



## **GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Date Written	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2021
Report Author	Ellis Cooper / Andrew Mogford
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **MTCBC ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report summarises the Council's Annual Performance Report (APR), attached as Appendix 1. Our Annual Performance Report is a statutory requirement for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (a document that we are required to publish in line with our regulations). We publish the Annual Performance Report to communicate our self-evaluation against delivery of our well-being objectives. The intention of the APR is to provide an overall assessment of Council performance during the year.
- 1.2 This APR document relates to the year April 2020 to March 2021.
- 1.3 Based on the judgements identified in the four well-being themes, our overall judgement for 2020/21 is **ADEQUATE**, where strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement. Our four well-being objectives were assessed as: Best Start to Life – Unsatisfactory; Working Life – Adequate; Environmental Well-being – Adequate; Living Well – Adequate.
- 1.4 The elements in this APR were challenged throughout the Scrutiny Committee cycle 2020/21. This has also received officer challenge through the quarterly performance and improvement review process. The APR has also featured on the Governance and Audit Committee forward plan, a precursor for the introduction of the requirement to produce a self-assessment report next year (Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021).

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

- 2.1 the Governance and Audit Committee note and debate this report.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This report summarises the Council's Annual Performance Report (APR), attached as Appendix 1. Our APR is a statutory requirement for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (a document that we are required to publish in line with our regulations). We do this to communicate our self-evaluation against delivery of our well-being objectives. The intention of the APR is to provide an overall assessment of Council performance during the year (April 2020 to March 2021).
- 3.2 As a result, it is important that the judgements made within this report receive challenge. This has been done by peer officer challenge throughout the year but also at our Scrutiny Committees and at quarterly performance and improvement reviews.
- 3.3 The elements in this APR were challenged throughout the Scrutiny Committee cycle 2020/21.
- 3.4 In addition to this, and in preparation for the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the APR is also being presented to the 'Governance and Audit Committee (4<sup>th</sup> of October 2021).
- 3.5 This is the last time the Council will produce a report in this format. This is due to changes in legislation. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires the Council to produce a self-assessment report. This replaces the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 that required the Council to produce an APR. This will be done after setting the budget next financial year. Our APR (2020/21) will be published on the Council website by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021.

## **4.0 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND WELL-BEING DUTY**

### **Continuous Improvement**

- 4.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 applied the duty on all local authorities in Wales to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions by identifying their own priorities for improvement. This requires the Council to consider seven aspects of improvement, namely: service quality; fairness; strategic effectiveness; service availability; sustainability; innovation; efficiency. This principle has been maintained in the approaches of developing and delivering our Corporate Well-being Plan. It has also been built into our self-evaluation process (used as part of the APR to arrive at our judgements). The APR reports on our performance for 2020/21 and considers trends from the previous year and, where available data from across Wales. Our findings will be built into planning and delivery in future years to learn from past experiences, continuously improve and

enable us to continue to use the sustainable development principle (Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015).

### Our Well-being Objectives

- 4.2 Our Corporate Well-being Plan (Focus on the Future – Well-being in our Community) sets out the Council’s well-being objectives from 2017 to 2022. The Plan outlined four organisational well-being objectives (previously referred to improvement objectives) as stated below.

Well-being Theme	Objective
 <b>Best Start</b>	Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.
 <b>Working Life</b>	People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure which makes Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination.
 <b>Environmental Well-being</b>	Communities protect, enhance, and promote our environment and countryside.
 <b>Living Well</b>	People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.

### Well-being Duty

- 4.3 The Council, like other public bodies, is continuing to respond to the Well-being Duty as laid out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This Duty requires public bodies to contribute to the achievement of the seven national Well-being Goals and adopt the Sustainable Development (five ways of working) as the central organising principle.

#### Seven Well-being Goals for Wales



### *Five ways of working*



#### **Long term**

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.



#### **Prevention**

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.



#### **Integration**

Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.



#### **Collaboration**

Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.



#### **Involvement**

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

- 4.4 The Council's Well-being Plan, 'Focus on the Future: Well-being in our Community' represents our contribution in taking steps to achieve the seven national Well-being Goals. This report looks back over 2002/21 of that plan to assess our performance in delivering improvements to the economic, social, environment and cultural well-being in Merthyr Tydfil.
- 4.5 The APR provides an overall assessment of Council performance during 2020/21. To do this we will consider, amongst other things, our self-evaluation and conclusions from our regulators.
- 4.6 This is the fourth year where we have measured how activities and services across the Council can impact upon well-being. We have used a mixed method approach combining quantitative (using data to assess our performance against our key performance indicators) and qualitative data (case studies) to measure the impact on well-being in Merthyr Tydfil.
- 4.7 Each well-being objective and theme (as set out in 4.2) has a set of performance indicators used to measure progress. Where possible these indicators have been assigned a RAYG (Red; Amber; Yellow; Green) status to indicate their current position. Indicators are evaluated based on a ranked position when compared to the

other Welsh Councils (where available). The purpose of using comparative data is to enable us to understand our relative performance across Wales.

