

Report



Governance and Audit Committee

Part 1

Date: 25 January 2024

Subject **Audit Wales and Regulatory Bodies Published Reports 2023/24 (April to December 2023)**

Purpose To present an update on Audit Wales and Regulatory (Care Inspectorate Wales / Estyn) bodies reports / inspections published between April 2023 and December 2023 including updates on ongoing recommendations / actions.

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 / inspections completed by each body between April 2023 and December 2023 including a summary of the Council's response (where applicable), and any additional actions which the Council is undertaking to respond to the recommendations.

The report also includes an update with any actions in progress from the previous report to Governance & Audit Committee.

Proposal The Governance and Audit Committee is asked to consider the contents of this report of the regulatory activity completed and, 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. 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. 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 2023 and December 2023. Where recommendations have been highlighted, service area(s) response to these recommendations and action(s) are detailed in Appendix 1. The report also provides an update on actions reported in the previous report.

Audit Wales (Appendix 1)

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 Council / public body.

For the period covered in this report, AW have published three reports: 4 national (thematic) reports and 2 local (Newport City Council) reports. Each of these reports and the Council's response is outlined in Appendix one of this report where recommendations have been raised for Council to consider and if applicable implement necessary actions.

Additionally, we have also provided updates, where applicable on progress against other Audit Wales reports. These were originally reported to the Governance & Audit Committee in July 2023.

Care Inspectorate Wales (Appendix 2)

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) are the independent regulator of social care and childcare in Wales. CIW are responsible for registering, inspecting and taking action to improve the quality and safety 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. CIW publish inspection reports of adult residential homes on their website. Children's homes, secure accommodation and residential family inspections cannot be publicly reported by CIW to protect the privacy of children and people using the services. For information, Newport City Council is responsible for 11 services (4 adults and 7 children's) in Newport. All inspection reports and action plans for improvement are reported to the Social Service Directorate Management Team, Executive Board and shared with Social Services Cabinet Members.

In the period covered in this report, two national reports were published by Care Inspectorate Wales. One inspection of an adult residential provision was also completed. Full information on the reports and inspection are included in Appendix 2 of the report.

Estyn (Appendix 3)

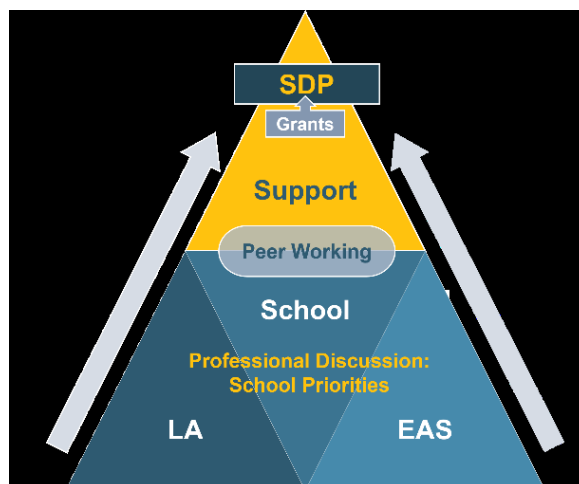
Estyn is the independent inspection and advice service on quality and standards in education and training provided in Wales. Estyn inspect quality and standards including all schools, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, teacher education and training, Welsh 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. Where the Council and schools are cited for good practice these are highlighted in appendix 3 of the report.

Appendix 3 of this report provides an overview of Estyn activity completed in 2023/24 with 5 national (thematic) reviews published and 6 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 Care Inspectorate Wales reports

Appendix 3 – Summary of Estyn 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?
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Recommendations and actions are not implemented by the Council to improve the delivery of services to the public / service users.	M	L	<p>All Regulatory reviews and reports are shared with the relevant Senior Officers and Cabinet Members.</p> <p>Recommendations and Actions are delivered and monitored by the relevant service area(s) with corporate monitoring by People, Policy and Transformation</p>	Corporate Management Team
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*Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Corporate Plan 2022-27

Options Available and considered.

1. To consider the contents of this report and to make any comments on the progress made in response to recommendations raised by the regulatory bodies.
2. To request further information or reject the contents of this report.

Preferred Option and Why

1. Option 1 is the preferred option with the Audit committee to consider the contents of this report and progress made by service areas.

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 and 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 positive 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. However Scrutiny Committees have oversight of service area progress through service plans.

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**

- The regulatory activity completed by the three bodies all consider the Equalities Act in any recommendations to the Council.

- **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: 16th January 2024

The appendices below provides a summary of any new Audit Wales (Appendix 1), Care Inspectorate Wales (Appendix 2) and Estyn (Appendix 3) reports (national, local and inspections) published between 1st April 2023 and 31st December 2023. Where recommendations have been raised, the Council's response and further actions have been included. Updates have been provided for the where recommendations and actions were marked as 'In Progress' in the Governance and Audit Committee report from July 2023.

