    - Members' Code of Conduct;
    - Employees' Code of Conduct;
    - Protocol on Member / Officer Relations;
    - Cardiff Undertaking – signed by all Members upon election and underlines their duties to the City and its citizens.

15. The Director of Governance and Legal Services is the Monitoring Officer, with the specific duty to ensure that the Council, its Officers, and its Elected Councillors, maintain the highest standards of conduct in all they do based on Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by Schedule 5 paragraph 24 of the Local Government Act 2000.

16. The Standards and Ethics Committee has a responsibility to monitor and scrutinise the ethical standards of the Authority, its Members, employees and any associated providers of the Authority's services, and to report to the Council on any matters of concern. The Committee is chaired by an independent person and its role includes determining the outcome of complaints against Councillors and Co-opted Members and monitoring the Council's whistleblowing procedures. Complaint statistics and information will be added after the financial year end 2017/18.

17. A strong commitment is made to ensuring the Council's Codes of Conduct are upheld. In 2015, complaints about a Councillor's conduct were referred by the Monitoring Officer to the Public Services Ombudsmen for Wales. This resulted in the conclusion in March 2017 through a Case Tribunal by the Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) that the Member had failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct. The Councillor was suspended from acting as a member of the Council for one month.

18. In May 2017, Councillor Huw Thomas was elected as the new leader of the Council and appointed a new Cabinet. In order to learn lessons from the experiences of Councillors whilst in office, prior to the election a Member Exit Survey was completed in February 2017. 61% of respondents reported that they would stand for re-election, with those standing down citing 'retirement', 'work-life balance/time pressures', 'dissatisfaction with role' and 'other' reasons as most related to their decision. Personal experience of bullying and discriminatory behaviours were reported at rates of 37% and 34% respectively. Witnessing bullying and discriminatory behaviours were reported at 68% and 79% respectively between Councillors and at 32% and 21% respectively between Councillors and Officers.

19. To address the matters raised in the Member Exit Survey, a HR counselling service has been made available to all Members. The survey findings were also taken into account in the development of a Member Induction Programme for new Members. A further Member Survey then took place in Autumn 2017 to seek feedback on the quality and completeness of the Member Induction, and to identify Member experiences of bullying and other unacceptable behaviours. In February 2018, the Democratic Servces Committee received the findings of the survey relating to the Member induction, through which 97% of respondents rated the induction day as useful or very useful and 96% found the formal training / facilitated group training useful. Actions were identified in relation to technology support, mentoring / peer support and administrative processes, which have been considered by the Director of Governance and Legal Services for further development.

20. The Standards and Ethics Committee received analysis of the responses relating to Member conduct and behaviour in March 2018. Most Councillors (55%) who responded, reported that they had had no personal experience of bullying, discrimination, or other unacceptable behaviours in their roles. A similar proportion (58%) reported they had not witnessed any unacceptable behaviours, representing an improved position overall from the Member Exit Survey.

21. For Members, the 'Cardiff Undertaking' sets out expectations of conduct in accordance with the 'Principles of Public Life'. The Corporate Assessment Follow-on, issued by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) in February 2016, recognised these governance arrangements, but concluded that the Standards and Ethics Committee could do more to visibly enforce the principles of the Cardiff Undertaking. To address this recommendation the Standards & Ethics Committee introduced biannual Member Briefings which have continued to report on the work of the committee and underline the importance of the Cardiff Undertaking, member conduct and behaviour.

22. An Officers' Personal Interests & Secondary Employment Policy requires staff to disclose any personal interest which actually or potentially conflicts with their duties to the Council and all secondary employment. The policy sets out how all Council employees are obliged, under the Employees' Code of Conduct, to ensure that their private interests do not conflict with their public duties, and to comply with the Council's rules on the registration and declaration of financial and non-financial interests.

23. The Council's Corporate Values focus on fairness, openness and working together. The Council supports a culture of behaviour based on these values which guide how the long term vision of the Council is put into effect, as well as how Members and Officers deliver their day to day roles. Corporate and directorate planning and personal performance and development arrangements are aligned to delivering corporate values and priorities.

