

# Report

## Planning Committee

---

### Part 1

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Subject** **Audit Wales – Planning Reviews – Newport City Council**

**Purpose** To report on the 2 recent Audit Wales Reviews: “Sustainable Development – Making best use of brownfield land and empty buildings” that was published in 2024 and the NCC specific “Planning Service Review” that was undertaken in February / March 2024. The former looked at whether Welsh Local Authorities are doing all they can to support and encourage vacant, non-domestic properties and vacant brownfield sites being repurposed into homes / other uses; whilst the latter considered whether NCC’s Planning Service was focussing on the governance and performance of the service. Planning Committee is asked to review and consider the report and Organisational Response Form.

**Author** Planning and Development Manager

**Ward** All wards

**Summary** Audit Wales has undertaken two recent reviews related to planning. The first review sought to understand the key barriers to Councils enabling brownfield regeneration and targeted the fieldwork at 8 Councils utilising document review, local interviews/ focus groups, national interviews, data collection and website review. They concluded that despite notable amounts of brownfield developments being delivered by Councils, regeneration could be increased significantly with a more systematic, interventionist, and collaborative approach. They identified 5 recommendations for consideration, 3 for Council’s and 2 for Welsh Government. The Council’s response is contained in an Organisational Response Form (ORF).

They also undertook a review of NCC’s Planning Service to gain assurance that the Planning Service has in place proper arrangements to deliver value for money in its use of resources. Their findings were based on document reviews, Planning Committee meeting observations and interviews with elected members and officers. The review was mostly positive, acknowledging the good team spirit and hard work of the service, but identified 5 recommendations for consideration which are set out further in the report below. A response to those 5 recommendations is contained in an Organisational Response Form.

This report provides a summary of the reports and the submitted Organisational Response Forms.

**Proposal** **Planning Committee to review and consider the Audit Wales Review and ORFs.**

**Action by** Planning Committee

**Timetable** Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Law and Standards, Monitoring Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing

**Signed**

[Audit Wales](#) are external regulators of local authorities who:

- Assure the people of Wales that public money is being managed well.
- Explain how public money is being used and how it meets people's needs.
- Inspire and empower the Welsh public sector to improve.

As part of Audit Wales Plan in 2023/24, 2 reviews were completed examining the use of Brownfield Land and Empty Buildings in Wales and also a review of the Council's Planning Services. The below provides an overview of both Audit Wales reports completed and are attached in the appendices of this report.

## **Background – Sustainable Development – making best use of Brownfield Land and Empty Buildings**

This was a national (thematic) review completed between January and August 2023 and looked at whether local authorities are doing all they can to support and encourage vacant, non-domestic properties and vacant brownfield sites being repurposed into homes / other uses.

The review utilised a variety of methods including document review, local interviews/ focus groups, national interviews, data collection and website review.

The Audit Wales Report was issued to the Council in January 2024, attached as Appendix 1.

The Authority has submitted an Organisational Response Form in advance of reporting to Planning Committee outlining how we will address the recommendations from the report, attached as Appendix 2.

## **Key Issues for Consideration**

The Audit Wales report outlines the key findings of this work. The key finding was:

*“Despite notable amounts of brownfield developments being delivered by councils, regeneration could be increased significantly with a more systematic, interventionist, and collaborative approach. By drawing on successful approaches elsewhere and more focused planning, councils could be better equipped to overcome significant barriers.”*

Other findings include:

- Councils have a broad but not comprehensive understanding of the built environment and potential for regeneration.
- While some regeneration is being delivered, the focus is still on 'easier' to achieve projects and councils are not always taking an ambitious, interventionist approach to tackle long-standing barriers.
- Councils are able to name barriers to brownfield regeneration and repurposing of empty buildings but are not utilising learning from elsewhere to overcome them.
- It is challenging to measure progress in delivering brownfield regeneration due to weaknesses in data and its management.

## **Audit Wales Recommendations and Response**

The following recommendations were made to Councils:

**R1:** To enable stakeholders to assess potential sites councils should create a systematic process to find and publicise suitable sites for regeneration:

- this should draw on data already held by councils, as well as external data sources to develop a composite and more complete picture of sites; and
- where known, key barriers should be named to help efforts to overcome them.

**Response:**

Newport City Council will develop a Brownfield Land Register and will seek further guidance from Welsh Government to ensure consistency and avoidance of duplication with other existing policies / registers.

