

Decision Schedule



Cabinet

TO ALL MEMBERS OF NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

Decision Schedule published on 17/10/2019

The following decisions were taken on 16/10/2019. They will become effective at Noon on 28/10/2019 with the exception of any particular decision(s), which is (are) the subject of a valid "call-in".

The deadline for submission of a 'Call-in' request form (available from Democratic Services) is 4.00 pm on 25/10/2019. Reports relating to staffing issues/confidential reports are not circulated to all Members of the Council as part of the consultation/call-in processes.

CAB 48/19

Corporate Plan Annual Report

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report presented Cabinet with the Corporate Annual Report 2018/19 and showed the progress of delivery against the Corporate Plan 2017/22.

Newport City Council launched its Corporate Plan 2017/22 'Improving People's Lives' and set four Well-being Objectives: to improve skills, education and employment opportunities; to promote economic growth and regeneration while protecting the environment; to enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient; and to build cohesive and sustainable communities. To support the delivery of these objectives and enable change in the way the Council delivers its services four themes were established: Resilient Communities, Aspirational People, Thriving City and Modernised Council.

This is the second year of reporting against the Corporate Plan Objectives and the Annual Report reflects back on the achievements made, lessons learned from the decisions made and looks forward to what will be delivered in 2019/20 and beyond. The report also reaffirms the commitment to delivering the Corporate Plan Objectives in 2019/20 and demonstrates how the Council is contributing towards the delivery of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Public Services Board Wellbeing Plan 2018/2023. The Annual Report highlights the achievements in delivering the Civil Parking Enforcement, introducing a new Waste Strategy, development of Chartist Tower, improvement in GCSE and A Levels, introduction of the Gwent Homelessness Strategy and the Young Person's promise.

As part of the 2009 Local Government Measure the Council will publish the Annual Report in Welsh and English on the Council's website before 31st October 2019.

Cabinet was asked to endorse the Annual Report 2018/19 in order to enable the report to be published before the 31st October 2019 deadline.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed the report and instructed officers to publish the information by the deadline date.

Consultation

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee; Corporate Management Team.

Implemented By: Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Service

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 49/19

Brexit Update Report

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report presented an update to Cabinet on the Brexit preparations that Newport City Council has taken since the last Cabinet Report in July 2019.

Following the UK Government's decision to trigger Article 50 to inform the EU that the UK was Leaving in two years, public sector bodies, including Newport City Council, have been making Preparations based upon whether there will be a transition period or a 'No Deal' exit. The Council has established a Task & Finish Group of senior officers across all service areas to identify and make preparations to ensure critical services and activities have the necessary resilience and resources in place.

Following Parliament reconvening in September 2019, the risk of the UK leaving on 31st October with or without a deal has increased significantly. Consequently the preparation work being undertaken by the Civil Service, Welsh Government, public sector bodies, including Newport City Council, has also increased. The Council's Task & Finish group has re-examined the key risk areas in the Council to ensure that service areas have the necessary mechanisms in place with mechanisms to escalate any significant issues that could affect the delivery of their services.

To enable the Council to make preparations, advice and guidance was provided by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and Welsh Government. Using their toolkit Newport Council established a Task & Finish Group in 2018 made up of senior officers across the eight service areas and representatives from its critical service providers such as the Shared Resource Service (SRS) and Newport Live. In line with the toolkit focused preparations have been on three aspects:

1. **Your Organisation** (Priorities/People/Finance & Funding);
2. **Supplies and Services** (Services, suppliers and supply chain/Core Operations/Legal, Data & Regulatory)
3. **Your Place** (Local Community)

An updated version of the toolkit has recently been released by WLGA and the Council is now working through that to support the preparations for 31st October 2019.

In September 2019 the Council's Task & Finish group reviewed the current issues (summarised in Appendix 1 of the report). With the 31st October deadline, additional factors such as the threat of winter weather events now need to be taken into consideration in the Council's planning activities. With regard to the key critical areas of the Council the following areas were highlighted as being impacted:

- **Food and medical supplies**
- **Stability of social care providers and homes ICT costs/cyber security / data protection**
- **EU Settled Status Scheme/Community Cohesion**
- **Businesses trading with the EU**

The areas covered above, detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, are being undertaken within existing resources with grant funding being provided for Community Cohesion officers and a small amount of funding (£45K) to support Brexit related activity.

Cabinet was asked to:

- Consider the contents of the report;
- Note the Council's Brexit Preparations;
- And agree that Cabinet/Cabinet Members will receive updates from officers as part of their portfolio.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed the report.

Consultation

Corporate Management Team; Internal Brexit 'Task and Finish' Officer Group.

Implemented By: Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Service

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

CAB 50/19

WAO Report – Corporate Safeguarding

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report presented to Cabinet the Wales Audit Office (WAO) follow-up review of corporate arrangements for the safeguarding of children.

The report confirmed that in 2014 the WAO published a report into the *Council's arrangements to support safeguarding of children* and also in 2015 as part of the Auditor General's report *Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils*.