24. An Employee Survey 2017 has demonstrated an improvement in staff experiences and perceptions across all 10 response statements since last conducted in 2015. The survey which excluded school-based employees, had a response rate of 33.9% and covered matters including information, communication and engagement, learning and development, performance management, health and wellbeing, council values, priorities and the employee charter. For each best practice statement a 'high level' of agreement was the most frequent response, with an average (mean) response of 'medium level' of agreement.

25. The Workforce Strategy and Employee Charter have been in place throughout 2017/18 and are underpinned by the Council's vision and values and aligned to the Corporate Plan:

    - The Employee Charter sets out the expectations of employees, managers and senior managers and has formed part of the objective setting process for personal performance and development reviews. It aims to address the issues raised by the Wales Audit Office in September 2014 as part of the Corporate Assessment and the earlier Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Peer Review.

    - The Workforce Strategy seeks to deliver outcomes for and with employees, within a culture that supports a flexible, skilled, engaged and diverse workforce.

26. The Council takes fraud, corruption and maladministration very seriously supported by the following policies to prevent, and manage such occurrences:

    - Financial Procedure Rules;
    - Contract Standing Order and Procurement Rules;
    - Whistleblowing Policy;
    - Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy;
    - Money Laundering Policy and Procedure;
    - ICT Security Policy;

- Data Protection Policy & Procedure;
- HR policies regarding investigation and discipline of staff.

27. Induction training is undertaken by staff to ensure awareness and understanding on a range of policies, procedures and regulations including those relating to Financial Control, Data Protection, Health & Safety, Equalities and IT Security. Induction training also ensures that staff are aware of the corporate values and how they should be applied.

28. The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy in place through which staff and contractors are encouraged to speak out on misconduct or illegal behaviour within the organisation, which affects the public or other people (making a disclosure in the public interest). Whilstleblowing statistics will be added after the financial year end 2017/18.

29. The Corporate Director Resources is the Council's Section 151 Officer with overall responsibility for the financial administration of the Council. The Council's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016).

B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

30. Through its Corporate Values, the Council outlines a commitment to being "open and honest about the difficult choices we face, and allowing people to have their say on what's important to them and their communities." Consultation, engagement and joint working with citizens are central to delivering this value and are outlined as follows.

31. To support openness, the Council is focusing on publishing increasing amounts of data through the development of an Open Data Strategy as part of the Council's Publication Scheme. It has adopted the UK government's approach to publishing data to a minimum of 3 stars out of a 5 star scale. This means data should be easily accessible and available to re-use as required (subject to terms outlined in the Open Government Licence). This year, the Information Governance Team has continued to identify data sets for publication and maintain the publication of existing data sets.

32. There is open debate and challenge on performance and risk management with quarterly reporting and review in Senior Management Team (SMT) and further challenge and oversight in Cabinet, Scrutiny and Audit Committee meetings. A Risk Management Steering Group is in place to develop and review risk management policy and accountability frameworks and to support SMT in identifying new and emerging corporate risks. A 'Star Chamber' is used by the Chief Executive, Directors and Cabinet Members to agree actions arising from an open debate of performance and service delivery challenges.

33. Meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees are generally open to the public to attend except where confidential or exempt information is being discussed, as defined by the law. Full Council meetings include a facility for public questions, and the Council's Scrutiny Committees invite stakeholder contributions to their scrutiny programme, both through research and consultation exercises and through direct access to Committees. Throughout 2017/18 the Council has webcast Council and Planning Committee meetings and webcasting has been introduced for three Scrutiny Committee meetings to enable wider public accessibility. Papers and reports are also available on the Council's website.

34. The public and other stakeholders are given the opportunity to tell the Council what they think about the services provided through the Council's Comments, Complaints and Compliments Policy. It reflects guidance given in the Welsh Government Model Policy and Guidance Paper for Handling Complaints, as well as guidance received from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales and places a greater emphasis on a prompt resolution of complaints. Cabinet is informed annually of the number of complaints received.

