

Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – Swansea Council

Quarterly Update: 30 June 2023

Annual Audit Summary

| Description | Timetable | Status |
|--|-----------|--|
| A report summarising completed audit work since the last Annual Audit Summary, which was issued in May 2023. | Complete | Published: Annual Audit Summary 2022 |

Financial Audit work

| Description | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Audit of the Council's 2021-22 statement of accounts | To provide an opinion on the 'truth and fairness' of the Council's financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2022. | February 2022 to March 2023 | Complete |
| Audit of the Council's 2022-23 statement of accounts | To provide an opinion on the 'truth and fairness' of the Council's financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2023. | To be confirmed | Not started |

| Description | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|--|--|---|--------------------|
| <p>Certification of Grant returns for financial year 2021-22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Benefit Subsidy • Non-Domestic Rates • Teachers' Pension Contributions | <p>Certification that nothing has come to our attention to indicate that the return is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not fairly stated • Is not in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions | <p>In line with certification deadlines. December 2022 to February 2023</p> | <p>Complete</p> |
| <p>Certification of Grant returns for financial year 2022-23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Benefit Subsidy • Non-Domestic Rates • Teachers' Pension Contributions | <p>Certification that nothing has come to our attention to indicate that the return is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not fairly stated • Is not in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions | <p>To be confirmed</p> | <p>Not started</p> |

Performance Audit work

| 2021-22 Performance Audit Work | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|---|--|---------------|--|
| Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFG Act) examinations | We will seek to integrate the delivery of our WFG examinations of steps to deliver well-being objectives with our other audit work. We will discuss this with the Council as we scope and deliver the audit projects listed in this plan. | N/A | N/A |
| Improvement reporting audit | Audit of discharge of duty to publish an assessment of performance. | December 2021 | Complete |
| Assurance and Risk Assessment | <p>Project to identify the level of audit assurance and/or where further audit work may be required in future years in relation to risks to the Council putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources.</p> <p>At Swansea Council the project is likely to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial position • Self-assessment arrangements • Recovery planning • Implications of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act • Carbon reduction plans | Ongoing | <p>Mostly complete:</p> <p>Published ARA 2021-22 progress update letter summarising Implications of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, and Self-Assessment arrangements.</p> <p>Published ARA 2021-22 Carbon Reduction plans summary</p> <p>Published ARA 2021-22 Financial Position Update</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|---|
| | | | Drafting Recovery Planning (see also local risk work too) |
| Springing Forward – Examining the building blocks for a sustainable future | As the world moves forward, learning from the global pandemic, this review looks at how effectively councils are strengthening their ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services, including those delivered in partnership with key stakeholders and communities. | Autumn 2021 onwards | Drafting |
| Local risk work: ‘Achieving Better Together’ Transformation – a local project to ‘review’ new transformation arrangements | <p>The focus of the work is real time working alongside the Council in taking forward its new transformation arrangements to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remobilise the Council • Refocus the Council to be efficient and effective in delivering its Corporate Plan and current priorities • Reshape to look beyond the next two years in setting out its new Corporate Plan building on ‘Sustainable Swansea – fit for the future’ <p>We have worked alongside the Council as it further develops its recovery plan as a ‘critical friend’ and in learning from and sharing practice and assurance and insight.</p> | Ongoing | Drafting |

| 2022-23 Performance audit work | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|---|---|--|--|
| Assurance and Risk Assessment | Project to identify the level of audit assurance and/or where further audit work may be required in future years in relation to risks to the Council putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources and acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle. The project is likely to focus in particular on: | March 2022 – December 2023 | Ongoing |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial position | Ongoing monitoring of financial position | Ongoing |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital programme management | September – December 2023 | Scoped |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of performance information – with a focus on service user feedback and outcomes | February – September 2023 | Draft issued to the Council. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting of well-being objectives | March 2023 – July 2023 | Drafted and about to issue to the Council. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other local areas of focus that arise as part of our Assurance and Risk Assessment work | | | |

| 2022-23 Performance audit work | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Thematic Review – Unscheduled Care | A cross-sector review focusing on the flow of patients out of hospital. This review will consider how the Council is working with its partners to address the risks associated with the provision of social care to support hospital discharge, as well as prevent hospital admission. The work will also consider what steps are being taken to provide medium to longer-term solutions. | August 2022 – July 2023 | Fieldwork nearing completion, reporting from June 2023 onwards. |
| Thematic review – Digital | A review of councils’ strategic approach to digital, and the extent to which this has been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle; and that it will help to secure value for money in the use of councils’ resources. | January – September 2023. | In progress – fieldwork is being scheduled at each council between March and August 2023. |

