

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 17 July 2024

Title: Panel Performance Assessment – Agreement of Panel Membership

Purpose of the report: To consider the list of potential Panel Members supplied by the WLGA and agree membership of the Panel

For: Decision

Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:

Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Democratic Services, Policy, Performance and People and Organisation

Background

Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced a new Self-Assessment based performance regime for Principal Councils. Part of the new regime is the duty to undertake a Panel Performance Assessment once in every election cycle.

Panel Performance Assessments are intended to provide an independent and external perspective of the extent to which the Council is meeting the performance requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The aim is to support councils to achieve their aspirations through developing an understanding of how they are operating and how they can ensure they are able to deliver effective services long-term.

The Assessment is undertaken by a Panel of trained peers from across the public, private and voluntary sectors. The Panel members are selected from a pool of trained peers across Wales which is agreed with the Council. The pool of trained peers is maintained by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), who support the setting up and running of the Assessment. The output from the Assessment is a feedback report from the Panel on their findings, including recommendations for the Council to consider.

Work is continuing with the WLGA to organise the Council's first Panel Performance Assessment between 30 September and 3 October 2024. The Panel was originally scheduled to take place in July but was rearranged due to the General Election. The next step is to consider and agree the proposed membership of the Panel who will undertake the Assessment.

Current Position

The proposed Panel Members are set out in Appendix 1. These have been carefully selected by the WLGA to match the skillset required by the Council in its Scoping Document. The themes that the Panel will focus on are as follows:

The three core requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, namely:

- The extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively;
- The extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- Whether its governance is effective for securing the above.

Along with the following three themes identified by the Council where it can derive most benefit:

- Funding and Resources
- Capital and Asset Management
- Innovation for long-term sustainability of the Council

As set out in the Council's Constitution, Membership of the Panel requires the agreement of Cabinet.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If not, please state why.

No, the Panel Performance Assessment does not introduce any new policies or strategies.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: N/A
Collaboration: N/A
Involvement: N/A
Prevention: N/A
Integration: N/A

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet approves the proposed Panel Membership.

Reasons for decision:

To ensure compliance with Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Overview and Scrutiny:

N/A. As set out in the Council's constitution, Cabinet are the decision-making body for the membership of the Panel.

Policy Framework:

Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Corporate Well-being Objectives:

All, the Panel Performance Assessment looks at the Council's overall performance.

Finance and Procurement implications:

None, the WLGA have confirmed that the costs associated with Panel Performance Assessment in the first tranche up to end of March 2025 will be met by the WLGA Improvement Fund.

Legal Implications:

The Council has a duty under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to undertake a Panel Performance Assessment at least once in each electoral cycle.

Staffing implications:

The Panel will be supported by the designated WLGA Improvement Officer and the Council's Performance Team in the preparation, during after the Assessment.

Property / asset implications:

N/A

Risk(s):

The Panel Performance Assessment is not undertaken leading to a failure to comply with legislation (Part 6 of the Local Government Elections (Wales) Act 2021).

Statutory Powers:

N/A

Background Papers:

N/A

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposed Panel Membership

Corporate Lead Officer:

Alun Williams, Corporate Lead Officer: Policy, Performance and Public Protection

Reporting Officer:

Rob Starr, Performance and Research Team

Date:

24 June 2024

Appendix 1 – Proposed Panel Membership

Independent Chair: Steve Phillips

- **Current position:** Company owner of Leucarum Consultancy Services, providing management consultancy.
- **Background:** Has extensive experience of local government having previously served as Chief Executive for Neath Port Talbot Council between 2009 and 2020, and as Corporate Director at Cardiff City Council prior to this. Also worked at Welsh Government between 1997 and 2003. Skilled in Economic Development, Voluntary Sector, Community Engagement, and Policy Analysis. A strong business development professional with a Master's Degree focused in Public Administration from Cardiff University/Prifysgol Caerdydd.
- **Welsh Speaker:** No

Senior Elected Member: Robin Wyn Williams

- **Current position:** Deputy Leader (Ynys Môn). Portfolio: Deputy Leader and Finance.
- **Background:** Has a strong focus on finance in a Local Authority capacity and with private companies. Background is in financial planning. An experienced financial adviser with a demonstrable history of working in the financial services industry. Skilled in performance improvement, banking, pension funds, retirement planning, and people development. Strong professional with a DipPFS focused in financial planning from Chartered Insurance Institute. Has been a Plaid Cymru Councillor since 2017 and currently in his second term.
- **Welsh speaker:** Yes

Serving Local Government Senior Officer: Jenny Williams

- **Current position:** Strategic Director for Social Services and Education (Conwy)
- **Background:** Worked in local government for two decades and firmly believes in the public sector, but also has great experience of service innovation with a range of public and private companies. Compassionate leadership and a motto of treating people with kindness and respect to achieve the best outcomes. Held a range of roles in Social Care and Education and advocate for an inclusive environment where everyone is accepted for who they are. Has a range of experience in service redesign, transformation and innovation. Also a trustee of Children in Wales, North Wales Workforce Board Chair, and North Wales Safeguarding Board Chair.
- **Welsh Speaker:** Yes

Peer from the Wider Public, Private or Voluntary Sectors: Nesta McCluskey

- **Current Position:** Clinical Director of Allied Health Professionals, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Maelor Hospital in Wrexham
- **Background:** Has a strong background in health with specialist knowledge, skills and experience of the health sector. Previous roles include Clinical Director of Therapies, Assistant Area Director Therapies, and Head of Physiotherapy at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. Has also worked on joint projects in Flintshire and Wrexham. Employment connection is in North Wales so able to offer the fresh perspective required from the wider public sector. Qualifications include MSc in Advanced Healthcare Practice and BSc in Physiotherapy.
- **Welsh Speaker:** Yes