



Report of the Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel – 12th December 2023

Audit Wales Digital Strategy Review

Purpose:	To present the Audit Wales review of the Digital Strategy 2023-28.
Policy Framework:	Performance Management Framework Transformation & Financial Resilience well-being goal within the Corporate Plan Successful and Sustainable Swansea
Consultation:	Finance and Legal.
Report Authors:	Sarah Lackenby
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
FOR INFORMATION	

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 Audit Wales have undertaken a review of the digital strategies of the 22 principal Councils in Wales.
- 1.2 The review sought to provide assurance that Councils' digital strategies will help to deliver well-being objectives, are in accordance with the sustainable development principle, are meeting people's needs, and delivering better outcomes. This work also builds on the 'springing forward' review undertaken during 2021-22.

2. Findings

- 2.1 The Audit Wales review (Appendix A) concluded that the Council:

- Has a clear vision for its approach to digital and is developing comprehensive arrangements to support the delivery and monitoring of its digital strategy.
- Used a wide range of different sources to inform its digital strategy
- Has a clear digital vision and is planning to deliver its vision over an appropriate timescale.
- Understands the wider impact of digital and works collaboratively to help deliver its digital aspirations.
- Has allocated resources to deliver its digital strategy and has arrangements to assess the costs, benefits and risks.
- Has comprehensive arrangements to assess and monitor the impact of the Council's digital approach and the value for money.

2.2 Audit Wales also made one recommendation (Appendix B). The previous strategy ran from 2015 to 2020 and began at the point the Council was exiting the external Capgemini contract. Although the Council reviewed its previous digital strategy, this was not a formal review and Members did not receive its outcome. This was due to the timing of the pandemic. At the end of March 2020, the Council went into business continuity mode because of the COVID19 pandemic.

2.3 In the report, Audit Wales acknowledges the lack of a formal review has not prevented the Council from improving its arrangements to monitor and assess the current strategy, particularly arrangements to assess the costs and benefits of financially supporting the implementation of digital projects.

2.4 The Council responded to the Audit Wales recommendation with a set of actions that will help the review of the current digital strategy in 2027, capturing any and all learning as part of developing and agreeing the new strategy from 2028 onwards.

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.

- This report is for information only. Any activities following this report will be subject to the IIA process as required.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A Audit Wales Digital Strategy Review Report
Appendix B Recommendation and Response