

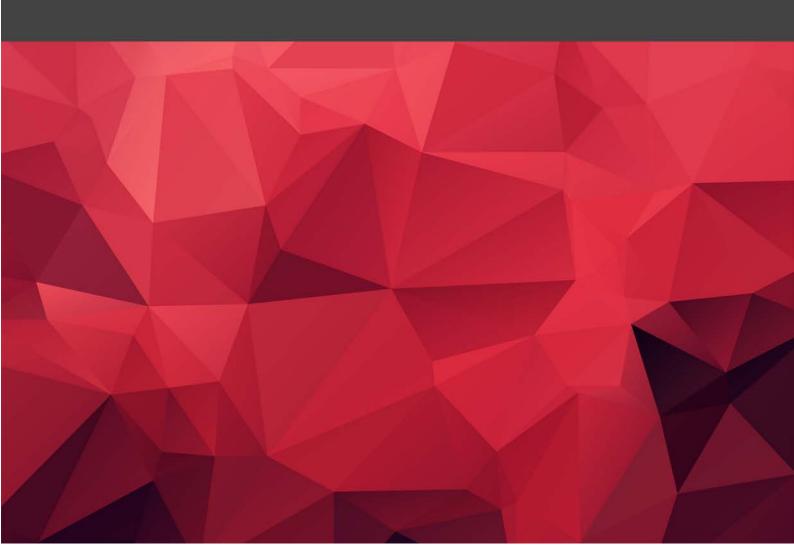
Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru Auditor General for Wales

Can the Council demonstrate sufficient progress in meeting proposals for improvement made in February 2016? – City of Cardiff Council

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

The team who delivered the work comprised Allison Rees, Ian Phillips, Andrew Strong, and Steve Barry under the direction of Huw Rees.

Contents

The Council can demonstrate sufficient progress in implementing the 2016 proposals for improvement and is in the process of embedding new performance management and reporting arrangements, but a decline in the proportion of staff completing mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection needs to be resolved.

Summary report	4
Appendices	
Appendix 1 – key findings	6

Summary report

- In February 2016, we published our Corporate Assessment Follow-on report, which concluded that the City of Cardiff Council (the Council) had put in place better arrangements to support improvement and to address longstanding issues, but was at a critical point in embedding them if it was to achieve a step change in delivering improved outcomes.
- 2 In February 2016, we made one formal recommendation.

Recommendation

- R1 The Council must ensure that it addresses the proposals for improvement as set out in this report to deliver improved outcomes within the next 12 months.
- The Council complied with statutory requirements in response to our formal recommendation by producing a Statement of Action in March 2016.
- We also made 14 proposals for improvement (PFIs) related to the following areas:
 - Leadership and Management
 - Governance
 - Performance reporting and performance management
 - Corporate Enablers
- 5 Between February and May 2017, we reviewed the Council's progress in addressing these proposals. We asked the question 'Can the Council demonstrate sufficient progress in meeting proposals for improvement made in February 2016?'
- We found that the Council can demonstrate sufficient progress in implementing the 2016 proposals for improvement and is in the process of embedding new performance management and reporting arrangements, but a decline in the proportion of staff completing mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection needs to be resolved. We came to this conclusion because:
 - the Council has improved communication frameworks for staff;
 - the Council has implemented the majority of our proposals for improving governance;
 - the Council has implemented improvements to performance reporting and performance management and is in the process of embedding changes; and
 - the Council has made sufficient progress in addressing proposals for improvement across a range of corporate enabling functions but reported rates of completion of mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection are declining.
 - Human Resources: The council has made progress in developing its human resource processes and strategies.
 - Asset Management: The Council has developed its approach to asset management and is in the process of implementing improved arrangements.

- Financial Planning: The Council has addressed proposals for improvement and has a transparent and effective savings planning approach which supports financial resilience.
- Information Technology: The Council has developed a clear digital strategy and is in the process of implementing improvements although the need to address a range of technical issues has meant progress has been slower than planned.
- Information Governance: The Council has made some progress in addressing three of the four areas identified for improvement but reported rates of completion of mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection are declining.
- Our findings in respect of individual proposals for improvement can be found in Appendix 1. With many of the proposals for improvement we identified specific improvement actions, so in total our February 2016 report included 32 areas for attention. The Appendix provides our assessment of the progress made against each of these areas for attention.
- We do not make any further proposals for improvement in this report. Our 2017-18 performance audit programme will focus on the development of performance reporting and management, assess how changes are being implemented at operational level and monitor the steps being taken to ensure improvement in the proportion of staff completing mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection.

