

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

22nd FEBRUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – SHEENAGH REES

Matter for: Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title – Self-Assessment 2021/2022

Purpose of Report

1. To present Members with the Council's draft self-assessment for 2021/2022. 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.
3. As part of the self-assessment, we are required to consider the extent to which the Council 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 can 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 council is exercising its functions, using its resources and governing itself (rather than a focus on operational / service delivery).

5. In undertaking this 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 report sets out how we have approached the self-assessment – utilising the LGA 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. Overall, the council is deemed as mature when assessed against the LGA 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 council's 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. 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.

10. As required under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 on 15th February 2023 the Governance and Audit Committee reviewed the draft Self-Assessment 2021/22. The Committee made no recommendations for any changes to the conclusions or actions contained within the draft.

Integrated Impact Assessment

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

Valleys Communities Impact:

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

Workforce Impact

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

Legal Impact

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.

Recommendations

17. Members are asked to approve the draft self-assessment prior to publication and submission to the Welsh Government.

Reason for Proposed Decision

18. To evidence how the Council is meeting the new duty set out in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, 'for each Council in Wales to keep under review the extent to which it is meeting the 'performance requirements', that is the extent to which:-
 - it is exercising its functions effectively;

- it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- its governance is effective for securing the above.'

Implementation of Decision

19. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

20. Appendix 1 – Draft Self-Assessment 2021/2022

List of Background Papers

21. Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

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