

## Minutes of the Corporate Governance Group

4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

11am

Democratic Services Committee Room, County Hall and Virtual Meeting

### Present:

Cllr. Alun Lenny (AL)	Executive Board Member (Resources) - Chair
Cllr. Linda Davies Evans (LE)	Executive Board Member (Housing Services)
David MacGregor (DMcG)	Co-opted Member
Paul Thomas (PT)	Assistant Chief Executive
Linda Rees Jones (LRJ)	Head of Administration and Law
Helen Pugh (HP)	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance
Alison Wood (AW)	People Services Manager
Gareth Jones (GJ)	Chief Digital Officer
Gwyneth Ayers (GA)	Corporate Policy & Partnership Manager
Hayley John (HJ)	Personal Assistant

### Apologies:

Chris Moore	Director of Corporate Services
Randal Hemingway (RH)	Head of Financial Services

Item No.	Discussion / Action	Responsible Officer
1.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b> As noted above.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of Last Meeting dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and Matters Arising</u></b> Amend title for DMcG in apologies.  AGS 17/18 – 6 actions have now been removed as they are closed.	HJ
3.	<b><u>Annual Governance Statement</u></b>  HP highlighted that the timetable for the Statement of Accounts (SOA) has tightened, the AGS draft deadline is end of June and the final SOA are to be approved in September. CM said that Carmarthenshire County Council were the 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Wales to complete their SOA, 9 authorities are yet to be signed off by Audit Wales.  Full Action log below.  Actions from log:	

	<b>21/22 No. 5</b> Further development work on handling complaints and investigating complaints. Suggested for a report of complaints to be discussed at a further CGG.	<b>GA</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b><u>Corporate Strategy</u></b>  Process for 23/24 is underway and will be going through to full Council in December.	
<b>5.</b>	<b><u>Information Governance</u></b>  Terms of Reference have been revised, and paper has gone through to CMT, previously not updated since 2016. All in agreement that the item sits under Corporate Governance Committee.	All
<b>6.</b>	<b><u>Social Partnership &amp; Procurement Act</u></b>  GA said the Act is coming into force from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024. There are three new parts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trade Union Relations</li> <li>2. Social Partnerships &amp; Social Development</li> <li>3. Socially Responsible Procurement – also subject to procurement legislation</li> </ol> Further information on the Act can be found in the links below. <a href="#">Getting ready for the Social Partnership Duty   GOV.WALES</a> <a href="#">Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act   GOV.WALES</a> <a href="#">Paratoi ar gyfer y Ddyletswydd Partneriaeth Gymdeithasol   LLYW.CYMRU</a> <a href="#">Deddf Partneriaeth Gymdeithasol a Chaffael Cyhoeddus (Cymru)   LLYW.CYMRU</a>	
<b>7.</b>	<b><u>Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs)</u></b>  CM said the budget has been set for next year. With regards to Regional Transport Plan, three workstreams have been set up to look at what can be developed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Energy Sub Committee</li> <li>2. Economic Well Being and Regional Economic Development Sub-Committee</li> <li>3. Regional Transport Sub-Committee</li> </ol> No further update. All agreed to remove the agenda item from future CGG meetings.	All
<b>8.</b>	<b><u>CRWG – Verbal Update</u></b>  CRWG now meet on an annual basis in preparation for the AGM, there are no legislation changes to report. Looking at revising the Terms of Reference for Shadow Cabinet.	

<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Corporate Safeguarding</u></b></p> <p>Cathy Richards attended and introduced herself as the Senior Safeguarding Manager for Corporate and Adult Safeguarding and that the policy is being updated and with a view to working towards strengthening the current process. As part of the Audit Wales report it was agreed that the CGG should have an understating of corporate safeguarding and that updates should be on the agenda quarterly to begin with.</p>	<p><b>HP/HJ</b></p>
	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	

Carmarthenshire County Council: AGS – Actions / Progress Update @ 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023

UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING GOVERNANCE ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN PREVIOUS ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENTS					
SOURCE	ISSUES	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ACTIONS/PROGRESS		STATUS
AGS 2017/18 No.6	Monitor and evaluate People Strategy Group/Work stream actions relating to AW People Performance Management recommendations.	Assistant Chief Executive – People Management	March 2020	<p>Consolidating learning and moving forward. PSGB Group has met through COVID19, but revaluation of way forward needed.</p> <p>IIP – high level review for further accreditation carried out. Steering group is refocusing its objectives.</p>	<p>Formal confirmation that IIP Gold Standard Achieved. Of the 27 themes – already hit Platinum level for 12 levels. IIP will be reporting to CMT on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022.</p> <p>PSGB Group – areas of development identified through IIP- internal communications strategy to be developed.</p> <p><b>Close</b></p>
AGS 2019/20 No.8	Ensure Employment Policies reflect any new legislation such as exit payment cap, reclaiming exit payments etc.	People Services Manager	March 2021	<p>Ongoing – On 12/2/21 the UK Government repealed the exit pay cap provisions. We await new legislation and will update policies accordingly.</p> <p>The legislation is likely to come back in the Autumn. Waiting for this, following these policies will be reviewed and updated where required.</p>	<p>2021/22</p> <p>Position @ 5 December 2022 - Still awaiting advice. 4<sup>th</sup> April still awaiting advice and no legislation coming forward. New action when legislation is received.</p>
AGS 2020/21 No.2	Implement The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act requirements	Corporate	May 2022	The elements that have not been implemented to date have a timetable that needs to be met to deliver the Act's requirement / timescale.	Progress not implemented to date, awaiting guidance from WLGA.