Appendix 1

Key findings

The Council can demonstrate sufficient progress in implementing the 2016 proposals for improvement and is in the process of embedding new performance management and reporting arrangements, but a decline in the proportion of staff completing mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection needs to be resolved.

Exhibit 1: proposals and key findings

Statutory Recommendation	Follow-up findings: The Council complied with statutory requirements in response to our formal recommendation by producing a Statement of Action in March 2016.
The Council must ensure that it addresses the proposals for improvement to deliver improved	The Council met the deadline for responding to a statutory recommendation: In response to the Auditor General for Wales' statutory recommendation made in February 2016, the Council responded by producing a Statement of Action within the required 30 working days.
outcomes within the next 12 months.	The Statement of Action is a process-driven document with less clarity on intended outcomes. At the time of this review between February-May 2017, the Council had yet to decide on the most appropriate approach to convey whether the Council has achieved improved outcomes. This remains a work in progress at the time of this review.
	The Council did not complete all actions to the timeframe initially planned: The Council set clear timescales to deliver actions to address the proposals for improvement. However, not all actions were delivered as originally planned, most notably performance reporting/management proposals for improvement. Whilst key governance matters were resolved, most performance reporting and management improvements took longer than initially planned. This is a reflection of the evolving approach that was developed to ensure collaboration across key stakeholder groups and greater buy-in from services.

Statutory Recommendation	Follow-up findings: The Council complied with statutory requirements in response to our formal recommendation by producing a Statement of Action in March 2016.
Undertake a review of the Council's Organisational Development programme (ODP).	ODP 2014-17 review has been completed and a new ODP for 2017 onwards is being prepared. In May 2014, the Council established an Organisational Development Programme (ODP) to provide a framework for the Council to drive and shape significant cultural and service changes. The Council reviewed the ODP 2014-17 annually, and in 2016 re-profiled the Governance and Engagement element into Performance and Governance to directly address many of the proposals for improvement from our February 2016 report. For example, a review of scrutiny, member support and induction, business planning, performance reporting, performance support and improvement, asset management and digitalisation are ODP projects. The Policy, Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee (PRAP) and Cabinet received a report on the outcome of this review in June 2016. 2016-17 is the final year of the current three-year ODP. In March and April 2017, the Council commissioned an independent review of the ODP. Officers are currently considering the output from this review in shaping the next iteration of the ODP.

Leadership and Management

Follow-up findings: The Council has improved communication frameworks for staff

P1 Develop further engagement opportunities with staff and members to consistently embed an effective performance management culture across the organisation to help deliver improved outcomes.

Implementing at an appropriate pace: The intention of this proposal for improvement is drive a performance management culture across the organisation. We recognise that leading and managing such a cultural change takes time and commitment.

The Council has established a variety of communication opportunities for senior managers to engage with employees and an Internal Communications and Engagement strategy is being implemented by the senior management team. Since January 2016, 1500 staff have attended 35 employee roadshows involving the Chief Executive and senior management team. A staff Ambassador Network has been established and consolidated with 159 staff being involved to date. Chief Executive 'Have your Say' sessions have been introduced and the Cardiff Manager Forum has also been set up. The impact of these initiatives can be seen in the Council's biennial Staff Survey results. Between 2015 and 2017, there was an improvement of the mean score from 5.55 to 6.33 of staff who agreed that 'communication/staff engagement' had improved over the last 12 months. However, the staff survey also asked a question on whether staff were clear about what is expected of them as agreed through their personal performance objectives. There has been only a small improvement in the mean score since this question was first included in the staff survey in 2013. 7.36 in 2013, a decrease to 7.12 in 2015 and an increase to 7.38 in 2017. However, with the refresh of the performance management strategy, mandatory service plans and a refresh of the PPDR process, the Council are confident that the 2019 staff survey will show further improvement.

The member induction and support programme for the new Council contains a member 'performance information challenge workshop' scheduled for September 2017.