35. Citizens, communities and partners have been engaged in a three year conversation 'The Cardiff Debate' about the future of public services in Cardiff. Consultation on the 2017/18 budget involved 2,520 people completing a 'Changes for Cardiff' survey and public views were also given via petitions, social media, attendance at 'drop-in' public engagement events, and through correspondence. The consultation ran for more than five weeks and included eighteen community engagement events, an online questionnaire, social media promotion and hard copy questionnaires distributed across the city.

36. Regular meetings are held with Institutional stakeholders to whom the Council is accountable, which include the Welsh Government and the Council's External Auditors (Wales Audit Office). Efforts have also been made to foster open and effective relationships between the County Council and the six Community Councils in Cardiff through a Community Councils Charter ("the Charter"). It reflects the model Charter issued by the Welsh Government in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and is based on equality of partnership between the two tiers of local government.

37. The Cardiff Public Services Board (PSB), represents a statutory partnership of public and voluntary sector organisations, chaired by the Leader of the Council to deliver the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 and the 'What Matters' single integrated partnership strategy. This year, the strategic focus of the PSB has been the development of a statutory local Well-being Plan for launch in April 2018, in which well-being objectives have been established to support the delivery of national well-being goals. The Well-being Plan responds to the evidence set out in a Well-being Assessment and focusses on the areas of public service delivery which fundamentally require partnership working between public and community services, and the citizens of Cardiff. The Draft Well-being plan was subject to Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny in November 2017, and 12-weeks of consultation and engagement through locality events. Final approval was given by the PSB, Full Council and statutory member organisations prior to the end of the financial year.

38. Neighbourhood Partnerships of multi-agency staff are currently under review. Work has been scaled back this year and new arrangements are still under consideration for next year. The intention of the review is to understand how locality based partnership working and Council resources can be better aligned and managed so as to deliver person centred, joined up and complementary services in our communities.

39. The Council regularly engages in consultation with the Trade Unions and a 'Partnership for Change Agreement' was signed off in February 2015. This supports the Council's Leader, Cabinet and Trade Unions in working together to reform Council services in a cost effective manner, providing a level of certainty for staff on major issues and protecting jobs wherever possible.

C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.

40. The Corporate Plan sets out the organisation's priorities and clear improvement objectives to be delivered with the support of Lead Members. It was approved by Council in February 2017 for the period 2017 – 2019, informed by the consultation on budget proposals for 2017/18. It sets the strategic direction and provides a framework for Directorate Delivery Plans and performance management objectives. Corporate Plan priorities were maintained from last year as below:

- Better education and skills for all
- Supporting vulnerable people
- Creating more jobs and better paid jobs
- Working together to transform services

41. The delivery of the Corporate Plan is monitored through the Council's Performance Management Framework, which includes:

- Performance Challenge sessions of the Council's Senior Management Team;
- Joint Cabinet and Senior Management Team Performance Challenge meetings;
- A Challenge Forum involving Members, Senior Officers and external peer support to challenge the Council's progress against its improvement journey and the delivery of the Corporate Plan

42. Following the election of a new leader in May 2017, the 'Capital Ambition' was approved as a statement of the new administration's priorities in July 2017, which includes "commitments for Cardiff" which cover all of the Council's services. The Capital Ambition sets out how a series of principles will underpin the development of the Council in the coming years, namely: getting the basics right, digital first, putting communities front and centre, joining-up of frontline services, purposeful partnerships and a new deal for citizens. The four priorities are:

- Working for Cardiff: Making sure that all our citizens can contribute to, and benefit from, the City's success
- Working for Wales: A successful Wales needs a successful capital city
- Working for the Future: Managing the city's growth in a sustainable way
- Working for Public Services: Making sure our public services are delivered efficiently, effectively and sustainably in the face of rising demand and reducing budgets

43. The Council has committed to the Sustainable Development Charter and making decisions that produce the best long-term outcomes for Cardiff and the future of Wales. The Council participates in the CCR City Deal, which aims to enhance development, infrastructure, land use, economic development and employment. Its proposals are supported by a £1.2bn fund with a target of creating 25,000 jobs by 2036, leveraging £4bn of private sector investment and securing economic growth. The CCR City Deal involves the UK Government, Welsh Government and ten Council's working together, through joint enterprise.