Local government national studies planned/in progress

| Study | Scope | Timetable | Status | Fieldwork planned at Swansea Council |
|---|---|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Building safety | Review of how well local authorities are delivering their responsibilities for building safety | September 2022 – August 2023 | Reporting – end of July 2023 | Yes – interview with nominated officer at the Council and survey. |
| Planning for sustainable development – Brownfield regeneration | Review of how local authorities are promoting and enabling better use of vacant non-domestic dwellings and brownfield sites | October 2022 – September 2023 | Reporting – September 2023 | Yes – interview with nominated officer at seven councils and survey. |
| Governance of special purpose authorities – National Parks | Review of systems and effectiveness of governance | November 2022 – September 2023 | Evidence gathering – fieldwork due to be completed end of June 2023 | No |

| Study | Scope | Timetable | Status | Fieldwork planned at Swansea Council |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs)</p> | <p>Assessing CJCs' progress in developing their arrangements to meet their statutory obligations and the Welsh Government's aim of strengthening regional collaboration.</p> | <p>September 2022 – August 2023</p> | <p>Draft report has been issued to the four CJCs. Letters to the four individual CJCs will also be issued. Updated summary report due to be published August.</p> | <p>Yes – We explored the Council's perspective via our routine liaison meetings. Fieldwork included interviews with the chief executive, director of finance and chair of each of the four CJCs.</p> |

Estyn

Our link inspectors are continuing to work with Torfaen as part of our follow-up process for an authority causing significant concern. Wrexham local authority is still in a causing concern category, and we will convene a progress conference in July to evaluate progress against the recommendations from the core inspection. We also undertook a focused link work activity in Powys in May to consider aspects of their work on school improvement, the transformation agenda and financial management in schools. We will inspect Gwynedd in the week beginning 26 June and Carmarthenshire in the week beginning 10 July.

Field work being carried out across local authorities during the summer term includes a focus on how well local authorities are supporting the educational needs of asylum seekers and refugees. This work will be included in HMCI's annual report. Our aim is to describe, acknowledge, and evaluate the experiences of these groups as they engage with education and training in Wales.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

| CIW planned work 2022-23 | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|--------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|
| Programme 2022-23 | <p>We have published our updated Code of Practice for our local authority inspection activity Care Inspectorate Wales</p> <p>How we inspect local authority services and CAFCASS Cymru</p> | May 2023 | Published |

| CIW planned work 2022-23 | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|--|---|---|-------------|
| Joint work | We are finalising our thematic reviews programme of work for 2023-2026. Areas for consideration include, adult safeguarding, carers, CLDT and CAMHS. | Current | In progress |
| | We continue to work with partners, sharing information and intelligence including completing joint reviews. | Current | In progress |
| | We are working in collaboration with HIW for a national review of the stroke pathway. A national report will be published early summer. | Current | In progress |
| | We continue to work in collaboration with HIW in conducting CMHT inspections. | Current | In progress |
| | CIW is working with partners to complete a rapid review. The overarching objective of the rapid review is to determine to what extent the current structures and processes in Wales ensure children who are in need of care, support and protection are appropriately placed on, and removed from, the Child Protection Register, when sufficient evidence indicates it is safe to do so. This is a collaborative review. | Interim findings – Publish 22 June 2023 National report – September 2023 | In progress |
| Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Annual Monitoring Report for Health and Social Care 2022-23 | The 2020-21 report was published on 7 February 2021 | Published | Published |
| | The 2021-2022 report is underway | To be confirmed | Preparing |

| CIW planned work 2022-23 | Scope | Timetable | Status |
|---|---|--|-------------|
| National review of Care Planning for children and young people subject to the Public Law Outline pre-proceedings | <p>Purpose of the review</p> <p>To provide external scrutiny, assurance and to promote improvement regarding the quality of practice in relation to the care planning for children and young people subject to the public law outline pre-proceedings.</p> <p>To consider the extent to which practice has progressed since the publication of both the CIW 'National Review of care planning for children and young people subject to public law outline pre-proceedings' and the publication of the PLO working group report 2021 including best practice guidance.</p> | National report publication October 2023 | In progress |
| Joint Inspection Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA) | <p>Cross-inspectorate approach. Areas to be determined. We will complete a further four multi-agency joint inspections in total. Each local authority will have a published letter post inspection.</p> <p>We will publish a national report in late spring 2023.</p> | April 2023 – April 2024 | Delivery |

Audit Wales national reports and other outputs published since June 2022

| Report title | Publication date and link to report |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Maximising EU funding – the Structural Funds Programme and the Rural Development Programme | <u>June 2023</u> |

| Report title | Publication date and link to report |
|---|---|
| Digital inclusion in Wales (including key questions for public bodies) | March 2023 |
| Orthopaedic Services in Wales – Tackling the Waiting List Backlog | March 2023 |
| Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – Review of Board Effectiveness | February 2023 |
| Welsh Government purchase of Gilestone Farm | January 2023 |
| Together we can – Community resilience and self-reliance | January 2023 |
| A Picture of Flood Risk Management | December 2022 |
| 'A missed opportunity' – Social Enterprises | December 2022 |
| Poverty Data Tool | November 2022 |
| 'Time for change' – Poverty in Wales | November 2022 |
| Learning from cyber-attacks | October 2022 (distributed privately to audited bodies) |
| National Fraud Initiative 2020-21 | October 2022 |
| COVID-19 business support in 2020-21 – Memorandum for the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee | October 2022 |

| Report title | Publication date and link to report |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Payment to the Welsh Government's Former Permanent Secretary on Termination of Employment | September 2022 |
| Equality Impact Assessments: More than a Tick Box Exercise? | September 2022 |
| Welsh Government – setting of well-being objectives | September 2022 |
| Welsh Government workforce planning and management | September 2022 |
| NHS Wales Finances Data Tool – up to March 2022 | August 2022 |
| Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030: Evidence Report | August 2022 |
| Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030 | July 2022 |
| Sustainable Tourism in Wales' National Parks | July 2022 |
| Third Sector COVID-19 Response Fund – Memorandum for the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee | July 2022 |
| The Welsh Community Care Information System – update and data tool | July 2022 |