Fundamentally, development in Newport is predominantly built on brownfield land. The latest Annual Monitoring Report confirmed that 91% of housing was developed on brownfield land in 2022/23. As a Local Authority we are already effectively implementing our sustainable development objective in respect of supporting the use of Brownfield Land. However it should also be noted that not all brownfield sites are in sustainable locations and allowing residential development on land in unsustainable locations is also contrary to the principles of sustainability. Welsh Government are clear that new housing should have access to public transport and community services. That is not always the case with brownfield land as it is not always confined to town or city centres.

There can also be other constraints which cannot be mitigated through the development. For example, the latest version of the revised TAN 15 would not allow us to entertain residential uses in Flood Zone 3 areas, irrespective of what mitigation could be put in place to protect the individual site. Flood zone 3 affects large swathes of land in key cities such as Newport, Swansea and Cardiff and effectively sterilises land for the delivery of new housing. This has been made clear to Welsh Government and we await their revised draft of the TAN.

The principle of providing a brownfield land register is not opposed, although it is unclear where responsibility lies for holding and updating this register (Planning or Regeneration). This is not an issue for Newport City Council as both functions sit within the same portfolio. The format for this register should be clear in order to ensure consistency and useability across all Authorities. There are poor examples of such registers in England in terms of format and anything introduced in Wales needs to be meaningful. Guidance should be produced by Welsh Government, providing clear requirements for content in order to avoid duplicating information which is already publicly accessible. For example, planning policy is available online both at the local and national level along with identified constraints information.

Resource is an ongoing issue with difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified staff. Whilst we take an innovative approach to recruitment, there are already key pressures on the Planning and Regeneration Service as we are at critical points in the delivery of a number of important strategic documents, including the replacement Local Development Plan, Placemaking Plan, Cultural Strategy and Destination Management and Marketing Plan. The Replacement Local Development Plan is not due to be completed until 2026, but there may be some capacity to progress the brownfield site register through the regeneration team in early 2025, once the aforementioned strategies have been completed.

**Timescale:**

Start Date – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025

Completion Date – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**R2:** To help ensure that regeneration activity and the shaping of the environment is informed by the needs of communities Councils should increase opportunities for community based involvement in regeneration, both in plan-making and actual development.

**Response:**

No Further NCC action.

No additional actions are required for reasons stated. Engagement and consultation is already embedded in the delivery of the planning and regeneration services.

Consultation and community engagement is already at the heart of what we do, particularly in Planning and Regeneration. In respect of the replacement Local Development Plan, there is an approved Delivery Agreement with the Welsh Government which includes a Statement of Community Involvement and the requisite consultation requirements are prescribed in legislation. Notwithstanding this, the Authority already goes above and beyond what is stated as the minimum requirements in plan-making and takes the views of communities into account. For example, the consultation on the Preferred Strategy took place for 8 weeks, as opposed to the minimum of 6 weeks. We engaged Planning Aid to undertake a number of community events across the City to raise awareness and engage with residents on the Preferred Strategy. We also held drop in sessions and attended ward meeting in order to ensure that the consultation was well publicised and engagement was meaningful.

In relation to strategic regeneration strategies and projects, public engagement and consultation is already an integral part of our process. For example, in the development of a new leisure and well-being centre, a public consultation exercise was undertaken and received over 1000 responses. 94% of people supported the delivery of a new facility and stated that their priority for the new centre would be a modern swimming pool which incorporated swimming for fitness as well as fun. This has been reflected in the design of the new facility.

With regard to the proposed Placemaking Plan, an engagement strategy has been agreed with the consultants leading on this and involves a series of stakeholder engagement and focus group meetings. We are positively engaging with users and stakeholders of our city centre in order to ensure that we are aware of what matters to them, what impacts their use of the city centre and how we can shape and influence the centre to create a vibrant, attractive and cohesive environment.

**Timescale:**

Not applicable.

**R3:** To provide focus and impetus to developing brownfield sites Councils should review their current regeneration approaches and where appropriate set clearer, more ambitious regeneration policies and targets. Together these should:

- set out the approach and expectations of the Council;
- set out how their approach will be resourced; and
- set out how the approach aligns with national policy goals and regional planning priorities.