44. A CCR City Deal five year strategic business plan was approved by the Regional Cabinet of 10 local authority leaders in February 2018, to detail how £495 million of the funding will be used to deliver its outcomes. Two significant investments have been approved by Regional Cabinet this year. Funding of £37.9 million has been allocated to support the development of a semiconductor industry cluster in the region, which aims to leverage up to £375 million of private sector investment, and create up to 2,000 high value jobs. The Regional Cabinet has also agreed to commit £40 million in principle to support the £180 million Metro Central Development, a project to deliver a new Central Transport Interchange in Cardiff's core employment zone.

45. In December 2017, Cabinet approved a four year Capital Ambition Delivery Programme to replace the Council's Organisational Development Programme (ODP). The establishment of the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme followed an independent review of the ODP in May 2017, which concluded that the change programme had effectively served its purpose and should allow the Council to respond and adapt to the changing operational environment. In line with the recommendations of the independent review, the new programme focusses on a smaller number of transformational programmes which are aligned to the delivery of corporate priorities and budgets. The Capital Ambition Delivery Programme is composed of two discrete components:

- Modernisation: Transformation of corporate systems and processes that support service delivery, led by the Corporate Director - Resources; and
- Resilient Services: Transformation of front-line services, led by the Corporate Director - People and Communities.

46. The Final Local Government Settlement for 2017/18 for Cardiff was received in December 2016, equating to a funding increase of 0.5%. Additional cash of £2.3 million was allocated compared with 2016/17, but the actual increase in spending power was £294,000 once new responsibilities and other differentiating year on year factors were taken into account.

47. Consultation on the Council's 2017/18 budget proposals "Changes for Cardiff" ran from 10 November 2016 – 16 December 2016. As outlined under principle *B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive engagement* of this AGS, a number of mechanisms were used to ensure the consultation was as accessible as possible.

48. The Council has predicted a budget gap of £73.5 million over the next three years. The outlook over the medium term remains a matter of concern and the Budget Report 2018/19 details the challenges in respect of ongoing financial austerity, increasing financial pressures and the difficulty offsetting and realising year on year budget savings. A deliverable Budget Strategy has been a key document for meeting the radical changes which must continue to be made to the shape of the organisation in order for it to remain operational and resilient.

D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.

49. To ensure decision makers are well informed, all decisions taken by Members are supported by written reports from officers which include assessments of the legal, HR and financial implications arising from the decision. Such reports address the key risks involved in particular decisions and alternative courses of action which are available.

50. To support delivery of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Council has developed well-being objectives and a well-being statement as part of the development of the annual Corporate Plan. This process has helped to integrate the sustainable development principle and the Act in organisational processes and decision making.

51. 'Ask Cardiff' is the Council's largest and longest running engagement activity, and since 2002 it has enabled citizens to share their views of the city and a wide variety of public services. The Corporate Plan 2017-19 has been informed by the views of over 4,000 people who took part in 'Ask Cardiff', together with the 2,520 people who took part in the 'Changes for Cardiff' budget consultation.

52. To ensure staff are consulted and involved in decision making, various channels of communication are used including Corporate Roadshows, the Chief Executive's Update, joint updates from the Leader and Chief Executive, Core Brief, 'Our News' newsletter and 'Your Inbox' circulars. A Council Ambassador Network has employees at all levels from across the Council helping to take forward the four corporate commitments from the Employee Survey namely: Health and Wellbeing; Performance Management; Learning and Development; and Employee Voice.

53. Consultation on draft decisions resulting from budget proposals is robust and the impact on citizens and service users is an important consideration. The Cardiff Debate and 'Changes for Cardiff' communications with citizens have been an important means of identifying and designing services to meet the needs and expectations of service users and citizens in Cardiff in the context of budgetary constraints. To support robust project based decision making, the Council has developed a Business Case template using the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) "Five Case Model", as recommended by HM Treasury for use by Public Sector bodies.

