



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Audit Committee Update – Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

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Audit committee update

About this document

- 1 This document provides the Audit Committee of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (the Council) with an update on current and planned Wales Audit Office work. It covers financial and performance audit work together with information on the Auditor General's programme of national value-for-money examinations.

Financial audit update

- 2 **Exhibit 1** provides members of the Audit Committee with a brief overview of progress against the planned key outputs and milestones from financial audit outputs and milestones, as set out in the draft outline.

Exhibit 1: delivering the 2016-17 financial audit work

Planned output	Scope	Current status
Annual Audit Plan	Plan of financial audit work for 2016-17.	Audit Committee March 2017
Financial Statements 2016-17	Audit of the Council's 2016-17 financial statements.	Opinion issued 26 July 2017
Whole of Government Accounts 2016-17	Audit of the Councils 2016-17 whole of government accounts	Opinion issued 27 September
Certification of Grants 2016-17	Certification of grants and returns 2016-17	Planned for December 2017
Annual Audit Letter	Report summarising our 2016-17 financial audit work.	Planned for December 2017

- 3 The Council is participating in the second year of the 'outcomes pilot' on Welsh Government grants for the 2016-17 financial year. The 'outcomes pilot' aims to test the feasibility of a new outcomes approach developed in 2015-16 and takes into account of how both the Welsh Government and the Auditor General wish to improve the value and impact of certification work. The pilot's aim is to move auditors' efforts away from transaction testing and towards consideration of the activities to be delivered by the funding. Fieldwork is underway and we are due to report our finding to Welsh Government in December 2017 in line with their deadline.

Performance audit update

- 4 **Exhibit 2** summarises the performance audit work recently completed or underway within the Council – and national reports relevant to the Council.

Exhibit 2: performance audit work programme

Topic	Scope	Status	Timescale
Performance audit work			
Governance Review	With the introduction of CIPFA's revised framework for 'Delivering good governance in local government', and requirement for councils to adopt the sustainable development principle from April 2016, this review will provide the Council with a baseline from which to consider opportunities to strengthen governance.	Complete. Final report published 30 th August 2017	Audit Committee 13 th December 2017
Year one commentary on WFG/Baseline	Gather evidence on how the 44 bodies are beginning to respond to the requirements of the WFG Act and identify examples of notable emerging practice.	Complete. There is no local report. The baseline assessment will inform a commentary to be published summer 2018.	November 2017
Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future?	This review will examine the impact of the WFG Act on the work of scrutiny committees including PSB scrutiny, facilitating improvement and sharing of good practice.	Planning. Fieldwork scheduled for January/February 2018	March 2018

Topic	Scope	Status	Timescale
Service User Review	A user focussed review. A specific area to be agreed with the Council.	Planning - draft project brief issued 3rd October	March/April 2018
Aligning Levers of change workshops	The purpose of this review is to support the development of local action that will promote positive practice and help identify barriers to be addressed.	Complete. Additional work n	November 2017
Digital Risk	Diagnostic internal document no assurance, but areas for potential scrutiny for future assessment inform plans for next year	Planning – to be confirmed	March/April 2018
IAL1	Review Council arrangements to secure continuous improvement, its progress against previous proposals for improvement and the setting of improvement objectives for the year	Complete.	27 th April 2017
IAL2	Review of the Council's published plans for delivering on improvement objectives	Complete.	24 th November 2017
Annual Improvement Report (AIR)	Annual report summarising the audit work undertaken in the last year which also includes a summary of the key findings from reports issued by 'relevant regulators'	Planning – not yet started	May 2018
Local government studies			

Topic	Scope	Status	Timescale
Addressing dependency and demand for public services through the development of effective prevention approaches	We will review how adaptations prevent access to and speed up discharge from hospitals. The work will look at how health use adaptations to underpin their activity as well as how efficient and effective organisations are at procuring and delivering adaptations work.	NPTCBC has not been selected to take part in the detailed fieldwork of this study.	January 2018
Strategic commissioning of learning disability services by local authorities	The review will focus on learning disability schemes as a tracer in local authorities and will assess how effectively strategic commissioning is being delivered. Fieldwork will focus on both the corporate approach to strategic commissioning but also use findings from the tracer area to understand how effective operational arrangements are. We are working with CSSIW and SSIA and will be building on recent national inspection and support work on learning disabilities.	NPTCBC has not been selected to take part in the detailed fieldwork	December 2017
Managing Demand - (Improving joint work on housing and health)	The study will focus on a specific tracer area of homelessness in local authorities using the recent prevention duties placed	NPTCBC has not been selected to take part in the detailed fieldwork	December 2017

Topic	Scope	Status	Timescale
	on local authorities to judge how demand for services is managed.		
Integrated Care Fund	A review of the integrated care fund at both a local and national level	Early stages of scoping	TBD
Using data effectively	Review will primarily focus on the role of local authorities in how effective they are at managing and using data to support decision making and the use of resources	Project brief issued June 2017	August 2018
How well do public bodies provide services to rural communities	This review will assess how well public bodies are working together to assess needs, identify priorities, deliver and maintain the provision of key operational services to meet the needs of people in rural communities.	Project brief issued June 2017. NPTCBC has been selected as a fieldwork site.	August 2018

Update on national value-for-money studies work and reports

- 7 **Exhibit 3** provides Audit Committee members with information on our national value for-money studies that have relevance to local authority organisations. Any recommendations arising from our national studies (or related reports by the National Assembly's Public Accounts Committee) that are relevant to local authorities will be reported as appropriate to the Audit Committee.

Exhibit 3: update on local authority-related national value-for-money studies

Local government-related national studies	
Public Procurement in Wales	Published Oct 2017 Link
Good Governance when determining significant service change National summary Report	Published Oct 2017 Link
The National Procurement Service	Published Oct 2017 Link
Savings Planning in Councils in Wales	Published June 2017 Link
21st Century Schools and Education Programme	Published May 2017 Link

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