Appendix 1 - Audit Wales 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)
National Report Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) – commentary on their progress. South East Wales CJC / Cardiff Capital Region November 2023	For information report. AW examined the progress of the 4 CJCs across Wales and their progress in developing the arrangements to meet their statutory duties. NCC is represented at the South East Wales CJC. Overall for South East Wales CJC AW are assured that the CJC has taken a considered and proportionate approach to determine and develop its governance arrangements. There were no recommendations for the Council to consider. Report findings will be considered by the CJC.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Councillor Jane Mudd, Leader of Newport City Council <u>Directorate / Service Area</u> Transformation & Corporate / Law & Standards. Chief Executive Directorate / Regeneration & Economic Development	No recommendations	Report has been shared with relevant Cabinet Member and senior officers for information.	Not Applicable
National Report Covering teachers' Absence: follow-up 2023 October 2023	For information report. Follow up review completed on the provision of supply teachers across Wales and progress against the report's findings in 2020. The report is directed at Welsh Government (WG) and Public Accounts & Public Administration Committee. The report concluded that WG has taken a range of relevant actions which it mostly accepted. However, similar issues to those	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Councillor Deb Davies, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education & Early Years. <u>Directorate / Service Area</u> Chief Executive Directorate / Education Services	No Recommendations	Report has been shared with relevant Cabinet Member and senior officers for information.	Not Applicable

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>raised in the previous report remain e.g. gaps in data, for example on take-up of professional learning opportunities, a lack of evaluation to date and the absence of a clear picture of what constitutes good quality and sufficient supply across the education system.</p> <p>There were no recommendations for the Council to consider.</p>				
<p>National Report Approaches to achieving Net Zero across the UK. September 2023</p>	<p>For information report. This is a joint report of the 4 Audit bodies across the UK. The report is an insight and summary of the progress which the UK Government and its devolved governments making towards achieving net zero. The report identified 4 key themes: i) The 4 nations have different emissions profiles and varied approaches to achieving net zero, but the choices they make must ultimately deliver net zero at a UK level. ii) Given the different net zero targets, Carbon budgets and policies across the nations, there will be opportunities for the governments to learn from each other. iii) Achieving net zero in any one nation depends on UK-level action and vice versa. iv) Effective working relationships and close engagement between the UK and devolved governments will be vital to achieving the overall aim of net zero.</p>	<p>Lead Cabinet Member Councillor Yvonne Forsey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Bio- diversity</p> <p>Directorate / Service Area Environment & Sustainability / Environment & Public Protection</p>	<p>No recommendations raised.</p>	<p>Report has been shared with relevant Cabinet Member and senior officers for information.</p>	<p>Not Applicable</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)
	There were no recommendations raised for local authorities to consider.				
Local Report Cyber Security Review – Newport City Council August 2023	Audit Wales examined the extent to which the Council's arrangements for cyber resilience meet the 10 steps to Cyber Security produced by the National Cyber Security Centre. Details of the report and its findings cannot be published to protect the Council's cyber security arrangements. Audit Wales raised 4 recommendations to strengthen the Council's cyber resilience arrangements.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Councillor Dimitri Batrouni, Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation. <u>Directorate / Service Area</u> Transformation & Corporate / People, Policy & Transformation	<u>Recommendation 1</u> The Council should regularly review and update all cyber and IT security strategies, policies and supporting arrangements to ensure that they are aligned with current working practices.	<u>In Progress</u> Policies are reviewed on a rolling basis and reported in the Annual Information Ris Report. Policies reviewed and updated to support and reinforce cyber security: information risk management, information security incident reporting, records management and information retention and disposal.	People, Policy & Transformation January 2024
			<u>Recommendation 2</u> The Council should provide Cyber, IT and Information Security training for members as a matter of urgency and in future deliver this in a timely way and at an appropriate frequency.	<u>Completed</u> All elected members and staff undertake initial online training. Further training of elected members originally took place in July 2023. A further session took place in October 2023. Following this session a total of 36 of 51 members completed the training. This equates to 71% attendance. This is supplemented by online training accessible by all staff and members.	People, Policy & Transformation March 2024
			<u>Recommendation 3</u> The Council should review its contracts for outsourced IT systems and services to ensure effective supply chain management in relation to cyber security risks.	<u>In Progress</u> To complement the initial checks undertaken, the Council is developing regular checks for suppliers of cloud systems in line with the NCSC's supply chain security guidance.	People, Policy & Transformation June 2024
			<u>Recommendation 4</u> The Council should put in place Business continuity plans at corporate and service area level and test them.	<u>In Progress</u> Work continues as programmed for the completion date of the 31 st March 2024 in ensuring that business continuity management	Infrastructure (Business Continuity) and People, Policy & Transformation March 2024

