



Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance

Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel – 7th May 2024

Audit Wales Report - 'Springing Forward - Workforce'

Purpose	To brief the Panel on the findings of the Audit Wales 'Springing Forward - Workforce' report and the recommendations made to the Council
Content	The Audit Wales report concludes that the Council has a clear vision for its workforce, strengthened by its work with partners. The report recommends that Council consider the medium-term identification of resource implications of delivering the Workforce Strategy, and to expand its use of benchmarking information to effectively measure success and value for money of its workforce arrangements.
Councillors are being asked to	Consider the information and provide views
Lead Councillor	Councillor David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance
Lead Officer	Rachael Davies, Head of HR and Service Centre
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Legal Officer	Debbie Smith
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Audit Wales 'Springing Forward - Workforce' report reviewed the Council's arrangements for managing its workforce. The report looked at how the Council strategically plans for its workforce, how it monitors the use of its

workforce and how it reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of its arrangements.

- 1.2 This review was carried out across all 22 Welsh councils to look at how, as a result of the experiences of the global Covid pandemic, they are strengthening their ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services, including those delivered in partnership with key stakeholders and communities.

2. Findings

- 2.1 The Audit Wales report findings found that the Council has a clear vision for its workforce, strengthened by its work with partners, but has not identified the resources required to deliver its strategy.

- 2.2 This conclusion was reached because:

- The Council has a clear vision for its workforce, with actions to gain more comprehensive information to strengthen its ability to transform,
- The Council is taking action to strengthen its approach to managing its workforce including by collaborating with partners to address current issues, but has not resourced the delivery of its strategy; and
- The Council has appropriate arrangements for monitoring workforce arrangements, but there is an opportunity to make more use benchmarking to measure the current and longer-term success of its workforce initiatives.

- 2.3 Two recommendations were made:

- The Council should identify the medium-term resource implications of delivering its Workforce Strategy to support appropriate delivery arrangements,
- The Council should expand its use of benchmarking information to help it to effectively measure success and value for money of its workforce arrangements.

3. Council Response

- 3.1 The transformation delivery board has approved temporary funding to create additional capacity within the HR&OD service until March 2025 in order to deliver elements of the Workforce Strategy. This funding is supporting three additional business partner posts.

- 3.2 This additional resource will enable the service to deliver as many of the Workforce Strategy objectives as possible in the earlier years of the lifespan of the strategy.

- 3.2 Further consideration will have to be given to the long-term delivery arrangements and ways in which the 2022-2027 strategy can be fully completed but also how the required 2027-2032 plan can be devised and achieved.
- 3.3 The HR&OD service has already started to make use of wider benchmarking data sets to inform recommendations and decisions. Use of the benchmarking clubs within Benchmarking Wales is more commonly used to provide meaningful comparator information in workforce areas such as sickness absence and workforce headcount data.
- 3.4 The Head of HR and Service Centre will explore other methods of effective data benchmarking with the all-Wales HR Director network to build further on the Benchmarking Wales provision.

5. Legal implications

There are no legal implications contained within the report.

6. Finance implications

There are no additional direct implications contained within the report. Temporary investment funding has, as been noted, already been provided via the use of transformation reserves to progress and deliver the plans to date. Any potential additional costs that arise in due course will be factored into future budgets and planning if and when needed and having due regard to overall likely materially constrained resources.

7. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 7.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.

- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

7.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

7.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

7.4 As this is an information report there is no need for an IIA.

Background papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix A 'Springing Forward' – Workforce