

Report

Audit Committee



Part 1

Date: 26th November 2015

Item No: 05

Subject **Monitoring Regulatory Reports**

Purpose To provide Audit Committee with information about the regulatory reports that have been received by the Authority and the arrangements to follow up on any recommendations made.

Author Ceri Dowsett, Senior Performance Management Officer

Ward All

Summary This report details all of the regulatory reports that have been received by the authority from our main regulators, Wales Audit Office (WAO), Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and Estyn.

Each of the regulatory reports contains recommendations or proposals on areas of service delivery where the authority can make improvements. It is important that the authority take note of these proposals and make plans to implement the findings and to monitor the progress of the plans

Proposal

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To receive a further update in March 2016

Action by Heads of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Law & Standards
- Chief Democratic Services Officer
- Head of People and Transformation
- Head of Finance
- Chair of Cabinet
- Audit Committee

Signed

Background

This report builds on the information provided to the Audit Committee on 19th September 2013 and 21st November 2013, 27th March 2014, 27th November 2014 and 10th March 2015. Earlier reports contain details of regulatory reports that have been received by the authority since 2011. However for ease of reading this report only includes details for 2013 onwards. Review from our main regulators are included, Wales Audit Office (WAO), Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW), Estyn and more recently, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP)

Each of the regulatory reports contains recommendations or proposals on areas of service delivery where the authority can make improvements. It is important that the authority take note of these proposals and make plans to implement the findings and to monitor the progress of the plans.

New Information for this report

- The authority has received the CSSIW Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance and this was considered by Scrutiny and Cabinet in February 2015. The balanced report highlighted areas for development and improvement alongside areas of good practice within social services and identified five areas for follow up by CSSIW in the next year.
- A Certificate of Compliance issued by the WAO after an audit of the Improvement Plan 15/16 was considered by Cabinet in May 2015.
- Upcoming WAO reviews include Financial Resilience, Waste and an Estyn Inspection March 2016

Monitoring WAO proposals for Improvement and recommendations

To date, the monitoring of the proposals for improvement made by WAO are reported to Cabinet, whereas the monitoring arrangements for CSSIW and Estyn reports are through Scrutiny. Progress monitoring reports for the WAO proposals for improvement are reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. These quarterly reports to Cabinet include updates of the open Proposals for improvement and the recommendations arising from the Corporate Assessment. The latest update on the Proposals for Improvement is included in appendix 2

Links to the Cabinet papers can be found below:

Cabinet Report 17th March 2014 (page 42 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont722104.pdf>

Cabinet Report 9th June 2014 (page 62 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont724223.pdf>

Cabinet Report 8th September 2014 (page 42 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont727364.pdf>

Cabinet Report 8th December 2014 (page 44 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont730383.pdf>

Cabinet Report 16th March 2015 (page 46 onwards)

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont733719.pdf>

Cabinet Report 8th June 2015 (page 54 onwards)

<https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s1526/05%20Improvement%20Plan%20-%20Quarter%204%20v3%2015MAY15.pdf>

Cabinet Report 1st September 2015 (page 37 onwards)

<https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s2400/05%20Improvement%20Plan%20-%20Quarter%201%20v1%2018AUG.pdf>

WAO Local Studies

WAO Undertake a programme of work at the council about our local arrangements. The findings of the performance work are published in two letters to the council and the data quality review report.

Local Studies currently underway are:

- Corporate Assessment Review
- Gwent Frailty Follow up

WAO National Studies

In addition to the local work that WAO undertaken at the council they also carry out a number of national studies each year on various topics. The outcomes of these studies are to identify trends across Wales and to identify best practice. We have been asked to participate in the following

National Studies over the next few months.

- Value for money study on early termination and severance payments
- Gwent wide review – Social Services, managing the financial challenges
- All Wales Local Government Improvement Study: Independence of Older People
- All Wales Local Government Improvement Study: Delivering with Less: Leisure Services
- National Value for money study on Coastal Erosion and Flooding
- All Wales Local Government Improvement Study: Strategic approach to income generation and charging
- All Wales Local Government Improvement Study Community safety partnerships

Roles and Responsibilities

Body	Role	Responsibilities
Cabinet	To receive and respond to service review reports by drawing up appropriate and robust action plans. To work with officers to ensure delivery of those action plans.	To receive 'whole authority' reports from the major regulatory bodies (WAO, CSSIW and Estyn) and endorse action plans for consideration and monitoring (where appropriate) by Scrutiny. To receive quarterly monitoring reports on the proposals for Improvement
Cabinet Members		To receive whole authority reports To receive specific review reports and endorse action plans for consideration and monitoring by Scrutiny. To ensure delivery of action plans.
Audit Committee	To ensure all regulatory reports are being appropriately dealt with, and the Council's risk management and internal control mechanisms are adequate.	To receive six monthly overview reports about the position of the regulatory reports received by the authority, including summary findings of reports received. To be advised of upcoming regulatory reports
Scrutiny Committees	To hold the Executive to account in responding to regulatory reports, ensuring actions plans are robust, and progress is being made in delivering them.	To receive all regulatory reports and resulting action plans, and to monitor the progress of the action plans as appropriate.
Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service and Senior Managers	To present and deliver action plans and ensure these plans are monitored through service planning or other scrutiny arrangements.	To input into the whole authority and specific review reports as appropriate. To work with Cabinet Members to ensure delivery of action plans.

Types of regulatory report

There are two types of report that are received from regulators, whole authority (or whole service) reports, and specific review reports.

- 'Whole Authority' reports are those that cover the governance of the authority or the whole scope of the regulator. Examples of this would be the Corporate Assessment, Improvement Letters, Estyn Inspection of Local Authority Services, and the CSSIW Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance. These reports will be considered by Cabinet and final reports will generally be presented by the regulator that authored the report.
- 'Specific Review' reports are those on a single topic, e.g. Waste Management or Regeneration. These reports will be considered by the relevant Cabinet Member.

Financial Summary

- There are no specific financial implications from this report

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the authority may not comply with the Local Government Measure in this respect	M	M	Processes have been put in place to capture, monitor and manage proposals from regulators.	
That the authority does not have a full picture of the regulatory activity	M	L	This overview report, the cabinet reports and regular future reports on this topic will address this issue	

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

This report contributes in some way to all of the Council's priorities

Options Available

For information

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no specific financial consequences arising from this report. There may be financial consequences arising from the individual regulatory reports and these will be picked up within those reports as appropriate.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. However, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and relevant statutory guidance now requires that Audit Committee should be informed of all external audit or regulatory reports, so they can be satisfied with the measures adopted to address any issues identified and to mitigate any internal risks. Following the processes set out in this report, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee's and Audit Committee will need to exercise a greater overview over regulatory reports in future..

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no direct staffing implications associated with this report.

This report enables the authority to have an overview of the regulatory reports received by the authority, and as such, complies further with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Background Papers

See links in report

'Regulatory Reports Review' Audit Committee (19/09/13)

'Monitoring Regulatory Reports' Audit Committee (21/11/13)

'Monitoring Regulatory Reports' Audit Committee (27/03/14)
'Wales Audit Office: 2014/15 Performance Audit Work and Fees (18/09/14)
'Monitoring Regulatory Reports' Audit Committee (27/11/14)
'Monitoring Regulatory Reports' Audit Committee (10/03/15)

Dated: 26th November 2015

Appendix One Details of Regulatory Reports

Key: The following acronyms are used in the table below

LCL Scrutiny	Leisure, Caring and Learning Scrutiny Committee (post May 2012)
CPD Scrutiny	Community Planning and Development Scrutiny (post May 2012)
SRS Scrutiny	Streetscene, Regeneration and Safety Scrutiny Committee (post May 2012)
CFS	Service Area: Children and Family Services
CIS	Service Area: Customer and Information Services
P&T	Service Area: People and Transformation
RRS	Service Area: Regeneration and Regulatory Services
L&S	Service Area: Law and Standards

Education (Estyn Regulatory Reports)

