

Annual Review of Performance

Executive Summary

2021/22



Introduction - The Annual Review of Performance 2021/22

The Council's Corporate Plan 2021/22 *Delivering a Successful and Sustainable Swansea* describes our 6 key priorities (Well-being Objectives) and our organisation values and principles that will underpin the delivery of our priorities and overall strategy; this discharges our duties under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the 'Act') to set Well-being Objectives.

Our Well-being Objectives show the Council's contribution to Wales' 7 national goals¹ described within the Act and describes how we will maximise this contribution to the national goals and to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Swansea by working in line with the sustainability principles set out within the Act.

The Corporate Plan sets out the steps being undertaken to meet our Well-being Objectives and contribute to the seven national well-being goals outlined in the Act.

The Plan also sets out how we are maximising our contribution to our well-being objectives and national goals through the way in which we work, which is in line with sustainable principles as follows:

- Looking ahead to the medium and long-term challenges.
- Preventing problems from occurring or from getting worse.
- Ensuring our objectives do not contradict each other and compliment those of other public bodies.
- Working in partnership with others.
- Involving local people.

Our ambitions and commitments to residents – our Well-being Objectives 2021/22

In order to meet these challenges, we prioritised six Well-being Objectives in 2021/22. These were:

- ***Safeguarding people from harm*** – so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- ***Improving Education & Skills*** – so that every child and young person in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- ***Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure*** – so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.
- ***Tackling Poverty*** – so that every person in Swansea can achieve his or her potential.
- ***Transformation & Future Council development*** – so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.
- ***Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity*** - so that we maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, improve our

¹ The National Goals are: A Prosperous Wales; A Resilient Wales; A Healthier Wales; A More Equal Wales; A Wales of More Cohesive Communities; A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language; A Globally Responsible Wales.

knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and benefit health and well-being.

This Annual Review of Performance 2021/22 (the 'Review') is the Council's Annual Well-being Report required under the Act on its progress undertaking the steps to meet its Well-being Objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan to maximise its contribution to the national goals by applying the sustainable development principle. This report also discharges our duty under Part 6 of the Local Government & Elections Act (Wales) Act to publish an annual Self-assessment Report 2021. In doing so, the Review seeks to describe the extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively, using its resources well and governing itself properly by working in line with the requirements set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Section 6 Biodiversity Duty

The information detailed under the *Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity* Objective in this report will be used as the basis for the Council's Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Report to Welsh Government.

How can you get involved?

You can get involved and have your say. <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/haveyoursay>. You can also get involved through the Council's Scrutiny Boards and panels, which are open to the public: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny>. You can contact the Council at any time by: Email to improvement@swansea.gov.uk Telephone 01792 637570.

Executive Summary

Part 1 – How the Council is exercising its functions

This part of the Review represents a report on the progress the Council has made undertaking the steps it set out in its Corporate Plan 2021/22 to work towards meeting each Well-being Objective. It provides a self-assessment on the extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively. The Council is exercising its functions effectively when:

- It is meeting the steps set out to achieve its Well-being Objectives.
- It is maximising its contribution to its Well-being Objectives and National Goals.
- When it is working sustainably (in line with the 5 ways of working).

For each Well-being Objective:

- Why this is a Well-being Objective and what does success look like?
- How well are we doing - and how do we know?
- What and how can we do better (now and for the long-term)?
- Conclusion – the extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively:
 - Progress meeting the steps to deliver the Well-being Objective.
 - Contributing to the achievement of all the national well-being goals.
 - Working sustainably when taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective.

This first part of the report assesses the extent to which the council is exercising its functions effectively using a modification of the Future Generations Commissioner’s Self-Reflection Tool to support an integrated approach to the gathering of evidence to determine progress against the Council’s well-being objectives and to fulfil its new self-assessment responsibilities.

An assessment on progress is made against the following criteria:

- **‘Getting started’** means this is a new objective or a change in direction. This could also mean the Council has faced challenges or barriers to progress.
- **‘Making simple changes’** should be quick and easy to implement. They’re often actions that are ‘low hanging fruit’ that have been tested by others and have a low risk of failure.
- **‘Being more adventurous’** involves stepping out of a ‘business as usual’ mind-set and acting to change how things are currently done. Signalling early progress to wider change, this might involve a change in strategy or team approach to doing something and could involve more departments and organisations than a ‘simple change’.
- **‘Owning our ambition’** can be a similar stage to ‘being more adventurous’ with initiatives developing and more people becoming involved. The Council will be taking more well-managed risks, reaching out to other sectors to make progress and

collaborating on funding or staffing. The Council defines its approach as ambitious and staff feel empowered to work across sectors and influence change.