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>plans for all service areas are completed. Existing Business Impact Assessments (BIA's) continue to be updated to reflect service area realignment following the Council reorganisations and any changes to service area delivery that may have an impact on the continued delivery of critical services during periods of disruption.</p> <p>In addition, the development of the Corporate Business Continuity Management Plan is underway Q1 23/24.</p> <p>However, the Business Continuity Institute published its edition 7.0 of the Business Continuity Good Practice Guidelines in November 2023. This is significant as together with ISO22301:2019, the Council's business continuity arrangements are based upon these guidelines and work is now ongoing to ensure that the Council's Business Continuity Management Policy and Programme reflect these updated guidelines.</p> <p>The Council continues to routinely demonstrate its ability to identify and ensure the continuation of critical services during unforeseen disruptive events, which is built around the principles of robust business continuity policies and practices.</p>	
National Report Cracks in the Foundations – Building Safety in Wales	Audit Wales undertook a review examining Building Control and Building Safety in response to the Grenfell Tower Fire tragedy. This review examined Welsh	<p><u>Cabinet Member</u></p> <p>Councillor James Clarke, Cabinet Member for</p>	<p>Recommendation 1 (Audit Wales Report Recommendation 5)</p> <p>Local authorities should develop local action plans that articulate a clear vision for building control to be</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Discussions have been held with Local Authority Building Control (LABC) (the body representing</p>	<p>Regeneration & Economic Development</p> <p>December 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)
August 2023	<p>Government's, local authorities and their key partners in implementing the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022.</p> <p>Audit Wales' overall conclusion is that responsible bodies – particularly local authorities and fire & rescue are unable to effectively discharge their responsibilities and ensure buildings in Wales are safe. Welsh and UK Governments are diverging in key policy areas and some doubt remains on how the Act will be implemented in Wales. This is creating uncertainty for local authorities. Additionally the report found local authorities have an ageing workforce, poor succession planning and wider lack of investment in services, training and development. Overall 8 recommendations were raised:</p> <p>4 – Directed towards Welsh Government to consider and implement</p> <p>4 – Directed towards local authorities to consider and implement.</p>	<p>Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing.</p> <p><u>Directorate / Service Area</u></p> <p>Chief Executive Directorate / Regeneration & Economic Development.</p>	<p>able to plan effectively to implement the requirements of the Act. The Plans should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be based on an assessment of local risks and include mitigation actions; • Set out how building control services will be resourced to deliver all their statutory responsibilities; • Illustrate the key role of building control in ensuring safe buildings and be linked to well-being objectives and other corporate objectives; and • Include outcome measures that are focused on all building control services, not just dangerous structures. <p>Recommendation 2 (Audit Wales Report Recommendation 6) Local authorities should urgently review their financial management of building control and ensure they are fully complying with Regulations. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a timetable of regular fee reviews to ensure charges reflect the cost of services and comply with the Regulations; • Annually reporting and publishing financial performance in line with the Regulations; • Ensuring relevant staff are provided with training to ensure they apply the Regulations and interpret financial reporting correctly; and • Revise fees to ensure services are charged for in accordance with the Regulations. 	<p>Building Control Authorities in England and Wales) and other local Building Control Authorities on format and approach in order to ensure consistency. However, the current priority for the service relates to the introduction of a new Building Control Competency Registration requirement Framework that is being introduced in April 2024, requiring all Building Control Officers to have a minimum level of competency in order to undertake their role.</p> <p>Without this registration the service is unable to operate. It is recognised that the Action Plan is an important piece of work and will be progressed as soon as possible.</p> <p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>The Building Control budget in Newport is reviewed and monitored regularly and managed prudently in line with regulations and guidance. Financial performance will be published in a new format at the end of this financial year and fees have been reviewed for this year. However it should be noted that Building Control compete against the private sector and therefore have to ensure the service is competitive and value for money. Staff training is provided, and Officers are required to register and maintain their qualifications under the new competency framework. The service will continue to monitor performance, and look at ways to improve efficiency, including exploring opportunities for</p>	<p>Regeneration & Economic Development</p> <p>June 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)
				collaboration and sharing best practice with other Authorities. Timetable for review will be included in a Local Action Plan (see recommendation 1 above).	
			Recommendation 3 (Audit Wales Report Recommendation 7) Local authorities should work with partners to make better use of limited resources by exploring the potential for collaboration and regionalisation to strengthen resilience through a cost benefit analysis of partnering with neighbouring authorities, establishing joint ventures and/or adopting a regional model where beneficial.	<u>In Progress</u> Partnering arrangements already exist in Building Control, an example being with the Indoor Market project where the Vale of Glamorgan were responsible for the first stage 'Plan Check' and Newport oversaw Inspections throughout the construction stage. Newport has experienced, and continues to have issues with staff recruitment/ retention. However this is a national issue and not limited to Building Control but work is being prioritised and undertaken to the required standard. The service will continue to explore options, and look at ways to improve efficiency, through collaboration and sharing best practice with other Authorities on a regional or sub-regional basis.	Regeneration & Economic Development December 2024
			Recommendation 4 (Audit Wales Report Recommendation 8) Local authorities should review risk management processes to ensure that risks are systematically identified, recorded, assessed, mitigated and subject to regular evaluation and scrutiny.	<u>Complete</u> Risk management approach is already in place and is currently subject to an audit review and internal Health and Safety review. Relevant senior managers are made aware of any risks identified and actively look to identify ways to resolve. Key risks addressed through established corporate governance arrangements involving identifying risks in Service Plan and/or Corporate Risk Register as necessary.	Regeneration & Economic Development

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)
Local Report Counter Fraud Arrangements - Newport City Council July 2023	In 2020, Audit Wales published a report on fraud and made 15 recommendations for public bodies in Wales to consider and implement where necessary. Audit Wales examined the progress NCC has made in implementing the recommendations. Overall, Audit Wales found that the Council's counter-fraud arrangements have key weaknesses which potentially expose the Council to increased risk of fraud. Audit Wales raised 2 recommendations to strengthen the Council's arrangements.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Councillor Jane Mudd, Leader of Newport City Council. <u>Directorate / Service Area(s)</u> Transformation & Corporate / Finance Service	<u>Recommendation 1</u> The Council should review the cost-benefits of its current counter fraud arrangements from a value for money perspective to assure itself that arrangements are commensurate with its own objectives for counter fraud. When doing so, the Council may find it useful to reflect on the recommendations of the Auditor General in his 2020 Report.	<u>In Progress</u> The Council's Internal Audit partners (South West Audit Partnership, SWAP) have been asked to undertake a Fraud Risk Assessment as part of the 2023/24 audit plan. This will in due course be used to inform annual audit plans going forward.	Finance Service Area March 2024
			<u>Recommendation 2</u> The Council should strengthen reporting on counter fraud to the Governance and Audit Committee to enable the Committee to become fully engaged with counter-fraud arrangements.	<u>In Progress</u> The Fraud Risk Assessment completed in recommendation 1 will be taken to the Governance and Audit Committee. Future audit plans will identify and report on specific work resulting from this review.	Finance Service Area July 2024
Three National Themed Reports – Alleviating and Tackling Poverty. National Report – Poverty in Wales 'Time for Change' November 2022 National Report – Social Enterprises 'A Missed Opportunity' December 2022 Together We Can – Community Resilience and Self-Reliance. January 2023	In 2022/23 Audit Wales published three reports looking at how local government is alleviating and tackling poverty. The first report 'Time for Change' examined impact of poverty across Wales and the response of national / local government. Six recommendations raised for local authorities to consider. The second report examined how local authorities are working to grow and expand social enterprises to help deliver more services and reduce demand. Three recommendations were raised for local authorities to consider.	<u>Cabinet Member(s)</u> Councillor Deb Harvey - Cabinet Member for Community Well-being. <u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u> Social Services / Prevention and Inclusion. Environment & Sustainability / Housing & Communities. Supporting: Education Services and People, Policy & Transformation.	There were 11 recommendations raised in total for local authorities to consider. Summary of the recommendations are: 1. In Progress - Local strategies, targets and performance reporting for tackling and alleviating poverty. 2. Complete - Leadership on the poverty agenda. 3. In Progress - Experience mapping to create inclusive services for people in poverty. 4. Complete - Web Landing page for people seeking help. 5. Complete - Streamlining and improving application and information services for people in poverty. 6. Complete - Complying with the Socio-Economic Duty.	<u>In Progress</u> Since the previous update in July 2023 to the Governance & Audit Committee, the Council has progressed development in the Council's strategic and delivery of services. Some of these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Poverty Working Group lead by the Director of Social Services is developing the Council's Poverty Strategy and an action plan which will be published in 2024. • The Council's Director of Social Services provides regular updates to Cabinet Members on its progress across the poverty agenda. • The Council is reviewing its customer contact service including experience mapping. Findings and conclusions will 	Council response / Social Services Directorate Lead. June 2024