Governance		Follow-up findings: The Council has implemented the majority of our proposals for improving governance	
P2	Clarify the roles and responsibilities within the Council's decision-making	Ensuring that meetings of the Informal Cabinet are recorded appropriately. Complete: Cabinet office records action points from informal meetings of the Cabinet.	
	framework.	Reviewing the role and membership of Cabinet Advisory Groups to ensure that those members involved do not sit on any Scrutiny Committee responsible for scrutinising the same/similar issues.	
		Complete: In May 2016, Cabinet approved a terms of reference for these groups, which is more explicit depending on the role of individual groups established in the future. At the time of this review no specific Cabinet Advisory Groups were in place.	
		Ensuring that the title and roles of Assistants to Cabinet Members are applied consistently, ensuring that their limited roles and responsibilities do not cloud any accountabilities.	
		Complete: In October 2016, the Council approved the amendment to the constitution to include the role description for Assistants to Cabinet Members.	
		Ensuring that a decision is made on the issue about whether to delegate executive decision making to individual Cabinet Members.	
		Complete: In September 2016, the Constitution Committee considered a report on whether to delegate executive decision making to individual Cabinet members. The Committee concluded that with local elections scheduled for May 2017 and the need for further consideration on the potential legal framework for individual Cabinet members, no further action be taken until the matter has been considered by any new administration post May 2017.	

Gov	ernance	Follow-up findings
P3	Further strengthen the Council's scrutiny function.	Complete in respect of 2016 report, the new Council proposes to review scrutiny arrangements in 2018: At the Council's Annual Meeting on 25 May 2017 the Council decided to retain the established scrutiny committee structure for a year prior to deciding whether any change in scrutiny structure would be beneficial. This proposal for improvement is therefore regarded 'complete' in respect of 2016 arrangements. We will monitor the evolution of scrutiny arrangements of the new Council as part of performance audit programme. The proposal for improvement made some specific points that should be referenced in the Council's future review future review: • developing an approach to scrutinising cross cutting issues; and • ensuring that any vacancies on scrutiny committees are filled quickly.
P4	Ensure that all committee agendas, minutes and decision-logs are published in a timely manner on the Council's website, and increase the number of committees that are webcast.	Complete: The publication of minutes in a timely manner is slightly (5%) under the Council's own target of 80% of minutes to be published within ten working days. The Council has extended the webcasting of Council meetings to include a number of scrutiny meetings.

Governance	Follow-up findings
P5 Enhance Member accountability.	Ensuring that the Standards and Ethics Committee plays a more proactive role in promoting and enforcing the Cardiff Undertaking for Councillors and supporting policies in relation to Member conduct and behaviour.
	In progress: In August 2016, the Standards and Ethics Committee published its first bi-annual Member Briefing. This was a positive step in terms of the Standards and Ethics Committee taking a more proactive role. There remains scope for the Standard and Ethics Committee to raise an understanding of its role with members. This can be addressed during member induction processes in 2017.
	Strengthening member development and learning programmes based on competency assessments to improve skills and understanding to enable them to undertake their roles more effectively.
	In progress: Considerable attention has gone into strengthening essential member training arrangements, as is evidenced by the constitution provisions report written by the Monitoring Officer for the Constitution Committee in March 2017. The report sets out options for strengthening the constitution in respect of essential Member training.
	At the time of this review, a small number of member competency assessments had been completed. The Council does not intend to carry out competency assessments for all members. It does intend to undertake personalised development discussions with members. The new Council has the opportunity to determine the future of member competency assessments/personalised development discussions.
	Determining what training should be considered essential for Members to discharge their role effectively.
	Complete: The Democratic Services Committee considered a draft member induction programme in March 2017, which included essential training.

Performance Reporting	Follow-up findings: The Council has implemented improvements to performance reporting and performance management and is in the process of embedding changes
P6 Further strengthen performance reporting arrangements to support decision making.	Include SMART performance measures within directorate delivery plans, and ensure that these are reported to Cabinet and scrutiny to demonstrate progress. Complete: The Council's Corporate Performance Team worked with colleagues from the wider Performance Network to peer review the Council's 2016-17 Directorate Delivery Plan to ensure they contained SMART performance measures. This approach has been further developed for 2017-18 plans. Consistently using and reporting on a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating for Corporate Plan commitment actions, and Directorate Plan actions, in quarterly reports provided to Scrutiny. In progress: The Council's approach goes beyond the usual Blue, Red, Amber, Green (BRAG) rating system. Likelihood and Consequences are also contained within the Performance RAG Status Matrix. There are 16 RAG ratings in total. This system should enable consistent rating of progress towards strategic objectives. Member and officer understanding of the updated risk rating system for performance reporting will be critical to ensure correct interpretation of performance information. Mandating consistent service level plans. Complete: The development of a service planning framework took longer than originally scheduled in order to incorporate feedback from the officers who would be responsible for using the plans. This feedback also resulted in a change of design, from a traditional report format to Balanced Scorecards, which stakeholders strongly preferred for usability reasons. Prioritising key performance indicators (KPIs) where the Council will seek to demonstrate improved performance and outcomes. Complete: The Council's Corporate Performance Team have led the development of a new approach to Performance Reporting, which has been co-designed by colleagues from the Council's Performance Network. This has resulted in the development of a scorecard approach to reporting that focuses member scrutiny of
	performance on strategic performance issues.

