

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2025

REFERENCE FROM GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE: 21<sup>ST</sup> JULY, 2025

“223 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT 2024-25 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2025 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Director of Corporate Resources.

For the reporting period 2024/25, the Council had judged its performance to be ‘Good’ and details of the supporting evidence used in coming to this conclusion were provided at paragraph 2.8 of the report. That included the Council’s end of year performance review against the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 commitments. There was also further assurance from the Panel Performance Assessment (PPA), findings which concluded that, ‘Overall, the Vale of Glamorgan Council exercises its functions effectively... and there were no identified areas of concern.’

The Council had attributed an overall judgement of ‘Good’ in relation to its use of resources. Paragraph 2.10 provided the rationale for coming to that conclusion and included the Directorate Self-Assessment findings and assurance from the Panel Performance Assessment findings (November 2024) in relation to the Council’s use of resources, which concluded that, ‘From the evidence we have heard and within the current high levels of service demand and financial pressures faced by all Local Authorities across Wales the Council is using its resources effectively and efficiently.’

For the reporting period 2024/25, the Council had judged governance to be ‘Good’ with key supporting evidence including the Draft Annual Governance Statement which provided an overall opinion of ‘Reasonable Assurance’ that the Council’s governance arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the government framework. Paragraph 2.11 of the report provided further details on the evidence that supports this judgment. The PPA also concluded that in relation to the effectiveness of the Council’s governance arrangements, ‘We consider the Council has effective governance arrangements in place but there are areas which could be further developed.’ It was reported that good progress had already been made in taking forward those recommendations.

Councillor E. Goodjohn referred to area of Performance and the 85.3% of actions completed against a target of 85%. Councillor Goodjohn stated that the calculation was based on all actions and measures collated together, and as there were more actions than measures, it would be appropriate to look at how the calculations could be presented and more clearly defined. In reply the Director stated, that was something that the Council was considering and there was possibility of looking at

how information for actions and measure were presented for the mid-year update report.

Councillor Goodjohn queried the judgements made by each individual Directorate and the balancing with cross Directorate areas of high risk such as Project Zero. The Director stated that each area of risk had a risk owner, namely one of the Council's Directors, who had responsibility for managing those risks. Part of the self-assessment was for the Directors to assess and judge how well those risks had been managed.

With regard to Governance, Councillor Goodjohn commented that the judgement for that was based on the PPA and the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS), and he queried whether that was sufficient. In reply, the Director stated that he felt those were sufficient to form a judgement given that for the AGS there was the CIPFA code which the AGS was required to satisfy, and also because it drew together a range of different information and data sources (including those from the Council's regulatory framework) in order to reach a final judgment. Of the 55 recommendations made by the Council's regulators, only 17 required ongoing action. That was a positive indication of the Council's response. One aspect for future consideration, was a recommendation from the Joint Performance Scrutiny meeting, around incorporation of the Annual Scrutiny report.

Councillor M. Hooper queried consultation on the Annual Self-Assessment carried out with businesses in the Vale. The Director advised that businesses would have opportunity to respond directly through social media communications and also through consultation with the Council's Regeneration Team. It was noted that there was not a strong level of feedback received from businesses. Councillor Hooper stated that there was perhaps opportunity to explore the potential of partner engagement further.

The Chair queried whether any external or peer assessment had been carried out as part of the self-assessment process. In reply, the Director stated that by it's nature as a self-assessment, the evaluation process was mainly internal to the Council. The key aspect for the Council was around the direction of travel and what the Council was doing to achieve its priorities and areas for improvement. There was an element of peer assessment on a Director level, which also involved the relevant Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Chair, and it was also important to highlight that changes had been made to judgements as part of the moderation process.

The Chair commented that there was a concern with regards to some aspects of the recommendations made by at the Joint Scrutiny meeting, particularly in relation to limiting the tender prices for services, so it was important for legal advice to be sought before that was adopted. The Chair also welcomed an easy to read / young person's version and opportunities to bolster the evidence base used as part of the self-assessment process. He stated that it would also be useful for any trends relating to the direction of travel of different judgements over time to be considered for inclusion.

Subsequently, the Committee

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the draft Vale of Glamorgan Council Annual Self-Assessment Report 2024-25 be noted.

(2) T H A T the comments of the Governance and Audit Committee be referred to Cabinet for its consideration. The comments relating to the following:

- For the presentation of calculations in relation to the percentages of actions and measures completed to be more clearly defined;
- For any trends relating to the direction of travel of different judgements over time to be considered and presented;
- The importance to explore the potential for partner engagement in the self-assessment process;
- For an easy to read/ young person's version of the self-assessment to be devised post consultation.

Reason for decisions

(1&2) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.”