- Those that are **‘Leading the way’** may be the first people or Council to be taking these actions and are a guide for others to follow. This is a systemic, transformational change to how things have always been done and will require reallocating resources, time to put the changes in place and collaboration with other bodies. Actions are innovative, inspirational and collaborative, putting the Act into practice across larger portfolios to achieve the Council’s priorities. This way of working becomes embedded in the Council and good practice is shared with others.

Case-studies are also included in the full Review to better show the impact the steps are having.

Impact from the COVID-19 Pandemic

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has brought huge challenges and changes to the Council, its services and workforce. The Council has never undertaken such change in such a short timescale and in such challenging circumstances. A number of non-essential services were suspended or reduced during 2020/21 and 2021/22 in order to redeploy resources to areas where they were most needed.

This inevitably has had a significant impact on the usual areas of performance across the council and that is why targets for performance indicators were not set for 2020/21 or 2021/22. This should also be considered when comparing performance to previous years.

Summary of Part 1 - How the Council is exercising its functions

The Council is effectively delivering its functions. The evidence in Part 1 of the assessment shows that the extent to which it is delivering its functions is that it is **owning its ambition** in the delivery of its well-being objectives, which are the councils key priorities for delivery. This means that the Council is stepping out of a ‘business as usual’ mind-set and acting to change how things are currently done. It is signalling early progress to wider change with more parts of the Council and organisations becoming involved. The Council is taking more well-managed risks, reaching out to other sectors to make progress and collaborating on funding or staffing. The Council defines its approach as ambitious and staff work across sectors and help influence change.

A summary of the evidence shows the following areas for continued improvement.

| Well-being Objective | Areas for continued improvement |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Safeguarding People from Harm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn the lessons of these new ways of working to inform future delivery models that ensure that we are the best that we can be in meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain our focus on prevention / early help across the whole system, and at the same time safeguarding and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. • Develop new, imaginative approaches in attracting new qualified and unqualified workers to want to work in the health and social care sector, and in retaining their loyalty and commitment. |
| <p>Improving Education & Skills</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further analyse with schools the impact on learner outcomes because of the pandemic, including basic skills in the early years and pre-school, Welsh language skills, mental health and wellbeing, curriculum design, teaching and learning, and assessment. • Develop a strategy to promote the inclusion to support vulnerable groups of learners and to ensure that the Local Authority has oversight of individualised tracking on learner progress. • Develop an Inclusion for Learners Strategy, focus on the few elements of the ALN strategy where further progress is required and finalise the revision of the accessibility strategy and plan. • Develop further sufficient specialist places for learners with ALN, including STFs and special schools, and support schools to build capacity to meet the needs of learners with SEBD to prevent exclusion or referral to EOTAS and embed universal strategies for all areas of ALN. • Develop a coherent strategy to support literacy and numeracy outcomes in schools and further assess the impact of increased Welsh-medium provision and falling birth rates within the English medium sector. • Evaluate provision within schools that have smaller numbers. • In terms of provision (services), continue and enhance the effectiveness of Member/Officer engagement to inform next stage development of longer-term capital investment and school organisation proposals. <p>Areas for improvement in relation to leadership include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the Abertawe 2027 strategic plan to succeed Abertawe 2023 for education improvement in Swansea. • Sustain the quality of leadership across the education system (school leaders, governors, members, and officers) and embed a consistent and high quality new regional improvement partnership. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish more effective collaboration with the Local Health Board to ensure the statutory requirement of ALNET are met to ensure vulnerable leaders achieve good outcomes. |
| Transforming our economy and infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Economic Delivery Plan - Lead implementation of South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan in Swansea and associated work packages and funding streams such as UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Welsh Government sources. • Diverse and sustainable local economy - Promote and enhance a diverse and sustainable local economy through strong local networks such as the Regeneration Swansea Partnership, development partner Urban Splash and leisure delivery partners Freedom Leisure and Parkwood, to progress Swansea's economic regeneration and cultural agendas including delivery of the Welsh Government Transforming Towns programme, Creative Wales, and through the implementation of the Local Development Plan (LDP) that supports the regeneration of Swansea and promotes sustainable communities underpinned by sustainable transport connectivity. • Community Benefit clauses - Create employment & training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in contracts. • Business support - Leverage of support, advice and funding for new start-up businesses and our existing business stock through Business Swansea and working with Welsh Government to continue to innovate support programmes such as commercial meanwhile uses, and other support interventions in City Centre and District and Local Centres. • Creative Network - Continue to work through strong and resilient Creative Network to support both existing, under development and future fabric of cultural and leisure assets embedded across the City Centre and District and local centres. • Housing - Progress strategic housing and mixed development sites to meet housing need and provide employment. • Public protection - Protect and promote the health, wellbeing, safety and consumer interests of people living in or visiting Swansea by working with others to maintain public safety across the range of regulatory services such as pollution, scams and unfair trading, public health and housing issues, etc. |
| Tackling Poverty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify aims and objectives in relation to tackling poverty and improve the ways in which it monitored and measured the outcomes of work. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the reliance on grant funding to tackle poverty and look for greater flexibility in relation to using funding in a way which best meets local needs in a sustainable way. • Complete the revision of the Council’s Tackling Poverty Strategy. • Complete and implement the Review of Employability and the Review of Financial Inclusion. • Develop and implement the Corporate Volunteering Policy. • Review food poverty and community cooking and growing activities, employment support and access to Lifelong learning, developing evidence based outcome models for projects and developing a quality / satisfaction framework for services. |
| <p>Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the delivery of the Section 6 Corporate Biodiversity Plan, the Nature Recovery Action Plan and the Resilient Wales goal through annual business planning and reporting mechanisms up to 2027. We will report to WG every 3 years in line with our Biodiversity Duty. • Embed a Climate Change and Nature Strategy and monitor the delivery of respective Action Plans up to 2027 • Continue to monitor air, water and soil quality. • Monitor the delivery the energy action plan targets proposed to 2027. • Set out new measures for monitoring the impact of our Procurement of goods and services in line with eth emerging WG carbon measurement toolkit. • Embed and deliver a sustainable transport strategy to 2027. • Continue to report the number of new homes constructed to net carbon zero standards and set out new measures of recording the decarbonisation of our existing stock in line with emerging WG guidance. • Report on the delivery of deliver a waste reduction strategy. • Secure grants and other external funding to help deliver the above. |
| <p>Transformation & Future Council development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Part 2 – Areas for Continued Improvement |