Service Area	Report / Review and date	Reported to	Comments / follow up
Education	Inspection Pupil Referral Unit October 2012 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont710582.pdf (report) http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont710585.pdf (Action plan)	LCL Scrutiny 17 th April 2013	Action plan appended to the report. Estyn make 7 recommendations for improvement
Education	Pupil Referral Unit Monitoring http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont712697.pdf	LCL Scrutiny 12 th June 2013	Follow up report by Estyn on the 7 recommendations made in October 2012.
Education	Review of regional school improvement services (EAS)	Joint Education Group* June 2015	Fieldwork for the review was undertaken in mid-November, the conclusions of the review are expected in the Spring.
Education	Upcoming: Estyn Inspection – March 2016	Cabinet and LCL Scrutiny	Outcomes from the inspection are expected June 2016

*Joint Education Group consists of 5 cabinet members (across Gwent) and the Chief Education Officer

Social Services (CSSIW Regulatory Reports)

Service Area	Report / Review and date	Reported to	Comments / follow up
Adults	WAO report on Gwent frailty November 2012 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont709310.pdf	CPD scrutiny 13 th March 2013	No specific action plan included as proposals apply to the whole of Gwent. Follow up: Cabinet 9 th September and CPD Scrutiny on 23 rd October

Service Area	Report / Review and date	Reported to	Comments / follow up
CFS	Inspection Report for Children and Family Services February 2013 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont712699.pdf	LCL Scrutiny 12 th June 2013	Action plan included in the report
Social Services	CSSIW Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2012/13 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont720831.pdf	Cabinet 10 th February 2014	CSSIW have identified 12 areas for potential Improvement and Development
Social Services	CSSIW Annual Performance Evaluation Report 2013/14 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont732574.pdf	Cabinet 9 th February 2015 LCL Scrutiny 18 th February 2015	A CSSIW evaluation of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services. CSSIW highlight areas for development and improvement, and five areas for follow up during the next year.
CFS	HMI Probation Inspection Full Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Work in Newport	Local Service Board 3 rd March 2015	The report contains 12 recommendations and a plan is in place to implement the changes necessary.
CFS	WAO review of Safeguarding of Children https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s917/5%20WAO%20Inspection%20Safeguarding%20Final.pdf	LCL Scrutiny 15 th April 2015	The review includes six proposals for Improvement the will be monitored on a quarterly basis alongside the other open proposals for improvement that the authority has received.
CFS	CSSIW National Inspection Safeguarding and Care Planning of looked after children and care leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s919/7%20CSSIW%20Inspection%20Final.pdf	LCL Scrutiny 15 th April 2015	Findings from the individual local authority inspections will inform a CSSIW national overview report to be published later this year.
CFS	CSSIW Inspection report Newport City Council Fostering Service https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s2592/5%20Fostering%20Cover.pdf	LCL Scrutiny 16 th September 2015	Following the inspection both recommendations have been fulfilled.
Adults	CSSIW Inspection of Adult Social Services https://msmodgovdb01.corporate.newport/documents/s2082/CSSIW%20Inspection%20Report%20-%20Adult%20Social%20Services.pdf	Spring 2015	The inspection outlined 9 Recommendations. An action plan has been developed to address these.

Other Service Areas and Corporate Reports (WAO Regulatory Reports)

Service Area	Report / Review and date	Reported to	Comments / follow up
ALL	WAO Improvement Assessment Letter 2 December 2012 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont705797.pdf (Cover) http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont705798.pdf (Report)	Cabinet 14 th January 2013	A further seven proposals for improvement are made in this report. All proposals are included in the quarterly monitoring to Cabinet
RRS	Asset Management August 2012 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont706586.pdf	SRS Scrutiny 21 st January 2013	Action plan included in report of January 2013 and proposals are being monitored through the quarterly report to Cabinet.
RRS	WAO regeneration http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont706588.pdf	SRS Scrutiny 21 st January 2013	Action plan included in report of January 2013 and proposals are being monitored through the quarterly report to Cabinet.
ALL	Corporate Assessment September 2013 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont717470.pdf (Cover) http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont716631.pdf (Report)	Cabinet 21 st October 2013	The report contains 7 proposals for Improvement that are updated in the quarterly monitoring report to Cabinet (November 2013). The report also contains 6 Recommendations. The statement of response can be found on the link below and the Recommendations will be monitored through the next quarterly monitoring report (March 2014) http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/article/cont717942.pdf
P&T	Review of Transformation Programme http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont718071.pdf	Joint Scrutiny Meeting 11th November 2013	WAO Report contains 4 proposals for Improvement and included in the report to scrutiny is an action plan to address these. Monitoring will be undertaken through the quarterly Cabinet report and an update on the action plan will be presented to Scrutiny in November 2014
ALL / L&S	Good Scrutiny? Good Question! Wales Audit Office Scrutiny Improvement Study, Newport City Council Self Evaluation http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont718067.pdf	Joint Scrutiny Meeting 11th November 2013	Strengths and weaknesses are discussed in the report and an action plan is also provided
P&T	Review of Neighbourhood Working http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont719051.pdf	SRS Scrutiny, 9 th December 2013	The report contains 3 proposals for Improvement and an action plan for addressing these. Quarterly monitoring will be undertaken as part of the reports to

Service Area	Report / Review and date	Reported to	Comments / follow up
			Cabinet
ALL	WAO Improvement Assessment Letter 2 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont720830.pdf	Cabinet 10 th February 2014	Two proposals for improvement will be monitored by the quarterly report to Cabinet
ALL	WAO Certificate of Compliance: Audit of Improvement Plan 14/15 http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont729426.pdf	Cabinet 10 th November 2014	A certificate was issued to confirm that the authority has complied with the requirements of the Local Government Measure 2009 with regards to Improvement Planning 14/15
P&T	WAO HR Review http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont730050.pdf	CPD Scrutiny 19 th November 2014	An update on the progress made towards the recommendation made in the Corporate Assessment. There are no new actions arising from the report
P&T	WAO Whistleblowing http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/report/cont730049.pdf	CPD Scrutiny 19 th November 2014	The WAO contains 6 proposals for improvement and an action plan setting out how improvements will be delivered is also included in the report. The proposals will be updated through the next quarterly monitoring report (March 2015)
ALL	WAO Certificate of Compliance: Annual Review of Performance 13/14	Cabinet 8 th December 2014	A certificate was issued to confirm that the authority has complied with the requirements of the Local Government Measure 2009 with regards to its Assessment of Performance 13/14
CIS	WAO Information Governance https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s1823/4.4.%20Newport_CC_IT_Follow_Up.pdf	Cabinet 6 th July 2015	The Council has made progress in addressing the recommendations on ICT
ALL	WAO Corporate Assessment Review https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s1820/4.1.%20Corporate%20Assessment%20Cabinet%20report%2025JUN15.pdf	Cabinet 6 th July 2015	A follow up of the original Corporate Assessment undertaken in 2013. The Corporate Assessment Review contains seven recommendations. Since the last assessment one recommendation has been closed, four have been updated, one has not been changed and there are two new recommendations. These will be monitored via quarterly reporting to Cabinet. Included with this report is a more detailed Action Plan (Cabinet, November 2015) which outlines progress made and planned towards the Recommendations.
ALL	WAO Data Quality Review https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s1822/4.	Cabinet 6 th July 2015	An assessment of the accuracy of the performance data produced by the authority. Three proposals for

Service Area	Report / Review and date	Reported to	Comments / follow up
	3.%20Newport CC Data Quality Review.pdf		improvement received.
ALL	Certificate of compliance for improvement plan https://msmodgovdb01.corporate.newport/documents/s1527/06%20certificate%20of%20compliance%2019MAY15.pdf	Cabinet 8 th June 2015	The Auditor General had issued the Council with a Certificate of Compliance following an audit of the Improvement Plan 2015-16
ALL	Annual Improvement Report https://democracy.newport.gov.uk/documents/s2791/04%20AIR%20Cover%20report%20revised%20V2%20Sept30.pdf	Cabinet 19 th October 2015	An assessment as to whether the authority will meet statutory continuous improvement duties.
ALL	WAO: Certificate of Compliance. Annual Review of Performance 14/15	Cabinet December 2015	A certificate was issued to confirm that the authority has complied with the requirements of the Local Government Measure 2009 with regards to its Assessment of Performance 14/15
FIN	UPCOMING: WAO Financial Resilience	Cabinet	Expected December 2015
STS	UPCOMING: Waste Review	Cabinet	Scoping work is underway. Outcomes expected by Spring 2016

