

Report

Governance and Audit Committee

Part 1

Date: 26 January 2023

Subject **Audit Wales and Regulatory Bodies Published Reports 2022/23 between April and December 2022.**

Purpose To present an update on Audit Wales and Regulatory (Care Inspectorate Wales / Estyn) bodies reports published between April and December 2022 along with the Council's response.

Author Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Ward All

Summary The Governance and Audit Committee is required under its terms of reference to receive and consider inspection reports from external regulators and inspectors and to make recommendations and, where necessary, monitor implementation and compliance with agreed action plans.

There are three external regulators: Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales, and Estyn. Each body is responsible for providing assurance that the Council is fulfilling its statutory duties and providing value to the public. This report covers the regulatory reports published by each body between April and December 2022 including a summary of the Council's response (where applicable) and any additional actions which the Council is undertaking to respond to the recommendations.

Proposal The Governance and Audit Committee is asked to consider the contents of this report of the regulatory activity completed and the assurances that where recommendations have been raised the Council is taking necessary action.

Action by Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Corporate Management Team

Signed

Background

In [May 2021](#), the terms of reference for the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) was updated to align with the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021. One of the functions outlined in the terms of reference of the Committee is:

To receive and consider inspection reports from external regulators and inspectors and to make recommendations and, where necessary, monitor implementation and compliance with agreed action plans.

In June 2021, the Auditor General also requested all Council's Governance and Audit Committees to formally consider all reports of external review bodies – principally: Audit Wales (AW), Estyn, and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

All reports received by the Council are considered by the relevant Directors and Heads of Service impacted by the report. All reports are shared with relevant Cabinet Member(s). Where recommendations are raised for the Council to consider / action, the relevant service area(s) are required to confirm their response (if applicable). These may already be actions identified in their service plans, risk mitigation response, programmes / projects being delivered by the service area or bespoke actions. Where service areas are not able to implement the recommendations e.g. resources, prioritisation etc, they are asked to provide an explanation to support their decision.

This report provides an overview of the reports that have been published by the three regulatory bodies between April and December 2022. The Report includes where recommendations have been highlighted, service area(s) response to these recommendations and action(s).

Audit Wales (Appendices One and Three)

Audit Wales (AW) is the statutory external auditor of most of the Welsh public sector and its role is to examine how public bodies manage and spend public money including achieving value in the delivery of their services. Reports produced by AW cover either national (thematic) areas or local studies of the public body.

For the period covered in this report, AW have published nine reports: six national (thematic) reports and three local studies. Each of these reports and the Council's response is outlined in Appendix one of this report where recommendations have been raised for local authorities to consider and if applicable implement necessary actions.

Appendix three includes copies of the Local Audit Wales reports completed.

Care Inspectorate Wales

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) are the independent regulator of social care and childcare in Wales. CIW are responsible for inspecting and driving improvement of regulated services and local authority social services. CIW also undertake national (thematic) reviews of social care services and inspect social care and childcare services across local authority areas.

Inspection reports of regulated services such as children's homes and secure accommodation services and residential family centres are not reported and/or made available on the CIW website to protect the privacy of children or people using that service. In the period covered in this report, no national or local studies have been completed by Care Inspectorate Wales.

Estyn (Appendix 2)

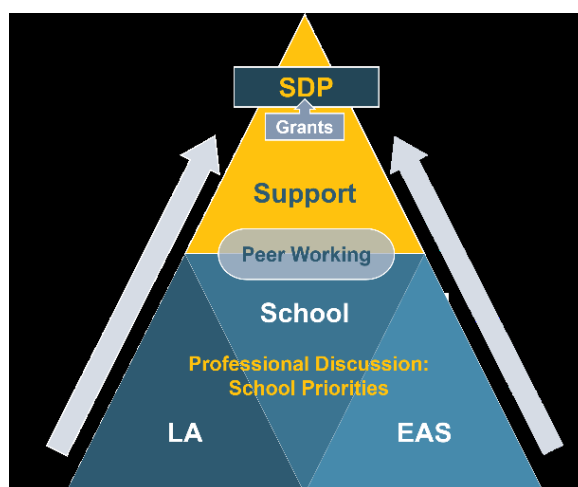
Estyn is the independent inspection and advice service on quality and standards in education and training provided in Wales. Estyn inspect quality and standards including all schools, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, teacher education and training, Welsh for adults, work-based learning, and others. Below is an overview of how Newport Council, the Regional School Improvement Partners (EAS) and schools collaborate to monitor and implement recommendations and actions from Estyn Thematic, local and School inspection reports.

Appendix 2 of this report provides an overview of Estyn activity completed in 2022/23 with one national (thematic) review and four school inspections. Links are available for further information.

Estyn / Newport Council School Inspection and Assurance Overview.