54. The Council has a performance management framework to facilitate and measure the delivery of priorities at City, Council, Directorate and officer levels. The framework includes statutory National Strategic Indicators together with local indicators to support a wide understanding of performance. The annual performance against these indicators is submitted to the Welsh Government to be audited as part of the revised Wales Programme for Improvement as a result of the Local Government (Wales) Measure. This framework ensures that there is alignment between Performance against the Council's targets, and that objectives are reported publicly on a quarterly and annual basis.

55. The Council's Budget Strategy has developed from an incremental budgeting approach, to one where budgets are informed to a greater extent by corporate priorities and the required future shape of the organisation. The change in approach was first made to inform the 'Budget Strategy 2016/17 and the Medium Term', from which the momentum for forward planning continued in preparing the 2017/18 budget, by bringing forward the usual focus of budget strategy tasks by at least one quarter.

56. The themes for savings in the Budget Strategy for 2017/18 were aligned with general budgetary questions that formed part of the Ask Cardiff consultation, in synergy with the Council's corporate plan priorities, as follows.

    - Income generation
    - Working with partners and others
    - Use of technology
    - Review of Subsidies and grants
    - Internally facing proposals
    - Second / third year of proposals
    - Service reduction / redesign

57. To provide greater confidence in the delivery of savings, the 2017/18 directorate proposals were submitted, and subject to challenge to ensure clearer ownership, accuracy, feasibility, achievability and risk management.

58. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) conducted a review into the financial resilience in Cardiff Council in March 2016, to assess whether the council effectively manages budget reductions in order to ensure ongoing financial resilience. The conclusion was that

    'The Council has improved its arrangements for financial planning and has sound financial control and governance arrangements but now needs to develop robust plans to support the timely delivery of its savings proposals'.

59. The Council's financial control and governance arrangements were assessed as low risk, and financial planning as medium risk. This was consistent with the findings of the WAO follow on report published on 26 February 2016, which recognised that the Council has improved its Medium Term Financial Plan / Programme (MTFP) arrangements and had raised the profile of financial resilience but through which four specific recommendations were made to further strengthen financial planning processes.

60. The Council's risk management guidance emphasises the requirement to incorporate risk management into all levels of business, including the management of shared risks through programme, project and partnership arrangements.

E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.

61. The Council has put in place a commitment to effective leadership, recognised in the WAO Corporate Assessment Follow On 2016, which concluded that:

    'The Council has put in place better arrangements to support improvements and to address longstanding issues, but is now at a critical point in embedding them if it is to achieve a step change in delivering improved outcomes'.

62. WAO recognised a more engaged culture, with good Member and officer commitment to attending and engaging in full Council meetings. They reported a need to improve more variable Member engagement observed in Scrutiny Committee meetings, the Leader's meetings with opposition leaders, the Challenge Forum, Member Training and Member

Briefing sessions. The requirement to clarify some roles and responsibilities within the Council's decision making framework was also reported.

63. The Council developed a Statement of Action to respond to the Follow On Corporate Assessment and a Performance and Governance Programme to further develop and embed performance management arrangements. Between February and May 2017, the Wales Audit Office reviewed the Council's progress in relation to its Statement of Action. The subsequent report of this work concluded that the Council has demonstrated sufficient progress in implementing the 2016 proposals for improvement and is in the process if embedding new performance management and reporting arrangements.

64. Decision making responsibilities and authority are clearly set out in the Council's Constitution. It documents the roles and relationships for decision making, between the Full Council, the Cabinet, Scrutiny and other Non-Executive Committees. It also details decisions delegated to senior officers through the different management tiers.

65. Following election as Leader of the Council in May 2017, Cllr Huw Thomas formed a new Cabinet. The Cabinet is the part of the Council which is responsible for most major decisions. The Cabinet is made up of the Leader elected by the Council, and up to nine other councillors whom he/she nominates for approval by the Council. The Cabinet has to make decisions which are in line with the Council's overall policies and budget. If it wishes to make a decision which is outside the budget or policy framework, this must be referred to the Council as a whole to decide.

66. The Council's programme of strategic business change has been aligned with the priorities of the new administration through the four year Capital Ambition Delivery Programme, which uses a best practice governance approach (Project Quality Assurance (PQA)) to provide effective planning, monitoring and delivery. Governance arrangements have been put in place for the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme, which include regular updates to the Senior Management Team and quarterly updates to a Cabinet Performance and Delivery Group. An annual review of the Programme will be reported into Cabinet and Scrutiny.

