

SUBJECT: Evaluation of Decisions
MEETING: Democratic Services Committee
DATE: 24 th September 2018
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the proposed process for the evaluation of decisions made by Council and Cabinet ensuring that the effectiveness and impact of changes to policies and services can be monitored.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee identify any unresolved issues or questions that they require officers to explore prior to implementation of the process.
- 2.2 That the committee endorses the proposed approach, subject to any amendments resulting from 2.1, to ensure political oversight of the evaluation of decisions.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In March 2017 Wales Audit Office issued a report called 'Good governance when determining significant service changes.' One of the proposals it contained was 'Setting out at the point of decision on service change proposals how the impact of proposed changes is going to be measured and monitored'
- 3.2 From September 2017 changes were made to the report writing template which included the addition of a section on evaluation. These are required where there is a significant change to policy or the way in which services are delivered as determined by the report author. One year on we are at the point when we can expect evaluations to start being completed.
- 3.3 In principle it makes sense for evaluations to go back to the decision-maker. However if every single evaluation were to be considered at a political meeting it would create a log-jam on agenda's impacting on the amount of new business that could be debated. We need an arrangement that provides assurance that evaluations are being completed and which gives decision-makers and select committees the opportunity to look at evaluation in more detail on a risk-based approach.
- 3.4 The following process is proposed:
- An amendment to existing planners will see the addition of a column to log which reports/decisions require evaluation and when this is due.
 - A list of the evaluations recently completed and those scheduled for completion in the next quarter, is made available to:

- The decision-maker. This would feature largely for information and appear towards the end of meeting agenda
- The Chairs of Select Committees who may decide to add any upcoming evaluations to their work plans for future scrutiny which would trigger a fuller debate. The chair of Democratic Services Committee will also receive these in line with the committee's coordinating function.
- The Cabinet Member for Governance
- A biannual report to Audit Committee will be produced containing a summary of each evaluation completed in the previous six months and their findings. This will highlight any gaps where evaluations were scheduled but not completed. The evaluation should include the impact on any particular groups highlighted in the Future Generations Evaluation. This will form part of that Audit Committee's remit to oversee the effectiveness of internal controls and governance arrangements.

3.5 Criteria will be established to enable members to effectively and consistently prioritise the evaluations which are considered.

4. REASONS:

4.1 To ensure a more consistent approach to the evaluation of the impact of service changes

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 None

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

6.1 None

7. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet Member for Governance
Chief Officer, Resources

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

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