Appendix Two

Update on Wales Audit Office Proposals for Improvement and Recommendations

(Taken from September 2015 Cabinet report)

Regeneration

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
29	Ensure that its Economic Development Strategy and Master Plan clearly relate to the relevant objectives in the Community Strategy and Improvement Objectives and to each other, to help the Council assess their contribution to its improvement programme and to achieving the Council's strategic priorities.	Preparatory work to put in place a revised economic development / regeneration framework for the city. When implemented this will: - Ensure vitality and viability of the city centre is safeguarded - Increase employment - Fewer empty shops and vacant/derelict buildings	Work is now underway on a new Economic Growth Strategy encompassing a new regeneration framework. This will link to the objectives of the Community Strategy and Improvement programme. A high level delivery plan will be produced as part of the new Regeneration Strategy outlining outcomes, targets & milestones. Scrutiny Committee – July Full Council – September / October	By close of 2015/16	Head of Regeneration and Regulatory Services
30	Prioritise its actions and, against those actions, consistently include more details regarding outcomes, targets, deadlines, resources, milestones, risk factors and mitigating actions, which can be used to monitor progress, measure success and establish improvement.	- Provide growth within local economy - Increase footfall in city centre and increase level of tourism and use of city as a sporting venue Regeneration Targets have been set through the Vibrant and Viable Places program			
31	Strengthen the setting of outcomes and targets for regeneration schemes and projects, and ensure sufficient performance information is available to maintain monitoring and evaluation.				
32	Include more details on time, budget and resources in regeneration documents such as project initiation documents to enable assessment of value and cost effectiveness.				

Proposals for Improvement from the Corporate Assessment 2013 and Corporate Assessment Review April 2015 (includes those from Data Quality, Transformation and ICT Reviews)

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
40	<p>The Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and implement an appropriate engagement and communication strategy that both communicates the new mission and organisational framework, and also supports cultural changes within the organisation; • ensure that it has in place the people and resources capable of implementing the organisational framework and delivering subsequent service changes; and • engage the Fairness Commission when developing improvement priorities as well as budget proposals. 	<p>The council continues to operate an effective mix of engagement and communication techniques in order to inform both staff and wider stakeholders.</p> <p>Internally this includes daily messaging through the staff intranet. This carries multiple messages ranging from the chief executive's message, updates on key council-wide projects and department specific projects as well as a daily news summary.</p> <p>The design of the intranet has been refreshed in response to staff feedback on their preferences and user experience to date.</p> <p>A regular ebulletin is also sent to staff which includes a mix of corporate messages, staff updates and wider city news.</p> <p>Newport Matters, continues to be a key external communication tool, and was noted as a key information channel for residents finding out about the council's budget challenges and potential service changes.</p> <p>Social media channels increase in popularity, allowing the council to inform many residents instantly of key council information.</p>	<p>The council will maintain its increased momentum of staff communications, and will work closely with all service areas to make sure key initiatives and changes are communicated in a timely manner to those both directly affected and a wider council audience when appropriate.</p> <p>The September edition of Newport Matters will feature an open letter to readers from the Chair of the Fairness Commission.</p> <p>September will also see the council hold its annual staff conference. The content of this has been developed in consultation with the employee panel, and will include three separate breakout sessions allowing staff to meet their knowledge priorities.</p>	Ongoing	Head of People and Business Change / Head of Finance

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
		<p>Core council business, such as cabinet meetings, are always supported with external press releases that are distributed through a variety of news channels.</p> <p>Meetings of full council can also be watched online via a live streaming service accessible from the council's website.</p>			
42	<p>Develop a clearer understanding of the collaborative projects taking place across the Council and an agreed and widely communicated approach to the management of collaboration. The approach should help the Council to ensure that collaborations are providing value for money outcomes for Newport's citizens.</p>	<p>Details of collaborations and partnerships are included in the service planning and review process, and through the annual governance statement. A clearer understanding of the councils collaborative activity is now available</p>	<p>Service plans and reviews contain collaborative information and will be considered by Scrutiny in Autumn</p>		

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
45	<p>Strengthen the LSB's performance management framework to clarify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How all the information from partners is collated and managed and who is responsible for this; • When the Single Integrated Plan will be reviewed and considered for approval; and • The mechanisms for dealing with underperformance 	<p>The mechanism for dealing with underperformance is firstly the SIP Board within their responsibilities to manage the delivery of the SIP and if this fails it is escalated to the LSB.</p> <p>One Newport Local Service Board produced the first Annual Report detailing work undertaken during 2013/14 and this was presented to Scrutiny in June 2014.</p> <p>The Performance Management Framework was reviewed and revised after year 1 in April 2014. LSB meeting schedule were also changed so that there is better alignment for performance monitoring arrangements.</p> <p>Three communication and engagement events took place in March 2015 to assess progress of the SIP and agree SIP priorities for the coming year.</p> <p>The Performance Management Framework has been reviewed and updated for 2015-16. The main changes to the framework are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated clearer roles and responsibilities; • The removal of the Performance Group from the structure to reduce duplication; • An increase in the frequency of performance reporting to quarterly and a simplification of the SIP Board performance process to focus on the core theme dashboards. This will enable the SIP Board to address underperformance, reduce risk 	<p>The first quarter performance will be reported to the SIP Board on 26th August 2015.</p>	<p>This will be on going as part of a culture of continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Head of People and Business Change</p>

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
		<p>and remove blockages;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of a process to critically analyse the core themes to ensure that the overarching themes of Tackling Poverty and Vulnerable Groups are focused on. A streamlining of the Priority Delivery Plan for use by the Working Groups and Theme Boards; <p>The Annual Report for 2015/16 has been presented to the LSB on 19th May 2015.</p>			
46	No further action required.				
49	<p>New focus on service improvement and value for money P3 Instil a new focus on service improvement and value for money by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarifying the extent of improvement the Council wants to make through the programme and supporting this with appropriate measures and targets to monitor progress, particularly focusing on service quality, performance, customer experience and the difference the Council wants 	<p>Performance team now merged into the Council's Business Improvement function.</p> <p>Alignment of the Change Programme, Budget and Performance reporting to relevant boards,</p> <p>Improvement measure and target developed for the Change programme and incorporated into the Council's performance management framework and reporting mechanisms.</p> <p>Change Programme reporting</p>	<p>Develop appropriate improvement measures and targets for individual initiatives and monitor using existing governance processes and mechanisms.</p> <p>Identify appropriate Benchmark comparators and incorporate within the Change Programme reporting process.</p>	Ongoing	Head of People and Business Change

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
	<p>to make to the lives of local citizens;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • jointly reporting savings and performance information to help evaluate the impact of the programme on service performance and assess whether value for money is improving; • continuously challenging performance through benchmarking with other councils and service suppliers and integrating this with programme monitoring and reporting; • developing more consistent mechanisms to obtain feedback from users and using this to take corrective action and inform future changes to service delivery; and • continuing to develop a performance culture in which service managers are accountable for service performance and efficiency. 	<p>dashboard incorporating performance, savings and budgetary Information reported monthly to the Change Programme Board and the Cabinet Member.</p> <p>High level portfolio and all council dashboards bring together finance, performance and change information along with people related information and risk management</p> <p>Social media “Yammer” being utilised internally to gain feedback from users across the Council.</p> <p>Development of performance culture – Embed review of performance into the service area management meetings-. Social Services, streetscene, Regeneration and Regulatory Services, CLL and Education..</p> <p>Through project governance processes service users are consulted on proposed changes to service delivery and feedback is used to inform the direction of future activity.</p> <p>Increased alignment of the Change programme with the Councils performance framework.</p> <p>Staff involved in budget consultation process and underlying change programme proposals</p> <p>Heads of Service and Service Manager are the key for the development and delivery of the</p>			