Perf	ormance Management	Follow-up findings
P7	Adopt a more cohesive and co-ordinated approach to corporate enabler functions to better help the Council drive improvement.	Complete: The Council has refreshed the Performance Management Strategy (PMS) that should enable effective service delivery and continued service improvement across the organisation. The establishment of the Performance Support Group has provided a mechanism through which enabling functions and front-facing services can work together to investigate and tackle the Council's performance challenges.
P8	Further develop the Council's performance management arrangements.	Enhance the Council's performance management strategy to include guidelines, timescales, processes, and procedures to support a consistent approach. Complete: The review and refresh of the Council's Performance Management Strategy and Framework took longer than expected. This extra time was used to engage with officers from across the organisation ensure a collaborative approach to developing the Strategy and Framework. This approach should enable a more robust and useable performance management arrangements that have the support of the Council's directorates. Increase the level of performance management and challenge undertaken by the central performance team. In progress: The establishment of the Performance Support Group (PSG) provides the Council with a mechanism for ensuring there is corporate oversight of operational performance, and a conduit through which to channel investigation and challenge of performance issues. The central performance team links into the PSG by undertaking analysis of performance data to inform the group's agenda, and supports the ongoing work to follow up performance issues. The members of the central performance team liaise with service-area performance leads on an ongoing basis to support continuous service improvement.

P9 Further develop the Council's Human Resource processes and strategies Strengthen the Council's staff appraisal process by including explicitly measureable objective capturing information on training on a corporate basis, and developing links to staff's future aspirations to support workforce and succession planning	Follow-up findings: The council has made progress in developing its human resource processes and strategies	
Good progress: The Personal Performance Development Review (PPDR) has been revised incorp feedback from staff, managers, directors, the Chief Executive and Trade Unions. The revised PPDR available for staff and officers to use with a corporate deadline of 31 May 2017 for all staff to have re a PPDR. There has been a conscious effort to make personal objectives within the PPDRs measurable. Servi managers have responsibility to ensure personal objectives can be measured in the future. The process seeks to capture learning and development needs from all staff but the way in which inf be captured corporately remains a work in progress, as does the development of links with an individe career aspirations to support workforce and succession planning. The Council has set a deadline of for a corporate process for succession planning to be available across the Council. At the time of the this proposal for improvement in May 2017, this was in the early stages of development. Further embed the Council's workforce strategy and integrate with financial and service planning food progress: A workforce-planning toolkit is available to assist service areas when determining feworkforce requirements. From May to July 2017, three service areas are piloting the new toolkit. Oth are engaging in workforce planning without utilising the toolkit. Feedback and a review of both approhelp shape the roll out of the toolkit to all service areas. The introduction of this toolkit together with the requirement that all services will have a workforce action plan from 2018, and the expectation that all have a service area balanced scorecard by June 2017, should enable the integration of workforce planning workforce planning the toolkit.	rporating R is now received vice nformation w vidual's future of March 2018 ne review of nning g future ther services roaches will n the all services	

Corporate Enablers Asset Management		Follow-up findings: The Council has developed its approach to asset management and is in the process of implementing improved arrangements
P10	Complete the data capture exercise relating to the use of assets, and develop a single system to hold appropriate asset management information.	Complete with further work in progress: Since this proposal for improvement was made the Council has revised its approach to the corporate landlord role. In March 2017, the Organisational Development Board adopted one operating model for all non-domestic property matters. The model is to be supported by suitable data systems. The Council will have three systems: Risk Assessment Management System (RAMIS), SAP (System, Applications and Products) and a new system that will link to manage and monitor non-domestic properties.
P11	Ensure all outstanding actions from the Construction Excellence Wales review of the Council's building maintenance framework are completed.	In progress: In October 2015, the Council produced an action plan to support implementation of the Constructing Excellence in Wales recommendations. The Statement of Action progress report in January 2017 states that the majority of actions have been addressed however, it does not clarify which recommendations are yet to be implemented and their relative importance.