67. The senior management structure of the Council has also been reviewed to align with and support the delivery of the Capital Ambition. The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) is the most senior member of the Council's staff and has responsibility for overall management supported by a number of Directors and Assistant Director / Chief Officer posts. A revised senior management structure was approved by Council in November 2017, which was developed within the existing senior management budget and informed by Hay Group benchmarking analysis undertaken in July 2017 which compared the management structure of Cardiff Council to other Core City Councils and other large Unitary Councils. The approved changes to the senior management model were as follows.

New Posts	Deleted Posts
• Corporate Director, People and Communities • Director Planning, Transport and Environment (previously Director, City Operations) • Chief Digital Officer • Assistant Director, Corporate Landlord • Assistant Director, Street Scene • Head of Democratic Services	• Director of Communities, Housing and Customer Services • Director, City Operations • Assistant Director, Commercial Services • Enterprise Architecture Operational Manager

68. The Council aims to ensure that Members and Officers have the skills, knowledge and capacity to discharge their responsibilities effectively and recognises the importance of well trained,

competent people. New staff and Members attend an induction programme to introduce them to the Council and its values, objectives, policies and procedures. An in-house Cardiff Manager Programme represents a commitment to increasing the learning and development of staff with line management responsibilities. The programme is well embedded, having trained more than 500 staff in key management and finance skills since it commenced in 2014. Approximately 250 managers have completed an ILM level 3 qualification following participating in the programme.

69. A Member Learning and Development Programme aims to provide Members with access to a range of development opportunities to assist them in delivering their roles as Community Leaders and Council representatives. The programme is informed by the WLGA Continuing Professional Development for Councillors Competency Framework, which sets out the range of skills and knowledge required by Members. The 2017/18 induction programme was developed by a Member Development Steering Group as part of a Member Support and Induction Project and approved by the Democratic Services Committee. The programme was developed to include induction sessions in May 2017, a series of essential sessions in the first 12 weeks and further development and information sessions on specific topics until December 2017.

70. Performance is primarily evaluated through the Council's Personal Performance and Development Review (PPDR) process, which provides a framework for employees and managers to discuss work performance and behaviour as well as to identify learning and development needs. It enables employees to be clear about their roles, responsibilities and the behaviours expected of them whilst giving a clear understanding of how their job and efforts contribute to the Council's objectives. Member Personal Development Reviews are also in place to help them update their knowledge and learn new skills, where required, to be more effective in supporting their communities. The Cardiff Council Academy supports the PPDR through the provision of a number of learning and development programmes and courses.

71. The Council's Workforce Strategy has employee health and wellbeing as a priority. The Council continues to support the 'Time to Change' Pledge, and during 2017/18 has been recognised as a Disability Confident Employer, signed the Dying to Work Charter, is working towards being a Dementia Friendly organisation and achieving the Health Standard Silver Award. The Council continues to deliver the Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-19 which provides a broad framework to address barriers to wellbeing and identify ways to improve employee wellbeing.

72. The Council has published an Annual Statutory Improvement Report, which provides a retrospective summary evaluation of performance for 2016/17 as required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. In assessing progress against Improvement Objectives, a number of sources of information were used including reviews of inspection reports, surveys, feedback, case studies and performance measures. A positive performance trend can be reported as 60% of National Indicator results were better than the Wales average, compared to 48% in 2015/16. However, it is recognised that the Council will need to continue to address areas of underperformance through future planning arrangements.

73. The Wales Audit Office published an Annual Improvement Report 2016/17 in September 2017, which is a forward-looking assessment that considers the likelihood of compliance with the Council's duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. The report did not raise any formal recommendations, but it made proposals for improvement, relating to good governance when determining service changes and financial planning arrangements. The report concluded that:

'Based on, and limited to the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure (2009) during 2017-18'

F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.