However, due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, there is little, or in some cases no, national data available. As such this feature is significantly limited in this years report.

Table Indicator status definitions

Performance definition	Rank	Status
The current position is excellent	1-6	Excellent
The current position is good	7-11	Good
The current position is adequate	12-16	Adequate
The current position is unsatisfactory	17-22	Unsatisfactory
There is no comparable information, only local data	Not applicable	

4.8 In some instances, we are unable to compare an indicator with other Councils in Wales. **When this occurs, local targets set should be considered in conjunction with the judgement definitions listed below to enable officers to assign a judgement.**

<b>EXCELLENT</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice.
<b>GOOD</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>ADEQUATE and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>UNSATISFACTORY and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

4.9 The second part of the APR considers our performance though utilising qualitative data (case studies) to demonstrate how we are working towards the seven Well-being Goals and five ways of working. The data captured in the case studies provide a rich account of the positive outcomes for individuals and communities. For 2020/21, we have developed 25 case studies (chosen randomly) to demonstrate how we have used the sustainable development principles (the five ways of working) to deliver the support/services to communities; thereby more explicitly evidencing this aspect of the Council's requirement to respond to the Well-being Duty. We have also assessed how our work has taken an integrated approach to delivering our well-being objectives and the cross-cutting theme of 'Tackling Poverty'. This theme has emerged from feedback from the first three years of the plan. This is a wicked issue for the County Borough. We have also used the Well-being of Future Generations

self-reflection toolkit to help us form judgements on our performance and impacts on delivering our outcomes.

- 4.10 Based on the judgements identified in the four well-being themes, our overall judgement for 2020/21 is **ADEQUATE**, where strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement. Our four well-being objectives were assessed as: Best Start to Life – Unsatisfactory; Working Life – Adequate; Environmental Well-being – Adequate; Living Well – Adequate.

### **External Regulators**

- 4.11 Like all Councils in Wales, our work is scrutinised by external regulators to ensure that we use public money effectively to deliver benefits to our communities. Audit Wales (previously known as the Wales Audit Office (WAO)) has an annual programme of audit and assessment work which it undertakes in the Council. Other regulators undertake work relating to specific service areas. The conclusions from all this work are brought together in an Annual Improvement Report. The other primary regulators are Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (Estyn) and the Care Inspectorate for Wales (CIW).
- 4.12 Every year, Audit Wales reports on how well each Council is planning for improvement and delivering services. The Annual audit summary 2020 for Merthyr Tydfil is outlined in the APR. These outcomes are being addressed and further work being done during 2021/22 and as part of the Council's improvement planning.
- 4.13 Estyn is the office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. Estyn provides an independent inspection and advice service on quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) register, inspect and take action to improve the quality and safety of services for the well-being of the people of Wales. This includes the review of the Council's children and adult social services.

## **5.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE**

- 5.1 To determine if we are performing as a Council, we will evaluate improvements made in our priority areas and compare outcomes of performance of previous years and from across Wales (where this information is available).
- 5.2 By using qualitative and quantitative data analysis and applying the sustainable development principles (five ways of working), the Council can continue to self-evaluate, challenge and improve to better deliver its well-being objectives and support regional and national delivery of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 5.3 The Council wants to improve on the 'Adequate' and 'Unsatisfactory' judgements across the well-being themes noted within the report covering 2020-21.

- 5.4 The corporate self-evaluation process was reintroduced in June 2019, will offer further sources of evidence to support the preparation of the self-assessment process and report going forward. This has been bolstered for 2020/21 with the introduction of quarterly performance and improvement reviews (an officer led challenge of performance and improvement, adding a different layer of challenge to Member scrutiny).
- 5.5 As well as delivering against our well-being objectives, the Council has prioritised its improvement in its 'Recovery, Transformation and Improvement (RTI) Plan'. In doing so, focus has been placed on three priorities: raising standards in Education; increasing resilience in Social Services; and the Economic Recovery of the County Borough. This means we will need to continue to respond and recover from the coronavirus pandemic and transform the way we work. This will include: Digital Transformation; a Commercial work programme; creating a Health Organisation (e.g. being a learning organisation, better use of data, enhancing how we monitor staff and organisational performance); and Governance Improvement.

## **6.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT**

- 6.1 We will use the lessons learnt over 2020/21, together with areas for improvement and priorities captured as a result of the roll-out of the corporate self-evaluation process, to respond to the identified needs of our communities; to deliver our well-being objectives; and to provide evidence for external regulators undertaking audits and examination visits.
- 6.2 The Council will continue to strengthen its corporate service improvement framework, quarterly performance and improvement review process, self-evaluation processes, delivery of recovery, transformation and improvement and ensure alignment with the Well-being Duty.
- 6.3 Continuation of delivery against our 'Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan' remains a priority.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**Appendix 1 – MTCBC Annual Performance Report**

**ELLIS COOPER**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**COUNCILLOR LISA MYTTON**  
**COUNCIL LEADER**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>