**Response:**

Policies and commitments are already clearly identified in the Corporate Plan, Local Development Plan and Service Plan. The completion of the Placemaking Plan will complement these strategies, alongside the replacement Local Development Plan. These documents will reflect the Council's approach and ensure alignment with national and regional policy.

Policies and commitments are already clearly identified in the Corporate Plan (Well-being Objective 1), Local Development Plan (Objective 1, Policies SP1, SP18, GP6, H9, and R1), and Service Plan (Objective 1, programmes, projects and actions). The completion of the Placemaking Plan will complement these strategies, alongside the replacement Local Development Plan. However until the issues around the proposed new TAN 15 are resolved, the extent to which any Local Authority impacted by flooding can be more 'ambitious' is yet to be determined and Welsh Government will need to decide which is the priority.

The suggestion that more ambitious targets should be set also ignores the issue of resources. This is fundamental to the ability of Local Authorities to become involved in unlocking and delivering on brownfield sites. Funding is a significant issue and without the availability of capital funding, or the ability to commit to significant borrowing, we are reliant on external funding sources. Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding is restricted to town/city centres only (in line with the Town Centres First principle). Social Housing Grant is available for Registered Social Landlords as part of a wider housing programme. The Cardiff Capital Region are actively trying to address this funding problem through the Housing Viability

Fund which forms part of Investment Fund. At least two brownfield sites in Newport are set to benefit from this funding in 2024/25.

Furthermore, there is conflict of interest here. If the Local Authority intervenes in resolving land remediation, this conflicts with the 'Polluter Pays' principle.

Smaller empty properties are a long-standing issue in all town and city centres and Newport is proactive in using enforcement powers to target prominent sites. However, these enforcement powers cannot force owners to bring a building back into use. We proactively use enforcement powers to force owners to invest in the appearance of the building, with the expectation that this will encourage them to seek a return through either selling or letting the premises. Cabinet has recognised the importance of this work through the provision of an evergreen direct action fund, and we have also funded the creation of a Strategic Enforcement Officer post which is responsible for leading on the Council's empty properties project. However, planning enforcement powers do not extend to the interior of properties and we have examples in Newport where landowners persist in keeping properties vacant, despite having spent money on the property as a result of enforcement action. An example being the Former TJ's on Clarence Place. This listed property was subject to significant external refurbishment but the interior of the building remains in poor condition and not capable of being brought back into use.

It is disappointing that the feedback provided regarding the need to review the non domestic rates system has not been reflected in the report. There is an evident need to impose additional premiums to properties which are long term void. The current exemption for empty listed buildings is also working against the efforts being made to force landowners to invest in their properties through enforcement powers. This initiative has been enabled in respect of empty residential properties but should also be in place for commercial properties.

**Timescale:**

Not applicable.

**Audit Wales Welsh Government Recommendations:**

In addition to the above, the following 2 recommendations were made to the Welsh Government:

**R4:** To help enable stakeholders to assess potential sites the Welsh Government should:

- work with councils to ensure that listings of identified sites for regeneration are reported by council area; and
- produce a national listing informed by the local listings and through working in conjunction with other public sector bodies.

**R5:** To help inform scrutiny of performance both locally and nationally the Welsh Government should create a national framework for monitoring and assessing levels of brownfield sites being developed compared to levels of sites available and levels of greenfield development.

**Conclusion:**

It must be recognised that the Audit Wales review into the sustainable development and brownfield land is an all-Wales document and Newport is already ensuring development utilises brownfield land where it is sustainable. The review overlooks resource issues to a degree and could have gone further (such as suggesting changes to non-domestic rates for example) to provide additional levers to resolve the problem. The Council is already incorporating several of the measures espoused in the recommendations but issues at a national level around planning policy (such as TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk) remain.

## Background – Planning Service Review

In December 2023 Audit Wales confirmed that they would be reviewing the Planning Service as part of their 2023-2034 work programme, focussing on governance arrangements and performance. The Project Brief is attached as Appendix 3.

The review was subsequently undertaken by Audit Wales in February/March 2024. This involved a desk-based review of existing processes and protocols, observation at a Planning Committee Meeting and a series of interviews with Officers and Members as noted in the Project Brief.

The Audit Wales Report was issued to the Council in April 2024, attached as Appendix 4.

The Authority is required to submit an Organisational Response Form in advance of reporting to Planning Committee outlining how we will address the recommendations from the report, attached as Appendix 5.

