



Report of the Director of Corporate Services

Governance and Audit Committee – 6 December 2023

Audit Wales Recommendations Tracker

Purpose:	The report presents a tracker providing progress updates meeting Audit Wales recommendations.
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For Information	

1. Background

- 1.1 All relevant recommendations from Audit Wales national and local reports are recorded in a tracker and are monitored for progress.
- 1.2 The tracker is attached at Appendix A for information.
- 1.3 The tracker lists the relevant Audit Wales report, the recommendations, the actions that the Council intends to undertake to implement the recommendations, progress to date and target dates for completion.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The first sheet in the tracker lists all the Audit Wales recommendations that are considered closed and complete as at November 2023. The second sheet in the tracker lists all the Audit Wales recommendations that are considered open, as at November 2023:
 - 2.1.1 'A missed opportunity' – Social Enterprises. This national report looked at how local authorities are working to grow and make the most of Social Enterprises. Recommendations regarding self-evaluation and leadership on the poverty agenda have been implemented. A draft

Action Plan for 'A missed opportunities' recommendations is under review and further details will follow in 2024/25.

- 2.1.2 'Together we can' – Community resilience and self-reliance. This national report looked at how local authorities are creating the conditions needed to help communities thrive as independently as possible. The Council has implemented recommendations on self-evaluation. Actions to address the gaps have been identified and progress is recorded in Appendix A with completion dates identified during 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- 2.1.3 'Time for change' – Poverty in Wales. This national report looked at the challenge of poverty in Wales and how government is responding. Recommendations regarding leadership on the poverty agenda, experience mapping to create inclusive services for people in poverty, a single web landing page for people seeking help, streamlining and improving application and information services for people in poverty and complying with the socio-economic duty are in place. Swansea's Tackling Poverty Strategy, which is cited as good practice, provides a foundation for further improvements, which will be undertaken with a refresh of the strategy and performance framework to be in place by March 2024.
- 2.1.4 Direct Payments for Adult Social Care. This national report looked at how local authorities manage and encourage take up of Direct Payments and whether these services present value for money. The Council has implemented several recommendations from the report. Further work is required to review how advocacy services are considered at first point of contact to provide independent advice for Direct Payments to service users and Carers; further information will follow in 2024/25.
- 2.1.5 'Cracks in the Foundations' – Building Safety in Wales. This national report looked at how Welsh Government, local authorities and their key partners are implementing the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022. The Council intends to expand on existing action plans to implement the Act by April 2024 and discussions have commenced to consider regional / collaborative working to include "hubs" of expertise to address the inevitable shortage of specialisms resulting from the introduction of the new building safety regime.
- 2.1.6 Setting of well-being objectives. This report set out to answer the question 'to what extent has the Council acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when setting its new well-being objectives'. The report concluded that the Council had applied the Sustainable Development Principle in setting its Well-being Objectives and that embedding its approach to engagement and performance monitoring would further strengthen this. Recommendations on improving consultation and engagement and considering the impact of future financial savings and risks have been implemented. Work to

revise service planning to help measure progress implementing the Councils Well-being Objectives will be considered during the 2024/25 planning cycle.

2.1.7 Update on the progress the Council is making around its Transformation Programme. This report describes if the Council is effectively planning and monitoring its approach to its organisational transformation programme and the delivery of associated savings. The overall view in the report is that whilst many aspects of the Council's strategic approach to planning, monitoring, and delivering its new Transformation Programme are well defined, some key arrangements could be strengthened to enable the Transformation Programme to adapt to the ongoing financial pressures and achieve its ambitions. The Council has outlined several actions to address the recommendations to be implemented during 2023/24.

3. Integrated Assessment Implications

3.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

3.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

3.1.3 This report is a 'for information' report and so is not relevant for an IIA.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A – Audit Wales recommendations tracker.