

Ref: GAC2022-1
Date: 10 October 2022

Councillor Huw Thomas and Paul Orders
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF104UW

Dear Councillor Huw Thomas and Paul Orders

Governance and Audit Committee Recommendations and Observations - Draft Well-being (Self-Assessment) Report 2021/22

In accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Governance and Audit Committee has a responsibility to review the Council's draft annual Self-Assessment Report (represented by the Annual Well-being Report) and to make any recommendations for changes.

This is the Committee's inaugural review of the above report since the legislative responsibilities of the Committee have been brought into force. Our review has followed a process of engagement, primarily with Gareth Newell, Head of Performance and Partnerships, during the municipal year 2021/22. This engagement has informed our Committee of processes for the report's preparation, assessment, scrutiny and oversight.

A Governance and Audit Committee consultation on the above report commenced with Paul Orders, Chief Executive and Gareth Newell, Head of Performance and Partnerships attending our Committee meeting on 27 September 2022 to present the draft annual Self-Assessment Report. The meeting was informative, and we received a clear outline of the different performance and assurance components which make up the overall assessment. We raised questions from our initial consideration of the report and received useful explanations. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank these officers for attending our Committee to provide an invaluable outline of the report.

The following recommendations and observations reflect on the draft report received in Committee, introductory pages to the report which we subsequently circulated, and the considerations which followed with the engagement of the full Committee.

GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



**STRONGER
FAIRER
GREENER**



We raise the following Governance and Audit Committee ‘Recommendations’.

| Recommendations | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. | We recommend that the draft Strategic Assessments under each Wellbeing Objective are reviewed to: - a. ensure the overall evaluative conclusions are explicitly recorded, b. consider if they provide sufficient emphasis on outcomes. |
| 2. | The Committee recognises the well-structured and comprehensive self-assessment process. However, we recommend the Council considers if the Annual Well-Being Report adequately records conclusions on the extent to which it meets its “performance requirements” namely: - a. It is exercising its functions effectively, b. It is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively, c. Its governance is effective for securing the above |
| 3. | It is considered that the narrative self-assessment within the “Key Successes” sections have an emphasis on input activities, we recommend that for future annual Self-Assessment Reports, that the Council consider whether a stronger focus on outcomes can be applied. |

We also raise the following Governance and Audit Committee ‘Observations’.

Our Committee has wider observations which are outlined in the following paragraphs. These observations are not to be treated as recommendations, but as matters for the Council to reflect upon and consider, as future annual reports are prepared. The Committee offers them in the spirit of continuous improvement.

- Our Committee recognises that the annual report represents the Council’s comprehensive evaluation of its performance. Members also recognise the importance of the Council’s wider stakeholder collaboration and partnerships through which there are shared goals and ways of working. Consideration could be given in future reports to the representation of whole-system objectives and the Council’s performance in this wider context.
- In further reflection on engagement, the Council may consider outlining details of the consultations and surveys related to the Well-being Objectives assessed, which could enhance the narrative within the assessment.

- Where data is used to illustrate performance, it should include a context so that the reader can consider the level of performance. There were some examples of figures being quoted for which it is not possible to identify if performance is good, bad or indifferent.
- In future reports, consideration could be given to increasing the prominence of the evaluation of the 5-ways of working as defined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We trust that the recommendations and observations contained within this letter offer useful and practical insight from our Committee on the areas where we consider the representation of the Council's performance assessment could be enhanced, and a means to build upon what our Committee recognise as a comprehensive and professionally written report.

Yours sincerely

David Hugh Thomas
Chairperson, Governance and Audit Committee

Gavin McArthur
Deputy Chairperson, Governance and Audit Committee

On behalf of the Governance and Audit Committee

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Governance and Audit Committee
Scrutiny Committee Chairpersons
Chris Lee, Corporate Director Resources
Chris Pyke, Audit Manager
Gareth Newell, Head of Performance and Partnerships
Dylan Owen, Head of the Cabinet Office
Gary Jones, Head of Democratic Services