

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO:** **THE PRESIDING MEMBER AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**SUBJECT:** **GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**  
**12<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2023**

**REPORT OF:** **DEMOCRATIC OFFICER**

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**PRESENT:** JOANNE ABSALOM (CHAIR)

Councillors S. Behr  
W. Hodgins  
C. Smith

Martin Veale

**WITH:** Chief Officer Resources  
Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships  
Service Manager – Development & Estates  
Business & Regeneration Service Manager  
Professional Lead – Internal Audit  
Data Protection & Governance Officer  
Communications & Marketing Manager

**AND:** Charlotte Owen, Audit Wales  
Mike Jones, Audit Wales

**DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

<b><u>ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>SUBJECT</u></b>	<b><u>ACTION</u></b>
<b>No. 1</b>	<b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b>  It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
<b>No. 2</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b>  Apologies for absence were received from:	

	<p>Councillors D. Bevan, K. Chaplin, J. Wilkins, Audit &amp; Risk Manager, Chief Officer Commercial &amp; Customer and Deborah Woods, Audit Wales.</p>	
<b>No. 3</b>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interests or dispensations reported.</p>	
<b>No. 4</b>	<p><b><u>GOVERNANCE &amp; AUDIT COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>The decisions of the Governance &amp; Audit Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2023 were submitted.</p> <p>It was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<b>No. 5</b>	<p><b><u>ACTION SHEET – 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE, 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Action Sheet arising from the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2023 was submitted, whereupon:</p> <p><b><u>Item 7 – Forward Work Programme 2023/2024 - Annual Report of the Governance &amp; Audit Committee</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that this action had been completed as an item relating to the Annual Report had been included on the Forward Work Programme. However, the production of the report would be the responsibility of the principal adviser to the Committee (in liaison with the Chair) and not the Chief Officer Resources/Head of Democratic Services, Governance &amp; Partnerships as previously reported.</p>	

	<p><b><u>Item No. 11 – Civic Centre Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) – Ebbw Vale Town Centre Visitor Footfall</u></b></p> <p>The Business &amp; Regeneration Service Manager provided a verbal update in relation to the challenges and accuracy of footfall data that had been collated for Ebbw Vale Town Centre and suggested that as a number of queries had been received from several Members regarding footfall data, that a Member Briefing be arranged to outline the methodology around footfall counters, how the data was collected and the algorithms used to quantify the data.</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p> <p>It was unanimously,</p> <p>FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the Action Sheet be noted.</p>	
<p><b>No. 6</b></p>	<p><b><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the proposed Forward Work Programme 2023/2024.</p> <p>It was noted that the additional items discussed at the June Committee would be incorporated within the Forward Work Programme going forward.</p> <p>It was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the Forward Work Programme be accepted.</p>	
<p><b>No. 7</b></p>	<p><b><u>AUDIT WALES: REVIEW OF THE PLANNING SERVICE – BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Development &amp; Estates.</p> <p>It was unanimously,</p>	

	<p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, i.e. the Committee was assured that the Management Response responded to the identified recommendations within the Audit Wales report relating to the Review of the Planning Service.</p>	
<b>No. 8</b>	<p><b><u>STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/2022</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>It was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 2 be endorsed, namely that the Statement of Accounts be not approved at this stage and reconsidered following receipt and consideration of the Appointed Auditors Audit of Accounts Report.</p>	
<b>No. 9</b>	<p><b><u>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/2022</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>It was unanimously,</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Option 1 be endorsed, namely that the Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022 be approved and adopted in its current state and the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 be received in due course.</p>	