Newport Council's Education Service works in partnership with its School Improvement Partners ([Education Achievement Service \(EAS\)](#), Gwent Regional group) to ensure that schools in Newport have the bespoke support they require to meet the recommendations in Estyn inspection reports and to monitor their progress against the recommendations.

This is achieved through the Regional Approach to School Improvement (see diagram to the right). To support the process the Council's Education Service alongside the school and EAS collaborate to monitor and assure that recommendations and actions are delivered to improve performance.



The following activities are undertaken:

- **School Development Planning (SDP) Professional Discussion** – Annual professional discussion with the school leaders, Chair of Governors to assess performance, progress against their priorities, Estyn, Internal Audit recommendations.
- **Termly Supported Self-Evaluation** – Quality assure areas of strength and development including self-evaluation against any Estyn recommendations.
- **Team Around the School Meeting (identified school)** - Collaborative meetings between a school, the LA and EAS which are held on a 4-6 weekly cycle, for schools identified as requiring targeted, intensive support and are focussed on the forensic needs of the school.
- **Multi-Agency Meetings (secondary schools in Special Measures)** - These meetings are held on a termly basis, for secondary schools in the Estyn category of Special Measures. The outcome of these meetings and next steps, are reported and discussed with the EAS through the monthly partnership meeting, with the LA.

Appendix 1 – Summary of Audit Wales reports

Appendix 2 – Summary of Estyn Inspection reports

Appendix 3 – Audit Wales NCC reports.

Financial Summary

There are no direct costs associated with this report.

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?
Recommendations and actions are not implemented by the Council to improve the delivery of services to the public / service users.	M	L	All Regulatory reviews and reports are shared with the relevant Senior Officers and Cabinet Members. Recommendations and Actions are delivered and monitored by the relevant service area(s) with corporate monitoring by People, Policy and Transformation	Corporate Management Team

*Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan 2022-27

Climate Change Plan

Options Available and considered

1. To consider the contents of this report and recommend to Council that the recommendations / actions raised by the regulatory bodies be reported to Governance and Audit Committee in the end of year report with an overview of what the Council has undertaken.
2. To request further information or reject the contents of this report.

Preferred Option and Why

1. Option 1 is the preferred option with recommendations raised by the Audit Committee to be considered and reported to Cabinet and Officers in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no adverse budgetary impacts as a result of this report. Any recommendations made by the regulatory bodies in the reports issued during the first nine months of the financial year will be addressed through existing resources. Where this is not possible, consideration will need to be given to alternative mitigation or the impact will need to be factored into the Council's medium term financial planning. Some of the recommendations make specific reference to financial considerations and these will be reflected, as appropriate and practicably, within key financial plans, such as the annual budget report and Capital Strategy.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, as amended by the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, there are a number of statutory functions that the Governance and Audit Committee have to discharge and there are other non-statutory functions that can also be included within the terms of reference of the Committee. One of the additional functions that

the Council has previously delegated to this Committee is the responsibility for receiving and considering inspection reports from external regulators and inspectors, making any necessary recommendations and monitoring implementation and compliance with agreed action plans. This also meets the requirements of the Auditor General in terms of ensuring that all reports from external regulators are reported to the Council and there is a process in place for monitoring compliance. The role of the Governance and Audit Committee is to consider this overview report on the regulatory activity undertaken during the past 6 months period and to satisfy itself that appropriate action has been taken to address the issues identified by the regulators. Responsibility for individual actions, as identified in the responses to the specific regulatory reports, is a matter for the relevant officers and Cabinet Members but the Committee needs to be satisfied that robust procedures are in place to identify and monitor those actions.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Newport City Council has a responsibility for ensuring that its services provide value for money to the taxpayer and that we are fulfilling our statutory duties. This report to the Governance & Audit Committee outlines the regulatory activity completed this financial year to date and will provide necessary assurances that our governance, internal control, and risk management processes are operating effectively. We maintain a strong and ongoing working relationship with the three regulatory bodies and support their work completed throughout each year.

Local issues

None.

Scrutiny Committees

Not applicable as this report will be presented to the Council's Governance and Audit Committee.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**

The regulatory activity completed by the three bodies all consider the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act in its findings and recommendations for the Council. The Council's response also considers the five ways of working (Long term, Collaboration, Preventative, Involvement, Integration) to deliver improvement.

- **Equality Act 2010**

Not applicable as this is an information only report to the Governance and Audit Committee.

- **Socio-economic Duty**

Not applicable as this is an information only report to the Governance and Audit Committee.

- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

All reports published by the three regulatory bodies are available in Welsh and English.

Consultation

Consulted with Director of Social Services, Head of Children Services and Head of Education Services.

