

Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Quarterly Update: 14 October 2021

Financial Audit work

Description	Scope	Timetable	Status
Audit of the Council's 2020-21 statement of accounts	Audit of the Council's 2020-21 statement of accounts.	July 30 2021	Opinion issued 30 July 2021

Performance Audit work

2020-21 Performance Audit Work	Scope	Timetable	Status
Financial Sustainability	A project common to all local councils that will assess financial sustainability in light of current and anticipated future challenges building on work undertaken during 2019-20.	Report issued September 2021	Final report issued National Summary Report published September 2021
Workforce Planning	Review of workforce planning, impact of Covid and future resilience of the workforce	Final	Reporting via workshop November 2021

2021-22 Performance audit work	Scope	Timetable	Status
Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFG Act) examinations	<p>We will seek to integrate the delivery of our WFG examinations of steps to deliver wellbeing 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.</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing
	<p>We will examine the extent to which the council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in setting its Well-being Objectives.</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing
Improvement reporting audit	<p>Audit of discharge of duty to publish an assessment of performance.</p>	November 2021	Ongoing
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 NPT 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 • assess the Council's response to its independent investigation and subsequent action plan 	Ongoing	Ongoing

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.	Planned for Autumn 2021 onwards – to be confirmed following scoping.	Project scoping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workforce tracers • Asset tracers
Annual Audit Summary	Annual report summarising the performance and financial audit work undertaken in 2021-22 which also includes a summary of the key findings from reports issued by 'relevant regulators'. Also now combined with the Annual Audit Letter	Autumn 2022	Not yet started

Local government national studies planned / in progress

Study	Scope	Timetable	Status	Fieldwork planned at NPT County Borough Council
Direct Payments	Review of how local authorities manage and promote the use of Direct payments	Publication Winter 2021-22	Drawing conclusions mid-October, drafting and publication early 2022	No – work being delivered via Direct Payment Forum and a selection of follow up interviews
Emergency Services	Review of how well emergency services (blue light) collaborate	Publication winter 2021-22	Drafting report	No
Follow up on People	Review of how local authorities responded to the	TBC	Project set up	No – work being delivered via Homelessness

Sleeping Rough	needs of people sleeping rough during the pandemic following up on the AGWs report of July 2020			and Supporting People Forum
Poverty	Understanding how local authorities ensure they deliver their services to minimise or reduce poverty.	TBC	Project brief issued and contacts at councils being collated	TBC
Social Enterprises	Review of how local authorities are supporting and utilising social enterprises to deliver services	TBC	Project brief issued and contacts at councils being collated	TBC
Community Resilience	Review of how local authorities can build greater resilience in communities	TBC	Project brief issued and contacts at councils being collated	TBC

Estyn

Estyn planned work 2021-22	Scope	Timetable	Status
Local Government Education Services Inspections	Estyn have worked closely with Directors of Education to review their inspection guidance for local government education services to reflect the experiences of the pandemic. The updated guidance (published on 1 July) will be piloted on the first inspection and feedback will be sought on whether any further refinements need to be made.	LGES inspections to resume from late Autumn term	N/A
Curriculum Reform thematic review	Regional consortia and local authority support for curriculum reform.	Evidence collecting in Sept/Oct - publish in early February	N/A

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

CIW planned work 2021-22	Scope	Timetable	Status
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Assurance	CIW will be completing its work on Assurance Checks including publication of a national overview report.	July – September 2021	In progress
National review	Support for disabled children and their families.	TBC	In progress - Drafting report
Follow-up	CIW will be following up on areas for improvement identified in the Assurance Checks or through risk based inspection activity with individual local authorities where necessary.	TBC	Not yet started
Inspection	Risk based inspection activity will continue where required.	TBC	No inspections are scheduled at this time

Audit Wales national reports and other outputs published since 1 April 2021

Report title	Publication date and link to report
Financial Sustainability of Local Government	September 2021
NHS summarised accounts infographic	September 2021
Picture of Public Services¹	September 2021
Town Centre Regeneration	September 2021

¹ Main report published 15 September. To be followed over the following four to six weeks by short sector commentaries: A picture of local government, A picture of healthcare, A picture of social care, A picture of schools, A picture of higher and further education.

Student finances	<u>August 2021</u>
NHS finances data-tool 2020-21	<u>June 2021</u>
Rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Wales	<u>June 2021</u>
Quality governance arrangements at Cwm Taf UHB – follow up	<u>May 2021</u>
Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee governance arrangements	<u>May 2021</u>
At your Discretion - Local Government Discretionary Services	<u>April 2021</u>
Procuring and Supplying PPE for the COVID-19 Pandemic	<u>April 2021</u>

Audit Wales National reports and other outputs due to be published during 2021-22 (and other work in progress/planned)²

Title	Anticipated publication date
Supporting NHS staff well-being	October 2021
Warm Homes Programme	November 2021
Care home commissioning	November 2021
Welsh Government accounts commentary	November 2021

² 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. This includes maintaining some flexibility so that we can respond to developments in Welsh Government policy and areas of possible interest for a new Public Accounts Committee following the Senedd elections.

Unscheduled care – data tool and commentary	By end of 2021
Collaborative arrangements for managing local public health resources	By end of 2021
NHS waiting times data-tool and planned care commentary	By end of 2021
Welsh Government setting of well-being objectives	By end of 2021
Welsh Government workforce	By end of 2021
Orthopaedic services	By end of 2021
Curriculum reform	Spring 2022
Equality impact assessment	Spring 2022
Climate change – baseline review	Spring/summer 2022
COVID response & recovery / Welsh Government grants management	TBC
NHS structured assessment 2021 summary commentary	TBC
Affordable housing	TBC
Broadband infrastructure	TBC
Flood risk management	TBC

Forthcoming Good Practice Exchange events and publications

Title	Anticipated publication/event date
Post event resources including session recordings for both the Part 2 Your Town Your Future town centre regeneration event and the Future Workplace lunch and learn session with Dr Luci Attala and Hywel Dda UHB	Early October 2021
Transatlantic Conversations, Wales and Nova Scotia – discussing Housing	28 October 2021 (3pm)
Organisational Resilience	December 2021 (date tbc)