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
		<p>efficiency initiatives which underpin the forward MTRP.</p> <p>Heads of Service and Service Managers are responsible for the development of Service planning, monitoring and target setting.</p>			
50	<p>Learning and evaluation</p> <p>P4 Strengthen the arrangements to capture and share learning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more consistent evaluation of reviews at key stages and on completion; • strengthening mechanisms to capture, share and apply learning on a corporate basis; and • establishing mechanisms to systematically obtain post-implementation feedback from staff and managers, for example to assess the impact on staff capacity, identify training and IT needs and learn from their experience. 	<p>Gateway review process and post implementation reviews defined as part of the Newport Programme and Project Management methodology.</p> <p>Lessons Learned log completed and circulated to key stakeholders for the Budget setting process and development of the Change programme for the 14/15 financial period</p> <p>Lessons Learned log completed for the Norse Property Joint Venture, Street cleansing and Refuse.</p> <p>Lessons learned report completed for the 2015/16 budget setting process and disseminated among Senior management.</p> <p>Lessons learned report completed for the initial stages of the New Ways of Working Change programme.</p>	<p>Roll out of the Gateway Review process and post implementation review process across all initiatives within the Change Programme.</p> <p>Ensure adherence to the gateway review process and post implementation review process by embedding within the governance process for the Change programme.</p> <p>Review options for disseminating and apply learning on a corporate basis</p>	Ongoing	Head of People and Business Change
54 (old DQR)	No further action required				
58 (NEW)	<p>Test the information technology business continuity plan to ensure it operates as anticipated. In particular the Council should test a scenario where both server rooms at the Civic Centre are not available to determine how long it will take to set up an offsite server room and what</p>	<p>Using the Council's Business Continuity Priority Matrix as a foundation, the application matrix has been reviewed to ensure that all current systems and infrastructure affected by a server room failure are identified.</p>	<p>Complete discussions with SRS regarding greater resilience.</p> <p>Final developments of the plan for testing, with final approval of the plan by October 15.</p> <p>Test planned for Q3 2015.</p>	Jan 16	Head of Customer Services and Digital innovation

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
	effect this has on its timetable for restoring its critical systems.	<p>This will provide the foundation for the testing.</p> <p>Discussions have commenced with the Shared Resource Service based in Blaenavon to determine if an arrangement with the SRS could provide greater resilience for BC and DR.</p>			
59 (NEW)	The Council must reallocate the role of the chair for the Information Governance Group to remove the current conflict of interest that the Head of the ICT Division has by chairing the group.	The Council has reallocated the role of Chair of the Information Governance Group and has therefore removed the conflict of interest.		No further action required	Head of Customer Services and Digital innovation
60 (NEW)	<p>Strengthen the Local Service Board's Communications Plan and One Newport Engagement and Participation Strategy by introducing a delivery plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an explicit statement on intended outcomes and impact; • a timeframe for delivery with an assessment of progress; and robust performance measures. 	<p>A revised and strengthened Communications Plan has been developed for consideration by the LSB.</p> <p>The Consultation and Engagement Group has been tasked with developing a delivery plan for the Engagement and Participation Strategy.</p>	<p>The updated Communications Plan will be discussed at the SIP Board in August 2015 and then signed off by the LSB in September 2015</p> <p>Engagement and Participation Delivery Plan will be considered by the SIP Board in September 2015</p>	March 2016	Head of People and Business Change

Ref	Proposal	Progress update to the end of June 2015	Actions planned next quarter	Expected close down date	Responsible Officer
61 (NEW)	<p>The Council must ensure that it has robust data collection arrangements for its own self-defined performance indicators that include ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (P1.1) the Council's corporate arrangements for performance management are being rigorously implemented by service departments; • (P1.2) the Council's own internal information systems (VIEWS) reconcile with the final validated data; and • (P1.3) a complete audit trail of the Council's own internal processes for validating performance indicator data is retained. 	<p>The majority of local definitions are in place and it is anticipated that those outstanding should be complete by the start of Q2. A list of compilers and reviewers is currently being compiled and will again be published to the intranet.</p> <p>The council will continue to monitor performance management arrangements to ensure they are rigorously implemented; An audit of Views users has been started, this will help to target those who may need training or a refresher as to the PM cycle and data reporting processes.</p> <p>Ensure that data owners understand, take ownership and maintain audit trails of their performance data</p> <p>(P1.1 – general – see above)</p> <p>(P1.2) Views data reconciles with final validated data</p> <p>(P1.3) There is a complete audit trail of all data undertaken; and documentary evidence of data reconciliation is available. (i.e. CCAS/L/014)</p>	<p>Self-assessment documentation is being revised and will be rolled out to the OPN (Operational Performance Network) later this year.</p> <p>Ensure local definitions are completed and published</p> <p>Lists of compilers and reviewers will again be published to the intranet.</p> <p>Finalise audit of Views users</p> <p>Review need for training for new data inputters/reviewers/compilers</p> <p>Autumn meeting of the Operational Performance Network (OPN) to discuss data quality issues, data monitoring and keeping audit trails.</p> <p>We will continue to strive to eliminate inconsistencies between data held in service systems and Views and that correct protocols for amending figures in Views are applied.</p>	March 2016	Head of People and Business Change

Recommendation 1

The Council should ensure that members are provided with robust information at the earliest opportunity to enable them to inform, take and challenge choices and decisions effectively, and ensure that they are recorded and reported transparently. This includes the provision of:

- Options appraisals.
- The implications of the options, recommendations and decisions.
- Fully costed business cases prior to initiating major programmes to support change. The financial impact of any significant proposed service changes should be reflected in medium-term financial plans directly where the change is certain to proceed or as a sensitivity if the change is not certain.

Progress to date:

- Responding to this recommendation is not the responsibility of one particular service area, it has implications for various people across the organisation.
- All Heads of Service are seen to have a role in providing members with robust information and in response to the Corporate Assessment this is now being addressed through the business planning process
- The Scrutiny Team are seen to have a role in raising awareness among officers of the procedures that are in place for reporting to members and challenging whether they are being adhered to (options, implications, recommendations and decisions).
- The Business Improvement Team are seen to be responsible for ensuring that fully costed business cases are developed
- The Report Template is to be amended to include options, appraisals and implications by the end of 2014 to coincide with the introduction of a new Document management process. The challenge will be ensuring compliance.
- Discussions have taken place and a lessons learned log is in place to improve the approach for 2016/17 and beyond.

Future actions:

- Future compliance checking is to be carried out.

Recommendation 2

The Council should address with more urgency the weaknesses in its governance arrangements that underpin its decision making to support improvement. This would include:

- R2.1 strengthening committee work programming arrangements to ensure they are timely, meaningful, informative, transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up;
- R2.2 reviewing and updating the Council's constitution ensuring that roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear, and that all members understand and apply their respective roles in relation to each other without compromising independence;
- R2.3 empowering members to be more proactive and accountable for their roles and responsibilities;
- R2.4 strengthening decision-making arrangements to ensure transparency and appropriate safeguards are in place;
- R2.5 strengthening scrutiny arrangements to more effectively inform and challenge policies, options, decisions and actions, and hold Cabinet members, officers, partners and others to account more robustly to drive increased pace of progress and improvement;

R2.6 strengthening and mandating member and officer development and learning programmes based on competency assessments to improve skills and understanding to enable them to undertake their roles more effectively; and
R2.7 addressing information security and business continuity arrangements.