Background Papers

[Audit Wales](#)

[Care Inspectorate Wales](#)

[Estyn](#)

Dated: 11th January 2023

Appendix 1 - Audit Wales Reviews 2022/23

The table below provides an overview of completed Audit Wales reviews between 1st April 2022 and 1st December 2022 and the Council's initial response / action taken (if necessary). The table includes National reviews and Local (NCC) reviews.

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
<p>National Report – Social Enterprises ‘A Missed Opportunity’</p> <p>December 2022</p>	<p>This is the second Audit Wales review examining poverty and how the public sector is alleviating and tackling poverty.</p> <p>How local authorities are working to grow and make the most Social Enterprises ensuring social value and social capital stay in communities and help people who are struggling.</p> <p>Overall Conclusion – local authorities are not effectively working with Social Enterprises to maximise their impact, make better use of resources and improve services for people and communities.</p> <p>Three Recommendations raised for local authorities to consider.</p>	<p><u>Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Councillor Deb Harvey - Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p> <p>Social Services / Prevention and Inclusion / Environment & Sustainability / Housing & Communities</p>	<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>To get the best from their work with and funding of Social Enterprises, local authorities need to ensure they have the right arrangements and systems in place. We recommend that local authority officers use the checklist in Appendix 2 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluate current Social Enterprise engagement, management, performance and practice; • Identify opportunities to improve joint working; and • Jointly draft and implement an action plan with timeframes and responsibilities clearly set out to address the gaps and weaknesses identified through the self-evaluation. <p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>To drive improvement, we recommend that the local authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally approve the completed Action Plan; • Regularly report, monitor, and evaluate performance at relevant scrutiny committees; and • Revise actions and targets in light of the authority's evaluation and assessment of its performance. <p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>To ensure the local authority delivers its S.16 responsibilities to promote</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>A working group will be established to review the findings of the Audit Wales 'Poverty Reports' and to consider the Council's response to the recommendations raised and Implement as necessary.</p> <p>The working group will consider the best approach for the Council to undertake a self-evaluation of Social Enterprises based upon the resources available.</p> <p>The Group as necessary will report to Directors and Corporate Management Team to outline the Council's approach and next steps.</p> <p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>The Director of Social Services report 2022/23 will consider the</p>	<p>Prevention and Inclusion / Housing & Communities</p> <p>May 2023</p> <p>Director of Social Services.</p> <p>September 2023</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			Social Enterprises we recommend that it reports on current activity and future priorities following the evaluation of its Action Plan including the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services.	activity and future priorities for Social Enterprises.	
<p>National Report – Poverty in Wales ‘Time for Change’ November 2022</p>	<p>Examined the challenges of poverty of Wales and how government is responding. First of three reviews on alleviating and tackling poverty (Social Enterprises, see above and community resilience and self-reliance in council plans).</p> <p>Overall Conclusion – the scale of the challenge and weaknesses in current work make it difficult for Welsh and local government to deliver the systemic change required to tackle and alleviate poverty.</p> <p>Eight recommendations raised for Welsh Government and local authorities to consider.</p> <p>Recommendations 1 and 4 for Welsh Government. Recommendations 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 for local authorities.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Deb Harvey, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being</p> <p>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s) Social Services / Prevention and Inclusion / Environment & Sustainability / Housing & Communities</p>	<p>Recommendation 2 – Local strategies, targets and performance reporting for tackling and alleviating poverty.</p> <p>In Paragraphs 2.13 – 2.23 and Paragraphs 3.33 – 3.35 we highlight that councils and partners have prioritised work on poverty, but the mix of approaches and a complicated delivery landscape mean that ambitions, focus, actions, and prioritisation vary widely. We highlight that evaluating activity and reporting performance are also variable with many gaps. We recommend that the councils use their Wellbeing Plans to provide a comprehensive focus on tackling poverty to co-ordinate their efforts, meet local needs and support the revised national plan targets and actions. This should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include SMART local actions with a greater emphasis on prevention. • Include a detailed resourcing plan for the length of the strategy. • Be developed with involvement from other public sector partners, the third sector, and those with experience of poverty. • Include a robust set of consistent outcome indicators and measures to increase understanding of poverty locally; and • Be subject to annual public reporting to enable a whole system view of poverty locally to help improve delivery and support. 	<p>In Progress</p> <p>It is accepted that the Council is not able to tackle anti-poverty alone. The role of the Gwent Public Services Board and the Council’s local One Newport group will be coordinating activities to tackle and prevent poverty. The new Well-being Plan 23-28 (to be launched in April '23) is focused on this area considering the Marmot principles. There is an objective focused on addressing poverty, health and well-being. Supporting this will be a range of measures linked to Marmot, Well-being Assessment and Well-being measures which monitor the impact of actions to address poverty.</p> <p>Newport Council’s Corporate Plan 22-27 also has strategic priorities which will tackle and alleviate poverty in Newport’s communities. Each Well-being Objective (WBO) considers supporting residents and communities through: WBO 1 – Education and Employment focusing on becoming a living-wage city, eliminating education inequality, and attracting economic investment.</p>	<p>People, Policy & Transformation. June 2023</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
