

# CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

DATE – 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Paul Bradshaw, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development

**SUBJECT:** Audit Wales Report on Workforce Planning

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**REPORT FOR:** Noting Contents of Report

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### 1. Background

- 1.1 Over the past two years the Workforce and OD team have been supporting services in improving how the Council can plan to have the right workforce in the right place at the right time and how this ultimately can be best integrated within and can best support the Council's business planning process. During 2018 workforce planning was implemented in a number of services and as part of the business planning round last year for 2020/23, a consistent approach for workforce planning was introduced across all services.
- 1.2 During this time, Audit Wales had undertaken audit work in relation to the Council's wider transformation programme to deliver Vision 2025, and indicated that they wanted to review the Council's workforce planning arrangements as part of this.
- 1.3 Recognising that a new Head of Workforce and Organisational Development (WOD) was due to start during January 2019, it was agreed that the audit be arranged for the latter part of 2019/20.
- 1.4 From August 2019 a new integrated approach to business planning was implemented (i.e. Integrated Business Planning or IBP), which incorporated a new workforce planning process as a key component. As part of this, all service areas were required to complete an IBP, which identified; their service changes, the resulting workforce changes/needs and to produce a workforce plan to address their future workforce needs. Each service area was offered facilitated sessions by the Organisational Development Team, with many making good use of this offer and providing complimentary feedback. The majority of service areas completed workforce plans by late November 2019, with 3 service areas still in the process of completing their plans at the time of the audit.
- 1.5 During October 2019, the Head of WOD met with the senior auditor and his team to discuss the scope of the audit, along with the requirements and support required. As part of the scope, the audit team set out how the audit would be conducted, mainly through interviews with the CEO, Portfolio Holder, Director of Transformation, Head of Strategy and Communication, Head of WOD, the OD Manager and the Workforce Planning Manager in PTHB. In addition, focus groups were held with Heads of Service, selected service managers who had been involved in the workforce planning process, and HR and OD staff who had supported the process. Relevant documentation was also examined.

### 2. Purpose of the Audit

- 2.1 The purpose of the audit was confirmed as being to identify whether:

- The Council developed a robust and effective workforce plan?
- The Council developed a robust workforce plan at the strategic level?
- The Council developed a robust workforce plan at the operational level?
- The Council embedded workforce planning as part of its business planning cycle/process?

### 3. Key Points to Note

#### 3.1 In summary Audit Wales found:

In relation to the question they were seeking assurance on (Has the Council developed a robust and effective workforce plan?) found that overall stronger workforce planning means the Council is better placed to support its transformation objectives.

And confirmed that they had reached this conclusion, because:

- through its new approach the Council has improved its understanding of its current and future workforces;
- comprehensive workforce plans for all services are now in place, however quality is variable; and
- The Council intends to review its workforce plans and has identified areas to improve the overall process.

3.2 In their review (copy attached), Audit Wales made 2 proposals for improvement, as laid out below and pleasingly the second one (P2) reinforced and supported the actions already identified and planned by the service, to further develop the Council's workforce planning practices for the future.

3.3 The first area for improvement is also helpful, as it will build upon the communication with and engagement of the wider workforce and services in workforce planning.

Proposals for improvement:

P1: For the Council to consider improvements to the communication aspects of the workforce planning including:

- clarify how the three strategic-level documents will be communicated to the wider organisation;
- continue ongoing engagement with the wider workforce to communicate both the corporate and the service level vision for the workforce; and
- increase the engagement from services with the facilitated sessions.

P2: The Council should action the improvement areas it has identified:

- ensure all 12 service level workforce plans are consistent and comprehensive;
- complete the analysis of the local labour market;
- complete a formal lesson learnt exercise;
- confirm the succession planning arrangements;
- improve workforce planning tools; and
- further integrate workforce planning with the Integrated Business Plans

- 3.4 Audit Wales identified areas of good practice, and highlighted the nature of the ongoing support provided to service areas by the WOD team and recognised that where Heads of Service and managers engaged in the process, they had developed robust plans for this year. All of which will clearly benefit the services in recruiting retaining and developing staff in line with their future service needs.
- 3.5 The service would wish to thank Audit Wales for undertaking the review and for their findings, which help to recognise the progress made by the Council over recent years, recognises the plans the Council already had in place to improve the process further and proposes an area of further improvement, which the Council can build upon.
- 3.6 The report by Audit Wales clearly acknowledges the progress the Council has made, in that they recognised that the new approach represents a significant improvement on the previous process.
- 3.7 Taking all of this together, the Council now has a stronger workforce planning process in place, which places it in a better state of preparedness to deliver its transformation plans.
- 3.8 The Workforce and OD team is continuing to develop the workforce planning process for the 2021/24 IBP cycle in line with the proposed improvements, and will continue to support managers in developing robust workforce plans, which underpin service business plans and hence the Council's ongoing transformation programme.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>
That the committee note the findings of Audit Wales's report and the future plans.	To advise the committee about the report / findings of Audit Wales and the Council's future plans for workforce planning.

<b>Relevant Policy (ies) :</b>	No specific policy.		
<b>Within Policy</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Within Budget</b>	<b>N/A</b>

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