Progress to date

- Scrutiny Improvement Group (SIG) established; Regular meetings of the SIG and the Executive are now diarised. Meetings of the SIG and joint meetings with the executive are continuing
- A development programme based on skills appraisal is being developed by way of the Democratic Services Committee. Meetings are progressing with members and a final report to the Committee is scheduled for February 2015. The Scrutiny Improvement Group is also looking at a programme of development for scrutiny members; A report was presented to the Democratic Services Committee in February 2015 as planned.
- The Scrutiny Improvement Group (SIG) Action Plan contains some twenty actions which are included in the SIG programme of work. Good progress is being made in implementing these actions and a review of progress was set out in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2014. Further progress is being made on these issues and a self – assessment of progress is planned for the Annual Report 2015 in July
- An important feature of the action plan resulted from the Wales Audit Office’s National Scrutiny Study. The Scrutiny Improvement Group was set up to implement this plan and to drive forward the improvement programme for Scrutiny. The Scrutiny Improvement Group continues its work on a range of issues
- One of our most significant achievements this year has been to secure funding through the Welsh Government’s Scrutiny Development Fund to hold the “Gwent Scrutiny Challenge 2014 The project started with a high profile, very well attended event on 6 June in the Riverfront Theatre, looking at experiences from the Mid-Staffordshire Inquiry and what lessons can be learned by local government about the quality of challenge within our organisations. We are now planning a series of training events within each authority to look at how the lessons can be applied and our skills improved. : Since June we have been working with CfPS on the ‘legacy’ from the event, and a follow up workshop was held with Members in March – again, this was positively received
- The Composite Work Programme (CWP) continues to be used as an on-going programme and informs the work programme of the Council, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees. This continues.
- A new generic model constitution has been developed by a group of lawyers for use in Local Government. There has been some delay in producing this document but it should be available late in 2014. Democratic Services Committee is taking the lead on this work and will use the model constitution to facilitate an overall review of the constitution as opposed to previous piecemeal approaches; The review and update of the constitution is now unlikely in 2014. The next phase of ensuring understanding and application will take place in 2015; The new model constitution is still awaited but the constitution has been updated as necessary by way of the Democratic Services Committee
- A progress report on the development programme based on skills appraisal that is being followed by a small number of members was produced in July 2014. Based on the findings of this report the Democratic Services Committee agreed to further develop the programme; a final report on the process is to be considered by the DSC in February. : We have a modest budget of £12,000 to cover all members’ development. Much of this budget is used for mandatory training, particularly in terms of planning and licensing committees. By way of the Democratic services committee, we did a review of members to find out what they wanted to see in any programme. The results of the Review highlighted a need for training and development in a range of IT skills, interpersonal skills and Council or Committee related skills and knowledge. The WLGA’s funding and support for member development has been lost so the chances of new training opportunities are limited. However we will now work on meeting identified needs in-house at little or no cost, either offering members places on existing Newport City Council courses, or providing a course specifically for councillors. They will also be directed towards e-learning opportunities.

Where there is a need for a particular external course, the cost of the training will be considered against the resources within the Members Development budget

- A document that clarifies roles and responsibilities and standards for decision making and the relationships between the Executive and Scrutiny has been produced and considered by the joint meeting of the Scrutiny Improvement group and the Executive. This was agreed as guidance by the Scrutiny Improvement group and the Executive.
- Information Governance Group established (Annual Risk Report refers). The group is constituted, has met and the meetings have been minuted and have Terms of Reference: and a report containing proposals and action plan.

Future Actions:

- Regular monthly updates to the committee work programme
- The Constitution will be reviewed by the Democratic Services Committee throughout 2015 – 2016. This will include more clear information on roles and responsibilities
- To make further progress to identify and respond to members development needs

Recommendation 3

Updated since 2013 Corporate Assessment

The Council needs to ensure that its arrangements for strategic financial planning and management continue to develop to meet the significant challenges that are being faced by ensuring that:

- robust savings plans are developed in more detail to meet the projected budget shortfall for 2015-16 and to support the delivery of a meaningful medium term financial plan;
- sufficient challenge is applied to ensure that savings/investment plans are delivered and any budget overspends are highlighted and addressed by early intervention;
- financial plans provide clear links to improvement objectives and service plans; and
- sufficient finance staff (both centrally and within individual departments) with appropriate skills and experience are in post to support the development and delivery of future plans.

Progress to date:

- All saving proposals are subject to a business case process which have robust processes around them to ensure, as far as it is possible, that proposals are robust/achievable
 - Input from Senior Finance Business Partners and Business Improvements Team in their development and initial challenge/review
 - A formal 'Peer' review session is held with all HoS's at around September to ensure all proposals going to Members are robust. Reviews carried out by HoF and Head of Business Change/HR
 - Review by Cabinet and individual Cabinet Member for service areas prior to formal approval

- The Council has a medium Term MTRP which looks forward 4 years to 2019/20 currently. Demographic issues are included in the MTRP as are predictions for WG grant changes. It is reviewed on an on-going basis.
- In year Budget monitoring reviews progress on the delivery of all savings as well as overall forecast for all service and non-service areas. Whilst slippage inevitably occurs, this Council has good record of finding mitigating savings to offset short term problems/delays in delivering savings and had subsequently kept within budget. These are reported to Cabinet in detail as part of revenue budget monitoring reports.
- The Council's 'Corporate Management Team' reviews progress on delivery of savings and specific problem areas.
- The Councils in year budget forecasting and MTRP is informed by operational data on various key cost/income drivers and further development is required in this area though a good base is already in place at this point.
- The Council's MTRP on-going review makes explicit reference to issues such as risk and financial resilience and performance reports confirm that targets are delivered within existing resources. Any issues which would require additional and new resource would be considered alongside other budget pressures
- The finance function is currently recruiting into a small number of junior level vacancies, following the completion of its restructure and Total Reward grading exercise. This follows recruitment of a 'technically strong' Assistant Head of Finance in early Summer 2015. Capacity is improving and there is one further more senior role which is currently vacant and which will be recruited into in late Summer/Autumn.

Planned future action:

- Necessary financial modelling tools (projections) to be developed by end of 2015.

Recommendation 4

Updated since 2013 Corporate Assessment

The Council must continue to develop its people management arrangements, to ensure it has the capacity and capabilities necessary to change and improve. In doing so, it should:

- continue to develop its draft Workforce Plan and associated action plans by, for each action: allocate responsibility to an officer and set a deadline for completion;
- in the absence of a formal approach to 360 degree feedback for all staff, address manager inconsistency in carrying out appraisal and ensure all staff receive a constructive and developmental appraisal to support job performance; and
- put in place a key performance indicator and a challenging target for sickness absence that adheres to the target setting principles agreed by the Council's Senior Leadership Team on 17 March 2015.

Progress to date:

- A Workforce Plan has now been designed and is ready for publication. There are 6 key strands, each of which has an action plan, associated owners and deadlines for implementation.
- The OD strategy has been commissioned and will be published by December 2015 which will feature our plan for improvement in performance management systems, including staff feedback and consistency of appraisal

- Absence targets have been set for 2015/16 at each service level, with challenging targets for those who did not reach their target in 2014/2015. Additional resource has been allocated to manage attendance at work and targets will be closely monitored to ensure the Council can react to any slippage.

Planned future action:

- We will review the pilot area that has been utilising a workforce planning template and then adapt if necessary for use in all other service areas. It is anticipated that this will be completed in Autumn 2015
- A data dashboard containing workforce planning data and comparative data between services (including all wales data where possible) is projected to be in place by December 2015
- We will review the existing workforce as part of the planning template and link the review to service objectives, whilst developing career pathways to help with succession planning strategies. This will be a fluid objective, with the project starting in September 2015 and completing by June 2016.
- Revisions to the performance management process are anticipated to be ready for implementation for the next annual appraisal cycle, April 2016
- A review of the Aspiring Leaders programme will be undertaken and consideration given to expansion and further development opportunities throughout the organisation will be done by June 2016
- We will aspire to promote cross functional team working from April 2016 onwards through effective talent management
- A coaching and mentoring strategy will be designed by June 2016
- We will develop a strategy to address areas of under representation in the workforce by June 2016
- Review of MoA Policy and occupational health (along with associated systems and processes) to improve attendance at work, with a focus on managing long term absence (by March 2016).
- Further development of iTrent to improve access to absence data and roll-out of manager and employee self-service to actively engage managers and employees in absence management (by March 2016)

Recommendation 5 (previously R6)

Updated since 2013 Corporate Assessment

To strengthen the arrangements that enable the Council to, scrutinise, its improvement objectives. In doing so, the Council should:

- Enable members to effectively challenge and scrutinise service performance:
 - clarify the respective roles of the performance board and scrutiny;
 - ensure that meeting agendas allow for sufficient time for members to focus on (broad) underperformance in both; and
 - provide training on effective challenge and scrutiny for members.
- Improve target setting to better reflect the service/performance standards the Council wants to achieve.