				<p>WBO 2 – Improving the environment and places which people live, travel, recreational. Also improving how residents access digital technology and services.</p> <p>WBO 3 – Focuses on early intervention, prevention and support that will enable residents to live health and positive lives.</p> <p>WBO 4 – Focuses on improving access to services, community asset transfer and community wealth building.</p> <p>To support the delivery of these objectives the Council's service plans outlines the actions and performance measures. Services directly involved with supporting residents in poverty e.g. Housing, Education, Prevention are already working in partnership with other organisations.</p>	
			<p>Recommendation 3 – Leadership on the poverty agenda</p> <p>In Paragraph 2.23 we note that just over a third of councils have lead members and lead officers for addressing poverty. Given the importance of effective leadership in driving the poverty agenda forward and breaking silos within councils and between public bodies, we recommend that each council designate a cabinet member as the council's poverty champion and designate a senior officer to lead and be accountable for the anti-poverty agenda.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Newport Council's Cabinet Member for Community Well-being includes in their portfolio the anti-poverty agenda.</p> <p>Additionally, the Council has appointed an Anti-poverty Champion. Their responsibility is to support anti-poverty work of the Council and partners in Newport.</p> <p>As poverty impacts cross section of service areas, the Head of Housing and Communities and Head of Prevention and Inclusion are leading on work associated with anti-poverty.</p>	<p>Corporate Management Team / Law & Standards</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			<p>Recommendation 5 – Experience mapping to create inclusive services for people in poverty</p> <p>In Paragraphs 3.2 – 3.6 we highlight that people in poverty are often in crisis, dealing with extremely personal and stressful issues, but they often find it difficult to access help from councils because of the way services are designed and delivered. We recommend that councils improve their understanding of their residents' 'lived experience' through meaningful involvement in decision-making using 'experience mapping' and/or 'Poverty Truth Commissions' to review and improve accessibility to and use of council services.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>As identified in the Social Enterprises report, NCC will establish a working group to review the findings of the report. The working group will consider the findings of the report in this area the best approach to take within existing available resources.</p>	<p>Prevention & Inclusion / Housing & Communities</p> <p>May 2023</p>
			<p>Recommendation 6 – Web Landing page for people seeking help</p> <p>In Paragraph 3.14 we highlight the difficulties people in poverty face accessing online and digital services. To ensure people are able to get the information and advice they need, we recommend that councils optimise their digital services by creating a single landing page on their website that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is directly accessible on the home page. • Provides links to all services provided by the council that relate to poverty; and • Provides information on the work of partners that can assist people in poverty. 	<p><u>Complete</u></p> <p>Newport City Council has a support and advice page accessible on the Council's home page which provides a link for residents to access a range of services delivered by the Council and partner organisations.</p>	<p>People, Policy & Transformation</p>
			<p>Recommendation 7 – Streamlining and improving application and information services for people in poverty</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>As identified in the Social Enterprises report, NCC will establish a working group to review the findings of the report.</p>	<p>Prevention & Inclusion / Housing & Communities</p> <p>May 2023</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			<p>In Paragraphs 3.15 and 3.16 we note that no council has created a single gateway into services. As a result, people have to complete multiple application forms that often record the same information when applying for similar services. We highlight that whilst it is important that councils comply with relevant data protection legislation, they also need to share data to ensure citizens receive efficient and effective services. We recommend that councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish corporate data standards and coding that all services use for their core data. • Undertake an audit to determine what data is held by services and identify any duplicated records and information requests. • Create a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services. • Undertake a data audit to provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share; and • Review and update data sharing protocols to ensure they support services to deliver their data sharing responsibilities. 	<p>The working group will consider the findings of the report in this area the best approach to take within existing available resources.</p>	
			<p>Recommendation 8 – Complying with the Socio-Economic Duty</p> <p>In Paragraphs 3.27 to 3.32 we set out that while all councils undertake some form of assessment to determine the likely socio-economic impact of policy choices and decisions, approaches vary and are not always effective. We recommend that councils review their integrated impact assessments or equivalent to:</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Newport City Council's Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment already integrates the socio-economic duty.</p>	<p>People, Policy & Transformation</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that they draw on relevant, comprehensive and current data (nothing over 12 months old) to support analysis; • Ensure integrated impact assessments capture information on: • Involvement activity setting out those the service has engaged with in determining its strategic policy such as partners, service users and those it is coproducing with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The cumulative impact/mitigation to ensure the assessment considers issues in the round and how it links across services provided across the council. ○ How the council will monitor and evaluate impact and will take corrective action; and ○ An action plan setting out the activities the Council will take as a result of the Integrated Impact Assessment. 		