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)
	The third and final report examined how local authorities are creating the conditions needed to transform ways of working and empower communities to thrive as independently as possible. Two recommendations have been raised for local authorities to consider.		7. Complete - Self-evaluation of social enterprises across local authorities and create an action plan. 8. Complete - Create, monitor and report progress against the action plan. 9. Complete - Integrate the use of social enterprises into Director of Social Services report. 10. Complete - Local authorities use the Audit Wales evaluation tool to assess community resilience. 11. Complete - Create, monitor and report on an action plan.	inform future developments and projects. • The Council's website project is redeveloping the website and a new website will be launched in 2024.	
Local Review – Assurance and Risk Assessment Review November 2022	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. Focused on the following areas of the Council: • Financial Position • Local Government & Elections Act 2021 • Carbon Reduction Plan • Newport Intelligence Hub Two Recommendations for NCC consideration. One action was completed and the remaining action is in progress.	Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Jane Mudd, Leader of Newport City Council Lead Directorate / Service Area(s) Environment & Sustainability / Environment & Public Protection	Recommendation 1 – Carbon Reduction Arrangements The Council should ensure its proposed actions to reach net zero carbon by 2030 are: • Fully costed in terms of their carbon reduction impact to enable them to be evaluated and prioritised. And • Fully reflected in its financial planning.	In Progress 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 2024 and will also be used to inform the asset rationalisation programme. A full funding plan is under development as part of our climate change work. The Council will be assessing its funding plan across Climate Change Plan themes and as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning (revenue and capital).	Environment & Public Protection and Finance Service Areas March 2024

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><u>National Review – National Fraud Initiative 2020/21</u></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. 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. 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 were raised in the report. Since the last update, two actions were completed and one remains in progress.</p>	<p><u>Lead 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>Transformation and Corporate / Finance</p>	<p>Recommendation</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>Due to the resources challenge in Internal Audit, we have had to put this on hold pending recruitment exercise and review of the service.</p> <p>There are ongoing conversations between NCC and SWAP (Internal Auditor partner) to coordinate the Council's involvement in the NFI data / checking exercise.</p>	<p>Finance</p> <p>December 2024</p>
<p><u>Local Review – Springing Forward Workforce.</u></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>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. Since the last update one recommendation was completed</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 – 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>Complete</u></p> <p>The People Plan is a core document that supports our Corporate Plan. Following approval of the new Corporate Plan, we have engaged with the workforce to develop the People Plan. This was completed and presented to Scrutiny Committee in December 2023 and has since been approved by Cabinet, January 2024.</p> <p>The People Plan will be monitored through the Council's performance monitoring arrangements and both considers the 5 ways of working</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)
	and one remained in progress from the July 2023 update.			and fairness through a published Fairness Equality Impact Assessment.	
National Review - Direct Payments for Adult Social Care April 2022	<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>Eight recommendations were complete and one remained in progress in the progress update from the July 2023 update.</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 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>Complete</u></p> <p>The Council publishes performance of the Direct Payment service through the annual Director Social Services report and also through service plans. These provide a rounded assessment of the impact which Direct Payments have on individual care where it is taken up.</p>	<p>Adult Services</p>

Appendix 2 – Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Thematic Reports and Inspections of Adult and Children service provisions 2022/23

Below is a summary of CIW thematic reports published between April and December 2023. Where recommendations have been raised for local authorities to consider, the council's response and action(s) have been included.