				Elements of performance & governance implemented. Elections – in hand	
AGS 2020/21 No. 3	Develop governance arrangement around the better ways of working once plan is in place – for officers	Chair of Better Ways of Working Strategic Group	2021/22	Facilitated sessions underway for each HoS teams.  3 sub groups in place reporting into Strategic group.  Communications plan being drawn up for the project  Two pilots on hybrid working in place.	Ongoing  Each service is now collating information to determine the practicalities / operational needs space allocations collated from all HoS to inform the property strategy.  Also work ongoing with other public sector bodies – joint working. <b>Close – plan now implemented</b>
AGS 2020/21 No.5	Recruit lay members for Governance and Audit Committee.	Head of Legal and Democratic Services / Director of Corporate Services / Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance	2021/22	<i>A recruitment process was conducted during 2021/2022.</i>	Job Specification drawn up Job advert drafted – both presented to Governance & Audit Committee for approval 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2021. Shortlisting and Interviews completed- Recommendations on successful applicants for the lay member posts presented and accepted - County Council in May 2022. <b>Close</b> Further advert issued; no candidates shortlisted.  New advert out December 2022

ISSUE REF	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Target date / Actions/Progress	Status
AGS 2021/22 No.1	Develop recruitment strategy and workforce plan	People Services Manager	March 2023 In progress – new software in place – testing system and	Recruitment system is live and a Strategy has been drafted

ISSUE REF	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Target date / Actions/Progress		Status
	alongside implementation of new recruitment software to ensure recruitment service can be streamlined and maintained.			rolling out training – from March 2023  Strategy will follow once system in place.	which will go to Cabinet at the end of March 2024.
AGS 2021/22 No. 3	Review employment safeguarding framework and develop training programme for recruiting managers	People Services Manager	March 2023	Corporate Safeguarding group (January 2022) will consider recommendations in respect of a training programme to managers.	Commenced <b>Review finished - Close</b>
AGS 2021/22 No.4	Develop an Engagement and consultation plan for the local authority.	Media and Marketing Manager	March 2023	Work has commenced – reflecting on the staff survey findings and IIP	Not completed to date - timetabled for Q2 of 24/25.
AGS 2021/22 No.5	Further development work on handling complaints and investigating complaints.	Head of ICT and Policy	March 2023	Piece of work being carried out on the resource needed to investigate complaints. Triangulate this with FOIA and Member enquiry	Complaints report has gone to GAC and they are looking at the procedures, particularly around Social Care. There has been a significant rise in complaints this year. Suggested for a report of complaints to be discussed at a further CGG. <b>Action GA</b>
AGS 2021/22 No.6	Review the customer service that we as a Council provide and how we can further improve the customer journey.	Media and Marketing Manager	March 2023	From 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2022 – Development of Hwbs – more access to customers – thematic days introduced.	Scrutiny Task and Finish group is currently looking at customer contact through HWB and other areas.
AGS 2021/22 No.7	Review and reinvigorate our Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives.	Head of ICT and Policy	March 2023	Draft Corporate Strategy in place. Been CMT on 1 December 2022 Pre cabinet 12 December 2022 Cabinet – February 2022	Commenced <b>Approved, part of Vision Statement. Going to full Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Completed</b>

AGS 2021/22 No.8	Establish clear governance mechanism to drive progress against each Well-being Objective and identify priority themes and service areas to support delivery of the well-being objectives	Head of ICT and Policy	March 2023	Governance mechanisms now in place – completed. Four well-being objectives identified and thematic priorities and service priorities framework in place. Divisional plans format issued w/c 5 December 2022	Commenced Close, linked to No.7
AGS 2021/22 No.10	Develop a new Transformation strategy; ensure that Learning & Development priorities and programmes are fully aligned with corporate priorities and needs	Assistant Chief Executive	March 2023	Strategy to be taken to Transformation Board - December 2022	Commenced Approved by Cabinet in February - Close
AGS 2021/22 No.12	Review the Governance arrangements for both Local Authority Trading Companies (LATC) with a view to aligning the arrangements and clarifying the roles of Members and Scrutiny Committees in relation to the LATCs.	Direct of Corporate Services Head of Legal and Administration	March 2023	Monitoring Officer review carried out and completed. Report is being finalised.  CWM taking a governance review report to the CWM Board.	Commenced Update: Monitoring Officer Governance update review carried out and completed. Report is being finalised.  CWM taking a governance review report to the CWM Board. Still being finalised., with CM for review. HP to confirm with OB.

ISSUE REF	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Target date / Actions/Progress		Status
AGS 2022/23 No.1	To embed the governance arrangements around the New corporate strategy and Well-being objectives 2022-27	Corporate Policy - Performance	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024		Merge with 21/22 (8) Close
AGS 2022/23 No. 2	We will ensure that Corporate Performance Management and Internal Audit work together, to ensure that the Annual Governance Statement	Corporate Policy - Performance	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2023		Self-assessment is now complete as part of the Annual Report 22/23 and will be revisited annually. Close

ISSUE REF	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Target date / Actions/Progress		Status
	plays its part in the Overall Council's Self-Assessment.				
AGS 2022/23 No. 3	Data Insight Team to support in the development and analysis of consultation activity arising from the Local Government and Elections Act (specifically with residents, businesses, trade unions and staff).	Corporate Policy – Data Insight	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024		Two cycles of consultation have been completed and will now be an annual commitment. Close
AGS 2022/23 No. 4	Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report to be produced and consideration given as to whether the annual report be presented to full Council.	Governance & Audit Committee & Corporate Services – Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2024		The Chair of GAC will be presenting his report to the next GAC on 12 <sup>th</sup> July, then it will be presented to full Council.