Progress to date:

- **The respective roles of Performance Board and scrutiny have been clarified.** Members of Cabinet and Scrutiny met to discuss their respective roles in March 2014 and the roles of Performance Board and scrutiny was clarified at the Performance Board meeting in March 2014.
- **Both Performance Board and scrutiny receive regular, high quality, priority-focused performance information.** Performance Board meet quarterly and receive regular concisely reported monitoring information on each Improvement Objective contained within the Improvement Plan and also receive information on overall Council performance. Half yearly and end of year service plan reviews are considered by Scrutiny Committees.
- **Meeting agendas allow for sufficient time for members to focus on underperformance.** Meeting agendas for Performance Board are now prioritised to assess both 'looking forward' and 'looking back'. The latter is a mechanism to highlight underperformance and ensure that sufficient time is available to consider and address the underlying causes. The setting of appropriate agendas is complemented by timely briefing meetings with the Leader.
- **The Council is improving the training it provides to members on effective challenge and scrutiny.** The Democratic Services Committee has considered a schedule of member development activities and recognised that much of the training events were knowledge based rather than concentrating on the skills members need to fulfil their various roles. This is now being addressed and the Organisational Development Team is assessing the benefits of developing a programme based on needs identified by members. An initial report is to be considered by the Committee in July. The Scrutiny Improvement Group will examine the needs of members of scrutiny committees within its programme of work.
- **Target setting reflects the standards the Council wants to achieve and resources are allocated to deliver desired standards through the Medium Term Financial Plan.** There is clear alignment between target setting within business plans and the Medium Term Financial Plan. The targets and the allocation of resources reflect the Council's ambition and priorities in relation to decision to both invest to save and disinvest. In addition, all NSI, PAM, Improvement and Service plan targets have been scrutinised and agreed by SLT where a three principle approach has been applied; measure targets must be i. above the Welsh Average, ii. Improving on last year, and iii. Be set above quartile 4 levels.

Recommendation 6 - New

We recommend that the Council improves the collective leadership and delivery of its response to the Auditor General's 2013 Corporate Assessment by agreeing clear accountability and monitoring arrangements for the implementation of recommendations and proposals for improvement.

Progress to date: July Cabinet agreed accountability and monitoring arrangements for PFIs and Recommendations (see July cabinet papers).

Recommendation 7 - New

The Council must ensure that all National Strategic Indicator data is collected and published in accordance with the Welsh Government definitions; particularly NSI. EDU/015a - Final Special Educational Needs statements issued in 26 weeks.

Current position: The Education service has revised its approach to how data is collected in regard to the EDU/015a indicator and this has been carried out in accordance with the prescribed national definition. The Council will continue to ensure that all NSI data is collected and published as required by Welsh Government.

Report

Cabinet

Part 1

Date: 9th November 2015

Item No:

Subject Updated Action Plans in Response to Corporate Assessment Recommendations

Purpose To present Cabinet with jointly agreed updated action plans in response to the Recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office following the Corporate Assessment Review 2015

Author Chief Executive

Ward All

Summary In May this year, the Council received the Corporate Assessment Review which outlined the Wales Audit Office's findings of progress following the full Corporate Assessment of the Council in 2013.

The Corporate Assessment Review 2015 contains seven recommendations. Since the original assessment in 2013, one recommendation has been closed, four have been updated, one has not been changed and there are two new recommendations.

In October, the Council held a number of joint workshop sessions with members and senior officers to agree detailed action and monitoring plans to address the requirements of each recommendation with the intention of closing them.

Proposal Cabinet are requested to:

- Endorse the action plans and monitoring framework
- To continue to receive quarterly monitoring reports on the progress made towards recommendations and proposals for improvement

Action by Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Head of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chair of Cabinet
- Cabinet
- Chief Executive
- Strategic Directors
- Heads of Service

Signed

Background

During November and December 2014 the Wales Audit Office reviewed the progress that the Council had made in implementing the Recommendations and Proposals for Improvement from the full Corporate Assessment in 2013.

The overall conclusions from the Corporate Assessment Review are:

“The Council has made improvements in some aspects of its arrangements, however in other areas the scale and pace of change required has not been achieved, and longstanding governance weaknesses remain”

The Corporate Assessment Review contains seven recommendations. Since the original assessment one recommendation has been closed, four have been updated, one has not been changed and there are two new recommendations.

At its July meeting, Cabinet were presented with broad action plans to address the detail of the recommendations. In order to progress actions towards the recommendations, a series of joint workshops for elected members and officers were held in October. These meetings resulted in more detailed and robust action plans and monitoring arrangements being established; with the intention of efficiently concluding the recommendations.

The action plans are included in appendix one below.

Financial Summary

All actions will be delivered within existing budgets

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Competing priorities delay the implementation of the action plans	M	L	Regular monitoring of action plan progression is essential to ensure the council maintains pace with delivery of the action plans	SLT Heads of service Cabinet Members
Regular monitoring of the action plan does not take place	M	L	Regular monitoring of action plan progression is essential in the Council being able to demonstrate that it has addressed the point in the statutory recommendations so that they may be considered closed in due course.	SLT Heads of service Cabinet Members

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Assessment Review and Statement of Response

Options Available

- a) To accept the updated action plans and monitoring framework
- b) To disregard the action plans and monitoring framework

Preferred Option and Why

The preferred option is a). The updated action plans and monitoring framework establish a more robust approach towards the recommendations received as part of the Corporate Assessment Review and will enable the Council to more quickly conclude the recommendations.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. Work programmes associated with the action plan that have future staffing implications will need to be subject to a separate report to the Cabinet Member for People and Business Change.

Comments of Cabinet Member

The Chair of Cabinet has been consulted and has agreed that this report goes forward to Cabinet for consideration.

Background Papers

Cabinet Report "Corporate Assessment" (21/10/13)

Cabinet Report "Corporate Assessment Review 2015" (06/07/15)

Appendix One: Action plans

Dated: November 2015

Appendix 1

Action plan to address WAO Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Council should ensure that members are routinely and transparently considering robust information at the earliest opportunity to enable them to inform, take and challenge choices and decisions effectively, and ensure that decisions are recorded and reported transparently.

Responsible Officers: Head of Finance, Head of People and Business Change

Responsible Cabinet Member: Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for People and Business Change

Additional actions as identified on 8th October by Cabinet and SLT:

- Heads of Service will be reminded to use the briefing template previously issued to ensure there is consistency and the appropriate information (such as sickness data) is routinely provided
- The decision making tracker will record and ensure the right trigger mechanisms are in place for properly governed decision making

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
the consideration of Options appraisals	To set up a process to ensure that the template for all reports is amended to ensure that all reports to the Council meeting; the Cabinet and Cabinet Members that are seeking a decision, include reference to all options considered ; options appraisals and implications of options, as well as the preferred option. The SLT will view all Decision making reports and will conclude on whether the options appraisals are of sufficient quality and the case for the preferred option is well made. This will take place alongside improvements on the identification of risk in any decision- making reports. The section on risk in the report will consider the risk of taking the proposed decision as well as any risks that could impact on the proposals The SLT will view all Decision making reports and will conclude on whether the risk appraisals are of sufficient quality.	March 2016	Written process Minutes of a meeting where process is agreed Reports considering options for decisions
The implications of the options, recommendations and decisions			
Fully costed business cases prior to initiating major programmes to support change. The financial impact of any significant proposed service changes should be reflected in medium-term financial plans directly where the change is certain	The Business Case template used in compiling the Medium Term Financial Plan has been revised and now includes options appraisals and all business cases are fully costed, including the identification of implementation costs, prior to the implementation of projects	February 2016 (timescales in line with the budget setting process)	Revised business case template

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
to proceed or as a sensitivity if the change is not certain			

Recommendation 2

The Council should address with more urgency the weaknesses in its governance arrangements that underpin its decision making to support improvement.