CIW Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
Thematic Report – Report on care homes for children operating without registration (1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023) November 2023	For Information One of CIW's core functions is to ensure only those people who are judged to be fit and are likely to provide good quality care are registered to do so. The registration process acts as a gatekeeper for those wishing to provide a regulated service and CIW monitor / inspect ensures providers continue to provide high quality and safe services. In conclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of appropriate provision for children and young people with most complex range of needs resulting in too many children being placed in unregistered services. • Majority of services operating without registration are being directly provided by local authorities. • Whilst some children achieve positive outcomes in a temporary service which is operating without registration, some do not, including several moves from one service operating without registration to another. • Often the premises used for unregistered services and/or the standard of the arrangements made for children falls below those required for registration. • In many cases, staffing arrangements to provide care and support have been ad hoc and subject to frequent change. The deployment of staff who are not trained to meet the care and support needs of the child or young person and the over reliance on agency staff is of particular concern. 	<u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u> Cllr Jason Hughes and Cllr Stephen Marshall, Cabinet Members for Social Services <u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u> Social Services / Adult Services	Not Applicable	Whilst there were no recommendations raised in the report, the Council's Children Services is fully aware of the situation in relation to placing children into settings operating without registration and the report has been shared with the respective Cabinet Members for information. The circumstances for placing children into these settings is complex and are always thoroughly assessed and monitored throughout the process. The service area has reviewed the report's findings and where the report has noted weaknesses, the service area can assure the committee that these arrangements are subject to regular review and assurances that arrangements meet necessary legislative requirements. As part of the Welsh Government's Eliminate profit from Children's Care, Newport Council is leading alongside other Gwent local authorities and other key stakeholders to deliver the Eliminate programme which is reported through the Children Services Service Plan. Additionally, the Council's Corporate Risk Register includes this as a risk and is reported to the	Not Applicable

CIW Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For some children, stable placements have not been secured for some time, creating uncertainty for the child, and making it difficult for longer term plans to be made for them and their families. <p>No Recommendations were raised for local authorities to consider.</p>			<p>Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet every quarter.</p> <p>Finally, the Council is also working at local, regional and national levels as well as reporting to CIW on its arrangements.</p>	
<p>Thematic Joint Review (CIW and Estyn) – Rapid Review of Child Protection Arrangements</p> <p>September 2023</p>	<p>This is a joint report between CIW, Estyn and the Healthcare Inspectorate. In October 2022, Welsh Government requested a joint review of decision making around child protection in response to a number of tragic child deaths across Wales and England. The review's key findings are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, information sharing between agencies needs improving. The lack of a central information sharing IT platform is compounding this. Workforce instability and vacancy gaps across a range of organisations that are involved in child protection can lead to instability for children and their families as they experience numerous changes in social workers. This is despite great efforts locally and nationally to address the workforce shortfall. The child's voice is an integral part of safeguarding decision making and there should be a consistent approach across Wales to ensure the voice of the child is heard. Regular multi-agency training is needed to ensure there is a consistent approach and shared vision on safeguarding procedures and the threshold for significant harm across Wales. 	<p>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</p> <p>Cllr Jason Hughes and Cllr Stephen Marshall, Cabinet Members for Social Services</p> <p>Cllr Deb Davies, Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years</p> <p>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</p> <p>Chief Executive / Education Services</p> <p>Social Services / Children Services</p>	<p>The review identified 20 recommendations across the 6 key lines of enquiry.</p> <p>In Appendix A of the report, the recommendations have been aligned to the relevant responsible bodies. Note: some recommendations have been allocated to more than one responsible body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 recommendations for Multi-agency bodies to consider. 5 recommendations for Children Services to consider. 6 recommendations for Regional Safeguarding boards to consider. 2 recommendations for national Independent Safeguarding Boards to consider. 2 recommendations for Welsh Government to consider. 2 recommendations for Health to consider. 1 recommendation for Education services (this recommendation is led by Welsh Government). 	<p>In Progress</p> <p>Following the report's publication, Newport City Council and other partners from the Gwent Regional Safeguarding Board have commenced a review to examine report's recommendations.</p> <p>For the 5 recommendations raised for Children Services to consider the service the safeguarding Hub is currently being remodelled to ensure there are sufficient staff to meet demand.</p> <p>Multi agency working is a key factor to all work we complete within CS and the sharing of information is an integral part of the process. We have positive multiagency working relationships, with Police, Education, Preventions, Intensive Support Teams, Domestic Violence Services and Probation all being part of our multi agency arrangements.</p> <p>A central system is being considered by WG but this is currently in its infancy. This is a need that is recognised but having a platform to support a</p>	<p>Children Services</p> <p>December 2024</p>

CIW Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
				<p>national system would need to be led by WG.</p> <p>There is a nationwide shortage of social workers at present and there is work being undertaken nationally to support this. In Newport we have signed up to the Welsh Pledge of not taking on agency social workers if they have worked for an LA in the past 6 months. This is to support Social Workers remaining in LA's in Wales. We do have a very loyal workforce in Newport and we have a number of staff in the Child Protection teams who have been with us for a number of years. The Team Managers are very experienced and are nurturing to our social work students. We 'grow our own' social workers and sponsor social work assistants to undertake the degree.</p> <p>In 2020 all our documentation around the child protection process was reconsidered to ensure the voice of the child is heard, this is a key part of information within these reports. The Safeguarding Board may offer further recommendations in relation to this which we will readily adopt. There is regular training that is rolled out by the safeguarding board that is multi agency and will be an action taken up via the working group moving forward.</p> <p>For the recommendation raised to Education services this recommendation is to be led by Welsh Government.</p>	

CIW Report / Date Reported	Report Overview	Lead Cabinet Member(s) / Directorate & Service Area	Recommendation(s)	NCC Action / Update	Completion by (Service Area / Date)
				<p>The Safeguarding Board will be implementing a multi-agency action plan which Newport City Council will be contributing towards.</p> <p>Progress against the delivery of the action plan will be reported to the regional Safeguarding Board.</p>	

Service Provision	Service Area	Last Inspection Completed	Further Comments
Blaen Y Pant Home	Adult Services	02/05/2023	<p><u>Complete</u></p> <p>No non-compliance was identified in the report. 2 areas of improvement were raised and have been actioned by the home.</p>

Appendix 3 - 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 2023 and 31st December 2023.

Note: A joint Rapid Review Report on Child Protection arrangements is included in appendix 2 above.