74. Risk management is an integral part of strategic decision making, forming a key element of business planning, budget proposals, budget strategy, programme and project considerations. A Corporate Risk Register (CRR) is maintained and reviewed by SMT each quarter to ensure it includes key risks to the corporate vision, objectives and priorities. A Corporate Risk Map has also been used throughout 2017/18 to provide a transparent representation of the status of corporate risks and to support a proportionate management response.

75. The risk management process is led by the Information Governance and Risk Management Team, and supported by a nominated Member Risk Champion, Senior Officer Risk Champion and a network of Directorate Risk Champions. This process is designed to ensure clear ownership of risks which are identified, reviewed and escalated systematically each financial quarter.

76. Following a strategic risk management review, a draft Risk Management Strategy and Policy has been developed by the risk management network and considered by the Audit Committee in January 2018. A process of consultation and review by the Cabinet has commenced at the financial year-end. It is anticipated that the Risk Management Strategy and Policy will be approved and operational in the first financial quarter of 2018/19.

77. Decisions are made based on reports from officers which include assessments of the legal, HR and financial implications arising from the decision. Service delivery is monitored through risk registers and performance information and reports. The Cardiff's Statutory Improvement Report provides an annual summary of performance against Welsh Government indicators and corporate priorities and commitments. Projects and Programmes are monitored using PQA criteria, including use of milestones, risk and issue registers and lessons learned methodologies.

78. The Council's five standing Scrutiny Committees are designed to support the Cabinet in providing accessible, efficient and effective services for citizens. They meet on a monthly basis to undertake pre-decision scrutiny, policy monitoring and review and launch in-depth inquiries to help the Cabinet develop and review policies and services. The majority of recommendations raised to Cabinet following Scrutiny Inquiries are fully accepted. A number of the Council's collaborative activities are governed by Joint Committee's, examples include the CCR City Deal Joint (Regional) Cabinet, Wales Pension Partnership Joint Governance Committee, Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Committee, the Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee and the Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee.

79. The Audit Committee provides assurance to the Council on the effectiveness of its governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements through a wide ranging programme of work. The Audit Committee through its work programme has standard agenda items at each meeting which include; budgetary and financial information, treasury management, risk and governance, internal audit, external audit and operational matters. The Acting Audit Manager reports functionally to the Audit Committee and administratively to the Council's Section 151 Officer.

80. As part of its quality assurance and improvement programme, the Internal Audit Section has to measure conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), which came into force in April 2013. The PSIAS is a central measure of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit function against the mandatory elements of the International Professional Practices Framework, against which an external assessment is required at least every five years. An external assessment was completed in quarter 3 2017/18 by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, which involved discussions with various officers from Internal Audit and a review of supporting information. The external assessment has reported no significant deviations from the PSIAS, but offered a small number of recommendations to enhance information in the Internal Audit Charter, which have been progressed by the Acting Audit Manager.

81. Members and senior managers are provided with quarterly performance information on a balanced scorecard basis, with performance measured against performance indicators which are aligned to corporate plan priorities. The standard corporate risk scoring approach is used to measure performance and enable consistency of understanding. The financial element of the balanced scorecard quantifies variances between the budget and actual position for each Directorate in respect of the overall budget position, savings delivery and staff costs.

82. The Council has robust arrangements for internal control. The risk management policy, strategy and methodology enables consistency in risk assessments across the Council, supported by a portfolio of policies and procedures to ensure effective stewardship of public monies, address maladministration, corruption and fraud, as summarised under Principal B *Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.* .

83. Effective arrangements are in place to safeguard personal data. During 2017/18, the Council has been preparing for the General Data Protection Regulation which will come into force next year. An Action Plan setting out the changes in legislation has provided the focus of the work from aligning policies and processes through to raising awareness. The Corporate Director Resources is the Council's Senior Information Risk Owner, supported by a dedicated team who manage the overall Council approach to information management. An Information Governance Strategy contains a suite of information governance policies, procedures and guidance information to support compliance with the Freedom of Information Act / Environmental Information Regulations, Data Protection Act, Privacy and Electronic Communication Regulations and Protection of Freedoms Act.