<p>Local Review (App 3) – Assurance and Risk Assessment Review</p> <p>November 2022</p>	<p>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 its resources.</p> <p>Focused on the following areas of the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Position • Local Government & Elections Act 2021 • Carbon Reduction Plan • Newport Intelligence Hub <p>Two Recommendations for NCC consideration.</p>	<p><u>Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Cllr Jane Mudd, Leader of Newport City Council</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p> <p>Newport City Council Executive Board</p>	<p>Recommendation 1 – Carbon Reduction Planning Arrangements</p> <p>The Council should ensure its proposed actions to reach net zero carbon by 2030 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully costed in terms of their carbon reduction impact to enable them to be evaluated and prioritised. And • Fully reflected in its financial planning. <p>Recommendation 2 – Carbon Reduction monitoring of progress</p> <p>The Council should develop a robust and comprehensive set of metrics that support each planned action to</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Funding plan currently under development as part of the Climate Programme work. This will not include buildings costs. A buildings assessment is currently underway to fill this gap which should be complete in March 2023 and will also be used to inform the asset rationalisation programme</p> <p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Metrics are already defined in the Climate Change Plan. A review of the plan will take place in Q4 2022-23 which will include reviewing and rationalising</p>	<p>Environment & Public Protection and Finance Service Areas</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>Environment & Public Protection</p> <p>March 2023</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			measure, forecast impact and report progress to net zero carbon by 2030.	metrics to ensure they are focused and support the themes, priorities and actions in the plan and progress to net zero by 2030.	
<p>National Review – National Fraud Initiative 2020/21</p> <p>October 2022</p>	<p>NFI outcomes in Wales decreased by £1.5 million to £6.5 million in the 2020/21 exercise. Primarily due to fewer ineligible claims for Council Tax Single Persons Discount and Housing Benefit claims detected.</p> <p>While the majority of Welsh NFI participants display a strong commitment to counter fraud, 13 of the 22 Welsh local authorities identified 95% of the fraud and error outcomes achieved by the sector.</p> <p>This suggests that some local authorities have either failed to recognise the importance of the exercise or are unwilling to allocate adequate, skilled counter-fraud resources to investigate the NFI matches.</p> <p>Three recommendations raised by the report.</p>	<p><u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Cllr Dimitri Batrouni, Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p> <p>Transformation and Corporate / Finance</p>	<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>All participants in the NFI exercise should ensure that they maximise the benefits of their participation. They should consider whether it is possible to work more efficiently on the NFI matches by reviewing the guidance section within the NFI secure web application.</p>	<p><u>Complete</u></p> <p>Although Internal Audit co-ordinate the NFI on behalf of the Council they have limited resources to review all matches. Some matches are distributed to service areas to review. The Chief Internal Auditor will review the NFI web guidance and ensure all officers allocated matches to check do the same.</p>	<p>Finance</p>
			<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Where local auditors recommend improving the timeliness and rigour with which NFI matches are reviewed, NFI participants should take appropriate action.</p>	<p><u>Complete</u></p> <p>The NFI co-ordinator will work with Heads of Service of officers who have been allocated matches to check to ensure rigorous checking is undertaken on a timely basis.</p>	<p>Finance</p>
			<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Audit committees, or equivalent, and officers leading the NFI should review the NFI self-appraisal checklist. This will ensure they are fully informed of their organisation's planning and progress in the 2022-23 NFI exercise.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>The NFI co-ordinator will review the NFI self-appraisal checklist and ensure the Governance and Audit Committee is made aware of the Council's involvement with the 2022/23 NFI exercise.</p>	<p>Finance</p> <p>March 2023</p>
<p>Local Review (App 3) – Springing Forward Workforce.</p> <p>October 2022</p>	<p>How the Council strategically plans for its workforce requirements both now and in the future, how it monitors its workforce and how it reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of its arrangements.</p>	<p><u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Cllr Dimitri Batrouni, Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p>	<p>Recommendation 1 – Sustainable Development Principle</p> <p>The Council should use the sustainable development principle to shape the revision of its People and Culture Strategy, considering longer-term workforce risks and opportunities.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>The People Plan is a core document that supports our Corporate Plan. Following approval of the new Corporate Plan in November 22, People Plan development has commenced. Ongoing</p>	<p>People, Policy & Transformation</p> <p>June 2023</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