Responsible Officers: Head of Law & Regulation

Responsible Cabinet Member: Leader of the Council

Additional actions as identified on 8th October by Cabinet and SLT:

- The attendance rota for Cabinet Member attendance will be set out well in advance to allow for availability to be organised and an appropriate briefing to be provided by the Head of Service
- All Heads of Service and lead officers will be reminded of the need to attend scrutiny and help with ensuring that the right things are on the agenda. Thereby ensuring scrutiny are focussing on the big strategic plans and financial challenge options
- A review of the constitution is already underway and will be overseen by the Democratic Services Committee. This will set out roles and responsibilities and give clarity around these matters
- Regular meetings between the Cabinet Members and the senior officer team will continue to be diarised and notes of these meetings taken for future reference

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
strengthening committee work programming arrangements to ensure they are timely, meaningful, informative, transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up	Undertake the annual review of the Committees' work programmes and assist members in ensuring that scrutiny work is focused on key risks and priorities, and can make a positive impact on service improvement and policy development (Scrutiny AR Action 1)	Initial work by end October 2015 March 2016 to introduce composite WP	Work programmes agreed at September scrutiny meetings. Cabinet now agreeing its work programme and changes at every meeting
	Develop the links between Scrutiny and Auditors / Inspectors / Regulators, in particular to support work programming and training (Scrutiny AR Action 4)	Ongoing throughout the year	Meetings held with AIR contacts Training activities set up AIRs notified of committee activity and invited to attend

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
	Update Scrutiny Team procedures and processes to ensure a consistent and thorough approach (Scrutiny AR Action 10)	Ongoing throughout the year	as appropriate Updated procedures and processes
reviewing and updating the Council's constitution ensuring that roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear, and that all members understand and apply their respective roles in relation to each other without compromising independence	Clarify Scrutiny's role within the overall Governance arrangements of the Council, including the links between the scrutiny function and Performance Board. (Scrutiny AR Action 7)	By end April 2016	The Democratic Services Committee has considered two reports to date and this work is ongoing via that committee
empowering members to be more proactive and accountable for their roles and responsibilities	Complete the Gwent Scrutiny Challenge project and use the resulting toolkit to critically evaluate the performance of the Overview and Scrutiny function in Newport (Scrutiny AR Action 3)	Ongoing throughout the year	Agreement of toolkit; Training and evaluation activities undertaken as a result
strengthening decision-making arrangements to ensure transparency and appropriate safeguards are in place			
strengthening scrutiny arrangements to more effectively inform and challenge policies, options, decisions and actions, and hold Cabinet members, officers, partners and others to account more robustly to drive an increased pace of progress and improvement	<p>Work with the Scrutiny Improvement Group to consider new ways of working and examine the range of methods available in carrying out scrutiny work, including the use of technology to support alternative ways of working and information sharing between Members (Scrutiny AR Action 2)</p> <p>Develop a public engagement strategy for scrutiny, to improve public access to the scrutiny process, ensuring that processes are consistent and duplication is avoided with other processes within the Council (Scrutiny AR Action 5)</p> <p>Continue regular meetings between Scrutiny and the Executive to develop protocols for interaction between Scrutiny and the Executive and to discuss opportunities to widen the scope for monitoring the</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout the year</p> <p>By end October 2015</p> <p>Ongoing throughout the year</p>	<p>Reports and Minutes of SIG New processes and practices agreed</p> <p>Completed strategy (approved June 15) Agreed action plan and monitoring reports</p> <p>Reports and Minutes of meetings Agreed protocols</p>

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
	<p>outcomes of decisions where considered necessary (Scrutiny AR Action 6)</p> <p>Enhance links with colleagues within the Council and beyond and to look at a range of methods to promote and support the scrutiny function (Scrutiny AR Action 9)</p>	Ongoing throughout the year	In the process of arranging training with neighbouring colleagues
strengthening and mandating member and officer development and learning programmes based on competency assessments to improve skills and understanding to enable them to undertake their roles more effectively	To discuss Members requirements for training with the Scrutiny Improvement Group and to complete the review of training and development for Scrutiny Members and Officers, and ensure any gaps in training identified are addressed (Scrutiny AR Action 8)	By end May 2016	SIG reports and minutes Scrutiny seminar and training programme
addressing information security and business continuity arrangements	<p>WAO detailed report on Information Governance received by Scrutiny and Cabinet Member.</p> <p>Information Governance Group continues to meet quarterly. Terms of reference on the Council's intranet. The review had also recommended that the chair of the group was not the SIRO (senior information risk owner) and the chair has now been changed to Strategic Director (Place).</p> <p>The third annual information risk report outlines the Council's plans to address risk issues for the year, and reviews the performance of the previous year. Formal report to Scrutiny and Cabinet Member refers.</p> <p>Next steps</p> <p>Review the role of senior information risk owner (SIRO) following the senior management restructure.</p> <p>Continue with other activities as outlined in the annual information risk report.</p> <p>Business continuity - priority systems determined and agreed by</p>	<p>immediate</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>Scrutiny and Cabinet Member reports.</p> <p>Annual information risk report and action plan, service plan.</p> <p>System priority list,</p>

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
	<p>strategic leadership team. Planning for test of disaster recovery arrangements in support of business continuity planning underway. The Council is also working with the Shared Resource Service (Blaenavon) to support disaster recovery due to capacity and staff retention issues within IT.</p>		<p>discussions at business continuity group.</p>

Recommendation 3

The Council needs to ensure that its arrangements for strategic financial planning and management continue to develop to meet the significant challenges that are being faced.

Responsible Officer: Head of Finance

Responsible Cabinet Member: Leader of the Council

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
robust savings plans are developed in more detail to meet the projected budget shortfall for 2015-16 and to support the delivery of a meaningful medium term financial plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All saving proposals have appropriate and detailed individual business cases to support them, which includes risks and impacts and cost to deliver - Peer Review sessions on all business Cases and all business cases completed with help/guidance/preliminary challenge from BIP/Finance business partners – September each year. - Further review by Cabinet members individually and with Cabinet colleagues - 4year MTFP in place which identifies key budget pressure items, including demography issues and RSG predictions over the period. - To 2016/17, strategic framework of ‘Prospectus for Change’ guides service plans and associated budget proposals. Currently finalising a new vision document of ‘Newport 2020’ to supersede this. Provides an overview of strategic direction of services over the period. 	In place	Business Cases
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longer term budget proposals linked to service vision and action plan delivers a balanced medium term MTFP 	In place	Evidence of meetings
sufficient challenge is applied to ensure that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People/Place boards consider delivery of saving proposals and financial position in detail and agree appropriate actions 	In place	Evidence of meetings
		In place	MTFP reported to Cabinet
		Agree ‘Newport 2020’ with Cabinet – December 2015	Cabinet report
		Balanced MTFP reported to Cabinet Feb each year	Cabinet report

<p>savings/investment plans are delivered and any budget overspends are highlighted and addressed by early intervention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Change/Efficiency Board considers overall position on delivery of saving proposals and overall financial position of Council and provides appropriate challenge to understand action being taken. - Delivery of savings reported to SLT/Cabinet and service area action to deal with overspending - Scrutiny reviews of financial position and performance in each Autumn - SLT review of financial/performance 'hotspots' each Autumn 	<p>In place</p> <p>In place</p> <p>Autumn 2015</p> <p>In place – due Autumn 2015</p>	<p>Meeting/Reports</p> <p>Reports</p> <p>Reports</p> <p>Evidence of meeting</p>
<p>financial plans provide clear links to improvement objectives and service plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MTFP reports to include explicit sections on risk and performance and how they link to budget proposals - Individual 'Improvement Plans' and agreement by Cabinet to provide an analysis of resources required to deliver and confirmation that these are in place - Review Service Plans format to consider current level of financial detail in there. Areas to consider include – (i) savings to be delivered (ii) identifying resources required to deliver on Pl's / Improvement objectives 	<p>In place</p> <p>2016/17 service plans</p>	<p>Cabinet papers on MTFP – including 'scene setting', 'December and Feb Cabinets'</p> <p>Cabinet Report</p> <p>Service plans</p>
<p>sufficient finance staff (both centrally and within individual departments) with appropriate skills and experience are in post to support the development and delivery of future plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of experienced Assistant Head of Finance / S151 - Appointment to current gaps in new accountancy structure - Develop new accountancy structure by clarifying roles and responsibilities of new posts and performance standards - Put in place an updated log of staff undertaking professional training and ensure linked to manpower and succession planning as far as the service can. 	<p>In place</p> <p>Dec 2015</p> <p>December 2015</p> <p>In place</p>	<p>Post-holder identified</p> <p>Posts filled</p> <p>Evidence of meetings to do this. Statement of key roles/responsibilities for each level of hierarchy stemming from those meetings</p> <p>Log</p>

Recommendation 4

The Council must continue to develop its people management arrangements, to ensure it has the capacity and capabilities necessary to change and improve.

