

Report To: Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 26 September 2018

Lead Member / Officer: Hugh Evans, Leader

Report Author: Alan Smith, Head of Business Improvement & Modernisation

Title: **2017-18 Annual Improvement Report**

1. What is the report about?

The report concerns the annual assessment of the Council's prospects for improvement, undertaken by the Wales Audit Office

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide information to Members on the Council's Annual Improvement Report (AIR). See Appendix 1

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee note the contents of the attached report and the proposals for improvement within it

4. Report details

Under the Local Government Measure, the Wales Audit Office annually reviews the Council's progress towards meeting its objectives and its prospects for continuing to improve in the year ahead.

For the year 2017-18, the WAO has concluded overall that: *'The Council continues to meet its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement' and that: 'Having made significant progress in delivering its current vision, the Council is developing an updated plan to describe its vision and key ambitions for the future'.*

The report does not make any formal recommendations, but does set out some Proposals for Improvement, set out below. Against each, I have included the progress the Council has made to date in responding to these.

	Proposal for Improvement	Progress
P1	The Council's governance arrangements could be strengthened by consistent, timely monitoring of the impact of each significant service change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Version 2 of the Well-Being Impact Assessment contains strengthened analysis of Equality Impacts. Scrutiny Committees are updated with the Actions agreed at Service Challenges. The Corporate Plan Programme Boards play an active role in monitoring the impact of changes made to services as part of the Corporate Plan.
P2	Strengthen financial arrangements by:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an income generation/charging policy • Formally risk rate savings according to achievability and identify sustainable mitigating actions for those classified as high risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income policy was approved by Cabinet and forms part of the budget process; • Risk rating of savings has been incorporated into the budget process for 2018/19.
P3	<p>Strengthen people management arrangements by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an approach to ensure that employees with limited access to the intranet can access relevant HR information. • Ensuring that variations and inconsistency of application of HR policies are avoided for front line non—office based employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All HR information is now available on the DCC website to enable universal access. • HR information is now available for managers and supervisors to use in front-line ‘tool box talks’.
P4	<p>Strengthen Asset management arrangements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that actions already underway to modernise corporate asset management arrangements promote more efficient and effective use of the Council’s land and property portfolio and reinforce its contribution as a strategic resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal Asset management group has been established and a Corporate Asset Management Strategy developed
P5	<p>Strengthen ICT arrangements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the Council consults its ICT service over all technology purchases for both strategic and routine purchases; • Ensuring adequate ICT expertise are included in larger-scale or higher-risk procurements and implementations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ICT Business Partners are now involved in all developments from an early stage. It is now a requirement that all ICT purchase are signed off by the Business Transformation and ICT Manager.
P6	<p>Strengthen Information Management arrangements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring information governance arrangements meet the requirements of international standards and include representation from across the whole of the Council; • Extending the TOR of the Information Governance Group to cover business information needs as well as the requirements for compliance; • Developing an Information Strategy, linked to other resource strategies, to shape information use and ensure information is accessible when and where it is needed; • Developing longer term implementation plans for the EDRMS to move the Council towards its goal of a paperless office environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IGG now includes full representation from across the Council and has accepted the wider definition of its role. However, the work involved in GDPR preparation is currently the group’s priority, meaning that work on a new strategy has been put back to 2019. • The EDRMS work has confirmed financial resources until the end of the project

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

No decision is required, but the WAO's review of the Council's progress is an important part of understanding our progress towards delivering our Corporate Priorities.

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

There are no financial implications.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

Not applicable

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

Officers have reviewed the report for accuracy prior to publication

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

This positive report provides assurance that financial management arrangements are sound and no formal recommendations have been made and processes are in place to ensure that concerns raised are considered appropriately by the Council.

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

There would be risk to the Council if the proposals for improvement made by the WAO were not acted on

11. Power to make the Decision

No decision is required.