## Key Issues for Consideration

The Audit Wales report outlines the key findings of this work. The review findings were generally positive and the key finding was:

*“The Planning Service is flexible in its use of resources in supporting the delivery of the Council’s well-being objectives but there are opportunities to strengthen service planning and data quality”.*

Other findings include:

- The Planning Service is supporting the Council in its delivery of its well-being objectives and reviews and uses its resources to enable this;
- There is a positive and supportive culture within the Planning Service, but there are gaps in its service planning arrangements, and it is not maximising the functionality of its IT system;
- The Planning Service is taking action to improve its performance, but there has been incorrect reporting of performance which raises concerns about data accuracy;
- While there is some reporting of the performance of the Planning Service, the service has identified opportunities to enhance its performance reporting arrangements;
- “Significant staffing issues have affected performance in the timeliness in determining planning applications”, and
- Members understand their role and responsibilities, however, there are inconsistencies between the Planning Committee Code of Practice and the Council’s constitution and there are some gaps in the Planning Committee procedures.

In addition to the above findings, it is important to highlight some of the positive findings outlined in the report:

- “The Regeneration and Economic Development service plan closely aligns with the Council’s Corporate Plan and has a specific objective for the Planning Service.”
- “The Planning Service has a presence on several of the Council’s major project and programme groups...receiving professional planning advice at the appropriate time before the allocation of potentially significant resources”
- “There is a positive and supportive culture within the planning service”

- “The medium-term approach to budget management demonstrates prudent financial future planning...” and the service is “flexible in its use of resources to address emerging issues in other areas”
- “The Council understands the importance of having a dedicated officer responsible for overseeing S106 monies”
- “Officers...are performance driven and focussed on delivering against the national performance indicators”
- “Positive culture in addressing differences of opinion when determining planning applications” and “officers feel well supported and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities...and feel supported in respect of their learning and development”
- “The Planning Service is well supported by the Council’s legal service and the Council employs a Senior Solicitor with an expertise in Planning”
- “Planning Committee does not often make decisions contrary to Planning Officers’ advice”
- “Planning Committee members display respect of the Planning Committee process and there is good support provided by legal and planning officers at committee”

## **Audit Wales Recommendations and Proposed Response**

The following recommendations were made:

### **R1: Service Planning:**

The Planning Service should strengthen its service planning arrangements to reflect the breadth of the service’s activity and contribution to the Council. This would help it better demonstrate its value to the Council and provide a clear focus for future service improvements. It would also help the Council monitor the performance of the Planning Service and facilitate greater accountability for performance.”

### **Response:**

The recommendations have been carefully considered and comments regarding the Service Plan noted. There are opportunities to update and expand on the Service Plan in the new Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) Service Plan which is in the process of being prepared. This will allow overarching objectives to be widened and additional key actions to be included. This will link back to Performance Indicators and clarify how they will be captured and reported to Members.

It is acknowledged that the Service Plan should reflect the range of services delivered and how we make a positive contribution to the Council and the wider public. Allied to this, the Service Plan will be updated to identify the key challenges, risks and mitigating actions that the Planning Service is currently facing, including the risks around IT and staff recruitment which has, and will continue to impact on planning performance.

The Service Plan is supplemented by other reporting documents, including the Local Development Plan (LDP) Annual Monitoring Report which was recently reported to Planning Committee.

### **Timescale:**

The RED Service Plan is in the process of being updated, additional actions have been incorporated already and this will be finalised by October 2024.

### **R2: Performance Reporting**

The Planning Service should improve its performance reporting by:



- reinstating as intended its annual planning performance report to allow members and the public to gain a better and more thorough understanding of the performance of the service; and
- restructuring as intended its Section 106 annual report to allow members and the public to gain a better and more thorough understanding of the allocation of Section 106 monies across the Council and city.

**Response:**

It is considered that the Service is forward-facing and regularly reviews how to improve the service we provide. This involves learning lessons from other Local Planning Authorities across the UK, which is noted in the report.

The Annual Planning Performance Report will be reinstated this year and we will continue to look at identifying best practice from elsewhere. This will include data on a variety of indicators, and outline challenges and successes in the previous financial year.

A new format Section 106 (Planning Contributions) Report will also be produced on an annual basis, where development benefits will be delivered and providing more transparency.

All of these documents will be linked back to the revised RED Service Plan to enable improved accountability of performance across the Planning and Development Service.