Responsible Officers: Head of People and Business Change

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for People and Business Change

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
Continue to develop its draft Workforce Plan and associated action plans by, for each action: allocate responsibility to an officer and set a deadline for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for delivering workforce plan designed • Actions created and allocated • Cabinet Member and SLT sign off • Workforce plan template agreed by Head of People and Business Change • Monthly meeting of SHRBP and HRBP to assess progress against workforce plan timescales 	<p><i>August 2015</i></p> <p><i>August 2015</i></p> <p><i>August 2015</i></p> <p><i>August 2015</i></p> <p>September 2015 onwards</p>	<p>Brochure produced</p> <p>Actions printed in brochure</p> <p>Minutes from SLT meeting 24.08.15</p> <p>Email confirmation</p> <p>Monthly minutes produced</p>
In the absence of a formal approach to 360 degree feedback for all staff, address manager inconsistency in carrying out appraisal and ensure all staff receive a constructive and developmental appraisal to support job performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a new OD strategy for the organisation with focus on performance management arrangements • Review the data on appraisal submissions to assess current levels of annual appraisal • Review of the quality of appraisal submissions to assess manager inconsistency • Review and prioritise training to managers on performance management appraisal systems and handling cases of poor performance 	<p>November 2015</p> <p>November 2015</p> <p>December 2015</p> <p>March 2016</p>	<p>Publication of strategy</p> <p>Appraisal data as held by OD</p> <p>Report</p> <p>Training directory lists courses available</p>
put in place a key performance indicator and a challenging target for sickness absence that adheres to the target setting principles agreed by the Council's Senior Leadership Team on 17 March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional targets submitted to Performance Board on 23rd June 2015 • Targets reviewed and amendments made following final outcome of sickness data – applying principles established in the report to Performance Board and uploaded to Views • Annual absence review letters to be issued to all staff to set out new Council targets • Monthly meeting of SHRBP and HRBP to assess progress against targets 	<p><i>June 2015</i></p> <p><i>July 2015</i></p> <p>November 2015</p> <p>September 2015 and onwards</p>	<p>Performance Board report and minutes of meeting of 23 June 2015</p> <p>Final absence data available from iTrent</p> <p>Letters issued</p> <p>Monthly minutes produced</p>

Italics is completed

Recommendation 5

To strengthen the arrangements that enable the Council to, scrutinise, its Improvement Objectives.

Responsible Officers: Head of People and Business Change

Responsible Cabinet Member: Leader of the Council

Additional actions as identified on 8th October by Cabinet and SLT:

- WLGA will be invited to talk to group, council and scrutiny chairs. Further training will be provided
- Consider inviting the Data Unit to present to the team on the council's overall performance

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
Enable members to effectively challenge and scrutinise service performance: – clarify the respective roles of the performance board and scrutiny;	The Scrutiny Annual Report was endorsed by full Council on 29 September 2015. A key priority for next year will be to develop the relationship with Cabinet further, and work is currently being undertaken on developing a protocol between the Executive and Scrutiny that will help clarify the respective roles of both parties, including responsibilities for monitoring and accounting for performance. Regular meetings continue to be held between Cabinet and Scrutiny Improvement Group - at the most recent, on 6 October, Members discussed their roles and responsibilities and a finalised protocol / procedure will be agreed and implemented shortly.	By the end of the financial year 2015/16	Minutes of Scrutiny Improvement Group – 6 th October
ensure that meeting agendas allow for sufficient time for members to focus on (broad) underperformance in both;	We have recently reviewed the Committees' work programmes to focus more on key risks and priorities, with a new information reporting procedure to enable us to routinely provide performance and other relevant information to Members. The intention is to improve Members' background knowledge on service issues and provide a mechanism to pick up on any potential issues as they arise. Last year we also revised the service plan process for scrutiny - the half year reviews will take place in November, and will look at exception reports on any variances in performance against the plans	By the end of November 2015	Committee work programmes Scrutiny Agenda's and minutes for the November meetings (half year reviews)
provide training on effective challenge and scrutiny for members	Alongside the new work programmes, we are also putting together a programme of seminars and training events for Members, to develop skills and provide background information to support Members in scrutinising and challenging services more effectively. This currently includes briefings on key policy changes, for example in social services legislation, as well as training from the Fairness Commission on assessing fairness in policy development. We are also providing training on Fairness and Equality Impact Assessments, to improve	By the end of the financial year 2015/16	Training Materials for Members Member training calendar

CA Recommendation	Actions	Timescales	Evidence
	challenge within the budget setting process.		
Improve target setting to better reflect the service/performance standards the Council wants to achieve.	Target setting guidance has been in place since February 2015. The guidance sets out three key principles which heads of service must meet when establishing measure targets for the year ahead. The three principles include targets: exceeding previous year performance, not being in quartile 4 and exceeding Welsh Average. All targets are reviewed by SLT and if they do not meet these criteria, the relevant head of service must provide satisfactory reasoning behind retaining the target.	Completed	SLT minutes and reports Target setting guidance document

Recommendation 6

We recommend that the Council improves the collective leadership by both Members and officers of the delivery of its response to the Auditor General's 2013 Corporate Assessment by agreeing clear accountability and monitoring arrangements for the implementation of recommendations and proposals for improvement.

Additional actions as identified on 8th October by Cabinet and SLT:

- Cabinet Members and Heads of Service would attend scrutiny twice a year. They will jointly present the looking back/looking forward service plan and the 6 monthly review. This will include the full range of performance measures, to include financial performance, national and local performance indicators and priorities outlined in the service plan. Officers will design an appropriate template to capture all of the key data and allow for consistent reporting
- The meeting with the WAO on the 20th October was a joint presentation. It will also include the action plans sitting below the statutory recommendations which was presented by the relevant Cabinet Member/Lead Officer
- Consider opportunities in the future to present as a collective leadership group to staff groups

Recommendation 7

The Council must ensure that all National Strategic Indicator data is collected and published in accordance with the Welsh Government definitions; particularly NSI. EDU/015a - Final Special Educational Needs statements issued in 26 weeks.

Additional actions as identified on 8th October by Cabinet and SLT:

- In June, a comprehensive internal audit was carried out on this measure (EDU/015a)
- There were a number of issues identified and it was determined that NCC was non-compliant with the Welsh Government definition and guidelines
- The data collection and recording processes were revised; data for this measure was recalculated for 2014/15 submission and is now compliant with the WG definition
- An action plan was established to ensure the SEN team further embed the process with regular progress monitoring in place

Monitoring and Accountability

Role	Responsibilities	Monitoring Arrangements
Cabinet	To receive and respond to whole authority reports from the major regulatory bodies (WAO, CSSIW and Estyn) and endorse action plans for consideration and monitoring by Cabinet and/or Scrutiny.	Quarterly monitoring reports on the progress made towards recommendations and proposals for Improvement through the Improvement Plan Update report
Cabinet Members	To receive and respond to whole authority reports To receive and respond to specific review reports and endorse action plans for consideration and monitoring by Scrutiny. To work with officers to ensure delivery of those action plans.	Quarterly update from their head of service on progress made towards recommendations and proposals for Improvement
Scrutiny Committees	To receive all regulatory reports and resulting action plans, and to monitor the progress of the action plans as appropriate. To hold the Executive to account in responding to regulatory reports, ensuring actions plans are robust, and progress is being made in delivering them.	Six Monthly updates on the progress of recommendations and proposals for improvement through the service planning half year and year-end review process
Audit Committee	To receive six monthly overview reports about the position of the regulatory reports received by the authority, including summary findings of reports received. To be advised of upcoming regulatory reports To ensure all regulatory reports are being appropriately dealt with, and the Council's risk management and internal control mechanisms are adequate.	Six monthly updates on progress of recommendations and proposals for improvement through the 'monitoring regulatory reports' report
Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service and Senior Managers	To input into the whole authority and specific review reports as appropriate. To work with Cabinet Members to prepare and deliver robust action plans To provide internal peer challenge on the delivery of action plans and ensure these plans are progressed with adequate pace	Monthly updates on progress to be considered at Strategic Leadership Team and/or Corporate Management Team