Summary of Part 2 – How the Council uses its Resources

The Council has a duty to the public to use its resources wisely. This means making economic, efficient and effective use of the resources at its disposal. In other words, providing value for money to the public; but it also means doing so in a way that is fair and

sustainable so that services are available to all without compromising the needs of future generations.

When we talk about the ‘resources’ that are at the Council’s disposal, we are generally referring to the Councils budget, its workforce and its other assets, such as buildings. The Council is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively when:

- It is minimising the resources used (Economic).
- The intended results correspond to the actual results (Effective).
- There is a positive relationship between the resources used and outputs / outcomes, i.e. both the economic and effective criteria are met (Efficient).
- There is equitable access to services and needs are met without compromising the needs to future generations (Equity and sustainability).

These resources are used through the following areas:

- Financial Planning.
- Workforce Planning.
- Procurement.
- Performance Management (and benchmarking).
- Asset management.

This part of the Annual Review of Performance is an assessment on the extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively. It will do so by critically reviewing and evaluating how these resources were used through financial and workforce planning, procurement, performance management and asset management. Part 1 of this assessment, which looks at how effectively the Council is delivering its functions, is also a measure of the effective use of resources, i.e. the extent to which the intended results correspond to the actual results and should also be read as such.

How well are we doing and how do we know?

The Council undertook a self-assessment and assurance of the effectiveness of its use of resources and governance arrangements in place. The assessment looked at what arrangements were in place during 2021/22, how effective they were and the evidence.

| | Evidence & effectiveness of delivery | Extent of evidence & effectiveness |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Not in place | No evidence of effective delivery. |
| 2 | Limited application and effectiveness | Some evidence of application, but the effectiveness of delivery is limited. |
| 3 | Mixed Application and effectiveness | Mixed evidence of effective application, with some good evidence and some gaps in application or evidence. |
| 4 | Strong Application and effectiveness | Clear evidence of effective application. |
| 5 | Embedded | Clear evidence of effective and embedded application |

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- There is a positive relationship between the resources used and outputs / outcomes, i.e. both the economic and effective criteria are met (Efficient).
- There is equitable access to services and needs are met without compromising the needs to future generations (Equity and sustainability).

The evidence in Part 2 of this assessment shows that: there is a **strong application and effective use of resources** around financial management, procurement and asset management.

| Use of Resources | Areas for continued improvement |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Financial Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to contain, reduce, defer and delay spending as far as possible, having due regard to the existing agreed budget and political priorities to nonetheless seek to limit service overspending and take corrective action. • Re-establish tracking (suspended as a result of Covid) to ensure that savings targets are monitored and reviewed at the Reshaping and Budget Setting Board established as part of the Council's Achieving Better Together transformation strategy. |
| Procurement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Inquiry into procurement - including a focus on enhanced social value considerations in procurement in line with new legislation that the UK and Welsh Governments are developing (once that legislation is published and its impact becomes known), to include considerations of sustainable development, development of the local supplier base and co-production activity, i.e. involving citizens in decision-making, and also a focus on any areas of non-compliance in procurement activity. |
| Asset Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Asset Management Plan 2021/25 and monitor and report on progress. |

There is a **mixed evidence of effective application**, with some good evidence and some gaps in application or evidence regarding workforce planning and performance management.

A summary of the evidence shows the following areas for continued improvement.

| Use of Resources | Areas for continued improvement |
|---------------------------|--|
| Workforce Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the key messages from engagement exercises and finalise the Workforce Strategy. |

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|-------------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to improve the number of responses to the staff survey. • Reduce staff sickness. |
| Performance Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the current suite of corporate performance indicators for continued relevance for 2022/23 reporting and set annual targets for end-of-year reporting. • Develop a Corporate Plan and associated performance indicators for 2023/27. • Look for ways to improve the consultation and engagement process and improve the response rate for the annual self-assessment. • Review and work to improve the amount of review, scrutiny and challenge to the self-assessment process. |

Summary of Part 3 – the effectiveness of the Councils Governance arrangements

The Council is required by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 to undertake a review of its governance arrangements, at least annually. The review is intended to show how the Council has complied with its Code of Corporate Governance.

The review of governance is brought together in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which is to accompany the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts. The AGS is a key document informed by a number of both internal and external assurance sources.

This part of the Annual Review of Performance is not meant to replicate the AGS but should be read in conjunction with it. This part of the review is intended to assess and evidence the effectiveness of the Councils governance arrangements in helping to deliver its functions and provide value for money.

The Council has effective governance when it effectively applying the core principles of good governance set out by CIPFA / SOLACE in *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*:

- A – Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law.
- B – Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- C - There is a positive relationship between the resources used and outputs / outcomes, i.e. both the economic and effective criteria are met (Efficient).
- There is equitable access to services and needs are met without compromising the needs to future generations (Equity and sustainability).
- D – Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- E - Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- F – Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.

- G – Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

These core principles are applied in the Council through the following governance arrangements:

- Vision, strategy and performance.
- Organisational Governance, Ethics and Values.
- Organisational leadership.
- Customer & Community Engagement and Involvement.
- Risk Management and Business Continuity.
- Partnership / collaboration governance.
- Internal Control Environment.
- Fraud & Financial Impropriety.
- Programme and Project Assurance.
- Innovation & Change Management.

How well and we doing and how do we know?

The Council undertook a self-assessment and assurance of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements. The assessment looked at what arrangements were in place during 2021/22, how effective they were and the evidence.

| | Evidence & effectiveness of delivery | Extent of evidence & effectiveness |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Not in place | No evidence of effective delivery. |
| 2 | Limited application and effectiveness | Some evidence of application, but the effectiveness of delivery is limited. |
| 3 | Mixed Application and effectiveness | Mixed evidence of effective application, with some good evidence and some gaps in application or evidence. |
| 4 | Strong Application and effectiveness | Clear evidence of effective application. |
| 5 | Embedded | Clear evidence of effective and embedded application |

The evidence in Part 3 of this assessment shows that: there is a **mixed application and effectiveness of governance** around vision, strategy & performance.

A summary of the evidence shows the following areas for continued improvement.

| Use of Resources | Areas for continued improvement |
|---|---|
| Vision, Strategy & Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Part 2 - including financial management, performance management and workforce planning. |

There is a **strong application and effectiveness of governance** in all of the other areas.

A summary of the evidence shows the following areas for continued improvement.

| Use of Resources | Areas for continued improvement |
|---|--|
| Organisational Governance, Ethics and Values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put arrangements in place to ensure that Audit Wales recommendations are recorded and tracked in a consistent way. |
| Organisational leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Part 2 – workforce planning. |
| Customer & Community Engagement and Involvement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Part 2 – performance management. Continue the development of a Public Participation Strategy, as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. |
| Risk Management and Business Continuity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations from 2021/22 Internal Audit Report on risk management to continue regular updates and ensure control measures remain SMART. |
| Partnership / collaboration governance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue work to address all proposals for improvement to the operation of the Public Service Board made by the Scrutiny Programme Committee. |
| Internal Control Environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None identified. |
| Fraud & Financial Impropriety. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue work to address all recommendations in the Audit Wales report 'Raising our Game - Tackling Fraud in Wales'. |
| Programme and Project Assurance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None identified. |
| Innovation & Change Management. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None identified. |