

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

15th FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF

SHEENAGH REES

HEAD OF PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Matter for Consideration

Wards Affected – All Wards

Report Title – Draft Self-Assessment 2021/2022

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is for the Governance and Audit Committee to review the Neath Port Talbot Council draft Self-Assessment for 2021/22 further to a decision on approval being taken by Cabinet on 22nd February 2023. The council is required to publish the Self-Assessment within 4 weeks of approval.

Background

2. The completion of an annual self-assessment is a new requirement for all local authorities in Wales. The requirement is contained in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and is a corporate, organisational assessment rather than an assessment of individual services. There is a requirement to publish the Self-Assessment within 4 weeks of approval.
3. As part of the self-assessment, Neath Port Talbot Council is required to consider the extent to which it is:
 - exercising its functions effectively (*how well we are doing*)
 - using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively (*how do we know*)

- ensuring its governance is effective for securing the above (*what and how and we do better*)
4. From having sight of examples of completed self-assessments from across Wales, local authorities have adopted different approaches. Many have combined the self-assessment with the annual report on the achievement of well-being objectives for 2021/2022. This approach was not adopted here as the focus of the self-assessment should be an evidence-based analysis, understanding what both quantitative and qualitative information reveals about how the local authority is exercising its functions, using its resources and governing itself (rather than a focus on operational / service delivery).
 5. In undertaking the self-assessment process, in addition to stating what arrangements we have in place to ensure we are exercising our functions effectively, using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively and ensuring our governance is effective we have also considered how those arrangements can be further improved.
 6. The self-assessment sets out how we have approached the self-assessment – utilising the Local Government Association Efficiency Toolkit – which has provided a baseline enabling year on year improvement to be evidenced.

Conclusion:

7. The conclusion of the self-assessment is set out on page 27 and that Neath Port Talbot Council is identified as 'mature' when assessed against the Local Government Association Efficiency Toolkit.
8. A number of opportunities for improvement were identified during 2021/2022 as part of the extensive, council-wide work to develop the revised Corporate Plan for the period 2022/2027. The self-assessment exercise has provided assurance those opportunities for improvement were the right things to be focussing on during 2022/2023 (and onwards) and have been included in the Action Plan on pages 29-35. Progress on those improvement areas is also included.

9. In addition, the work undertaken to complete the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2021/2022 – which is an assessment of the effectiveness of internal control - identified 6 areas for improvement and these can be found in the Action Plan on page 29-35 along with progress made.

Financial Impact

10. There are no financial impacts in respect of this item.

Integrated Impact Assessment

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

Valleys Communities Impacts

12. There are no impacts in respect of this item.

Workforce impacts

13. There are no workforce impacts in respect of this item.

Legal Impacts

14. There are no legal impacts in respect of this item.

Risk Management

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

Consultation

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

Recommendation

17. No decision is required though Governance & Audit Committee are asked to review and comment on the draft Self-Assessment and if applicable make recommendations for any changes to the

conclusions or actions that they wish to propose the Cabinet consider when they come to approve the draft self-assessment.

Appendix

18. Neath Port Talbot Self-Assessment 2021/2022.

Background Papers

19. None

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