

Annual Well-being Report 2023/24 – End of Year Performance Assessment

Reason for the Report

1. To support committee's pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's Annual Well-Being Report 2023/24, reviewing the Council's end of year performance assessment prior to its consideration by Cabinet on 19 September 2024.

Structure of the Papers

2. Attached to this report are a series of appendices to assist Members preparations:

Appendix A – Cabinet Report titled Annual Well-Being Report 2023/24

Appendix 1 - Annual Well-Being Report 2022/23

Appendix 2 [Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Context

3. This committee has responsibility for scrutiny of the Council's corporate planning, performance assessment and reporting arrangements in line with its Terms of Reference.
4. The Council's Annual Well-Being Report 2023/24 is the end-of year performance report providing an assessment of the progress made in delivery of the administration's priorities as expressed within the Corporate Plan 2023-26.
5. In publishing this Annual Wellbeing Report 2023/24 the Council is addressing a number of statutory requirements as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
6. The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires an annual report of progress and review of Wellbeing Objectives.

7. The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act requires the Council to implement a self-assessment process each financial year that measures and reviews the performance of its functions, ensuring that resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively.
8. To meet these requirements, in February 2022 the Council introduced a strengthened Performance & Planning Framework and Data Strategy. This reflective performance management process assists the Council in developing a balanced picture of its improvement journey over the year, while also recognising areas which require further attention. The approach makes a strategic evaluative assessment of performance for each Well-being objective, in order to identify areas of focus for the year ahead. The self-assessment framework includes challenge by a number of stakeholders, including all Scrutiny Committees and the Governance & Audit Committee.
9. As part of the Performance Framework the Leader of the Council has committed to collaborative scrutiny engagement in the corporate planning and performance assessment process. This includes engaging informally with all Scrutiny Chairs to consider the corporate self -assessment of the Council's end of year performance 2023/24 and reflecting on their comments and observations before the Annual Well-being Report 2023/24 is formally published and considered by Cabinet. This level of engagement affords scrutiny an opportunity to shape and inform the self-assessment process.
10. The remit and role performed by the Scrutiny Performance Panel extends to in-depth informal scrutiny across all Council services. As such, membership of the Panel reflects the specialised knowledge and understanding of all five Council Scrutiny Committees, to enable effective internal challenge of the Authority's overall performance.
11. Comments, observations and recommendations made by Scrutiny Chairs at the informal meeting held on 5 September will be circulated before committee (*to follow*) to inform this pre-decision scrutiny of the Annual Well-being Report 2023/24, prior to its consideration by Cabinet and full Council.

Background

12. Members will be aware that in February each year, the Council approves a three-year **Corporate Plan**. The Corporate Plan sets out how the Council will deliver the administration's priorities as set out in its Policy Statement and the Council's Well-

being Objectives for the year in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Plan includes the **Steps** and **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** considered necessary to deliver and monitor progress.

13. The Corporate Plan 2023/26 is structured around 7 **Well-being Objectives**.

- Cardiff is a great place to grow up
- Cardiff is a great place to grow older
- Supporting people out of poverty
- Safe, confident and empowered communities
- A capital city that works for Wales
- One Planet Cardiff
- Modernising and integrating our public services

14. The Annual Well-Being Report 2023/24 is a statutory annual review and end-of-year self-assessment of performance 2023/24 in line with the commitments set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-26 and includes:

- A strategic self-assessment of the Council's performance for the reporting year 2023/24 against each of the Well-being Objectives (**Appendix 1**);
- A detailed update – with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) ratings – against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) included within the Corporate Plan 2023-26 and a detailed narrative update – with RAG ratings – against the Steps included within the Corporate Plan 2023-26. Updates against the Steps and KPIs in the Corporate Plan 2023-26 can be accessed via the [Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

15. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places a new duty on local authorities to keep performance under review. The Act, and associated Welsh Government guidance, sets out the expectations and purpose of the self-assessment, which is summarised as follows:

“...a way of critically, and honestly, reviewing the current position in order to make decisions on how to secure improvement for the future. Self-assessment is more

than stating what arrangements are in place; it is about considering how effective these arrangements are and how they can be improved. Self-assessment of how the council is meeting the performance requirements places ownership of performance and improvement firmly with councils...It is about a council being self-aware, understanding whether it is delivering the right outcomes, and challenging itself to continuously improve.”

16. The self-assessment report must set out its conclusions on the extent to which the Council met the performance requirements during that financial year, and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements. This duty is discharged through the publication of the Annual Well-being Report.