Corporate Enablers Financial Planning	Follow-up findings: The Council has addressed proposals for improvement and has a transparent and effective savings planning approach which supports financial resilience
P12 Further strengthen the Council's financial planning processes.	Develop more explicit links between the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Council's improvement planning arrangements. Good progress: The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-18 has a clear overall vision with key priorities and recognises that the implementation of strategic priorities and improvement objectives needs to be achievable within the resources for 2016-17 and set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan. The Council's MTFP is aligned with the Corporate Plan and other key strategies such as the Organisational Development Plan and workforce planning but the MTFP is less explicit about budget allocation for corporate priorities. Strengthen links between the Medium Term Financial Plan and service plans. Complete: The Council has improved the links between its MTFP and its service plans. The Council's 2016-17 Directorate Delivery Plans include the directorate savings and provide appropriate narrative to support this. Ensure that savings proposals, owned by Directorates, are linked to the Organisational Development Programme where relevant, are fully costed, and that delivery is driven by the Organisational Development Programme Board and ensure all budget savings plans are fully developed as appropriate with realistic timescales when the annual budget is set. In progress: The Council is in the process of strengthening arrangements by: ensuring that all savings proposals are fully developed prior to the start of the year with realistic timescales when the annual budget is set; developing an Income Generation/Charging Policy; and continuing to develop links between the Organisational Development Plan and annual savings.

Corporate Enablers ICT		Follow-up findings: The Council has developed a clear digital strategy and is in the process of implementing improvements although the need to address a range of technical issues has meant progress has been slower than planned
P13	Further strengthen the Council's IT arrangements.	Further develop the draft Digital ICT strategy and formally agree this strategic vision for delivering digitally enabled services. Completed: May 2016, Cabinet approved the strategic vision for delivering digitally enabled services.
		Deploy the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system fully to appropriate services across the Council.
		Slower progress than planned: A combination of reduced staff capacity and technical issues has meant that deployment has not progressed as quickly as originally planned. CRM deployment began in December 2015, with a three phase implementation intended to be completed by the end of 2018. The Council has initiated Phase 1 of the CRM deployment but has encountered a number of technical challenges and performance issues with the cloud based CRM system. Phase 1 of the CRM deployment with the Council's contact centre is progressing.
		The Council is working with the supplier of the CRM system, SAP (System, Applications and Products), on a number of technical and performance issues. These issues are being investigated within the supplier's network of expertise to seek a resolution. Since February 2017, the Council has reported an improvement in the performance of the CRM system for standard contact centre calls that require relatively simple workflow. The departure of the Council's chief enterprise architect from the CRM implementation team created a staff capacity issue. The Council is currently taking action to recruit to the vacancy and has commissioned an independent review of the CRM project implementation to identify potential options, lesson learned and a future roadmap to make improvements. The Council is expecting the review report and proposals in June 2017.
		In addition, the Council is working with SAP to develop proposals for the delivery of the remaining CRM project phases by the supplier. The Council is planning to review the SAP proposals and deployment plans at the end of June 2017.

