

Report To: Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 26 March 2014

**Lead Member / Officer: Barbara Smith – Lead Member for Modernising & Performance
Alan Smith – Head of Business Improvement & Modernisation**

Report Author: Ivan Butler – Head of Internal Audit

Title: Draft report - 'Delivering good governance and continuous improvement'

1. What is the report about?

This is a first consultation with the Committee on the self-assessment report on the Council's governance and improvement arrangements for 2013/14.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Corporate Governance Committee usually approves the Council's Annual Governance Statement, which this report now replaces by combining the previous governance self-assessment and corporate self-assessment. It is good practice to consult widely on the self-assessment with elected members and senior management and this is the commencement of that process.

3. What are the Recommendations?

The Committee considers and comments on:

- the new approach to the combined self-assessment;
- the content of the self-assessment; and
- whether it requires any amendments or additions to the self-assessment.

4. Report details

It is considered good practice to develop an 'annual governance statement' (AGS) that forms part of the Council's Statement of Accounts but, in the past, there has been some duplication between the self-assessment needed for the AGS and the corporate self-assessment that focused more on continuous improvement. We therefore decided to combine the documents to provide an innovative approach that saves resources and provides a joined-up approach to self-assessment within the Council.

Appendix 1 provides a Draft that we have called 'Delivering good governance and continuous improvement' that is now open for consultation with elected members and

senior management. The Committee should note that this is a very early draft that is still a work in progress and needs to be discussed further, particularly with Senior Leadership Team. The agreed final version will be signed by the CEO and Leader by 30 June 2014 and presented to this Committee with the Statement of Accounts.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

While the self-assessment itself does not directly contribute to Corporate Priorities, it provides an assessment and assurance on the delivery of the Corporate Plan, the Council's operational and financial performance, governance arrangements, community engagement etc. that are all directed towards delivering the Corporate Priorities.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

There are no costs attached to this report and the only impact on services is where the report identifies improvement areas; however, services will already be aware of these and should be building this into their service planning.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

This report does not require a decision or proposal for change, so there is no impact on people who share protected characteristics.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

The Draft document was discussed at CET on 17 March 2014 and this report is the next stage in the consultation process. It will need to be discussed further with other elected members, then with Senior Leadership Team in May 2014 before returning to this Committee as a 'final draft' in May 2014.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no financial implications attached to this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

This is a consultation on a draft document and there are no risks identified at this stage.

11. Power to make the Decision

There is no decision required for this report but there is a requirement under the local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 for the 'audit committee' to oversee the Council's corporate governance arrangements.