	<p>Overall Conclusion – Newport Council has applied the sustainable development principle to develop a clear vision for its workforce that is supported by effective implementation arrangements.</p> <p>Two Recommendations were raised for NCC consideration.</p>	Transformation and Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation	<p>Recommendation 2 – Performance Management</p> <p>The Council should benchmark its workforce management information internally and with other organisations to strengthen its understanding of workforce performance.</p>	<p>engagement and dialogue is currently taking place to shape priorities. Once the themes emerge, Members and the senior team will agree our plan for the next few years.</p> <p>The detailed actions relating to workforce planning are outlined in the Service Plan with a target date of 30 Jun 2023.</p> <p>In Progress</p> <p>Benchmarking information from the Council's MI Hub system is now available for service areas to compare and contrast Council performance measures and plan interventions. Some of our performance measures are available externally and are benchmarked, further work is being led on by the WLGA to give Councils the opportunity to benchmark in these areas.</p>	
<p>National Review – Equality Impact Assessments 'More than a tick box exercise'</p> <p>September 2022</p>	<p>Examined the overall approach to undertaking Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) across the 44 public bodies in Wales. Audit Wales focused primarily on understanding public bodies' approaches with a view to finding good or interesting practice and identifying any common areas for improvement. We did not evaluate individual public bodies' approaches in detail.</p> <p>Overall Conclusion – There are examples of good practice in aspects of EIA process across public bodies</p>	<p>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</p> <p>Cllr Dimitri Batrouni, Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation</p> <p>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</p> <p>Transformation and Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation</p>	<p>Recommendation 4 – Reviewing public bodies' current approach for conducting EIAs</p> <p>Public bodies should review their overall approach to EIAs considering the findings of this report and the detailed guidance available from the EHRC and the Practice Hub. We recognise that developments in response to our other recommendations and the Welsh Government's review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Wales specific regulations may have implications for current guidance in due course.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>There is an action in the People, Policy & Transformation service plan to update the Council's Fairness and Equalities Impact assessment and to provide training / support. The team will consider the report findings as part of its review of the Impact Assessment.</p> <p>Progress against this action will be reported through the Strategic Equalities Annual Report and Service Plan process.</p>	<p>People, Policy & Transformation</p> <p>March 2024</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
	<p>examined. Many public bodies use guidance from Equality Impact Assessment in Wales Practice Hub. However, there are areas for improvement.</p> <p>Four Recommendations raised for Welsh Government and public bodies to consider.</p> <p>Recommendations 1 to 3 are for Welsh Government consideration. Recommendation 4 is for public bodies consideration.</p>				
<p>National Review – Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030</p> <p>July 2022</p>	<p>This is an Audit Wales baseline review on how the public sector is preparing to achieve the Welsh Government's collective ambition for a net zero public sector by 2030.</p> <p>Overall Conclusion - There is clear uncertainty about whether the public sector will meet its 2030 collective ambition. Our work identifies significant, common barriers to progress that public bodies must collectively address to meet the ambition of a net zero public sector by 2030. And while public bodies are demonstrating commitment to carbon reduction, they must now significantly ramp up their activities, increase collaboration and place decarbonisation at the heart of their day-to-day operations and decisions. Organisations need to be bold and innovative and share</p>	<p><u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Cllr Yvonne Forsey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p> <p>Environment & Sustainability / Environment & Public Protection</p>	<p><u>Call for Action 1</u></p> <p>Strengthen your leadership and demonstrate your collective responsibility through effective collaboration</p> <p><u>Call for Action 2</u></p> <p>Clarify your strategic direction and increase your pace of implementation.</p> <p><u>Call for Action 3</u></p> <p>Get to grips with the finances you need.</p> <p><u>Call for Action 4</u></p> <p>Know your skills gaps and increase your capacity.</p> <p><u>Call for Action 5</u></p> <p>Improve data quality and monitoring to support your decision making</p>	<p><u>Complete</u></p> <p>Newport City Council's Climate Change Plan 2022-27 has in place a detailed action plan covering six themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organisational Culture & Leadership 2. Our Buildings 3. Our Land 4. Transport & Mobility 5. Goods & Services we procure 6. Our Wider Role <p>Progress against the Climate Change plan will be reported in the Council's Climate Change Annual Report, service plans and the Council's Well-being and Assessment report.</p>	<p>Environment & Public Protection</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
	<p>experiences of their successes and failures. The Auditor General will not criticise organisations for taking well-managed risks to address this unprecedented challenge.</p> <p>Audit Wales did not make specific recommendations. However, they have encouraged public bodies to consider the messages in the report and through their internal governance structure set out publicly how they intend to respond to the calls for action.</p>				
