

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 11TH JULY, 2024

REFERENCE FROM GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE: 17TH JUNE, 2024

“129 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025-2030, PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE CALENDAR 2024/25 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet on 6th June, 2024 was presented.

The report presented the Vale of Glamorgan Annual Performance Calendar for 2024/25 which outlined the activities that would be subject to consideration by Members throughout the year. The report also outlined how it was proposed to engage with Elected Members in shaping the processes, key plans and reports aligned to the Annual Performance Calendar to enable the performance requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (LG&E Act) to be met and contributed to the national goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG Act).

This year there were two additional aspects of the Performance Calendar that required consideration – the development of a new Corporate Plan and the arrangements for undertaking a Panel Performance Assessment (PPA).

The report set out the approach being taken to develop the new five year Corporate Plan 2025-2030 which would be published in April 2025. Work on a new Corporate Plan would include the development of new Well-being Objectives and a more outcome focused approach.

The report detailed the scope and indicative timetable for undertaking the Council's Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) in Autumn 2024. Introduced by the LG&E Act, the purpose of the PPA was to provide independent, external challenge to help inform the Council's improvement journey by building on its own annual self-assessment. The PPA would assess the extent to which the Council was meeting the performance requirements (that was, exercising its functions effectively, using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively and exercising good governance) and also presented the opportunity to consider work being undertaken as part of the development of the Corporate Plan 2025-30. It was proposed that the focus for the PPA concentrated on the changes being made and the approach being taken to deliver what was needed to make it more outcome and future focused and to increase the organisation's resilience.

The key findings and learning from the review of last year's Annual Self-Assessment approach were also detailed within the report as were proposals to further enhance the process in readiness for the 2023/24 self-assessment.

The Council's self-assessment covering the period 2023/24 would be published in December 2024. This timeline aligned with existing performance management arrangements and would enable key performance and governance related insights to be brought together throughout the year into a summary judgement on how well the Council was meeting the performance requirements of the LG&E Act.

Appendix A to the report contained information regarding the rolling programme of collaborative work with Members throughout the 2024/25 Annual Performance Calendar to develop their skills and knowledge and strengthen their involvement in shaping and refining the key plans, reports and processes that would support them in their key role of assessing whether the Council was achieving its Well-being Objectives, delivering value for money and improving the well-being of its citizens.

Councillor E. Goodjohn stated that Project Zero needed to be at the centre of the new Corporate Plan as at the key target date of 2030 was only five years away. In addition, the Corporate Plan needed to contain specific targets which could be easily assessed as a success or a failure. Finally, Councillor Goodjohn asked whether there could be greater engagement with Councillors around development of the new Corporate Plan. In reply, the Director of Corporate Resources stated that Project Zero would be one of the key strategic issues which would be linked throughout the new Corporate Plan to other elements. In terms of setting targets there would be discussions around outcomes, and it was important for the Council to consider what the outcomes should be and how would those be achieved. Engagement with Elected Members would be undertaken on a regular basis as would engagement events with the Council's key stakeholders.

Mr. G. Chapman (Chair and Lay Member) commented that in some ways a shorter-term Corporate Plan over one to two years may be better given the Council would not know its financial position over five years. Therefore, the Council's targets and objectives should reflect the budget position on the basis that the budgets were set on a year by year basis. In reply, the Director of Corporate Resources stated that the thinking of developing a five year Plan was in conjunction with the Council's Annual Delivery Plan and the process around that was considered sound. However, there could be scope to reconsider how Service Plans were delivered and whether five Directorate Plans would be more appropriate. Further discussion and consideration on the mechanisms around reporting the delivery of outcomes and actions was ongoing. The Director clarified that members of the Governance and Audit Committee would be consulted as part of the 8 week consultation.

Councillor Goodjohn commented that the new Corporate Plan needed to take into account the Council's Risk Register, and he stated that a five year Plan was a better option as was long term thinking.

Councillor M. Hooper stated that the need to achieve net zero had been set for 2030 and he wanted the Corporate Plan to be more agile and less prescriptive which allowed the Council to be receptive to change and any emerging risks. In response, the Director stated that defining resilience versus agilities was very interesting, and one of the current proposals was having a smaller and simpler corporate plan focusing on a smaller set of priorities. Such an approach would also give the Council more adaptability.

There being no further comments or queries, the Committee

RESOLVED – T H A T the views of the Governance and Audit Committee be referred to Cabinet. The views being:

- For the role of Scrutiny to be highlighted in terms of developing a new Corporate Plan, in particular the arrangements for assessing performance against the Plan.
- For Project Zero to be a central part of the new Corporate Plan.
- The need to have specific targets which could be easily assessed as being a success or failure.
- For there to be engagement activity with Elected Members around the development of the new Corporate Plan.
- For the targets and objectives to reflect the Council's budget position and the fact that the Council's budgets are set on a year by year basis.
- For the Council's corporate risks to be considered as part of developing the new Corporate Plan.
- As the 2030 net zero targets were not very far away, the Corporate Plan needed to be agile enough so that it allowed the Council flexibility and was not too prescriptive in terms of how objectives were achieved.

Reason for decision

In order to advise Cabinet of the views of the Governance and Audit Committee.”