Corporate Enablers ICT	Follow-up findings: The Council has developed a clear digital strategy and is in the process of implementing improvements although the need to address a range of technical issues has meant progress has been slower than planned			
	Implement the mobile scheduling and flexible working technologies where appropriate			
	Good progress: The Council has made good progress in deploying flexible working and mobile scheduling technologies across the organisation. The Council has 4,400 staff who use IT services and 1,750 of these have the ability to gain remote access to the corporate network through a laptop device to work flexibly. Flexible working technologies allow staff to complete work outside of their usual office environment for example, at other Council offices and at home. In addition, 2,100 Council staff have remote access to email services from a smart phone or mobile device.			
	Mobile scheduling technologies allow staff who deliver front line services, to receive scheduled work and then document completion of this work electronically and remotely, without the need to have a fixed desk at a Council office. The Council has piloted and implemented the mobile scheduling technology model and has demonstrated that benefits are deliverable and this approach works as intended. To date, mobile scheduling is used by staff in Community Maintenance Services and for Social Services carers. The Council is taking a phased approach to deploy mobile scheduling and is currently exploring its potential for other areas. The Council is currently developing a business case to deploy mobile scheduling to Waste Management services.			
	Expand the number and depth of ICT key performance indicators (KPIs) measured and reported, to cover the whole ICT service, and benchmark against public service comparators			
	Complete: The Council has reviewed and expanded the number of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that are measured, reported, and benchmarked with other Local Authority comparators. The Council has worked with the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) Wales and the Welsh Unitary Authority ICT leads to discuss a common approach to KPI's across Wales but also with reference to wider SOCITM member KPIs within English authorities. The Council has led on the procurement of an all-Wales SOCITM benchmarking exercise which benchmarked aspects such as digital maturity, IT maturity, IT performance and IT cost effectiveness and has used the outcomes of these exercises to inform potential KPI's for the future. The Council use a number of indicators to measure IT performance. One additional indicator was added in March 2017, on the level of devices that are used to support mobility and agile working.			
	The Council will need to consider and review how it assesses the future performance of the IT service with the deployment of the digital strategy and services to reflect new ways of using information technology.			

Corporate Enablers Information Management	Follow-up findings: The Council has some made progress in addressing three of the four areas identified for improvement but reported rates of completion of mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection are declining		
P14 Further strengthen the Council's information governance arrangements.	Complete the outstanding actions from the Information Commissioner's Office June 2014 audit on data protection and information confidentiality. In progress: The Council has made progress and has completed most actions from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO's) action plan. As at May 2017, 4 out of the ICO's 36 recommendations remained in progress, were awaiting further action or were partially implemented, for example, improving the arrangements for the County Hall building security. The ICO followed up their original 2014 audit in early 2015. Increase the level of staff completion of the Council's information confidentiality and data protection e-learning training programme. Council reports show a decline in performance: Council data shows a year on year reduction in the proportion of staff completing the mandatory information confidentiality and data protection e-learning training programme. All staff with access to a corporate email address are expected to complete the e-learning training. There is a completion target of 85% of staff. In October 2015, 81% of staff were reported as having completed this training. The Information Security Board (ISB) received a report that in 2016, 73% of staff had completed training. This is a decrease in the number of staff complying with this mandatory training. As at May 2017, completion rates ranged from 61% in Education to 79% in the Resources directorates. The Council has experienced technical issues with the supplier and is working with the company to reload the registration details for all staff onto the new version of the e-learning package during July to September 2017.		

Corporate Enablers Information Management	Follow-up findings: The Council has some made progress in addressing three of the four areas identified for improvement but reported rates of completion of mandatory training in information confidentiality and data protection are declining			
	Fully implement the Electronic Records Management System across the Council.			
	Slower progress than planned: The Council has made limited progress in fully implementing the Electronic Records Management System (ERMS) across the Council. Whilst all staff have access to view content on the ERMS, only staff in 14 out of the 71 Council sites can add documents to ERMS. The Council is currently recruiting and seeking funding for additional resources to accelerate the deployment of the EDRMS and train staff to use the system. The Council has not yet set a target date for the completion of the EDRMS project.			
	Improve the Council's response rates against statutory targets in respect of data protection subject access requests, and Freedom of Information Act requests.			
	In progress: The Council has made progress to improve the response rates against statutory targets. The response rate to Freedom of Information requests was 89% in 2016-17 compared to 80% in 2015-16. In 2016-17, 95% of subject access requests made under the Data Protection Act met the statutory target. The Council is planning to establish a new centralised approach to information request handling from 1 July 2017 with the aim of improving the consistency, response rates and quality of request responses.			
	Complete a Caldicott Principles ¹ into Practice self-assessment.			
	Complete: In May 2016, the Council put into practice the self-assessment of the 'Caldicott: Principles into Practice'. The Council's Information Governance team and Director of Social Services (the Caldicott lead) have assessed compliance against the Caldicott requirements and developed an improvement plan. The 'Caldicott: Principles into Practice' self-assessment was reported to the Information Security Board in September 2016.			

In 1997, Dame Caldicott led a review into how Patient-Identifiable Information was handled in the NHS. The 'Caldicott Report' made a number of recommendations for regulating the use and transfer of patient-identifiable information.

¹ Source: <u>http://www.wales.nhs.uk/nwis/page/52658</u>

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