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 – The new Additional Learning Needs System: Progress of schools and local authorities in supporting pupils with additional learning needs. October 2023	<p>Following the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) (ALNET) Act 2018, local authorities and schools have been transitioning into the ALNET Act with the Act to be fully implemented by August 2025.</p> <p>The review focused on how well local authorities and schools were transitioning into the new Act. As part of the review, Estyn visited NCC and John Frost school was one of the schools involved in the review.</p> <p>John Frost was cited for its integrated planning by senior leaders and the Council's Education services also cited for its use of provision mapping and dashboards across schools to monitor the progress of pupils.</p> <p>10 recommendations were raised for schools (3), local authorities (4) and Welsh Government (3) to consider and implement. Implementation of the recommendations by the Council and schools will be completed through the Education Achievement Service.</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 4</p> <p>Ensure that all schools are aware of their duties under the ALNET Act</p>	<p><u>Completed</u></p> <p>All schools are aware of their duties under the new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (National Assembly for Wales, 2018). Nearly all school ALNCOs have received training and support from the local authority on the new ALN system. A particular focus has been on writing IDP's, and the Additional Learning Provision (ALP) put in place to support the child or young person's additional learning needs.</p>	Education Services
			<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Provide clear, accurate and up-to-date information to stakeholders, in particular in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what constitutes additional learning provision in its schools • those IDPs that are to be maintained by the local authority and those to be maintained by schools 	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>A comprehensive Consideration Tool has been developed to give clarity to schools on what constitutes Additional Learning Provision (ALP) for learners. The Tool has been consulted with the LAs Inclusion Partnership Forum (which consists of eleven head teacher representatives from all sectors) and is due to be finalised by the end of January 2024. This document will form an appendix to the LA overarching Principle's document which is in the process of development and will provide clarity on those IDPs that are to be</p>	<p>Education Services</p> <p>March 2024</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)
				<p>maintained by the LA and those that are to be maintained by schools.</p> <p>In addition to the Consideration Tool and the Principle's document; a draft Early Years consideration Tool has been developed and the LA ALN Policy is in the process of being updated to ensure all documents are aligned. The timeframe for completion of these documents is the 31st of January 2024.</p>	
			<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>Continue to quality assure and review practice and additional learning provision to ensure funding and professional learning supports roll out effectively for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person centred practices • Individual development plans • Welsh-medium services, resources and provision 	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>Schools are being supported and assessed against progress towards implementation, this is being monitored/tracked at a local level by LA Inclusion Officers. Support has been provided to schools to develop a consistent provision mapping system; through the introduction of EduKey across all of Newport's schools. The LA uses dashboard functions to check on the quality of, for example, one-page profiles, individual development plans and timelines for holding reviews on pupil progress. This was highlighted within the thematic review as good practice. As EduKey is a new system, the provision mapping element was developed over the last academic year, 2022–23-year period. The LA is now able to access data from the system to identify outcomes of interventions, costs, and areas of development. The LA will moderate provision maps on an annual basis, across all schools in partnership with ALNCoS and school leaders. An initial QA of provision maps will take place in spring 2024. The financial tools within EduKey will be further</p>	<p>Education Services</p> <p>May 2024</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)
				<p>developed with schools during spring 2024 to ensure they have accurate financial data which will inform the LA of ALN expenditure, which will be reviewed by the ALN Implementation funding formula group.</p> <p>The Assistant Head of Education - Inclusion is in liaison with WG colleagues to ascertain the requirements of the Welsh-Medium provision review when there are very limited resources, interventions, or specialist staff available in the medium of Welsh. A meeting is to be arranged by WG early spring term to discuss and agree a review format. The Assistant Head of Education-Inclusion is also a member of the National task and finish group to support the development of National ALN resources and interventions.</p>	
			<p>Recommendation 7</p> <p>Develop and publish their strategy for post-16 learners with ALN</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>As Post 16 ALN is a new duty for LAs it has taken time to develop new systems and train central staff in this new area of work. We are now at a stage where a strategy for Post-16 Learners with ALN is in the process of being drafted in liaison with social services and Coleg Gwent which is planned to be completed by the end of summer term (April-July) 2024.</p>	<p>Education Services</p> <p>July 2024</p>
<p>Thematic Report – Jobs Growth Wales+ youth programme: Autumn 2023 insights.</p> <p>Regional report on Jobs Growth Wales+ youth programme in South East Wales</p> <p>October 2023</p>	<p>Estyn completed a review of Jobs Growth Wales+ programme included in the Young Person's Guarantee. The programme is an individualised training, development and employability support programme for 16-19 year olds who are not in full-time education, employment or training (NEET). The review considered the reports of the 4 regions which Newport is part of the</p>	<p>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</p> <p>Cllr Jane Mudd, Leader of the Council</p> <p>Lead Directorate / Service Area</p>	<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>Develop information sharing protocols and procedures across providers and referral agents, including engagement and progression co-ordinators, to enable better targeting and monitoring of referrals</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>NYA (Newport Youth Academy) is leading the way in targeting the appropriate young people who may be interested in joining the provision. This has been a part of a wider project which includes marketing and awareness raising of the provision itself from both stakeholders (Careers Wales) and end user (YP).</p>	<p>Regeneration & Economic Development</p> <p>March 2024</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)
	<p>South East region. In Newport, Newport Youth Academy was considered in the review. A copy of the regional reports is also linked. No recommendations were raised in the main report.</p> <p>2 recommendations were raised in the regional report for lead providers (Newport Youth Academy), Working Wales and partners to consider.</p>	Chief Executive / Regeneration & Economic Development.	onto the programme, particularly to support those young people who are not in education, employment or training or who have significant barriers to learning.	It has also included working close with the gateway team at Careers Wales to ensure they are familiar with the project and also the product we offer. This has developed to a point where we now have an 'onsite' Careers Wales officer who works from out of the NYA once a week. This person will complete the referral process and help with walk-ins as well as gain knowledge and understanding of the provision.	Regeneration & Economic Development March 2024
			<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Develop the number and range of work placements available for participants on the programme.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>This was identified as an area for development by the NYA's Self-Assessment Report and #Quality Development Plan (QDP) – and so it being recognises as part of the Estyn process built a level of confidence that we understand the provision and its current gaps. As part of the QDP, we had already planned the recruitment, through SPF Funding, of an Employment Liaison Officer who's priority KPI's will be the engagement with both internal (NCC) and external employers to create realistic and sustainable employment opportunities. This role is also targeted, as a phase 1 of 2 approach, to source placements with employers aligned to the young people's career goals and aspirations.</p>	
<p><u>Thematic Report – Equity of curriculum experiences for pupils who are educated other than at school (EOTAS).</u></p> <p>June 2023</p>	Estyn completed a review following a response to a request for advice from the Minister of Education and the Welsh Language. It evaluates the equity of curriculum offer for pupils placed in EOTAS provisions. The review found that there has been an increase in referral rates since the pandemic. Pupil Referral	<p>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</p> <p>Cllr Deb Davies, Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years</p> <p>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</p>	<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Support more pupils to return to mainstream school where appropriate through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening short term intensive support in EOTAS provision. 	<p>In Progress</p> <p>Newport LA were cited for its short-term Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) intervention at both Key Stage (KS) 2 and KS3 and the outreach provided to support reintegration back into mainstream school.</p>	Education Services March 2024

