

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

15th September 2021

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES

Matter for Information

Wards Affected – All wards

Audit Wales / Estyn / Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Reports and Recommendations

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to set out the proposed process by which the Governance & Audit Committee will be provided with assurance that the Council is actively considering the findings of reports issued to the Council by Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

Background

On 3rd June 2021, Derwyn Owen, Auditor Director, Audit Wales wrote to Chairs of Governance & Audit Committee setting out Audit Wales expectation that all councils' Governance & Audit Committee formally consider reports of external review bodies – principally; Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) – copy of letter is attached at Addendum 1.

In addition to considering the reports, the Auditor Director also set out the expectation for committees to assure themselves that there are arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate progress against any recommendations contained in them.

The Auditor Director acknowledged councils' approaches to dealing with Audit Wales performance audit reports, proposals for improvement and Local Government studies' recommendations are variable and is therefore not assured that all councils are consistently actively considering the findings of reports issued by Audit Wales.

To support councils to do the above more consistently, Audit Wales will have a more targeted approach of distributing final reports upon

publishing, set out our expectations of how councils should deal with the recommendations and find out whether these expectations have been met.

In addition, the Auditor General for Wales will produce a timetable which sets out the dates or periods when Audit Wales, Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales will be undertaking their work. This timetable will be issued every quarter to councils and copied to Governance and Audit Committee chairs. The latest quarterly update dated 15th July 2021 is attached at Addendum 2.

Proposed Process

The diagram attached at Addendum 3 sets out the proposed process to provide assurance to the Committee that the Council is actively considering the findings of reports issued to the Council by Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

On a quarterly basis, the **Register of Regulator Reports & Recommendations** will be presented to Governance & Audit Committee which will be the Council's key document to demonstrate how accepted proposals for improvement / agreed recommendations received from regulators are being addressed by the Council (template is attached at Addendum 4).

The Register will list:

- reports issued (to date) to the Council by Audit Wales, Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales;
- scrutiny committee responsible for monitoring progress on the action plan containing the agreed proposals for improvement or recommendations (or other monitoring arrangements); and
- target date for update to Governance & Audit Committee on the monitoring of progress for (assurance purposes).

Following today's meeting, and any suggested amendments, the Register will be updated with the necessary information from April 2021 (to date) and will be presented to the next meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee scheduled on 26th November 2021.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts in respect of this item.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an integrated impact assessment in respect of this item.

Valleys Communities Impacts

There are no impacts in respect of this item.

Workforce impacts

There are no workforce impacts in respect of this item.

Legal Impacts

There are no legal impacts in respect of this item.

Risk Management

There are no risk management issues in respect of this item.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

Members note the proposed process by which the Governance & Audit Committee will be provided with assurance that the Council is actively considering the findings of reports issued to the Council by Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

Appendix

- Addendum 1 – Audit Wales Letter – 3rd June 2021 – Audit Wales Reports and Recommendations
- Addendum 2 – Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – 15th July 2021
- Addendum 3 – Proposed Process
- Addendum 4 – Template - Register of Regulators Reports & Recommendations

Background Papers

None

Officer Contact

For further information on this report item, please contact:

Mr Hywel Jenkins, Director of Finance and Corporate Services

E-mail: h.jenkins@npt.gov.uk

Mr Huw Jones, Head of Finance

E-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk

Mrs Caryn Furlow-Harris, Strategic Manager – Policy & Executive Support

E-mail: c.furlow@npt.gov.uk