

**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council**  
**WAO Improvement Assessment 2012-13**

### **Improvement Assessment**

The Auditor General must carry out an annual Improvement Assessment to determine whether the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure 2009. This involves:

1. a review of the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement, its progress against previous proposals for improvement and the setting of improvement objectives for the year;
2. evaluation of the Council's self assessment of its performance in 2011-12 and agreed local study
3. improvement studies undertaken on an all Wales basis with some local reporting

<b>Activity:</b> Review and assessment of the Council's arrangements to secure continuous improvement	<b>Status/Product</b>
This year we will not be carrying out a full assessment at the Council, but instead will be following up proposals for improvement set out in our previous assessments. <b>See Improvement Assessment Letter 1 (IAL1)</b> from AGW indicating the outcome of the audit published during July 2012. Also informs Annual Improvement Report.	Complete IAL1
Monitor the setting of improvement objectives for 2012-13	Complete
Performance Management arrangements: Whether the Council is improving the way in which it is able to demonstrate what it is achieving in the context of its improvement objectives; sharing learning from its transformation programme and reporting outcomes to citizens	Ongoing
Human Resources: Assessing how well the Council is able to evaluate the performance of its staff; ensure it has the capacity to deliver the improvement objectives it has set and effectively manage staff absence. (Includes follow up of previous work)	Not yet started

<b>Activity:</b> Evaluation of the Council's self assessment of its performance in 2011-12 and agreed local studies	<b>Status/Product</b>
To assess whether the Council's published assesement represents a fair and balanced view of its performance in 2011-12. See <b>Improvement Assessment Letter 2</b> (IAL2) from AGW indicating the outcome of the audit. Also informs Annual Improvement Report.	Complete IAL2
Local Study: Neighbourhood Services	Cancelled budget to be used in CS study below
<p>Local Study: Community Safety.</p> <p>To establish how well the Community Safety services are contributing to the achievement of the Council's improvement priorities and are achieving positive and sustainable outcomes for the communities in the area.</p> <p>We will focus on two service areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Youth Offending Team (YOT)</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse</li> </ul>	In progress
<b>Activity:</b> improvement studies of areas which may hinder improvement or transformation or give rise to inefficiencies;	<b>Status</b>
Improvement Study – NEETs	Not yet started
Improvement Study – key themes from assessments of performance Whether the Council is improving the way in which it is able to demonstrate what it is achieving in the context of its improvement objectives; sharing learning from its transformation programme and reporting outcomes to citizens.	In progress
<p>Improvement Study – effectiveness of scrutiny To explore the extent to which challenge and scrutiny are operating effectively in local government in Wales The Six Phases: Phase 1 – Collaborative scoping, summer 2012 Phase 2 – Initial self-evaluation, September/October 2012 Phase 3 – Regional workshop 1, November 2012 Phase 4 – Fieldwork through peer learning exchange teams, December 2012 to March 2013</p>	In progress

Phase 5 – Regional workshop 2 and final self-evaluation refinement, April 2013	
Phase 6 – National reporting and on-going dissemination, May to September 2013	
<p>Improvement Study – authorities’ reviews of governance and preparation of Annual Governance Statements</p> <p>The study aims to increase auditor’s understanding of the processes by which authorities produce their annual governance statement and how these provide assurance. By doing this we aim to support authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve their approaches to reviewing governance and producing annual governance statements;</li> <li>• increase self-awareness in relation to governance arrangements;</li> <li>• strengthen the evidence base underpinning annual governance statements;</li> <li>• provide greater internal and external assurance on governance of authorities and partnerships to the executive, audit committee, auditors and the public.</li> </ul>	In progress
Improvement Study - collaboration governance risk review	Not yet started