**Timescale:**

These will be actioned in due course and reported to Planning Committee by October 2024.

**R3: Data Quality**

The Council needs to assure itself that the Planning Service has robust data quality arrangements to ensure that it reports accurate performance data so that staff, members, Welsh Government and the public can place reliance on the integrity of the data.

**Response:**

One data collection issue that was identified as part of the audit has been resolved and links to the next recommendation. It is fully accepted that correct data needs to be submitted to Welsh Government.

The data submitted to the Welsh Government is automatically populated by the IT system, but upon further investigation issues with recording information correctly on the IT system has resulted in minor errors.

These inputting errors are being addressed with the team through further training. The service area will continue to monitor and review data before submission to ensure the information is accurately captured in the first instance to give confidence in the system.

**Timescale:**

Formal training will need to be programmed in with all Officers of the Planning Service in conjunction with the IT Service Provider to improve how the system supports the service. It is anticipated that this will be completed by December 2024.

**R4: Planning Service IT system**

The Council needs to improve staff training on the Planning Service's IT system to ensure full use of the system's functionality, to improve recording and reporting of performance data and to improve efficiency.

**Response:**

This recommendation is fully acknowledged and will be acted upon. As noted in the report, the service introduced a new IT system in 2020, just prior to the pandemic. It is acknowledged that the system is not being utilised to its full potential and further formal training will be provided.

**Timescale:**

Formal training will need to be programmed in with all Officers of the Planning Service in conjunction with the IT Service Provider to improve how the system supports the service. It is anticipated that this will be completed by December 2024.

**R5: Governance arrangements**

The Council should strengthen its Planning Service's governance arrangements by:

- ensuring the Planning Committee arrangements and procedures as stated in the Planning Committee Code of Practice align with the arrangements stated within the Council's constitution;
- reviewing the balance of time local ward members have to speak on planning applications at committee meetings as compared to applicants and objectors;
- clarifying the role and voting rights of a Planning Committee member when addressing the Committee in their capacity as a Local Ward Member who has called a planning application to the committee to reduce the risk of a conflict of interest or pre-determination; and
- providing all Members with training on Planning Committee procedures and an overview of planning matters.

**Response:**

The Planning Committee Protocol and Code of Practice will be updated to correct inaccuracies and inconsistencies. This will also include a review of the time local ward members are allocated to speak at the Committee meeting, and providing clarification on the role / voting rights of a Planning Committee Member, using best practice from other Local Planning Authorities.

All Members will be offered further training on Committee Procedures and given an overview of Planning related matters.

**Timescale:**

The Code of Practice and Council Constitution will be reviewed by December 2024 (formal amendment at the earliest date thereafter that is possible under Council procedures). All Member training will be offered by December 2024.

**Conclusion**

The Audit Wales review into the planning service has been informative and has provided an independent overview of the existing arrangements already in place as well as identifying areas for improvement.

In general, the conclusions are positive and acknowledge that the Planning Service has clear value and is a key enabler of the Council in delivering its well-being objectives. However there are further opportunities to strengthen key areas within the Regeneration and Economic Development Service Plan. The review noted the positive and supportive culture of staff within the service who work hard to ensure they enable sustainable development.

The review also noted that the Planning Service has seen improved performance in a wide variety of performance indicators and that positive changes are proposed which would see greater reporting on planning performance and service delivery.

Understandably, the Audit also noted some areas that the Planning Service needs to improve on. This is not unexpected when participating in an independent audit process, but the points raised are not considered unreasonable. As with all changes, it is important that value is added to the process and changes result in improvement. The Council's proposed organisational response reflects this and agreed changes will be implemented in due course, with those already in development coming through earlier.

## Next Steps

Both Audit Wales reports and the Council's response will be presented to the Council's Governance and Audit Committee in July 2024. The recommendations and actions of the reports will be monitored and reported to the Council's Governance and Audit Committee.

## Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

All additional training will be covered by existing budgets.

