

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF  
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**8 September 2015**

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**CITY OF CARDIFF COUNCIL STATUTORY ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT  
REPORT 2014-15**

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**Reason for this Report**

1. For Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee to consider the Council's draft Annual Improvement Report prior to submission to Full Council on 24 September 2015, and factor areas of interest into its final discussion and approval of the Committees Work Programme 2015-16 later on the agenda.

**Background**

2. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires the Council to publish its Improvement Objectives and how it plans to achieve them. The Auditor General for Wales in previous assessments of the Council's performance of this duty highlighted the need for the Council to be more focussed on its key priorities and on their delivery. 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 the Council 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 three priorities, and in turn they helped to shape the Council's Improvement Objectives for 2014/15 and the content of the Outcome Agreement with the Welsh Government for 2013/16.
  4. The authority's 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. The Council is also required under the Measure to assess its 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 made against the authority's Improvement Objectives and Outcome Agreement they are included in this Improvement Report. The Council's 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 24 September 2015.
7. The City of Cardiff Council Annual Report 2014/15, attached as **Appendix A**, 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.

The Council's Annual Improvement Report 2014/15 seeks to address these issues.

### **Wales Audit Office Corporate Assessment of the City of Cardiff Council**

10. 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 the Council's Organisational Development Plan resolved the range of issues identified in the assessment. 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?'*

11. 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 the organisation's performance arrangements.

12. The output for the Wales Audit Office work will be a published report, planned for issue in early 2016.

13. Attached at **Appendix A** is the draft Annual Improvement Report 2014-15, a document the Council is required to publish under the Local Government

(Wales) Measure 2009, which will be submitted for consideration by Full Council in September 2015, prior to publication by 31 October 2015.

## **Way Forward**

14. The Committee is invited to consider the Annual Improvement Report 2014/15, and internally challenge how effectively the Council is preparing for improvement, by focusing on delivery of its three key priorities as previously highlighted by external regulators, Wales Audit Office.

## **Legal Implications**

15. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

16. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme.

However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. consider the Council's Annual Improvement Report 2014-15;
- II. ensure that key issues highlighted during the scrutiny inform the Committee's consideration of its Work Programme for 2015-16 later on the agenda; and
- III. report any concerns and observations on the Annual Improvement Report 2014-15 to the Leader of the Council prior to submission to Full Council and publication by the statutory date 31 October 2015.

### **Paul Orders**

Chief Executive

2 September 2015