



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Governance & Audit Committee – 14 June 2023

Election of Governance & Audit Committee Representative on the Governance Group

Purpose:	This report seeks to appoint a representative of the Governance & Audit Committee on the Governance Group.
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Legal, Finance, Access to Services.
Recommendation:	It is recommended that a representative of the Governance & Audit Committee is appointed onto the Governance Group.
Report Author:	Jeremy Parkhouse
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

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 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 Annual Governance Group.

2. Appointment of Governance & Audit Committee Representative 2023-2024

- 2.1 The Committee is requested to appoint a representative on the Governance Group for one year only until May 2024.

3. Governance Group

The Director of Corporate Services is the lead on governance and assurance and is chair of the Governance Group. In addition, the Group comprises the Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager (who is responsible for the production of the Annual Governance Statement), the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, together with a representative from the Governance & Audit Committee. The Chief Internal Auditor will be co-opted for his experience and expertise but not to participate as a direct member of this group and only in an advisory capacity. In the event that the Group wish to co-opt additional members, it will be done by unanimous agreement.

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 – Governance Group Terms of Reference.
Appendix 2 – IIA Form

Governance Group – Terms of Reference

With a view to improving both the Annual Governance Statement and monitoring governance arrangements within the City and County of Swansea, a Governance Group was formed in 2017. The Group comprises the S 151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer, and Corporate Performance Manager.

The remit and terms of reference of the Governance Group will include:

- Enhancing the Annual Governance Statement.
- Oversight of the Self-assessment and Management Assurance Statement process.
- Testing the robustness and detail of the Self-assessment and Management Assurance Statements.
- Challenging CMT assertions as to governance and assurance levels
- Ensuring that significant governance issues are both identified appropriately and addressed.
- Preparation of the Annual Governance Statement and collation of all appropriate evidence.

Role of the Governance & Audit Member:

The Governance & Audit Committee representative will be a full member of the Governance Group contributing to the remit and terms of reference as identified above. The member will have access to all documentation that is provided to the Governance Group including the Self-assessment and Management Assurance Statements. Such documentation to be provided on a confidential basis where appropriate. The Member will be invited to all meetings of the Group and is expected to contribute to discussions to ensure that the Annual Governance Statement reflects the governance position within the City and County of Swansea.

The representative will report back to the Governance & Audit Committee in order to provide the Committee with assurance on the work of the Governance Group as outlined within these terms of reference. However, the ultimate responsibility for the Annual Governance Statement rests with CMT.