<p>Local Review (App 3) – Springing Forward, Strategic Asset Management</p> <p>June 2022</p>	<p>The Audit Review sought to answer the question: Is the Council’s strategic approach to its assets effectively helping the Council to strengthen its ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of its services in the short and longer term?</p>	<p><u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Cllr Dimitri Batrouni, Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p> <p>Transformation and Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation</p>	<p>Recommendation 1 – Develop longer term planning that is required by the Sustainable Principle</p> <p>The Council should demonstrate longer-term considerations for its property portfolio strategic planning and associated decision-making processes.</p> <p>Recommendation 2 – Further develop partnership working</p> <p>Engage with public sector partners across Gwent to realise the potential benefits arising from a strategic approach to a single public estate.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Following the pandemic and the introduction of our ‘New Normal’ working policies and the development of our new Corporate Plan we will review our Strategic Asset Management Plan, and Disposal and Asset transfer strategies. This will be supported by an asset rationalisation programme in our Transformation Plan.</p> <p>The detailed actions relating to asset management are outlined in the People, Policy & Transformation Service Plan 22-24.</p> <p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>The Asset Rationalisation programme in our Transformation Plan will also consider opportunities for working with partners, which</p>	<p>People, Policy & Transformation</p> <p>March 2024</p> <p>People, Policy & Transformation</p> <p>March 2024</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
				maybe within a Gwent or local/Newport context.	
<p>National Review - Direct Payments for Adult Social Care</p> <p>April 2022</p>	<p>This report looks at how local authorities provide Direct Payments (DP) services to adults, examining their impact and value for money.</p> <p>Overall Conclusion - Direct Payments support people's independence and are highly valued by service users and carers, but inconsistencies in the way they are promoted and managed by local authorities mean services are not always equitable and it is difficult to assess overall value for money.</p> <p>Ten recommendations are raised in the report:</p> <p>One recommendation (8) for consideration by Welsh Government and nine recommendations for local authorities to consider.</p>	<p><u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Cllr Jason Hughes and Cllr Stephen Marshall, Cabinet Members for Social Services</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p> <p>Social Services / Adult Services</p>	<p>Recommendation 1 – Promote and raise awareness of Direct Payments</p> <p>Review public information in discussion with service users and carers to ensure it is clear, concise and fully explains what they need to know about Direct Payments.</p> <p>Recommendation 2 – Promote and raise awareness of Direct Payments</p> <p>Undertake additional promotional work to encourage take up of Direct Payments.</p> <p>Recommendation 3 – Promote and raise awareness of Direct Payments</p> <p>Ensure advocacy services are considered at the first point of contact to provide independent advice on Direct Payments to service users and carers.</p> <p>Recommendation 4 – Direct Payments are consistently offered</p> <p>Ensure information about Direct Payments is available at the front door to social care and are included in the initial discussion on the available care options for service users and carers.</p> <p>Recommendation 5 – Direct Payments are consistently offered</p> <p>Provide training to social workers on Direct Payments to ensure they fully</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Public information reviewed on Website and available to all.</p> <p>In Progress</p> <p>Replacement of staff due to vacancy has been successful and further promotional work with managed care and front door services within adults underway.</p> <p>We will have completed promotional work with all internal service areas in April 2023 and continue ongoing promotion externally.</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Advocacy referral is part of the offer when any information or consideration of DP.</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>DP workers closely aligned with the front door of Adult services.</p> <p>In Progress</p> <p>Training available and the DP workers will be attending the managed care and front door</p>	<p>Adult Services</p> <p>December 2022</p> <p>Adult Services</p> <p>April 2023</p> <p>Adult Services</p> <p>January 2023</p> <p>Adult Services</p> <p>November 2022</p> <p>Adult Services</p> <p>April 2023</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			understand their potential and feel confident promoting it to service users and carers.	team meetings to ensure clear understanding of what DP can offer and the process for all practitioners	
			<p>Recommendation 6 – Sufficient Personal Assistant capacity.</p> <p>Work together (All-Wales local Direct Payments Forum and Social Care Wales) to develop a joint Recruitment and Retention Plan for Personal Assistants.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Regional work across Gwent to ascertain DP priorities will encompass this as a priority for the future of DP take up by citizens with eligible needs.</p>	<p>Adult Services</p> <p>August 2023</p>
			<p>Recommendation 7 – Services provided equitably and fairly</p> <p>Clarify policy expectations in plain accessible language and set out: What Direct Payments can pay for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How application and assessment processes, timescales and review processes work. • How monitoring individual payments and the paperwork required to verify payments will work. • How unused monies are to be treated and whether they can be banked; and • How to administer and manage pooled budgets. <p>Public information should be reviewed regularly (at least every two years) to ensure they are working effectively and remain relevant.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Regional work across Gwent to ascertain DP priorities will encompass this as a priority for the future of DP take up by citizens with eligible needs. The regional work will be reviewing all the processes and timescales required for DP. It will also cover all the points in recommendation 7 to ensure a consistent regional approach for all who access care and support through DP.</p>	<p>Adult Services</p> <p>August 2023</p>
			<p>Recommendation 9 – Effectively manage performance to judge impact and value for money.</p> <p>Work together (Welsh Government and local authorities) to establish a system to fully evaluate Direct Payments that captures all elements of the process.</p> <p>– information, promotion, assessing, managing and evaluating impact on wellbeing and independence.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Part of the regional work will be to ensure the effective management of the DP performance is value for money locally and regionally</p>	<p>Adult Services</p> <p>December 2023</p>