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)
	<p>Units (PRUs) are making appropriate progress towards the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales. Whilst local authorities expect EOTAS to have access to full time education too many pupils only have access to part-time education. There have been improvements in the use of decision making panels but the processes for agreeing the length of EOTAS placements and review of placements arrangements remain inconsistent. Too many primary and younger aged secondary pupils remain long-term in EOTAS providers. As a result only a very few of these pupils return successfully to mainstream school.</p> <p>8 recommendations were raised for Pupil Referral Units and mainstream schools (2); local authorities and school improvement services (5); and Welsh Government (1).</p>	Chief Executive / Education Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring placement decisions are taken promptly and identify an agreed duration, clear roles and responsibilities and a review date. 	<p>During the autumn term 2023 the Bridge Achievement Centre's (BAC) referral processes were reviewed and discussed at the Inclusion Partnership Forum. The new referral process aligns with ALN reform and requires schools to refer to ALN Panel for specialist/longer term placements to ensure pupils have their needs appropriately identified and the correct provision agreed.</p> <p>The implementation of the new referral process will take place in spring (January-March) 2024. This will require training for both managed move panel representatives and ALNCos to ensure there is a coherent and consistent approach to referrals being made in a timely manner.</p>	
			<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Secure curriculum provision in PRUs which meets the needs of all pupils working with the management committee and teacher in charge</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>The Assistant Head of Education – Inclusion, directly line manages the Manager of The BAC and is a member of the Management Committee. This ensures close partnership working with regards to curriculum development.</p> <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). The BAC have developed their curriculum offer using the Curriculum for Wales EOTAS guidance. They have a shared vision around how pupils learn encouraging pupils to be independent learners through the use of bespoke plans. Planning is developed around learners</p>	Education Services

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)
				<p>developing their ability to apply, use and extend their skills. Staff develop assessment in learning and day-to day teaching of the plan teach assess cycle.</p> <p>Estyn completed a follow up monitoring visit at The Bridge Achievement Centre in March 2022. Two of the recommendations they focussed upon were in relation to the quality of teaching and planning, and curriculum and learning opportunities at KS4. Estyn commented that “the consistent use of the personalised plans by most staff and pupils is contributing to strengthening a consistent approach to teaching across the PRU well” and “Over time, the qualification pathways available to all Key Stage 4 pupils have increased significantly. This broader range of qualifications is available to pupils across all six sites, with a minimum offer of five qualifications available to all pupils. In addition, pupils can access two options from a broad range and, in total, the PRU currently has 15 qualification pathways available.</p>	
			<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Secure curriculum provision in EOTAS providers other than PRUs</p>	<p><u>Completed</u></p> <p>Where the LA has commissioned an Independent Education Provider through a tendering process a contract is in place with a quality assurance framework which the provider has to adhere to completing on an annual basis with LA Officers. For spot purchases at Independent Education Providers a new Education Services Contract for day placements was developed with the Procurement and Commissioning team during the autumn term 2023.</p>	Education Services

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)
				This outlines expectations in regard to curriculum provision. Quality Assurance visits take place on an annual basis with both Independent Education Providers and Alternative Providers commissioned by the BAC to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum offer along with other key areas such as safeguarding procedures.	
			Recommendation 6 Strengthen the quality assurance and monitoring processes to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum offer in all EOTAS providers	<u>Completed</u> Newport was cited in the thematic review for "it's robust quality assurance cycle. This involves the school improvement partner, and the local authority. Professional discussions are held using the Team Around the School (TAS) approach which includes the PRU leader. Areas for discussion include the curriculum offer in the PRU which is tailored to meet the range of ages and needs of pupils across the PRU sites."	Education Services
			Recommendation 7 Robustly challenge and monitor the attendance of pupils across EOTAS providers including the appropriate use of part-time timetables and pastoral support programmes	<u>In Progress</u> The BAC has robust systems in place to address poor attendance. They work closely with the Education Welfare Service, have contact with parents on the first day of absence and carry out home visits. During a recent rapid review of the BAC, it was deemed that: "There are very strong and effective links with local authority officers and agencies linked to the prevention of Neets and those linked to supporting attendance. An effective tracker linked to pupil attendance is maintained by the BAC to look at historical and bespoke support provided. This allows BAC staff and	Education Services July 2024

