



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022/23

COUNCIL PROGRESS UPDATE - AUDIT WALES - SPRINGING FORWARD REPORTS:

STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT

WORKFORCE PLANNING

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 OCTOBER 2022

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Committee with the latest Audit Wales' reports in respect of the Council's services and to provide the opportunity for Members to review the progress made to date by the Council in implementing the recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Scrutinise the progress updates (Appendix 1a – Strategic Asset Management and Appendix 2a – Workforce Planning).
- 2.2 Consider the progress made by Council Services to date in implementing recommendations reported by Audit Wales and determine whether further information and / or further progress updates are required.
- 2.3 Consider whether there are any matters of a governance, internal control or risk management nature that require referral to the Council's Governance and Audit Committee.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 In 2021/22, Audit Wales conducted an examination of each Council's overall arrangements and approach to transforming, adapting and maintaining the delivery of services. The review focussed on how the Council is approaching this in relation to;

- strategic management of its assets; and
- strategic management of its workforce

3.2 The resultant reports were issued in June and July 2022 respectively and were presented by Audit Wales to the [Governance and Audit Committee on 7 September 2022](#). For Members information, there were no matters highlighted by the Governance and Audit Committee at the 7th September 2022 meeting for referral back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. AUDIT WALES REPORT – 'SPRINGING FORWARD – Strategic Asset Management'

4.1 Set out at Appendix 1 is the Audit Wales report in respect of Strategic Assessment management and how this is being shaped by experiences of Covid-19. The report was issued in June 2022, following a review in late 2021.

4.2. This is the first report received by the Council which reflects Audit Wales' approach focussing on the Council's application of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Sustainable Development Principle.

4.3 The report concludes

1. *'The Council has good arrangements to deliver its current corporate asset management strategy but now needs to put the sustainable development principle at the heart of its considerations when renewing its strategy and supporting arrangements.*
2. *The Council is preparing to renew its corporate asset management strategy and needs to ensure this is fully shaped by the sustainable development principle.*
3. *The Council has good arrangements to deliver its current corporate asset management strategy and having responded to the COVID-19 crisis with agility and in partnership with other public sector organisations is looking to retain some benefits of new ways of working.*

The Council has strengthened its arrangements to monitor progress with its asset management plan, but, like other councils, will need to compare its data and performance with others to help it demonstrate its asset management arrangements are value for money'.

4.4 The report also sets out one recommendation:

The Council needs to ensure the sustainable development principle is driving and shaping its approach to all its assets. For example:

- *the Council should develop a longer-term approach to its assets; and*
- *the Council will need to fully integrate its workforce and digital strategies with its longer-term plans for its assets.*

4.5 Appendix 1a sets out how the Council is undertaking actions that will address this recommendation.

5 AUDIT WALES REPORT – ‘SPRINGING FORWARD – Workforce Planning’

5.1 Set out at Appendix 2 is the Audit Wales report in respect of Workforce Planning and how this is being shaped by experiences of Covid -19. The report was issued in July 2022, following a review in early 2022.

5.2. As set out in paragraph 4.2, this report also reflects Audit Wales’ focus on the Council’s application of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Sustainable Development Principle.

5.3 The report concludes

- *‘The Council has a clear vision and effective planning arrangements for its workforce but as it renews its workforce strategy will need to ensure this is shaped by the sustainable development principle.*
- *The Council has made good progress delivering its current workforce strategy, has a good understanding of the current challenges and is dealing with the impact that the pandemic has on its workforce; and*
- *The Council has arrangements to monitor and review its workforces and whilst it does engage with other organisations to shared knowledge and experience, examples of active and meaningful benchmarking are few.’*

5.4 The report also sets out one recommendation:

‘Extend existing workforce management data to include comparative benchmarking with other organisations to inform planning and strengthen the assessment of workforce initiatives’.

5.5 Appendix 2a sets out how the Council is undertaking actions that will address this recommendation.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

6.1 This report provides an update on the work being taken by the Council to progress recommendations reported by Audit Wales; therefore, an Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment is not required.

7 WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no Welsh language implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

8 CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 There is no direct requirement for Consultation/Involvement in this report. However, more widely, Involvement is a key pillar to enable the Council to respond to the Audit Wales finding in respect of the Sustainable Development Principle.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

11 LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 11.1 The Council's work to in respect of Strategic Asset Management and Workforce Planning is key to the delivery of the Corporate Priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan, '[Making a Difference – 2020-24](#)' and also contributes to the wider approach of 'Living within our means' and being an 'efficient and effective' Council.

12 CONCLUSION

- 12.1 Audit Wales reports play an important role in supporting on-going improvement to the Council's governance and service delivery arrangements, and as part of this process, the Council utilises its Scrutiny Committees and Governance and Audit Committee in line with their Terms of Reference, to oversee the arrangements and the monitoring of progress.
- 12.2 In line with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference, the Committee has responsibility for reviewing and challenging the progress the Council is making toward implementing agreed actions and forming a view on the adequacy of progress being made.
- 12.3 Lastly, where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider there are matters of a 'governance', 'internal control' or 'risk management' nature that require further review, these can be referred back to Governance and Audit Committee for consideration.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 10th October 2022

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND
COMMUNICATION**

**Council Progress Update - Audit Wales - Springing Forward Reports (Strategic
Asset Management and Workforce Planning)**

Item:

Background Papers

None.

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