17. To provide an end-of-year summary and evidence-based assessment of progress the report brings together information from several sources to assess performance, including:
 - **Progress against the Council’s Key Performance Indicators**
 - **Progress against the steps under each Well-being Objective**
 - **Regulatory assessment** – The Council is subject to a number of inspections from regulatory bodies including Audit Wales, Estyn (Education) and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Their findings help the Council to assess areas of strong performance, as well as identifying areas that require improvement.
 - **Surveys and citizen feedback**, including the Ask Cardiff, Budget, and Child Friendly surveys, and
 - **Annual Complaints Report 2023/24.**
 - **Financial monitoring** – The Council’s Outturn Report 2023/24 serves to inform of the Council’s financial position at year end 2023/24
 - **Feedback from Scrutiny Committees and the Governance & Audit Committee** - the Council responds to the issues raised and recommendations made by the Committees, which help inform performance improvement.
 - **Risk** –The Council’s corporate and directorate risks are considered fully.
 - **Annual Governance Statement** sets out an assessment of the Council’s framework of governance, risk management and internal control.

Council Performance

18. The Annual Well-being Report 2023-24 points to a broad pattern of year-on-year improvement across a range of council services. A summary of achievements can be found at point 13 of the Cabinet report attached at **Appendix A.**:

19. The Annual Well-being Report 2023/24 also draws attention to a range of strategic performance challenges, which need to remain the subject of corporate focus over the year ahead.

- Managing sustained increase in the complexity and scale of demand across council services:
- Ensuring continued service and financial resilience: The Council faces significant immediate and medium-term budgetary challenges.
- Workforce pressures
- Responding to new risks and issues.

Service and Budget Review Programme

20. Given the pressures ahead, in May 2024 the Cabinet initiated a comprehensive, politically led assessment to review and redesign services and ways of working so that the Council can continue to deliver the Stronger, Fairer, Greener policy agenda and provide vital services to the people of Cardiff while saving £100m over the next four years. The review process would be guided by the delivery of the Cabinet's Stronger, Fairer, Greener policy agenda and the delivery of Corporate Plan priorities (*Appendix A points 19-22*):

- **Stronger:** We will prioritise front line services and continue to drive the city's development.
- **Fairer:** We will protect the most vulnerable people and communities, making sure any change is fair and equitable.
- **Greener:** We will be a One Planet Council, making sure that carbon reduction is a priority for all services how we deliver projects and manage our assets.

21. In establishing the review, a series of **principles** was to be used to guide the Council's approach to changing services: In summary:

- A Member-led Council
- Citizens first
- Digital by default
- A commitment to partnerships
- Services that are preventative and intervene in the right way, at the right time
- Commercial thinking
- An engaged Council
- Commitment to developing a future-focused workforce
- Realism and achievability.

22. The first phase of this work took place in Quarter 1 of 2024/25 with a service and budget self-assessment that was completed by all services. In parallel, cross-cutting reviews of key corporate enablers have been initiated to identify service change and budget saving opportunities for the short-, medium- and long-term. This service and budget review process will continue over the course of the year, supporting the development of the Corporate Plan 2025-28 and the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2025/26, and ensuring service resilience over the course of the Council's MTFP. (*Appendix A ,point21*)

Panel Performance Assessment

23. An additional requirement of the Local Government and Election (Wales) Act 2021 requires the council to make arrangements for an independent panel, appointed by the council, to assess the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements at least once during an election cycle – *a Panel Performance Assessment*. (*Appendix A points 23-28*)

24. In this report Cabinet is recommended to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation & Performance, to put in place arrangements for a Panel Performance Assessment to take place in the 2025/26 performance year

Scope of the Scrutiny

25. The scope of the scrutiny will focus on the assessment of performance at year end and the challenges and priorities ahead. Members are invited to reflect on whether the end-of-year Performance Report 2023/24 aligns with the findings of the committees over the year. Comment and observations are invited on performance related to all seven Well-being objectives. However, the key objective relevant to the PRAP Terms of Reference is **WBO7 – Modernising and Integrating Our Public Services**.
26. Members are requested to consider whether there are comments and observations that need to be captured during the Committees discussion of this item at the Way Forward for submission to Cabinet.

Way Forward

27. To support consideration of this item the Leader of the Council, Councillor Huw Thomas; the Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation and Performance, Cllr Chris Weaver; Chief Executive, Paul Orders; Corporate Director Resources, Chris Lee; Corporate Director Communities, Sarah McGill; Head of Performance and Partnerships, Gareth Newell; and Operational Manager for Policy & Improvement, Dylan Owen, will attend to facilitate the discussion.

Legal Implications

28. 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

29. 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 information provided at the meeting, the Council's Annual Well-Being Report 2023/24, supported by the Corporate Performance dashboard; and
- II. Determine whether it wishes to convey any comments, observations, or recommendations to Cabinet.

DEBBIE MARLES

Director, Governance & Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

5 September 2024