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)
				<p>EWS to carefully consider next steps and reflect on what actions have been successful in improving attendance. This is highly valuable. The tracker also enables the Youth Engagement and Progression Coordinator to link effectively with young people, their dual settings and families to ensure they have secure destinations in education, employment or training."</p> <p>Although there is an expectation that weekly attendance data is submitted by both the commissioned Independent Education Providers and the spot purchased Independent Education Providers, a minority of the spot purchase providers do not provide the LA with this data. The newly developed Education Services Contract for day placements makes clear the expectation on commissioning of the service to provide this data, so its introduction will be beneficial.</p> <p>Internal systems for monitoring the attendance of pupils in out of county provisions need to be reviewed to ensure they are effective in tracking non-attendance.</p>	
<p>Thematic Review – School Governors Acting as critical friends and the impact of governor training.</p> <p>May 2023</p>	<p>This report focuses on important aspects of the work of governing bodies schools across Wales. Estyn found that most governors are enthusiastic and passionate about their responsibilities. They are highly committed to the role that they play in their school. Many governors talk knowledgably about the communities that their schools serve, and they often understand the particular needs of those communities. However, the majority of governing bodies do not reflect the</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>Evaluate the quality of their governor training more rigorously to make improvements where needed</p>	<p><u>In Progress</u></p> <p>The EAS completes an annual evaluation of Governor training through an Evaluative Impact Record (EIR). This uses a range of feedback data from governors. The EAS also uses the annual survey, for feedback from governors to inform future programmes. The current programme ends March 2024 and evaluation will take place across the Spring term, including consultation with the Governor Strategy Group,</p>	<p>Education Services</p> <p>August 2024</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)
	<p>diverse make up of their local community well enough. In most schools, governors work productively with the senior leaders and are supportive of their work. However, Estyn found that in a majority of schools, governors do not hold leaders to account for educational performance well enough. In addition, they do not have a wide enough understanding of their role in ensuring high expectations in all aspects of the school's work. This is because they do not challenge senior leaders sufficiently well.</p> <p>2 primary schools in Newport were involved in the review and cited for good practice in the report. Survey data was also used as supporting evidence.</p> <p>10 recommendations were raised for: governing bodies and schools (4); local authorities and school improvement services (3); and Welsh Government (3).</p>			where Newport Association is represented, to inform next year's programme.	
			Recommendation 6 Collaborate to ensure greater coherence and consistency in high-quality training opportunities between different parts of the country	<u>In Progress</u> The Governor Support service has been provided on a regional basis since 2012. In addition to the core programme, Newport local authority offers a range of training for governors in retained areas of responsibility. Collaboration between the Newport and the other 4 local authorities continues, with LA training materials being shared on the regional website for governors from Spring 2024.	Education Services May 2024
			Recommendation 7 Provide more effective support and advice to governing bodies to help them in their role as effective strategic leaders	<u>In Progress</u> This is included in the full governor Professional Learning Programme. This includes all mandatory training, pathways for governors, and bespoke training for clusters (Llanwern will be the first in Spring) 2024. The School Improvement Partner also reports annually to the governing body. In addition, bespoke training, support and advice is available for any governing body that requires it through the bespoke support plan.	Education Services May 2024
Thematic Review - Developing pupils' English Reading Skills from 10-14 years of age. May 2023	For Information Report Estyn completed this review in response to a request from the Minister for Education and the Welsh Language. In conclusion the report found that the pandemic had a negative impact on many pupils' reading skills but particularly on those pupils eligible for free school meals or from disadvantaged backgrounds.	<u>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</u> Cllr Deb Davies, Cabinet Member for Education and Early Years <u>Lead Directorate / Service Area(s)</u> Chief Executive / Education Services	Not Applicable	This report is shared with all schools and EAS.	Not Applicable

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)
	<p>Standards in reading are beginning to improve but recent inspection findings show that wide variations in pupils reading skills remain both within and across schools.</p> <p>2 schools (Glan Usk Primary school and St Julian's school) from Newport supported the review.</p> <p>7 recommendations were raised for school leaders (3); teachers and classroom based support staff (2); school improvement partners (1) and Welsh Government (1).</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)
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>1 out of 2 actions was marked as complete in the previous update to Governance & Audit Committee.</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 6</p> <p>Facilitate and support collaboration across schools to develop leaders' and teachers' understanding of progression and share effective practice in formative assessment.</p>	<p><u>Completed</u></p> <p>Every school cluster attended a curriculum conversation to provide an update of progress towards 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>Seven out of the nine Newport Clusters are continuing to engage with the action research programme with Professor Mick Waters on developing a range of approaches to establish an agreed understanding of learner progression, across the cluster.</p> <p>The Curriculum for Wales design networks are supporting the sharing of practice in approaches to curriculum design, progression and assessment. The Local Authority have audited cluster plans and will be providing feedback to each cluster and will be providing guidance, example plans and case studies for sharing across all schools.</p>	Education Services

School Inspections

Inspections completed of NCC schools are for information only to the Governance and Audit Committee. Links are provided to view full inspection reports. See Inspection process overview in report.

School Inspected	Date of Inspection	Date Reported
Pillgwenlly C.P. School	April 2023	June 2023
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School	May 2023	July 2023
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	July 2023	July 2023
Pentrepoeth C.P. School	May 2023	July 2023
St Woolos Primary School	May 2023	July 2023
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon	October 2023	December 2023