

AUDIT COMMITTEE: 26 JANUARY 2021

EXTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATION TRACKER

REPORT OF HEAD OF PERFORMANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

AGENDA ITEM: 8.1

Reason for this Report

1. This report provides an update on the management and delivery of recommendations received from Audit Wales.
2. The Audit Committee Terms of Reference requires the Audit Committee to:
 - Consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
 - Consider the council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
 - Consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.
 - Consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts
 - Comment on the scope and depth of external audit work, and to ensure it gives value for money.

Background

3. The Audit Committee receives regular updates on the work of the Council's external auditors, and information in respect of the reports underway and completed as part of Committee meetings. This item has been introduced, to provide a periodic overview and account, of the progress made in delivering agreed Audit Wales recommendations, for Audit Committee information and assurance.

Issues

4. Audit Wales conduct an annual programme of inspections and reviews, agreed each year with the Council and presented to Audit Committee.
5. In conducting examinations Audit Wales have the power to make formal recommendations to the Council. The Auditor General for Wales has duties relating to examining whether councils have proper arrangements to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money) under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. In accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act the Auditor General for Wales is also statutorily required to examine public bodies to

assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when: a. setting their wellbeing objectives; and b. taking steps to meet them.

6. As part of the Council's new Performance Management Framework, which is being developed in response to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill, the Council has introduced stronger corporate assurance and oversight to ensure that the Council is responding to these recommendations.
7. Appendix 1 contains an overview of progress against Audit Wales work programme and recommendations made over the financial years 2017/18, 18/19 and 19/20, including the following reports:

2019/20

- Review of Leisure Services
- Financial Sustainability Assessment

2018/19

- Delivering with Less – Environmental Health Services – Follow-up Review
- Corporate arrangements for the safeguarding of children - Follow-up Review
- Review of the arrangements to support the Capital Ambition Delivery Programme
- Well-being of Future Generations: An Examination of 'Develop and Launch a New Transport and Clean Air Vision for the City'

2017/18:

- Scrutiny: Fit for the Future

8. It is proposed that this update is provided to Audit Committee for information and consideration on a bi-annual basis.
9. It is also proposed that this report also include progress against Audit Wales national reports (where appropriate) and recommendations made by other external regulatory bodies, including Estyn, Care Inspectorate for Wales and Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Prisons.

Legal Implications

10. The statutory functions of the Audit Committee include the duty to review, scrutinise and issue reports and recommendations on the appropriateness of the authority's risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements (pursuant to Part 6 Chapter 2 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011). In discharging its functions, the Audit Committee must have regard to all relevant guidance, in particular the CIPFA guidance for Audit Committees.

Financial Implications

11. The financial implications (if any) arising from this report have been contained within the body of the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. That the Committee considers and notes the contents of the report.

Gareth Newell
Head of Performance and Partnerships

The following are attached:

Appendix 1 - Summary: Progress against Audit Wales Programme
Recommendation Table 2019-20
Recommendation Table 2018-19
Recommendation Table 2017-18