

| <b><u>BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</u></b> |  |
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| <b>Report to</b>                                   | <b>The Chair and Members of the Democratic Services Committee</b>        |
| <b>Report Subject</b>                              | <b>Democratic Arrangements Progress Report</b>                           |
| <b>Report Author</b>                               | <b>Gemma Wasley, Corporate Performance Manager</b>                       |
| <b>Report date</b>                                 | <b>9<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>   |
| <b>Directorate</b>                                 | <b>Corporate Services and Strategy</b>                                   |
| <b>Executive Portfolio</b>                         | <b>Cllr Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Members Corporate Services</b> |
| <b>Date of meeting</b>                             | <b>29<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>  |
| <b>Date signed off by Monitoring Officer</b>       | <b>N/A</b>   |
| <b>Date signed off by Section 151 Officer</b>      | <b>N/A</b>   |
| <b>Date signed off by Chair</b>                    | <b>14<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>  |
| <b>Key words</b>                                   | <b>Scrutiny<br/>Democratic Services<br/>Action Plan</b>                  |

## Report Information Summary

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Purpose of Report</b>  |
| 1.1       | The purpose of the report is to present the Democratic Arrangements Progress Report covering the period October 2017 to March 2018 (Appendix 2).            |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Scope of the Report</b>  |
| 2.1       | The progress report attached at appendix 2 has been developed to incorporate the established action plans covering scrutiny support and Member development. |
| 2.2       | It also includes a section on the democratic process, with the aim of providing a more joined up picture of progress for Members.                           |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Contribution to the National Well-Being Goals – Detail attached as Appendix 1</b>  |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CLT/Committees/Other groups</b>  |
| 4.1       | The Report has been approved by CLT at their meeting on 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2018.  |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Recommendation/s for Consideration</b>   |
| 5.1       | That the Democratic Services Committee considers the options in paragraph 6 and recommends the preferred option to Council for approval.                    |

| Why this topic is a priority for the Council? |                       |  |                            |                      |                      |
|---|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Single Integrated Plan (SIP)                  | Well-being Objectives | Performance Management Improvement Framework | Transforming Blaenau Gwent | Relevant legislation | Other (please state) |
|   | X                     | X  |                            |                      | WAO                  |

| Reporting Pathway                 |                                 |       |                               |          |           |         |                      |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|----------------------|
| Directorate Leadership Team (DLT) | Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) | Audit | Democratic Services Committee | Scrutiny | Executive | Council | Other (please state) |
| 15.3.18                           | 20.3.18                         |       | 29.3.18                       |          |           | 26.4.18 |                      |

## **Main Report**

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Background and Context</b>  |
| 1.1       | Progress updates on the Scrutiny support action plan and Member development action plan have been presented to the Democratic Services Committee on systematic basis.  |
| 1.2       | As part of the ongoing review process it was recognised that by integrating progress against these plans into one report and including a section on facilitating the democratic arrangements, Members would have a fuller picture of performance.  |
| 1.3       | The Corporate Performance Team, which also includes Democratic Services, under the Head of Democratic Services, worked to develop the revised version, which for consistency reflects the style and format used to present other performance information into the democratic process.  |
| 1.4       | The intention is to continue to develop the progress report to include further actions and performance measures, which will link to the corporate business planning arrangements.  |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Performance Evidence and Information</b>  |
| 2.1       | Appendix 2 provides detailed performance information.  |
| 2.2       | The Scrutiny Support section includes detail against the Wales Audit Office proposals for improvement received from previous audits, in addition to a number of locally identified actions.  |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Risk Implications</b>   |
| 3.1       | There are risks associated with reputation and not maximising the opportunity for monitoring of progress of actions to deliver the Council's democratic arrangements. The revised progress report aims to provide Members with a more joined up picture of performance across the key elements of the democratic arrangements. |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Financial Implications</b>  |
| 4.1       | The only direct financial implication of the action plans is where training needs are identified through the Member Development Programme. In house training options are developed to support Members where possible.  |

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| <b>5.</b> | <b>Staffing/Workforce Development Implications</b>  |
| 5.1       | The Democratic Services Team (business support) has returned to Policy and Performance in recognition of the alignment to the duties under the role of Head of Democratic Services.   |
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Options for Consideration</b>  |
| 6.1       | <p><b>Option One</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Democratic Services Committee consider the information included within the Democratic Arrangements Performance Report (Appendix 2) and recommend it to Council for approval</li> </ul>  |
| 6.2       | <p><b>Option Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Democratic Services Committee consider the information included within the Democratic Arrangements Performance Report (Appendix 2), provide specific comment or amendment prior to recommending it to Council for approval</li> </ul>   |
| <b>7.</b> | <b>Impact Assessment Against Proposals / Options</b>  |
| 7.1       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Thinking for the long term</b><br/>The Action Plans support the Council's longer term monitoring to ensure its Democratic Arrangements continue to be developed and reviewed.</li> <li><b>Taking an integrated approach</b><br/>Democratic activity impacts all Directorates of the Council integrating the work of both members and officers.</li> <li><b>Taking a preventative approach</b><br/>By working to improve the democratic functions of the Council we are looking to prevent further amendment or the need for regulation in future. This work is anticipated to become more prominent as the requirements of the Well-being for Future Generations Act are implemented.</li> <li><b>Collaborating</b><br/>As part of the continuing development of the scrutiny function peer learning opportunities with other local authorities are undertaken.</li> <li><b>Involvement</b><br/>There is a specific proposal for improvement contained within the WAO review in relation to engagement with the public.<br/><br/>Forward work programmes of the scrutiny committees include areas of work that promote positive benefits for people who fall</li> </ul> |

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|           | under the protected characteristics.  |
| 7.2       | <b>Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)</b><br>The Member development strategy was subject to an EQIA screening exercise, with no negative impact on the protected characteristics identified.     |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>Conclusion</b>   |
| 8.1       | A significant amount of work has been undertaken to continue to develop both the Scrutiny and Democratic Arrangements.  |
| 8.2       | The monitoring of progress by the Democratic Services Committee supports the continuing development of the Council's Democratic arrangements which are key to the overall governance framework. |

| Assess how well your project / activity will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals.   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Description of the Well-being goals   | How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals? | Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)? |
| <p><b>A prosperous Wales</b><br/>                     An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p> |   |   |
| <p><b>A resilient Wales</b><br/>                     A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>   |   |   |
| <p><b>A healthier Wales</b><br/>                     A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>   |   |   |

| Description of the Well-being goals  | How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?   | Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>A more equal Wales</b><br/>A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>   |   |   |
| <p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</p>   |   |   |
| <p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b><br/>A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>                             |   |   |
| <p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b><br/>A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p> | <p>The Democratic Arrangements of a Council are an important and vital aspect of the Council's governance arrangements and decision making process. By implementing the Action Plans both members and officers are working to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Blaenau Gwent.</p> | <p>Scrutiny and the Democratic Arrangements remains a key area of activity as part of the relevant business plans and is also identified as part of the Council's Well-being Objectives in order to prioritise support to the communities of Blaenau Gwent.</p> |