

Report To: Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 21 May 2014

**Lead Member / Officer: Barbara Smith – Lead Member for Modernising & Performance
Ivan Butler – Head of Internal Audit**

Report Author: Ivan Butler – Head of Internal Audit

Title: ‘Delivering good governance and continuous improvement’

1. What is the report about?

This is a final 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 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 document called ‘Delivering good governance and continuous improvement’ that is now in its final stages of consultation with elected members and senior management. The CEO and Leader need to sign the agreed

final version by 30 June 2014 and it will be presented to this Committee with the Statement of Accounts in September 2014.

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 document was discussed at:

- Corporate Executive Team on 17 March 2014
- Corporate Governance Committee on 15 April 2014
- Council Briefing on 28 April 2014
- Senior Leadership Team on 1 May 2014

It has also been distributed to Cabinet members and the Wales Audit Office for comment.

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.