## Risks

It is important to identify and manage any project or scheme's exposure to risk and have in place controls to deal with those risks.

| <b>Risk Title / Description</b>  | <b>Risk Impact score of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)</b> | <b>Risk Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)</b> | <b>Risk Mitigation Action(s)</b><br>What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect?   | <b>Risk Owner</b><br>Officer(s) responsible for dealing with the risk? |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Planning Committee not agreeing the outcomes of the Organisational Response Form | M  | L   | The Audit Wales review has been positively viewed and carefully considered by Officers and the recommendations are considered fair. The responses contained within the Organisational Response Form are considered to be measured and appropriate to ensure the continued improvement of the Planning Service. Planning Committee members will be consulted on proposed changes to protocols. | Planning and Development Manager                                       |
| Recommendations not implemented  | M  | L   | The findings of the report are considered reasonable and there are plans already in place to review how the performance of the service is reported, align corporate policies and protocols and also implement necessary training for officers and members.  | Planning and Development Manager                                       |

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Audit Wales review looked at the whole of the Planning Service, considering planning policy, development management, planning enforcement, heritage, Section 106 contributions and the technical support function. The Audit noted the role planning has in contributing towards improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Newport. The report found that the Planning Service is supporting and enabling the Council to deliver its well-being objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan.

The Local Development Plan (LDP) is one of the statutory plans the Council has to prepare. The audit review looked at the arrangements in place to prepare this statutory plan and also considered the performance of the Authority when determining applications against the policies in the plan.

## Options Available and considered

1. Planning Committee note the contents of the Audit Wales reports and the Council's response.

2. Planning Committee suggest amendments for further consideration.

## **Preferred Option and Why**

1. Planning Committee endorse the contents of the Organisational Response Form as a fair and reasonable reflection of the Planning Service and the steps identified to improve governance and performance.

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

As a review document/position statement, the report is not asking members to approve any financial implications. It is recognised there may be some ancillary costs to consider e.g. training, but service colleagues have confirmed they anticipate any such being afforded via existing budgets/resourcing.

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

The Audit Wales Report has largely been positive. However, several operational and governance issues have been raised which need to be attended to and the proposals contained in the responses appear appropriate to resolve these.

The governance issues identified include amendments which are required to align the Committee Code of Practice with the Council's Constitution. Though the amendments are not considered to be major ones, these changes must be made so that there is clarity in procedures at all times and there is no opportunity for legal challenge to any decision.

There are also requirements for consideration of the amount of time allocated to ward members who speak at a meeting and for clarification of the position of Committee members who have called an application to Committee. Monitoring Officer advice will be given where appropriate so that this clarification can be added to the Code of Practice.

Training for members is essential and is mandatory prior to a member attending a first Committee meeting. The Audit Wales Report has identified a need for on-going training and this must be addressed. Again, to fail to adequately train members could lead to decisions being open to challenge. This report confirms the Council's intentions to address the issue.

## **Comments of Head of People Policy and Transformation**

The reviews support the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 vision of 'an ambitious, fairer, greener Newport for everyone', and its four Well-being Objectives. This also supports the statutory Local Development Plan that reflects national planning policy and local policy.

The principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and its five ways of working are supported, ensuring improved Sustainable Development and an effective Planning Service, which improves and prevents issues over the long-term. The reviews were also completed utilising local interviews, focus groups, etc.

A Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed as this report just notes the Council's response to the two Audit Wales Reviews. There are no staffing or HR related issues arising directly from this report.

## **Scrutiny Committees**

This report has not been subject to any scrutiny committee at this juncture but will be reported in due course.

## **Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:**

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Socio-economic Duty**
- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

In the completion of these reviews, Audit Wales considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the principles of the 5 Ways of Working.

The council has a number of legislative responsibilities to assess the impact of any strategic decision, proposal or policy on people that may experience disadvantage or inequality.

An FEIA has not been completed as this proposal is to note the Council's Organisational Response Forms to the Audit Wales' reviews. The changes proposed are largely organisational in nature. Any changes to the Council Constitution would require formal review and agreement of Full Council.

## **Consultation**

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Regulation and Housing was briefed on audit outcomes and proposed response to Audit Wales.

## **Background Papers**

Appendix 1: Audit Wales – Sustainable Development – Making best use of brownfield land and empty buildings

Appendix 2: Newport City Council's Organisational Response Form – Sustainable Development

Appendix 3: Audit Wales – Project Brief

Appendix 4: Audit Wales – Planning Service Review – Newport City Council

Appendix 5: Newport City Council's Organisational Response Form – Planning Service Review



Planning Service  
Review\_Eng.pdf



ORF - NCC Response  
Brownfield Regenerati



Project Brief.pdf



Audit Wales -  
Sustainable\_developpr



Organisational  
Response Form - Nev

Dated: 20 May 2024