84. An Information Governance Training Strategy sits alongside the Information Governance Strategy to enable clear understanding of corporate and individual responsibilities. A risk assessment determines the extent of staff training, information and support required to provide the Council and the Information Commissioner's Office with the required assurance. Members are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as individual Data Controllers.

85. As outlined in the section on *Principle D. 'Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes'* significant attention has been given to financial management to support both long term and operational performance, through medium term financial planning and robust financial resilience mechanisms. This is integrated into all levels of planning and control, and is tracked both through performance monitoring of outcomes and through the corporate risk management mechanisms.

G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

86. The Council aims for all reports for the public and other stakeholders to be written in a fair, balanced and understandable way. This is to achieve a balance between providing full and complete information to demonstrate clear transparency without being onerous or overly complex.

87. The Council also aims for information to be easy for the Council and the public to find and use. It has adopted the Information Commissioner's model publication scheme, which sets out the classes of information that should be routinely available.

88. The Council's Annual Statutory Improvement Report evaluates performance, summarising the findings of a number of reports on performance, including corporate measures and evaluations of delivery against the What Matters, equality, sustainability and scrutiny measures.

89. The AGS is an assessment of the governance of the Council applied to the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' CIPFA / SOLACE framework, as outlined in the *Assessment Process and Summary*.

90. To demonstrate accountability, Senior Management Assurance Statements (SMAS) are completed by each Director twice a year to self-assess performance against a set of governance, risk management and internal control statements. The overall position is reviewed and authorised by the Chief Executive following the financial year end, at which point the overall Senior Management Statement is included within section 4) *Assessment Process and Summary*. Collectively, SMT hold an Action Plan of significant governance issues, representing an open disclosure of the most prominent issues of governance which require attention following the SMAS review. The AGS Action Plan is included in the following section.

91. The SMAS and AGS Action plan of significant governance issues are reviewed biannually by SMT, Audit Committee and the Information Governance and Risk Team. The aim is to achieve openness and transparency in Council affairs and identification, communication and management of matters which require corporate attention.

92. Council meet in May of each year to establish Committees: their size, terms of reference and allocation of seats. The Council's Constitution sets out the terms of reference for each of its Committees and the decisions that can be taken by each of those Committees, and is reviewed regularly by the Constitution Committee. A number of Committees have been appointed by Council to discharge regulatory and scrutiny services and they deliver annual reports on their performance and findings.

93. Prior to services being delivered through third parties or via joint working arrangements, the Legal Services Team assist directorates to ensure responsibilities and accountabilities for governance and risk management are adequately documented. The risk management policy strategy and methodology requires clear risk management arrangements in whichever model of service delivery is used.

94. Performance information is published against statutory NSI and PAM datasets, as set by the Welsh Government. Where these indicators and measures are relevant to the progress made against the Council's Improvement Objectives and Outcome Agreement they are included in Council's Improvement Report. This report includes ranking information to clearly and transparently show performance relative to each other Local Authorities in Wales.

95. The Council has taken steps to ensure that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon, such as the development of a statement of action for the Corporate Assessment Follow-on published in February 2016, and targeted governance projects to deliver the required improvements. Opportunities to learn from wider studies from the WAO are taken through the use of a tracker system to identify and summarise a range of their publications for the information and consideration of the Audit Committee.

96. The Council has an effective Internal Audit Service, as supported by performance information and reporting, which has been externally assessed as conforming with the PSIAS in all material respects. The Internal Audit Charter enables direct access to all officers, managers and members and requires functional reporting to the Audit Committee. Governance assessments form an element of the majority of audit engagements and the overall review of governance, risk management and control has informed the annual assurance statement from the Audit Manager. All recommendations are reported to Audit Committee and tracked to provide assurance that they are acted upon.

97. Peer challenges, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies are welcomed by Cardiff Council as a means to provide assurance over service delivery or identify opportunities for improvement.

iii)   AGS Action Plan – Significant Governance Issues

To be completed following the financial year end 2017/18

Certification by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive

<mark>To be completed following the financial year end 2017/18</mark>

Paul Orders, Chief Executive

Date:

Councillor Huw Thomas, Leader of the City of Cardiff Council

Date: