



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Governance & Audit Committee – 5 June 2024

Appointment of Governance & Audit Committee Representative on the Strategic Governance Group

Purpose:	This report seeks to appoint a representative of the Governance & Audit Committee on the Strategic Governance Group.
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Legal, Finance, Access to Services.
Recommendation:	It is recommended that: - 1) a representative of the Governance & Audit Committee and a reserve representative are appointed onto the Strategic Governance Group.
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Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Catherine Window

1. Background

- 1.1 At the Audit Committee meeting held on 16 September 2019, the Chief Legal Officer highlighted the requirement for a representative of the Committee to be appointed as a member of the Strategic Governance Group.
- 1.2 The Committee agreed to proceed and Councillor L V Walton was appointed as the Governance & Audit Committee representative on the Governance Group for 1 year only. Councillor Walton was subsequently appointed in January 2021 and May 2022, until the end of the previous Council term in May 2023. Appendix 1 provides the terms of reference of the Strategic Governance Group which were updated in May 2023.

2. Appointment of Governance & Audit Committee Representative 2024-2025

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to appoint a representative and a reserve representative on the Strategic Governance Group, for one year only, until May 2025.

3. Strategic Governance Group

The Strategic Governance Group will comprise:

- Chief Executive
- Director of Corporate Services (Chair)
- Director of Education
- Director of Finance
- Director of Place
- Director of Social Services
- Monitoring Officer
- Manager of Strategic Delivery Unit
- Governance and Audit Committee representative
- Chief Internal Auditor (observer status)

Additional co-opted members can be added to the membership, if agreed by the Group.

4. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 4.1 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.

- 4.1.1 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'.

4.1.2 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.

4.2 There are no impact assessment implications associated with this report.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Strategic Governance Group Terms of Reference.
Appendix 2 – IIA Form

Strategic Governance Group Terms of Reference (ToR)

1. Purpose

The Strategic Governance Group will enhance the council's governance arrangements by overseeing the development and delivery of the Council's statutory corporate self-assessment obligations and Annual Governance Statement. The Group sets out to ensure the Council is undertaking a robust self-assessment of its performance, use of resources and its governance arrangements.

2. Term

This Terms of Reference is effective from 25 May 2023 and will be reviewed annually.

3. Membership

The Strategic Governance Group will comprise:

- Chief Executive
- Director of Corporate Services (Chair)
- Director of Education
- Director of Finance
- Director of Place
- Director of Social Services
- Monitoring Officer
- Manager of Strategic Delivery Unit
- Governance and Audit Committee representative
- Chief Internal Auditor (observer status)

Additional co-opted members can be added to the membership, if agreed by the Group.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Strategic Governance Group is responsible for:

- Designing corporate processes to enable the council to comply with [Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)
- Overseeing the preparation of the Annual Review and Annual Governance Statement and supporting evidence
- Challenging the robustness, details and assurance levels provided in self-assessment documents produced to inform the production of the Annual Review and the Annual Governance Statement (e.g., Senior Management Assurance Statements and wellbeing objective self-reflection tools);
- Ensuring that significant governance issues are both identified appropriately and addressed by the appropriate officer in a timely manner; and

- Ensuring the council's assurance framework is kept under review.

The membership of the Group will commit to:

- attending scheduled Group meetings or sending a deputy where necessary
- sharing relevant information with Group members
- taking timely actions that support delivery of the Group's role and responsibilities.

5. Meetings

All meetings will be chaired by the Director of Corporate Services. A meeting quorum will be the Chair plus two additional directors and a Governance and Audit Committee representative. Decisions will be made by consensus (i.e., members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice).

Secretariat support will be provided by the Strategic Delivery Unit, including:

- arranging meetings
- preparing and circulating agendas and supporting papers
- preparing and circulating meeting notes and actions

Meetings will be held on MS Teams, as frequently as required to fulfil the Group's remit and responsibilities. If required subgroup meetings will be arranged outside of these times at a time convenient to subgroup, members.

6. Amendment, Modification or Variation

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by Group members.

Approved on 24 May 2023