

# Report



## Cabinet Member for Community and Resources

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### Part 1

Date: 15 May 2019

**Subject** **Wales Audit Office Report on the 'Service User Perspective' of Newport City Council's Flying Start Programme**

**Purpose** To present the Cabinet Member with the Wales Audit Office (WAO) report including the Management Action Plan on the 'Service User Perspective' of the Council's Flying Start programme.

**Author** Head of Regeneration Investment and Housing  
Performance and Research Business Partner

**Ward** All

**Summary** As part of the programme of regulatory activity, in accordance with the Well-being for Future Generations Act 2015 and Local Government Measure 2009, the Wales Audit Office undertakes a programme of work to ensure the Council is discharging its duties under both Acts. The report outlines WAO findings from a 'service user perspective' and concludes that *'Parents are generally very satisfied with the Flying Start Language and Play and Nurture programmes, but the Council could more systematically use parents' views when planning and improving services.'* The report raised three *'Proposals for Improvement'* for the service to implement.

**Proposal** Cabinet Member is requested to note the positive outcome, proposals for improvement and management response in implementing the necessary actions.

**Action by** Cabinet Member

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Senior Leadership Team
- Service management

**Signed**

## Background

As part of the programme of regulatory activity, and in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Local Government Measure 2009, the Wales Audit Office (WAO) undertakes a programme of work to ensure the Council is discharging its duties under both Acts. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to have regard for sustainable development and the five ways of working (Long Term / Collaboration / Involvement / Preventative / Integration).

In 2017/18, WAO completed work to understand the 'Service User Perspective' about an agreed service at every Council within Wales. For Newport City Council an examination of parents' experiences of the Language and Play (LAP) and Nurture programmes of the Flying Start programme in Newport was completed and attached as Appendix 1 of this report. The WAO report concluded that:

*'Parents are generally very satisfied with the Flying Start Language and Play and Nurture programmes, but the Council could more systematically use parents' views when planning and improving services.'*

The report noted the good work undertaken by the service with the user perspective indicating that:

- The Council designs the services effectively to meet parents' needs, but there are further opportunities for it to better understand and act on their views;
- Parents can access the services easily, although some barriers exist;
- Parents are generally very satisfied with the quality of the services they use; and
- Communication between parents and staff in the Flying Start settings is good, but the Council could do more to systematically use parents' views to improve the programmes.

The report also raised three 'Proposals for improvement' for the Council to implement. Attached at Appendix 2 of this report is the Council's Management Response for implementation of the proposals.

In recognition of the work undertaken by the Flying Start service, WAO also produced an infographic poster which outlined the outcomes of the review and was shared with parents at each of the centres where the service is delivered.

## Financial Summary

The financial implications of actions and projects identified by this and other regulatory work will be reported and considered in the normal way, in accordance with the council's financial plans and regulations.

## Risks

| Risk   | Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L) | Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L) | What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect  | Who is responsible for dealing with the risk? |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| The 'Proposals for improvement' are not actioned by the service area which could impact on the delivery of the service to its users. | Low                                  | Low                                   | There will be regular monitoring and reporting of the management actions to ensure that they are implemented by the service area. | Community Regeneration Manager                |

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

This work is aligned with the Council's Well-being Plan, Corporate Plan Well-being objectives.

## **Options Available and considered**

- a) To note the positive outcomes from the Wales Audit Office report in respect to the Flying Start service and to receive regular updates on the implementation of the management actions;
- b) To disregard the contents of the report and its findings.

## **Preferred Option and Why**

The preferred option is (a) and for the Cabinet Member to note the outcomes of the report and to be provided with regular updates on the progress of the service area implementing the necessary management actions.

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. The review of the Flying Start programme undertaken by the WAO from a service user perspective confirms that the Council is meeting its obligations and that parents are generally satisfied with the services they receive. The report also confirms that the Council is meeting its duties under the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and is having due regard to the sustainable development principle and the five ways of working, when discharging its functions in delivering the Flying Start services. However, WAO have recommended that parents views could be used more systematically, in future, to assist in service planning and improvements. Therefore, a number of improvement actions have been identified to address these recommendations.

## **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

The Wales Audit Office Report has taken into consideration how the Flying Start service implemented the 5 ways of working principle in relation to involvement, prevention and integration as part of the Well-being for Future Generation (Wales) Act. The report has acknowledged strengths in the delivery of the service against these principles and where areas of improvement can be made by the service.

From a HR perspective there was no direct Human Resource impact as a result of this review.

## **Comments of Cabinet Member**

The Cabinet Member has noted the findings of the Wales Audit Office report and management responses to implementing the necessary actions to improve the delivery of the service.

## **Local issues**

None

## **Scrutiny Committees**

Members of Scrutiny Committees will be notified the contents of the report for information.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

Not Applicable

## **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

This report considers the views of families as 'service users' of Flying Start.

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The review undertaken by the Wales Audit Office was completed with regard to the Well-being Act and its five ways of working principles. As identified in the report (Appendix 1), the review focused on the 'Involvement' principle and the importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring the diversity of the city is reflected in the service provided. The report highlighted strengths within the Flying Start service in meeting these principles but also recognised the further work required by the Council to improve the involvement of its service users in the delivery of its programmes.

## **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

## **Consultation**

Comments received from wider consultation, including comments from elected members, are detailed in each application report in the attached schedule.

## **Background Papers**

Appendix 1a – Wales Audit Office Service User Perspective Report English

Appendix 1b – Wales Audit Office Service User Perspective Report Welsh

Appendix 2 – Wales Audit Office Service User Perspective Management Response

Dated: 14 May 2019