Audit Wales national reports and other outputs (work in progress/planned)¹

| Title | Indicative publication date |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Local Government Financial Sustainability Data tool update | July 2023 |
| NHS finances data tool – to 31 March 2023 | July/August 2023 |
| Springing Forward: Managing assets and workforce in local government | July/August 2023 |
| Covering teachers' absence – follow-up | August 2023 |
| NHS quality governance | August/September 2023 |
| NHS workforce planning (data briefing) | August/September 2023 |
| Net zero (pan UK overview) | September 2023 |
| Ukrainian refugee services | October/November 2023 |
| Local government digital strategy review – national summary | October 2023 |

¹ We will continue to keep our plans under constant review, taking account of the evolving external environment, our audit priorities, the context of our own resourcing and the capacity of audited bodies to engage with us. Follow up work could also lead to other outputs, as may other local audit work where we consider there is merit in a national summary output of some kind. For example, we have been tracking developments with completion of the A465 section 2 road improvement project following our [interim findings report](#) in February 2020.

| Title | Indicative publication date |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Local government use of performance information, outcomes and service user perspective – national summary | October 2023 |
| Affordable housing | January/February 2024 |
| Local government capital programme management – national summary | To be confirmed |
| Active travel | To be confirmed |
| Cancer services | To be confirmed |
| Capital planning and programme management | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| Challenges for the cultural sector | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| Homelessness | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| Addressing biodiversity decline (pan-public sector and at Natural Resources Wales) | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| Rebalancing care and support | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| Tackling NHS waiting lists | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| Access to education for children with Additional Learning Needs | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |

| Title | Indicative publication date |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Further and higher education funding and oversight – Commission for Tertiary Education and Research | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| Governance of Fire and Rescue Authorities | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |
| The senior public service | To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24) |

Good Practice Exchange events and resources

| Title | Link to resource |
|---|--|
| <p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: Inspired by the Football Association of Wales journey over the past decade, this event will examine and discuss how going beyond expectations creates an inclusive and positive attitude that becomes self-fulfilling.</p> <p>Working in partnership with the Future Generations Commissioner and the Welsh Language Commissioner, this event will assist and inspire public bodies, and the third sector to embrace the cultural diversity of modern Wales and work beyond compliance and into excellence.</p> | <p>All resources are now available on our website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main page • Blog |
| <p>Together we can – creating the conditions to empower our communities to thrive: This shared learning event will bring people together from across public services to share ideas, learning and knowledge. We will share the findings of our reports on social enterprises and community resilience, including our recommendations going forward.</p> | <p>20 June 2023 – 10:00 – 12:00 – Online. The recording will be available on our website in 1-2 weeks.</p> |
| <p>Podcast: Poverty and Community Resilience Our latest podcast follows our recent reports and events on poverty, social enterprises, and community resilience.</p> | <p>Podcast</p> |

| Title | Link to resource |
|--|---|
| <p>Digital Strategy: The Covid pandemic has demonstrated the importance of digital in delivering modern services at pace. We have seen digital acting as a major catalyst in adapting to the challenges we have faced. Public services need to continue with this agile and responsive mind set as the norm and not the exception. This event will help equip public services with the practical tools and knowledge they need to successfully implement a Digital Strategy within their organisations.</p> | <p>21 September 09:00 – 13:00 – Cardiff - To register for Cardiff</p> <p>27 September 09:00 – 13:00 – North Wales – To register for North Wales</p> |

Recent Audit Wales blogs

| Title | Publication date |
|--|-------------------|
| Helping people to help themselves | 15 February 2023 |
| A perfect storm – the cost of living crisis and domestic abuse | 21 November 2022 |
| Tackling poverty means tackling poverty data | 11 November 2022 |
| Cost of living and putting away the bayonet | 21 September 2022 |
| Heat is on to tackle Climate Change | 18 August 2022 |
| Direct Payments in Wales | 15 June 2022 |
| Unscheduled Care in Wales – a system under real pressure | 21 April 2022 |
| Skills Competition Wales | 18 February 2022 |
| Cyber resilience – one year on | 9 February 2022 |

| Title | Publication date |
|--|------------------|
| <u>Helping to tell the story through numbers</u> (Local government financial sustainability data tool) | 3 February 2022 |
| <u>Call for clearer information on climate change spending</u> | 2 February 2022 |
| <u>Actions speak louder than words</u> (Building social resilience and self-reliance in citizens and communities) | 14 January 2022 |