Audit Wales Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Audit Wales Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			<p>Recommendation 10 - <i>Effectively manage performance to judge impact and value for money.</i></p> <p>Annually publish performance information for all elements of Direct Payments to enable a whole system view of delivery and impact to support improvement.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Local publication of DP is underway and will also be part of the regional work to benchmark and consider any local amendments required to ensure growth and value for money for the public purse and that DP is meeting the care and support needs of citizens.</p>	<p>Adult Services</p> <p>December 2023</p>

Appendix 2 - Estyn Thematic Reports and Inspections

The table below provides an overview of Estyn Thematic Reports and a summary of inspections completed of Newport City Council schools between 1st April 2022 and 1st December 2022.

National (Thematic Reviews)

Estyn Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Estyn Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update Position Statement	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
Thematic Review – Effective approaches to assessment that improve teaching and learning. October 2022	<p>This report is written in response to a request for advice from the Minister for Education and the Welsh Language in his remit letter to Estyn for 2021-2022. It focuses on how maintained primary, secondary, all-age and special schools are developing effective approaches to assessment that improve teaching and learning.</p> <p>Six recommendations raised of which four (1 to 4) aimed at schools and two (5 and 6) for Welsh Government, Education Consortia and local authorities to implement.</p>	<p><u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Cllr Deb Davies, Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years</p> <p><u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u></p> <p>Chief Executive / Education Services</p>	<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Develop constructive professional learning opportunities for schools to improve their understanding and use of formative assessment practices.</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>These recommendations are being developed by Newport's partner School Improvement Service.' The Education Achievement service, (EAS)'. Actions linked to each of these recommendations are embedded into the EAS Business Plan which is monitored by The Joint Executive Group and Company Board on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>This is being supported through the work of Learning Network and Professional Learning Schools across the region, Practitioner Networks, Development Groups, and a National, cross regional professional learning offer aligned to the Curriculum for Wales. These professional learning opportunities and research and policy documents are conveniently captured in the regional Curriculum for Wales Google Site.</p>	<p>Education Service</p> <p>August 2023</p>
			<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>Facilitate and support collaboration across schools to develop leaders' and teachers' understanding of</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Every school cluster attended a curriculum conversation to provide an update of progress towards</p>	<p>Education Service</p> <p>August 2023</p>

Estyn Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Estyn Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update Position Statement	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
			progression and share effective practice in formative assessment.	<p>Curriculum for Wales and their collaborative work across the cluster. Every school has completed a self-assessment exercise against their current progress and emerging practices. The EAS has targeted support and professional learning, to meet the needs of individual schools and clusters.</p> <p>Professor Mick Waters is working with the EAS, LAs and schools, to co-construct a range of approaches to develop a common understanding of learner progression.</p> <p>The Curriculum for Wales networks are supporting the sharing of practice in the development and realisation of cluster plans and in providing guidance, example plans and case studies for sharing across all schools.</p>	

School Inspections

Inspections completed of NCC schools are for information only to the Governance and Audit Committee. See Inspection process overview in report.

School Inspected	Date Reported	Main Findings and School Recommendations
Malpas Church in Wales Primary School Special Measures Follow Up	November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malpas Church in Wales Primary School is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection. As a result, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales removed the school from the list of schools requiring special measures. No further recommendations raised.
St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive report on the School environment and the level of teaching delivered. Positive arrangements in place to govern and manage the school noting the effectiveness between Leaders and governors sharing responsibilities purposefully. Good controls and processes in place to self-evaluate, plan for improvements and opportunities for professional learning to staff. Four recommendations for the school to consider and implement with further information provided in the report.
Crindau Primary School	May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive report recognising the school leadership team having a strong vision, clear sense of direction and a plan for continuous school improvements. Positive arrangements in place to support pupils and families focusing on their well-being creating a strong sense of community.

School Inspected	Date Reported	Main Findings and School Recommendations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposeful ethos for learning across the staff focused on improving pupil literacy and numeracy skills. • Three recommendations raised for the school to implement and further information provided in the link.
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive report recognising the work of the School Leadership Team with effective school improvement arrangements in place to self-evaluate and implement improvement plans. • Positive teaching environment and provision to support pupils and their families. • Effective arrangements in place to support and enable staff professional development to support the teaching of oracy skills. • Five recommendations raised and further information provided in the link.