The report outlined WAO findings from the follow up review that sought to seek assurance that the Council has acted upon previous national recommendations and local proposals for improvements for corporate arrangements for safeguarding children. The WAO report concluded that: 'The Council has acted on all our previous recommendations and proposals for improvement, however, aspects of some remain to be fully addressed. The report raised three 'national recommendations that have yet to be fully addressed'. Those issues were identified as:

- Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers;
- Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- Improve Accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and council-wide set of performance information.

Appendix 3 of the report identified the Management Response outlining how the Council will action the three recommendations that were 'partially met'.

Cabinet was asked to note the outcomes from the WAO report and to receive regular updates on the implementation of the management actions.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed to note the outcomes of the WAO report and to receive regular updates on the implementation of the management actions as set out in the report.

Consultation

Senior Leadership Team; Head of Corporate Safeguarding.

Implemented By: Cabinet**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

CAB 51/19**WAO Certificate of Compliance 1****Options Considered/Reasons for Decision**

The report presented Cabinet with the Wales Audit Office (WAO) Certificate of Compliance following an audit of the Council's 2019/20 improvement planning arrangements.

The report confirmed the Auditor General of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) has issued the council with a Certificate of Compliance for the improvement plan process following an Audit of the Council's Corporate Plan 2017/22. This Audit reviewed the Corporate Plan, and confirmation of the Council's Wellbeing Objectives. This is an annual requirement as outlined in the Local Government Measure (2009), which the Council is required to meet in conjunction with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) Annual Reporting requirements.

This is the first of two certificates that the Authority aims to achieve each financial year. The second certificate will be issued following the WAO's Assessment of Performance Audit and assessment of the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement.

Through this Certificate the Auditor General for Wales certifies that:

"...I believe that the Council has discharged its duties under section 15(6) to (9) of the Measure and has acted in accordance with Welsh Government guidance sufficiently to discharge its duties."

A copy of the Certificate of Compliance is attached to the report as Appendix 1 (English language) and Appendix 2 (Welsh language).

Cabinet was asked to note the contents of the report in relation to the Council's delivery of the Corporate Plan 2017/22.

Decision:

Cabinet approved the report and accepted the conclusion contained in the Auditor General's Certificate of Compliance Report.

Consultation:

Senior Leadership Team; Corporate Management Team; Wales Audit Office.

Implemented By: Cabinet**Implementation Timetable: Immediate**

CAB 52/19

Annual Report on Compliments, Comments and Complaints Management 2019

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The report provided Cabinet with an overview of all Corporate and Social Services compliments, comments and complaints received during 2018/2019. The report provided a summary of complaints received and recommendations for improvement.

The report noted that Newport City Council operates under a combined Corporate and Social Services Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy. In line with the model process outlined by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (Ombudsman) there is a two stage process (informal and formal) for dealing with complaints received. Social Services has a statutory requirement to operate a complaints procedure; guidance on the operation of the procedure is contained in the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Social Care and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

All compliments and complaints received for Corporate and Social Services have been recorded since April 2011. Since November 2018 compliments, comments and complaints received for all service areas are recorded on the 'My Newport' platform. Compliments, Comments and Complaints made on the Council's social media accounts are not included in these figures. Residents posting on social media accounts are directed to other channels to submit their feedback, such as using online forms, or contacting other organisations as appropriate.

The report provided an overview for the year 2018/2019, broken down by services area and complaint type. The report highlighted key trends or themes drawn from the data for consideration.

Complaints about schools are reported separately as they are subject to a distinct statutory framework; however, there are some circumstances where complaints are recorded and treated as complaints about Education Services; for example, where they concern administrative processes.

Firstly the report considered compliments, comments and complaints received for corporate services, and secondly compliments, comments and complaints received for Social Services. Statistics for all types of compliments, comments and complaints were detailed in table form within the report.

The report also contained details of the numbers of complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales during the period, which were either not accepted for investigation or resolved locally by way of settlement. The numbers of Ombudsman complaints was broadly similar to the previous year and were average compared to other Welsh councils, having regard to population figures. It is pleasing to note that there were no formal findings of maladministration against the Council during the period, although one of the settled complaints, where there were acknowledged shortcomings in the way in which a social care assessment was undertaken, did result in a public interest report being issued.

The Ombudsman is currently consulting about increases to his investigatory powers under the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019, particularly in relation to accepting informal complaints and undertaking public interest investigations on his own initiative, without any complaint. The Council may need to review its own internal procedures in due course in the light of these changes to his statutory powers.

Cabinet was asked to:

- Consider the volume, nature and themes regarding compliments, comments and complaints received and the recommended actions regarding complaint management set out in the report;

- Comment on any issues arising from the report;
- Endorse the recommendations for improvement set out within the report.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed the report and endorsed its recommendations for improvement.

Consultation

Cabinet Member for Social Services; Monitoring Officer; Head of People and Business Change; Council Officers and the Public.

Implemented By: Complaint Resolution Manager

Implementation Timetable: Throughout 2019/20

CAB 53/19

Cabinet Work Programme

Options Considered/Reasons for Decision

The Leader presented the Cabinet Work Programme.

Decision:

Cabinet agreed the programme.

Consultation

Chief Officers; Monitoring Officer; Head of Finance; Head of People and Business Change

Implemented By: Cabinet Office Manager

Implementation Timetable: Immediate

Signed:

Councillor Debbie Wilcox, Chair of the Cabinet

Date: