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Date: 25th October 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Cabinet** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Wednesday, 1st November, 2017** at **2.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

Chris Burns
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of Interest.	

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on the agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

3 Cabinet held on 18th October 2017.	
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1 - 4

A greener place Man gwyrddach



To receive and consider the following reports on which executive decisions are required: -

4	Wales Audit Office Review of the WHQS Delivery Programme.	5 - 52
5	Annual Improvement Report 2016-17.	53 - 76
6	Social Services Assisted Transport Policy.	77 - 112
7	Wales Audit Office (WAO) Local Risk Based Reviews: Asset Management and Information Management and Technology - Caerphilly County Borough Council.	113 - 128

Circulation:

Councillors C.J. Cuss, N. George, C.J. Gordon, Mrs B. A. Jones, P.A. Marsden, S. Morgan, L. Phipps, D.V. Poole and Mrs E. Stenner,

And Appropriate Officers.

Agenda Item 3



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER 2017 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs B.A. Jones – Chair (Presiding)

Councillors:

C.J. Cuss (Social Care and Well Being), N. George (Neighbourhood Services), C.J. Gordon (Corporate Services), S. Morgan (Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability), L. Phipps (Homes and Places) and Mrs E. Stenner (Environment and Public Protection).

Together with:

C. Harray (Corporate Director – Communities).

Also in Attendance:

J. Jones (Corporate Information Governance Manager), P. Lewis (Acting Head of IT), M. Headington (Green Spaces and Transport Services Manager), S. Ellis (Lead for Inclusion and ALN), J. Southcombe (Financial Services Manager), K. Cole (Chief Education Officer) S. Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs P.A. Marsden (Education and Achievement) and D.V. Poole (Leader) and C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151) and D. Street (Corporate Director – Social Services).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the beginning or during the course of the meeting..

3. CABINET – 4TH OCTOBER 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2017 (minute nos. 1 - 6) be approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

4. DATA PROTECTION REFORM

The report, which was presented to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 3rd October 2017 provided Cabinet with information on the requirements of the upcoming data protection reform and corporate action to address the requirements.

It was noted that the UK Government recently presented a draft Data Protection Bill to the House of Lords to replace the Data Protection Act 1998 and provide a comprehensive legal framework for data protection in the UK, supplementing the requirements of the General Data Protection Regular (GDPR) which will be directly applicable in the UK from 25th May 2018.

Cabinet were advised of the key impacts of data protection reform as set out in the report. It was noted that the changes would instil a greater requirement for accountability and Privacy by Design, and requirements. There are also greater rights for data subjects, including rights to know what the Council will do with their data, and tighter reporting timescales, including mandatory breach reporting within 72 hours. Members were also referred to the Council's Information Risk Management Policy appended to the report, which has been updated to cover new data protection requirements, and incorporates a number of changes, such as promoting the use of Privacy Impact Assessments when necessary, and frequency of reports on Service Area Information Risk Registers to the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) changing from quarterly to six monthly.

Members thanked the Officers for the detailed report and sought further information on the training programme associated with the new legislation, to mitigate risk of a breach. Officers explained that the volume of training will be relaunched on an annual basis to promote awareness of data protection requirements, to ensure that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report: -

- (i) the requirements of the upcoming data protection reform and corporate action to address these requirements be noted;
- (ii) the revised Information Risk Management Police appended to the report be approved.

5. CHILDREN'S BURIAL FEES

The report sought the views of Cabinet on establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Welsh Government and Local Government across Wales in respect of adopting a consistent approach to children's burial fees.

Members were asked to note that the report is as a result of the recent campaign led by Carol Harris (MP for Swansea East) to abolish charges imposed by Local Authorities for the interment of children.

On 1st February 2017, Cabinet resolved to remove the interment fee of children up to and including the age of 16 years. However, there would still be costs associated with the purchase of the Exclusive Rights of Burial of chosen by the bereaved family.

It was noted that the MoU proposed by Welsh Government suggests that all Councils agree to stop charging fees for the burial or cremation of children and that a common definition of a child being up to and including 18 years of age is adopted.

However, there is still a great deal of work required between officers and Welsh Government to establish which fees should be included and whether there are any conditions or restrictions. A common view is to be established in what is included in/meant by the "removal of charges".

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report: -

- (i) the Authority commits to working closely with Welsh Government on the formation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in respect of children's burials;
- (ii) once the final MoU is drafted, a further report be presented to Cabinet.

6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMBINED SENSORY AND COMMUNICATION SERVICE (SENCOM)

The report, which was presented to Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on 26th September 2017, sought Cabinet approval for the transfer of the Gwent Visual Impairment Service, currently hosted and managed by Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC), on behalf of the five Local Authorities (LAs) in the South East Wales Consortium to Torfaen County Borough Council. Torfaen currently hosts and manages the Hearing Impairment (HI) Service and the Communication Intervention Teams (ComIT) on behalf of the region.

The report detailed all consultation outcomes undertaken between November 2016 and June 2017 in relation to the proposal. It was noted that feedback overall was positive with service staff identifying benefits such as greater flexibility, more efficient use of resources and combined budgets, however, some of the threats identified included the potential loss of IT systems, harmonising job descriptions and terms and conditions. On consultation with third sector colleagues, feedback was positive and it was felt that timescales were sufficient to ensure a smooth transition and continuation of service, providing minimal disruption to Service Users.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report the transfer of the Visual Impairment (VI) Service to Torfaen CBC be agreed.

7. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report sought the endorsement of the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the period October 2017 to January 2018.

The report outlined the proposed Forward Work Programme of future Cabinet reports.

The Cabinet Forward Work Programme is updated on a regular basis to reflect any amendments that are made to it since it was first agreed on 22nd January 2014.

Cabinet were asked to note that, since the publication of the report, there were some changes and additional items added to the Programme, which were highlighted by the presenting Officer.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that, for the reasons outlined in the report, and subject to amendments provided at the meeting, the Cabinet Forward Work Programme be approved and published.

The meeting closed at 2.30 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 1st November 2017.

CHAIR



CABINET – 1ST NOVEMBER 2017

SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE REVIEW OF THE WHQS DELIVERY PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present to Members the recommendations resulting from the Wales Audit Office (WAO) review of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) delivery programme together with officers' comments and to seek approval on the actions proposed in response to the findings resulting from the report.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 During March and April 2017, as part of the WAO performance audit plan, the WAO undertook a review of the Council's arrangements to deliver the WHQS by 2020.
- 2.2 At the time of the review, the WAO concluded that the *"majority of tenants homes remain below the WHQ Standard due to longstanding inefficient and ineffective programme management and the Council is unlikely to achieve the standard by 2020"*.
- 2.3 Whilst officers accept the recommendations within the WAO report (Appendix 1), they do not agree with the overall conclusions made, as it does not reflect the current position of the programme and evidence to justify this view is provided throughout the report and specifically addressed within the Conclusion section.
- 2.4 This report sets out the individual recommendations resulting from the review together with officers' comments on how these recommendations have or will be addressed.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 This report links to the Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017 priority to "improve standards of housing and communities giving appropriate access to services across the county borough".
- 3.2 Improving Lives and Communities: Homes in Wales 2010 which sets out the national context on meeting housing need, homelessness and housing related support services.
- 3.3 The National Housing Strategy 'better homes for people in Wales' sets out the Welsh Government's vision 'We want everyone in Wales to have the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing'.
- 3.4 Corporate Plan 2016/17 sets out the Corporate Priorities which includes 'invest in our council homes and their communities to transform lives'.

3.5 This report links most closely to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

4. THE REPORT

4.1 As part of the 2016/17 performance audit plan, the WAO, during March and April 2017, undertook a review of the Council's arrangements to deliver the WHQS by 2020. WAO sought to answer the question "*does the Council have effective arrangements in place to enable it to meet the WHQS by 2020?*".

4.2 The WAO Review resulted in a number of recommendations which are set out below, together with comments from officers in response:-

WAO Recommendations

4.3 *R1: By September 2017, develop a comprehensive, overarching, financial and operational programme, setting out how the Council will achieve WHQS by 2020. This programme should:-*

- i) Establish the full scope of investment needed in the Council's housing stock based on accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date stock condition information.*
- ii) Set out how the Council, by March 2018 will:-*
 - (a) Review its procurement arrangements to ensure value for money.*
 - (b) Provide clear and transparent information to members and tenants about the current position of the programme and a commitment to stakeholders with accurate projected completion dates, and*
 - (c) Secure the resources needed to deliver the programme by 2020.*
- iii) contain clear and measurable milestones and relevant performance measures for delivering the programme up to 2020*
- iv) set out the programme management, governance and accountability responsibilities and arrangements so that urgent remedial action can be taken if further slippage occurs and those tasked with delivering the programme can be held to account at appropriate decision making levels*

4.4 *R2: Assure itself that it is meeting its statutory landlord responsibilities by ensuring that:*

- (i) All properties have a valid gas safety certificate in place, or are having the Council's non-compliance arrangements applied to them fully*
- (ii) Arrangements for undertaking asbestos surveys and recording the results of these surveys are robust.*

4.5 *R3: Ensure it has sufficient project management capacity to deliver the Council's WHQS programme effectively by 20210.*

Officers' Comments/Actions

- 4.6 R1 - By September 2017, develop a comprehensive, overarching, financial and operational programme setting out how the Council will achieve WHQS by 2020.

Response:

- 4.7 An exercise to establish the full scope of investment needed to meet WHQS by 2020, based on accurate and comprehensive information had already commenced at the time of the audit review and has recently been completed, which confirms that the housing business plan is financially viable and that the extent of work remains deliverable. The information has been used to compile a more detailed overarching programme but the timescales laid out in our existing programme have not changed. A holistic strategy, which captures all key information, policies, procedures and performance data relevant to the WHQS programme, has been developed and the data within it will initially be based upon current assumptions. In line with the recommendations relating to March 2018, this strategy will be further informed and refined through improvements made to Keystone (the central IT database), which will be used to provide robust data to provide a new detailed programme from 2018/19, which will be communicated to all stakeholders.
- 4.8 R1 (i) By September 2017 establish the full scope of investment, based on accurate comprehensive and up to date stock condition information:-
- 4.9 The Council's current WHQS programme was originally established in 2012 and adopted a community based approach whereby internal and external works are undertaken concurrently in different communities. The aim is for all housing communities to benefit from the WHQS works at an earlier stage in the programme rather than focussing on completing all WHQS works in one community at a time. To date, 85% of properties across the county borough have received either internal or external works.
- 4.10 The programme is based on the stock condition survey and estimated component costs provided by Savill's Consultants following a 15% survey of the housing stock. The information was used to inform the housing business plan and the ballot process by determining the financial viability of Castell Mynydd (the proposed delivery company if transfer took place) and CCBC delivering the programme within the timescales stipulated by WG.
- 4.11 Consideration was given to commissioning a new stock condition survey following the outcome of the ballot, but this was not progressed due to the need to procure such a service, the delays involved and the cost, which was estimated to be over £1m. Further consideration was made in 2015 but again it was decided that this would not be cost effective at the time.
- 4.12 More up-to-date condition information is in the process of being collated by utilising our own in-house surveyors to not only obtain condition information, but to also specify works for contract packages and tendering purposes. (To date approximately 80% of internal surveys have been completed and 50% of external).
- 4.13 The investment programme for 2017/18 has already been compiled, agreed and communicated to members, tenants and other stakeholders and is in the process of being delivered. Having recently completed a full review of our costs and projecting these costs forward for the delivery of the programme up to 2020, it has been confirmed that the project remains financially viable and that there is therefore no requirement to revise the programme for cost or condition reasons at this stage. However, since the WAO review was undertaken, the contractor responsible for delivering the internal works in the lower Rhymney Valley area is no longer trading. Officers have implemented contingency arrangements to minimise the impact of this unforeseen event and this will result in the in house workforce undertaking the majority of work, supported by external contractors as and when required. Again, despite this unfortunate event, due to mitigation measures available to us and the fact there has been contingency built into the programme, the delivery of the internal works by 2020 remains achievable.

- 4.14 The current programme is reviewed on an annual basis to account for any slippage, which can be as a result of a variety of issues including contractor performance, weather, unforeseen work, access, refusals, tender returns, etc. This review will need to continue on an annual basis, as some of these issues are beyond our control, but due to improvements in surveying, work packages can be prepared at an earlier stage in the process which results in better planning and programme management. The review also takes into consideration improved performance. This has occurred where the in-house service provider has completed more properties than planned during a financial year and work has to be pulled forward from future years.
- 4.15 Surveys for both internal and external works are now being undertaken for the 2018/19 financial year, and this information, together with actual costs based on recent tender returns, has been collated to calculate detailed average property costs in order to provide a more accurate investment programme up to 2020. These revised costs have resulted in a projected increase in expenditure of approximately £10M, with overall costs remaining within our borrowing headroom. Therefore the programme is confirmed as still being financially viable. This information will be used to refine our 2018/19 programme and beyond. CCBC have therefore met the WAO stated deadline of September 2017 and developed a comprehensive, overarching, financial and operational programme to demonstrate how the Council will deliver WHQS by 2020 (Appendix 2).
- 4.16 *R1(ii)(a) By March 2018, review its procurement arrangements to ensure value for money:-*
- 4.17 The WHQS programme was seen from the outset as an opportunity to link housing and regeneration outcomes. The procurement strategy and process being a facilitator to bring social and economic regeneration through a dedicated supply chain.
- 4.18 The Council had a desire to reduce its carbon footprint and embed sustainable alternatives whilst providing job opportunities. Thus the procurement strategy had clear objectives and the overarching evaluation criteria for all procurements set at Quality 60% and Price 40%.
- 4.19 Furthermore the procurement strategy was developed to meet Welsh Government's improvements and efficiency targets which included sustainability, waste reduction, carbon reduction and community benefits (included employment and training opportunities).
- 4.20 All procurements meet the requirements of the Council's standing orders for contracts, financial regulations and the wider UK Public Contract Regulations 2015. This in itself demonstrates open, fair and transparent process and as a result "Best Value" achieved against a pre-established evaluation criteria.
- 4.21 Clearly there are a number of factors to consider when administering individual procurements in order to effectively manage the supply chain and financial risk in order to deliver against the desired outcomes. E.g. the anchor contract, supply partner for all goods and materials is a long term relationship for ten (10) years. The contract has been established utilizing the NEC 3 term service contract. This reflects the Councils wish to share the financial risk of delivery of services with the supply partner.
- 4.22 This allows the Council to work with the nominated contractor to ensure all parties meet the requirements of "best value" through prices paid, delivery of social value through community benefits such as job opportunities and community funds.
- 4.23 The wider supply chain benefits are significant as over the past four (4) years the Council and supply partner have worked to establish and develop the local supply chain in and around the Caerphilly borough.
- 4.24 Internal works contracts are predicated on a fixed contract basis using the JCT form of contract and national schedule of rates (SoRs). The SoRs are reviewed annually on 1st August and facilitates price adjustments in line with national market trends.

- 4.25 External works have been developed via various procurement routes in accordance with legislation and in order to manage the supply base, ensure capacity and encourage and grow local contractors. The external works programme is managed through a series of arrangements which include the use of the small lots exemption, frameworks and more recently a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). The flexibility in these arrangements allows for pricing per contract opportunity and in the case of the DPS different pricing strategies depending on the specific requirement.
- 4.26 All contracts/ arrangements have key performance indicators which are currently measured by the WHQS team.
- 4.27 Members will also be aware of the agreement, at the outset of this investment programme that approximately 50% of the internal works would be carried out by the in-house workforce. Whilst, as stated by the WAO, the in-house workforce have not been subject to any competitive tendering process, value for money is considered to be provided for the following reasons and is not purely considered on cost:-
1. Not claims focused/not trading for profit.
 2. High quality service with focus on meeting tenants needs
 3. Higher levels of customer satisfaction than external contractors.
 4. Reduced number of complaints, compared with contractors.
 5. Employment of local people and sustain existing jobs.
 6. No issues with contractual challenges or claims.
 7. Directly employed with reduced use of sub-contractors.
 8. Improved performance above external contractors.
 9. Reduced requirement for supervision.
 10. Preferred choice by our tenants.
 11. More direct control with in-house team.
 12. Availability of benchmarking data.
 13. Locally available workforce in the event of contractor default.
- 4.28 A benchmarking exercise comparing in-house costs against those of external contractors was undertaken in 2014 and identified that costs based upon typical elements of work were approximately 20% higher for the in-house team. A more recent exercise undertaken internally has also confirmed that the in-house workforce costs are approximately 20% higher than external contractors undertaking similar work. However there are additional supervisory and management costs associated with project managing external contractors which are already accounted for within the in-house costs. With the demise of Compulsory Competitive Tendering, there are added costs associated with in-house services which also need to be considered. These include superannuation, living wage, leave, sickness, overheads linked to support service costs and the end of bonus schemes or price work payments arrangements. However, value for money is not based upon costs alone and qualitative factors, such as those stated in 4.22 above should also be considered. In view of all of these factors, as well as the positive feedback received from our tenants, along with the excellent performance being achieved by the in-house team, we consider that value for money is being provided.

- 4.29 Additionally, an exercise to outsource the WHQS work to our sheltered housing was developed and tenders invited. The cost of providing this service was considered excessive and a decision was made not to progress with the process in favour of using an alternative business model that focused upon the use of the in-house team. This will result in financial savings over the option to outsource this area of work and when tenants were consulted, they were very supportive of the in-house team and indicated a preference for this approach.
- 4.30 It is however accepted that on occasions very few tenders were received for the north and east areas. As part of the review to ensure value for money, tenders are evaluated and if submitted costs are considered to be high, then contracts are considered for re-tendering. However costs will depend on the construction market, with increased demand in this sector leading to increased costs, so value for money must be considered based on market conditions at the time.

R1(ii)(b) By March 2018, provide clear and transparent information to members and tenants about the current position of the programme and a commitment to stakeholders with accurate projected completion dates;

R1(ii)(c) By March 2018 to secure the resources needed to deliver the programme by 2020;

R1(iii) Contain clear and measurable milestones and relevant performance measures for delivering the programme up to 2020 and

R1(iv) set out the programme management, governance and accountability responsibilities and arrangements so that urgent remedial action can be taken if further slippage occurs and those tasked with delivering the programme can be held to account at appropriate decision making levels

- 4.31 Officers have considered the information provided to members and tenants and accept the manner in which information is presented can be improved. As part of the exercise, officers have reviewed information contained within the programme and have already made amendments to ensure it is clear, accurate and meaningful for all stakeholders.
- 4.32 Performance measures will be reassessed based upon improved surveying information and procurement activity and this will be communicated to all stakeholders in a more clear and meaningful way. The revised performance information will be shared and consulted with tenant representatives of the Repairs and Improvements Group to gain feedback on the level of information being presented and to ascertain if it is easily understood and measures what actually matters (draft proposals are attached at Appendix 3). Up to date performance information is appended to this report (Appendix 4) which provides information on the overall programme position and demonstrates that we remain on target to deliver the programme by 2020.
- 4.33 There are already significant programme management, governance and accountability responsibilities defined, through the WHQS Board, the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG), the Repairs and Improvement Group (R&I), Corporate Management Team (CMT), Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee (P&R) and Cabinet. The terms of reference of each of these groups will be reviewed to ensure that the respective groups are clear of their remit and purpose as well as ensuring that any urgent decision making required can be taken at the appropriate level.
- 4.34 Information contained within reports has also been reviewed to ensure they are presented in a clear and transparent way and contain all relevant details so that the current position of the overall programme is easily communicated to all stakeholders.
- 4.35 A resource plan was already being progressed and implemented by officers prior to the WAO Review and significant progress has already been made in this regard. This includes the recruitment of internal resources as well as increasing the availability of external resources.
- 4.36 In relation to internal resources a business case has been approved by Corporate Management Team (CMT) to appoint additional internal resources following the decision to undertake the work to our sheltered housing schemes by utilising our in-house workforce.

This includes the appointments of an additional Project Manager, Surveyors, Clerk of Works, Tenant Liaison Officer and trade operatives.

- 4.37 A 'blanket' business case to appoint additional staff and operational resources had been approved prior to the WAO Review and is being utilised to recruit additional resources as and when required. In relation to the appointment of additional contractors, the DPS arrangement was being implemented during the review and is now fully operational and working successfully.
- 4.38 As mentioned previously, a new DPS has been put in place not just to provide external contractor support to deliver the external works in the lower Rhymney Valley, but to also act as a contingency to provide support for any internal or external works throughout the county borough. This arrangement has been operational since April, 2017 and has already proved to be very successful with 11 contracts having been awarded.
- 4.39 Unfortunately since the WAO review the contractor delivering the internal works in the Lower Rhymney Valley area has ceased trading and alternative arrangements have been put in place. The in-house workforce will now be responsible for the majority of work in this area, but they will also be supported by external contractors with smaller packages of work being issued via the DPS. This demonstrates the flexibility in the programme offered through the various contractual arrangements and the in-house workforce that is in place.

Recommendation 2

- 4.40 Assure itself that it is meeting its statutory landlord responsibilities by ensuring that:-
- *All properties have a valid gas safety certificate in place, or are having the Council's non-compliance arrangements applied to them fully and,*
 - *Arrangements for undertaking asbestos surveys and recording the results of these surveys, is robust.*

Officers' Comments

- 4.36 At the time of the WAO review 98% of the Council's properties had a valid gas safety certificate, which equated to 221 tenanted properties not having a current gas certificate. All 221 properties were being progressed via the "no access" process. The reason for this shortfall is due to access issues and whilst the Council had access procedures in place which are being utilised, it is accepted that these procedures were prolonged and could take a number of months to either gain access or to take the case to court to obtain a possession order.
- 4.41 In order to improve performance with the aim of achieving full compliance, the no access procedure has already been reviewed and now includes the introduction of charges to tenants if they fail to provide access when an appointment has been made. Continued "no access" will then result in a "Notice of Seeking Possession" being issued to the tenant. If access is still not provided, then arrangements will be made to force entry, although this will only be used as a last resort. Following the implementation of the revised no access procedure, performance has increased to 99% (81 properties outstanding) and 20 forced entries have been undertaken.
- 4.42 In relation to asbestos surveys, officers have undertaken a full review of the process to ensure that accurate data is being recorded in a timely manner and the information made available to all stakeholders via a central IT database. To support this area of work the appointment of a dedicated additional technical officer is being progressed.
- 4.43 This review will also aim to improve the integration of services and information sharing to avoid any duplication and ineffective use of resources between the WHQS delivery team and the Housing Repair Operations team. It should be noted that it is already a requirement that contractors cannot commence work on any property unless they are in receipt of an appropriate asbestos survey.

Recommendation 3

- 4.44 *Ensure it has sufficient project management capacity to deliver the Council's WHQS programme effectively by 2020.*

Officers' Comments

- 4.45 In order to assist with the project management of such a major investment programme, the use of resources is being maximised through improved integration within Caerphilly Homes following changes in the management structure last year and by also utilising the services of other departments within the Council, including Building Consultancy, Grounds Maintenance, Highways Operations Group and Network Contracting Services.
- 4.46 As mentioned above, a business case has previously been approved which enables officers to proceed with the recruitment of additional resources without delay, either directly or via a recruitment agency. This allows resources to be brought into the programme as and when required to meet contractual demands, being mindful that post 2020, it is likely that resource levels will need to reduce.
- 4.47 The WHQS programme is overseen by the Corporate Director Communities with the Chief Housing Officer as the lead Head of Service, who is supported by a WHQS Programme Manager. This management structure is supported by a multi-disciplined WHQS and Caerphilly Homes staff structure. In order to maximise the use of skills and capacity across both teams, a restructure is already being developed with the aim of ensuring that sufficient capacity is in place to deliver the WHQS programme by 2020 and this will be further informed by the review of our systems.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The WAO have summarised their opinion of the Council's approach to delivering WHQS as:
- "The majority of tenants' homes remain below the WHQS due to longstanding, inefficient and ineffective programme management and the Council is unlikely to achieve the standard by 2020."*
- 5.2 Officers accept further improvements need to be made and agree with the recommendations set out by WAO. These identified improvements are being delivered in accordance with the action plan detailed in Appendix 5. It is accepted that the recommendations were following the review during March/April 2017, however at that point in time significant changes were already in the process of being made and this is demonstrated within the action plan with many tasks already completed.
- 5.3 Officers, therefore, do not agree with the overall conclusion drawn as it is felt that this statement does not offer a fair assessment of the current position of the programme. The following information is offered to support this view:

"Inefficient"

- i) The "internal/external" component approach to delivering the programme was agreed as the preferred approach following full consultation and agreement with tenants, CHTG, Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council. Furthermore, this approach is used routinely by other registered social landlords and local housing authorities and WG support this approach as a cost effective approach to delivery. Furthermore on the insistence of the Leader internal and external completions will continue to be reported separately as this has proved invaluable in pinpointing weekly instances of fluctuations in contractors' performance.

- ii) The WAO highlights that only 2.5% of tenants' homes fully met the WHQS standard. The internal/external approach taken to date has resulted with 65% (7,033) of internal works completed and 24% (2,602) external works completed. On the basis of work undertaken to date 45% of the programme has been completed. It is expected that as the number of external and internal completed works align the number of properties which fully meet the standard will increase significantly, with all properties programmed for completion by 2020.
- iii) We are able to demonstrate that the programme is providing value for money. Value for money is not measured through cost alone, tenant satisfaction rates have remained at 90% throughout the duration of the programme to date. Staff are fully committed to programme delivery. The Council's Caerphilly Homes team was awarded UK wide recognition in 2016, as "Best Housing Team" by the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE).

"Ineffective"

- (iv) Whilst a full survey of the properties was not undertaken at the beginning of the programme, a sample survey was undertaken and this has since been supported with an individual property detailed survey, which is used to inform the works required, programming and financial profiling. By March 2018, 90% of tenant properties would have been surveyed and 70% had been completed at the time of the review. This completed data has been used to further improve the cost/budget plan that was originally provided from the sample survey, and using this accurate data, we remain still within the overall financial envelope for the overall programme, whilst acknowledging this has increased our projected financial profile by £10M. The programme therefore remains financially viable.
- (v) Tenant satisfaction survey results show for internal works for the whole contract to date, 89% of tenants were very satisfied or satisfied, 5% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 6% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.
- (vi) The work to date has transformed people's lives by not only transforming their homes, but by also ensuring that the improvements meet the individual needs of the household. This has resulted in significant adaptations being undertaken to properties, including some work being carried out to the Royal National Institute of the Blind (R.N.I.B.) standard. Insulation and new heating work has also assisted in addressing fuel poverty, and considerable "community benefits" have also been delivered.

"Unlikely to achieve WHQS by 2020"

- (vii) Based on our current position and anticipated projections, 75% of internal works are expected to be completed by March 2018 and 40% of our external works. By March 2019, 94% of internal works are expected to be completed and 80% of external works. In relation to internal works specifically there are contingency arrangements in place to allow cessation of contractor involvement with remaining work available during 2019 for the in house workforce. There is, therefore, a plan and resources in place to complete the programme by 2020.
- vii) Whilst we accept that completion of the programme by 2020 is challenging, officers consider that the measures put in place has resulted in a significantly increased and focused rate of completions and officers are confident that the programme will be completed by 2020.

6. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 6.1 The report outlines the contribution made towards the Well-being Goals as set out in the Links to Strategy section above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that our processes have been developed in collaboration with Welsh Government and the local authority's housing partners, taking a long term approach to the development needs of the county borough. The programme itself assists the prevention agenda being delivered by our Homelessness Team and the affordable housing programme delivery plan integrates the work of the local authority alongside the work of the Housing Associations who themselves have similar aims.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report is for information purposes so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The report reflects any views of the consultees.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 Cabinet is asked to:-
- 11.2 Consider and comment upon the content of the WAO report.
- 11.3 Note and approve the officers' responses to the WAO proposals for improvement.

12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 To ensure that Cabinet is aware of the review work undertaken by the WAO and the resultant findings, conclusion and proposals for improvement.

13 STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Wales Audit Office Review of the WHQS Delivery Programme June 2017
Appendix 2 – CCBC WHQS Programme
Appendix 3 – WHQS Scorecard Draft
Appendix 4 – WHQS Performance Information
Appendix 5 – CCBC WHQS Action Plan

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
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The team who delivered the work comprised Sara-Jane Byrne, Allison Rees, Ron Price, Nick Selwyn and Non Jenkins under the direction of Huw Rees.

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Summary report

The majority of tenants' homes remain below the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) due to longstanding inefficient and ineffective programme management and the Council is unlikely to achieve the Standard by 2020

- 1 In 2001, Welsh Government set out its long-term vision for housing in Wales entitled Better Homes for People in Wales. The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is the Welsh Government standard of housing quality. The WHQS was first introduced in 2002 and aims to ensure that all dwellings are of good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future residents. The Welsh Government set a target for all social landlords to improve their housing stock to meet the WHQS as soon as possible, but in any event by 2020.
- 2 To achieve the standard, all social landlords are expected to:
 - have up-to-date information on the condition of their stock gathered via a rolling programme of stock condition surveys; and
 - work to a comprehensive strategy for planned maintenance and improvement based on this information and taking into account the views and aspirations of its tenants, with the aim of keeping all homes in compliance, as far as practicable, with the standard.
- 3 The WHQS measures 42 individual elements within the following seven categories:
 - In a good state of repair
 - Safe and secure
 - Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated
 - Contain up-to-date kitchens and bathrooms
 - Well managed (for rented housing)
 - Located in attractive and safe environments
 - As far as possible suit the specific requirements of the household (eg specific disabilities)
- 4 In 2012, Caerphilly County Borough Council's (the Council) tenants voted to keep the Council as their housing landlord. The Council was required by the Welsh Government, therefore, to ensure its housing stock met the WHQS by 2020.
- 5 During March and April 2017, as part of our 2016-17 performance audit plan, we undertook a review of the Council's arrangements to deliver the WHQS by 2020. We sought to answer the question: does the Council have effective arrangements in place to enable it to meet the WHQS by 2020?
- 6 We concluded that **the majority of tenants' homes remain below the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) due to longstanding inefficient and**

ineffective programme management and the Council is unlikely to achieve the Standard by 2020. We came to this conclusion because:

- the majority of tenants' homes remain below the WHQS and the Council is making insufficient progress to achieve the Standard by 2020;
- there are weaknesses in the Council's arrangements to meet its statutory landlord responsibilities;
- the Council has not met all the minimum requirements of the Welsh Government's WHQS policy because it lacks a comprehensive programme that sets out to stakeholders how it will meet the Standard by 2020;
- the Council does not have adequate and up-to-date stock condition information to enable it to shape its housing investment programme;
- the Council has a range of mechanisms to engage with tenants about WHQS but these are ineffective and are not being used to shape planning and drive performance;
- the Council is unable to ensure that it is achieving value for money in delivering its WHQS works; and
- arrangements to oversee, challenge, monitor and scrutinise the progress of the WHQS programme are weak and fail to provide sufficient oversight of the totality of the programme.

Recommendations

- 7 To assist the Council in making the required improvement we have set out some recommendations in the table below. The Council is required by the Local Government Measure to prepare a statement of any action that it proposes to take as a result of this report, and its proposed timetable for taking that action. This must be prepared within 30 days of receipt of this report.

Exhibit 1: Recommendations on action to achieve the WHQS by 2020

Recommendations	
The Council should take urgent action to achieve WHQS by 2020. It should:	
R1	<p>By September 2017, develop a comprehensive, overarching, financial and operational programme setting out how the Council will achieve WHQS by 2020. This programme should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• establish the full scope of investment needed in the Council's housing stock based on accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date stock condition information;• set out how the Council, by March 2018, will:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– review its procurement arrangements to ensure value for money;– provide clear and transparent information to members and tenants about the current position of the programme and a commitment to stakeholders with accurate projected completion dates; and– secure the resources needed to deliver the programme by 2020.• contain clear and measurable milestones and relevant performance measures for delivering the programme up to 2020; and• set out the programme management, governance and accountability responsibilities and arrangements so that urgent remedial action can be taken if further slippage occurs and those tasked with delivering the programme can be held to account at appropriate decision making levels.
R2	<p>Assure itself that it is meeting its statutory landlord responsibilities by ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• all properties have a valid gas safety certificate in place, or are having the Council's non-compliance arrangements applied to them fully; and• arrangements for undertaking asbestos surveys and recording the results of these surveys are robust.
R3	<p>Ensure it has sufficient project management capacity to deliver the Council's WHQS programme effectively by 2020.</p>

Detailed report

The majority of tenants' homes remain below the WHQS and the Council is making insufficient progress to achieve the Standard by 2020

- 8 In line with the approach agreed by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group in September 2012, the Council adopted a community based approach whereby internal and external works are undertaken concurrently in different communities. The aim is for all housing communities to benefit from the WHQS works rather than focusing on completing all WHQS works in one community at a time. The work is split between the Council's in-house work force and contractors and, with the exception of sheltered housing, there are separate sequences for internal and external works.
- 9 In February 2017, the Council reported to its Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee that as at December 2016, it had completed the internal works on 1,567 houses against an annual target of 1,692 (93%). The Council also reported that it had completed external works on 584 houses against an annual target of 1,992 (28%). For both internal and external works, this is an improvement on its 2015-16 end-of-year performance when the Council completed internal works to 1415 properties and external works to 203 properties.
- 10 The Council acknowledged that there was a slight underachievement in its 2016-17 quarter three performance for completing internal works and that external works completions were lagging well behind target.
- 11 Therefore, it is evident that the Council's approach has not been implemented as intended and internal works are being completed prior to external works in most cases. Interviewees informed us that this approach has posed some issues for the Council. For instance, we were informed of examples where contractors were arriving at properties to install kitchens but were unable to do this due to problems with damp. The Council informs us that this only relates to approximately 110 houses but the Council has not yet completed its surveys to fully understand the extent of external works required.
- 12 The Council tells us that as at May 2017, it has completed the internal works on 5,500 properties (50%) and external works on 1,300 properties (12%). However, the Council has not reported publicly this cumulative performance for internal and external completions since the start of the programme. The Council has not yet reported its 2016-17 end-of-year performance. The Council must complete both the internal and external works to meet the WHQS.
- 13 In our national report on progress in delivering the WHQS, published in January 2012, we reported that the Council had estimated that 10% of its housing stock would meet the WHQS by 31 March 2013, with 20% by 31 March 2017 and 100% compliance by 31 March 2020.

- 14 However, the Council did not start the WHQS works on its properties until 2015. As at March 2016, after the WHQS programme had been running for two years, the Council declared to Statistics for Wales¹ that only 252 out of its 10,852 properties (2.53%) were fully compliant with WHQS, meaning that 97% of properties were not yet up to the required standard.
- 15 **Exhibit 2** below also shows that the Council's performance compares poorly with other Welsh Councils in meeting the WHQS.

Exhibit 2: Welsh Housing Stock owning councils' WHQS comparative performance as at 31 March 2016

The following table illustrates the comparative situation as at 31 March 2016 for Welsh Housing stock owning Councils².

Council	Housing stock at 31 March 2016	Fully WHQS compliant as at 31 March 2016	Compliant stock subject to acceptable fails as at 31 March 2016	Non-compliant stock at 31 March 2016	Percentage of compliant stock at 31 March 2016
Caerphilly	10,852	252	22	10,578	2.53
Isle of Anglesey	3,780	2,461	1,319	0	100
Denbighshire	3,411	3,286	125	0	100
Flintshire	7,176	24	0	7,152	0.34
Wrexham	11,226	2,170	534	8,522	24.1
Powys	5,348	4,690	0	658	87.7
Pembrokeshire	5,659	4,986	673	0	100
Carmarthenshire	9,003	8,014	989	0	100
Swansea	13,493	377	2,057	11,059	18.04
Vale of Glamorgan	3,881	1,614	148	2,119	45.41
Cardiff	13,452	10,088	3,364	0	100
Total Local Authorities	87,281	37,962	9,231	40,088	54.08

¹ Statistics for Wales (Stats Wales) is a free-to-use service that allows you to view, manipulate, create and download tables from Welsh data.

² Source: Statistics for Wales: **Statistical first release: Welsh Housing Quality Standards**: 6 October 2016: SFR 135/2016.

- 16 During our fieldwork in March and April 2017, officers informed us that there was little dialogue between the Council's WHQS and the Housing Repair Operations teams in the first two years of the Council's WHQS programme. More recently, the Council has integrated the management of the WHQS and Housing Operations teams. Housing teams outside the WHQS Delivery Team are now contributing to the delivery of the programme. For example, the Council informs us that its Building Consultancy team are undertaking feasibility studies to some of the Council's sheltered housing schemes. Members and officers informed us that they felt the integration of the housing teams was having a positive impact on progress. However, the Council's overall performance in meeting the WHQS is such that tenants are not yet receiving the tangible benefits from the integration of the housing teams.
- 17 As at 13 April 2017, the Council's Keystone asset management system shows only 33 properties currently meeting the WHQS for external WHQS elements, and 3,730 properties currently meeting the WHQS for internal WHQS elements. The Council acknowledges that there is a delay in updating WHQS completion data into Keystone and that officers use other methods to understand performance. However, at the time of our fieldwork during March and April 2017, members and officers were unable to tell us how many properties currently meet WHQS and evidence how they were going to ensure the significant backlog of work to achieve WHQS by 2020 was going to be addressed.
- 18 As a result of repeated slippage in delivering the Council's planned schedule of works, the Council has reprofiled its WHQS programme a number of times, most recently in February 2017. We accept that in a programme of this size, there will be a need to review and update the level of works required but the Council's progress continues to fall behind its own schedule, particularly for its external works.
- 19 The Council has recently implemented a new contractual process, the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), to attract a wider cohort of contractors. The arrangement will provide contingency options borough-wide and cover both internal and external works. At the time of our fieldwork in March and April 2017, the Council still did not have a contractor in place to undertake the external works to tenants' homes in the Lower Rhymney Valley. The Council hopes that the recent introduction of the DPS will help resolve this issue.
- 20 The Council has a number of sheltered housing schemes that suffer from low demand due to their design and location. The Council has taken six schemes out of the WHQS programme as it has identified these for possible remodelling as they are not fit for purpose. Feasibility studies are ongoing to establish if the schemes could be improved, but the Council has yet to make a decision on these. The Council has incorporated the remaining sheltered housing schemes into its WHQS programme.
- 21 We also found that the Council's arrangements to engage with leaseholders are underdeveloped. The Council has 419 leasehold properties. The Council no longer has a leaseholders' forum. The Council informed us that this was due to forum

members not fully engaging in the forum. In February 2017, members of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group suggested that such a forum should be set up and officers confirmed that this could be explored.

- 22 The Council feels that it has appropriate procedures in place for liaising with leaseholders but during our fieldwork in March and April 2017, interviewees informed us these procedures were not always being followed resulting in tenants subsidising leaseholders for works being carried out. Arrangements to schedule and complete WHQS works to leasehold properties, for example works to common roofs, and external property elements, are unclear. This could potentially hold up the delivery of WHQS work to other Council properties unless resolved. The Council recognises that its approach to leasehold properties is not captured in an integrated strategy. We believe this is key to ensure that improvements to leasehold properties are undertaken effectively.
- 23 The Council set aside £10.6 million to deliver the requirements set out in Part 6 of the WHQS to ensure that 'all dwellings should be located in an environment to which residents can relate and in which they can be proud to live'. This is a key aspect of the Council's wellbeing objective 'Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities'. The Council's report to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in February 2017 states that over 100 small local schemes have been approved and it is in the process of consulting tenants to identify further schemes. However, the Council acknowledges that it has been slow to deliver these improvements. Work at Lansbury Park, which includes some hard and soft landscaping, a community garden and removal of a footbridge, has recently started.

There are weaknesses in the Council's arrangements to meet its statutory landlord responsibilities

- 24 At the time of our fieldwork in March and April 2017, there were over 400 Council properties, which did not have a valid CP12 gas safety certificate. As at 28 April 2017, the Council has improved this position as just over 98% of the Council's properties have a valid CP12 gas safety certificate, meaning that 221 tenanted properties do not.
- 25 The Council has procedures in place to address issues of non-access but at the time of our fieldwork in March and April 2017, we were concerned that there were delays in taking action in accordance with these procedures. As at 28 April 2017, there were 12 properties where gas safety checks were over six months overdue, with three of these being more than a year overdue. The Council needs to assure itself and its tenants that it is taking all reasonable steps to meet the requirements of The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and associated statutory landlord responsibilities.

- 26 Given that we have previously raised concerns about the Council's gas servicing performance, this long-standing issue is of serious concern. In 2008-09 we undertook a review of the Council's voids and concluded that the Council's systems for managing gas servicing had some significant weaknesses and we made six related recommendations³. Our recent review suggests these issues have still not been fully resolved.
- 27 The Council has decided to service its solid fuel appliances twice per year, although it only has a legal responsibility to provide an annual service. We understand the Council has recently appointed new contractors to undertake its gas service testing and that this has impacted upon performance as the new contractors become familiar with the Council's procedures.
- 28 We also found that the Council's arrangements for undertaking and recording of asbestos surveys of its housing stock are flawed. Some properties have been surveyed more than once due to inadequate recording of information. This is not only inefficient but also dangerous as there is a risk properties are not being surveyed for asbestos and contractors undertaking works in properties without understanding if asbestos exists. This poses significant health risks for contractors and tenants and underlines the need for up to date and accurate stock condition information.

The Council has not met all the minimum requirements of the Welsh Government's WHQS policy because it lacks a comprehensive programme that sets out to stakeholders how it will meet the Standard by 2020

- 29 Since the tenants' vote in 2012, the Council has undertaken very limited works during the first two years, due in part to it facing procurement challenges, when getting contracts in place took longer than expected. The Council's senior management informed us that the Council did not commence WHQS works on its properties until 2015.
- 30 Achieving the WHQS is a key priority for the Council with a budget of about £220 million. The Council's senior management feel it has taken steps to accelerate the programme during the last two years, including making management changes and integrating the Council's WHQS and housing maintenance teams.

³ Our report is available on the Council's [website](#):

- 31 With two and a half years to go, the Council is confident it will meet the WHQS by 2020. We do not share this view. The Council has not met the key WHQS milestones set by the Welsh Government⁴:
- the Council lacks accurate stock condition survey data to base investment decisions on; and
 - the Council has not finalised its programme for investment to achieve the WHQS based on accurate stock condition information.
- 32 The Council makes reference to its Local Housing Strategy in its WHQS related reports but this strategy was developed in 2008 and expired in 2013. The Council has a WHQS investment strategy and business plan. There are also regular reports setting out the reprofiled programme of works. However, because of the fragmented nature of these documents, we do not believe that they provide a strategic, comprehensive and integrated approach setting out clearly to tenants, councillors, officers and other stakeholders how it will meet the WHQS by 2020. The Council's approach has been reactive and tactical rather than planned and strategic. This is evident by the frequent reprofiling of the WHQS programme due to ongoing slippages.
- 33 The lack of a comprehensive programme and strategic approach, which is collectively owned by Members and officers, means that common integrated arrangements and policies for dealing with empty void properties, responsive and planned maintenance, housing allocations, pre-inspections of forthcoming empty properties, actions to deal with non-traditional house types and other key housing issues are not well defined.
- 34 We believe that the Council would benefit from an integrated programme plan which sets out:
- all the key activities which contribute to meeting the WHQS and the wider outcomes the Council is aiming to achieve. This would help the Council consider the relationships and dependencies between all these activities in an integrated way.
 - clear expectations for stakeholders including accurate timescales for when tenants can expect work to be undertaken on their homes.
 - the key milestones for delivery and required resources and inputs to do this.
 - how the Council will monitor and control the programme, including how the Council will monitor its progress in achieving its desired objectives and outcomes (in line with Council's wellbeing objective).
 - the full level of investment needed based on up to date, accurate and comprehensive stock condition information.

⁴ Welsh Government and Housemark Cymru, [The Welsh Housing Quality Standard, Revised Guidance for Social Landlords on Interpretation and Achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard](#), July 2008

- 35 It is important that stakeholders, including members and tenants, understand and own the plan.
- 36 During our fieldwork in March and April 2017, members of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group expressed considerable frustration about the delivery of the WHQS programme and raised concerns about the quality of some of the works undertaken.

The Council does not have adequate and up-to-date stock condition information to enable it to shape its housing investment programme

- 37 The Council has spent £110 million from 2012-13 to 2016-17 in delivering its WHQS programme yet it still does not have a comprehensive understanding of the condition of its housing stock. This significantly impacts on the Council's ability to plan, procure and give accurate programmes of work to contractors and the Council's internal Housing Repair Operation to deliver WHQS works effectively.
- 38 The Council commissioned a stock condition survey in 2008 to inform its housing ballot. The survey only covered a 15% sample of the Council's housing stock. The Council started the WHQS programme without knowing accurately the extent of non-compliance with the WHQS in its housing stock.
- 39 During our interviews, members and officers acknowledged that the 2008 survey information is insufficient and out of date but it is still using this to cost and direct WHQS works. Our fieldwork in March and April 2017, found that the Council had been aware of this concern for some time. Tenant representatives have raised frustrations about this, including to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in February 2017. In 2016, the Council's WHQS Board decided against undertaking a new stock condition survey. We have not seen evidence that there was a robust assessment of the costs, practicalities, impact and benefits to this decision to not undertake a new survey. We have not seen evidence that this issue was considered by Council or Cabinet.
- 40 In the past 12 months, the Council's in-house Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) team has been undertaking surveys on internal WHQS works of the Council's housing stock in order to provide more accurate information to help base future work projections on actual costs. The Council is also undertaking surveys to better understand the level of external works needed. The Council has informed us that as at June 2017, it has completed surveys for approximately 75% of internal works and 50% of the external works. It is aiming to have a 100% stock condition survey by 2019.
- 41 Given that the Council only has 2.5 years left to meet WHQS, it is concerning that it did not undertake these surveys earlier. It underlines our view that the Council lacks a strategic approach to managing the WHQS programme.

- 42 The Council feels that the most recent survey work together with the condition survey undertaken in 2008 provides them with reliable estimates to plan and undertake the necessary WHQS works. However, we found that the information from the Council's surveys is not always being recorded accurately and in a timely way on the Council's housing management system, Keystone.
- 43 At the time of our fieldwork in March and April 2017, the Council was unable to tell us how many of the Council's 10,852 properties have been surveyed by its in-house team, because of delays in loading information into Keystone. The Council's Keystone asset and contract management system does not provide fully accurate information to enable the Council to keep track of progress on the WHQS programme in a timely way, and there are gaps in recording information.

The Council has a range of mechanisms to engage with tenants about WHQS but these are ineffective and are not being used to shape planning or drive performance

- 44 The Council has a tenant communication strategy and a range of ways to engage with tenants and their representatives.
- 45 The Council has 14 Tenant Liaison Officers (TLOs), who are seen by officers and members as a valuable resource for the WHQS programme. It is positive that these officers have been trained on areas such as safeguarding, mental health and domestic abuse. The TLOs can advise tenants on wider issues and they provide the link across the Council and with partner agencies to support tenants. Two of the 14 TLOs provide specific support to tenants receiving work as part of the Council's sheltered housing programme. In addition to the 14 TLOs, the Council has two Specialist TLOs who are qualified Occupational Therapists.
- 46 The primary role of the TLO is to act as the interface between tenants and the in-house team or contractor undertaking the improvement works and to support the tenants whilst the work is underway. TLOs provide face-to-face contact with tenants and individual letters are sent to properties to inform tenants of forthcoming improvement works. The Council also informs us that every tenant receives a visit from the relevant TLO before the work starts.
- 47 The Council's 2016-17 customer satisfaction survey shows that 92% of respondents acknowledged that a TLO visited their home to discuss the work that would be undertaken. However, the Council's satisfaction survey only measures the satisfaction of those tenants who have received works to their homes. The Council does not survey those tenants who were due to receive works, but did not.
- 48 Tenants' representatives expressed some dissatisfaction with the TLOs to us during our fieldwork in March and April 2017, suggesting that they were not always available when works were underway. Councillors and tenants have also

expressed concern about the quality of improvement works undertaken, for example, at meetings of the WHQS Board and Caerphilly Homes Task Group.

- 49 The Council would benefit from reviewing its methods of measuring customer satisfaction so that it can capture feedback raised elsewhere. Given that the TLOs are intended to be the interface between the contractor and the tenant, the issues around the quality of works undertaken suggests that there is scope to improve the effectiveness of the TLOs.
- 50 Other mechanisms the Council has available to engage tenants include the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG), which consists of seven councillors and seven tenants. Whilst this is not a decision making group it can make recommendations to the Council. All Council reports relating to WHQS go through the CHTG including scrutiny reports, monthly WHQS board reports and WHQS quarterly monitoring reports. It was positive to observe tenants' representatives having the opportunity to share their views with the Council's Policy and Resources Scrutiny committee in February 2017. However, despite the tenants' representatives stating that the WHQS programme was having a detrimental rather than transformational impact on people's lives, the Scrutiny Committee did not sufficiently consider the concerns raised by the tenants' representatives at the meeting about elements of the programme.
- 51 One of the Council's 2017-18 wellbeing objectives is investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities, specifically 'to take steps to ensure the physical standard and condition of our housing stock, be improved and maintained to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), helping to improve the quality of life for the people who live in those homes'. This has been one of the Council's improvement objectives for a number of years. 'Investing in our council homes and their communities to transform lives. Rebuilding and refurbishing Council homes so they meet the Welsh Housing Quality standard by 2020' is one of the Council's corporate priorities.
- 52 However, it is evident that tenants and their representatives are frustrated with the Council's progress in delivering the necessary improvement works to their homes. They have raised their concerns about this and the quality of works undertaken with members and officers, but these are not always fully reflected in reports. For example, the report to the Council's Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in February 2017 states that 'customer satisfaction levels remain high'. This differs from the views of tenant members of the CHTG which expressed considerable concern to us about the quality of work being completed by the external contractors. Our review of a sample of the minutes of the meetings of the WHQS Board shows that this also differs from the information reported to the WHQS Board by senior members. As stated in paragraph 48, the way the Council measures tenant satisfaction is flawed. It only measures the satisfaction of those tenants who have just received works to their homes. It does not include those who were due to have works undertaken but did not.

- 53 The Council produces a tenants' newsletter twice a year. However, the information the Council has provided to tenants about the expected completion dates of works within its newsletters has been misleading and unhelpful. For example, the Council's summer 2016 tenants' newsletter included a schedule of works where the projected completion dates were 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 with no explanation of why they did not happen, or an indication of when the works would now be completed. Tenants' representatives are not aware of the Council's plans for delivering the WHQS and the Council's frequent changes to the programme have left them disillusioned. Tenants are largely unaware of when their homes will be brought up to an acceptable standard.
- 54 In addition to the newsletters, the Council uses other forms of media to share information about WHQS, including the Council's Newsline, community roadshows and social media. It has run a number of borough-wide and community events, where there are boards which display the programme timeline, and the public have the opportunity to discuss it with officers. The Council often runs these events in partnership with other agencies, such as Gwent Police, Communities First and the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO).
- 55 The Council is also about to review its tenant communications strategy and plans to hold a session with tenants to understand what information they want from the Council.

The Council is unable to ensure that it is achieving value for money in delivering its WHQS works

- 56 The Council has a budget of approximately £220 million to meet the WHQS. From 2012-13 to 2016-17 it has spent nearly £110 million in delivering the WHQS programme. As at the end of March 2016, only 2.53% of the Council's homes met the WHQS. As at 16 May 2017, the Council has not reported how many of its homes met the WHQS by the end of 2016-17 or been able to provide us with this information. We recognise that the Council has focused its attention on undertaking works to the internal elements of its properties to date, but the Council has yet to bring 10,578 properties up to the WHQS and has two and a half years remaining to do this.
- 57 As shown in [Exhibit 3](#) below, the Council has underspent against its annual WHQS budgets over the last four years. This suggests that tenants have continued living in housing that does not meet the WHQS, while the Council has been unable to deploy its resources to deliver an effective programme of improvements. In the last four years, the Council's underspends have ranged between 6% and 47%. For the financial year 2016-17, it underspent by 18.7% on WHQS investment programmes. Poor management and delivery of investment are continuing to hinder the Council achieving the WHQS by 2020. At the time of our fieldwork during March and April 2017, the Council still did not have any certainty about what elements of the

properties it needed to address until the survey of each property had been completed.

- 58 Although it has underspent, the Council has spent substantial financial resources on the WHQS programme to date without effective progress being made. Whilst the Council is making progress on completing the necessary internal works, progress on external works is significantly behind schedule. The Council believes that it can complete the external works by 2020 but according to the information the Council provided to Statistics Wales, as at March 2016 only 2.53 % of its homes are fully compliant with WHQS. As a consequence of uncertainty about what elements of properties needed addressing, resources were not used effectively during the first two years of the WHQS programme. For example, we were told by members we interviewed that 'roofs were replaced that didn't need it'.

Exhibit 3: Caerphilly County Borough Council's WHQS expenditure and budget over the past four years.

Financial year	Budget	Total expenditure	Underspend	Proportion underspent
2013-14	£15.553 m	£14.649 m	£0.903 m	6.1%
2014-15	£28.813 m	£15.344 m	£13.469 m	46.7%
2015-16	£36.29 m	£28.623 m	£7.657 m	21.1%
2016-17	£38.591 m	£31.4 m	£7.2 m	18.7%
Total	£119.247 m	£90.016 m	£29.2 m	24.5%

* In addition to the expenditure above, the Council spent £20 million in 2012-13 on WHQS.

- 59 The Council does not have a grasp of how much WHQS work costs or whether that represents value for money. The Council's reporting on value-for-money issues relating to WHQS has been very limited. The Council has allocated work to its Housing Repair Operation (HRO) without understanding the competitive aspects of the work, and in a situation where the HRO does not have basic information, for example, about the cost of materials that it purchases.
- 60 The Council entered into a single source supply arrangement for all materials in relation to Council-house maintenance and the WHQS programme in 2012. This arrangement has provided some benefits in terms of economies of scale, consistent product specification and quality, and enabled the Council to close its own stores and use the buildings for other purposes.
- 61 The Council undertook a benchmarking exercise of this arrangement in 2014, which resulted in price renegotiations. Internal Audit also undertook a review in May 2016 to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract and to establish whether in-house processes and procedures are adequate to ensure

that the correct benefits and liabilities of the supply arrangements are calculated and agreed.

- 62 The single source supply contract is a contract where a price list is used, which includes incentivisation in the form of a pain/gain mechanism. The prices as tendered become the target price for that period and the Supply Partner will be paid the defined cost of the goods and materials supplied. If the defined cost is less than the prices, the supply partner will be paid 30% and the Council 70%; this is in effect the gain. If the defined cost exceeds the target prices, the Supply Partner will contribute 30% towards the extra cost; this is in effect the pain.
- 63 Internal Audit concluded that the systems and procedures in place were, in the main, unsatisfactory and a number of control weaknesses existed. Internal Audit also found that the pain/gain aspect of the contract was providing money for the Council but not to the level expected, in part due to insufficient ordering of materials being undertaken in advance. We understand that the Council's response to the Internal Audit report explained that the contract was only open to the WHQS and HRO spending, so the Council could only order materials required by these two teams. Nevertheless, we believe this again supports our view that the Council lacks a strategic approach underpinned by robust stock condition information that would enable it to forward plan the level of works and materials needed in order to maximise the benefits of its contractual arrangements.
- 64 The Council has recently commissioned consultants to undertake a review of its single source supply arrangement.
- 65 Contract performance reports are provided periodically to the WHQS Board and the Board has called in contractors to discuss and challenge performance. The Council has been concerned about the progress and quality of works undertaken by one of its external contractors. The Council has explained to us that it previously had issues with the other contractors, but is confident that it has now addressed these.
- 66 The in-house team is now also responsible for delivering the WHQS works to the Council's sheltered housing schemes. Tenants have been positive about the quality of the works undertaken by the in-house team. The Council informs us that it decided to use its in-house team for its sheltered housing schemes following a comparison against the tendered works and considerations of other factors such as the vulnerability of its tenants. It is not clear if this constituted a formal competitive process to ensure that the use of the in-house team provides value for money. The Council also tells us that it had previously compared the costs and value of its in-house team against contractors but the Council has not provided us with the evidence to demonstrate that this was the case.
- 67 The lack of a strategic programme also suggests that the Council has not yet considered if the increasing use of its in-house team is sustainable or provides value for money.

68 The Council has undertaken workshops with local companies to help them understand the Council's procurement process so as to facilitate greater take-up/use of local contractors. As part of their community benefit clauses, the Council's contractors are also required to undertake six Meet the Buyer events during the course of the contract.

Arrangements to oversee, challenge, monitor and scrutinise the progress of the WHQS programme are weak and fail to provide sufficient oversight of the totality of the programme

- 69 The Council has a number of arrangements to oversee and challenge its progress in meeting WHQS. This includes the WHQS Board, Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG), a Tenants Council, Cabinet and scrutiny committees. However, these governance arrangements have not been fully effective and roles and responsibilities have become blurred. Both the WHQS Board and the CHTG have been focused on operational detail and there has been a lack of corporate overview of the WHQS programme. Because the Council felt these arrangements were sufficient, WHQS is not part of its Business Improvement Board arrangements set up in 2016 to provide corporate oversight of its major projects.
- 70 Performance management and reporting of the WHQS programme have been poor. WHQS performance and progress reports do not show progress of the WHQS programme in a clear and understandable way. Significant amounts of information are presented, but officers do not report progress against the programme as a whole to show the numbers of properties which meet the WHQS. Reports tend to focus on progress against the internal and external works and due to a number of 're-profiling' exercises the exact current position is difficult to identify. This hampers members' and tenants' ability to understand the true up-to-date picture and to challenge performance effectively.
- 71 Members are not providing sufficient leadership or challenge to the WHQS programme to ensure that tenants live in homes that are in line with the WHQS. Whilst members of the Policy and Review scrutiny committee did ask some relevant questions at the meeting in February 2017, for example, about accessing properties, they did not take the opportunity to rigorously challenge the Council's poor performance in meeting WHQS. A number of members thanked the officers for their hard work and improvement, despite acknowledging issues about quality and having listened to tenants' representatives express frustration.
- 72 Reasons for the lack of progress with achieving WHQS are not well understood or reported in a clear and transparent way. Officers have reported to members that one of the reasons for the slippage of the internal works programme is the inability to gain access to properties. However, the Council's data systems do not capture this information, and reports to Cabinet, the CHTG and the Policy and Resources

Scrutiny Committee do not quantify the extent of the problem or provide adequate reasons for what is being done to mitigate the issue. At the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in February 2017, councillors asked officers to provide this access to properties information so that they could understand the issue better and see what they could do as ward members to help address this. Officers did not have this information to provide to the members at the meeting. In their response to our draft report, officers stated that the issue of no access had not had any major impact on the Council's progress and relates to internal works only. Nevertheless, it is important that officers and councillors fully understand the reasons for no access so works can be planned and undertaken effectively.

- 73 The Council has set itself the objective that delivering WHQS works will 'transform people's lives'. In February 2017, officers provided a report to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the Council's progress in meeting its wellbeing objective WO5 – 'Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities'. The report emphasises that the Council's investment in its council houses was not just about delivering the WHQS but also to aspire to transform homes, lives and communities. The report highlights the employment opportunities that have been created through the inclusion of community benefit clauses in WHQS contracts. For example, the report states that as at December 2016, 68 permanent full-time opportunities with contractors and 83 full-time opportunities within the Council had been created, as well as the creation of 53 apprenticeships. The report also highlights other benefits that have been delivered.
- 74 However, the measures that the Council is using to monitor progress in achieving its 'Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities' wellbeing objective are primarily focused on delivering the WHQS rather than delivering wider benefits and outcomes to tenants and communities. The Council informs us that it has information to demonstrate that its work is having a positive impact on people's lives, such as case studies of tenants who have benefitted from adaptations. However, currently the Council is not reporting this to members and the public effectively.
- 75 The Council has lacked robust and effective programme management of its WHQS works. Primarily as a result of problems awarding contracts, the Council was slow to start its WHQS works and we feel the Council has been catching up with issues rather than taking a considered and strategic approach. It has spent £110 million to date on WHQS but it still has significant work to do to achieve WHQS by 2020. The Council is confident that it will complete the required internal works ahead of schedule but recognises there is a risk it may not complete the necessary external works. The Council tells us that it is working hard to take steps to mitigate this risk, but based on the Council's performance to date and the findings from our review, we are not assured that the Council will meet WHQS by 2020.
- 76 The Council has reduced its risk rating of failing to achieve WHQS by 2020 from 'red' to 'amber'. This is despite the Council's poor performance and the absence of a comprehensive strategic approach to address this. Given our findings, we feel this remains a significant risk for the Council.

- 77 We have concerns about the capacity of the directorate to manage the WHQS programme. WHQS now sits within the Directorate of Communities, which also covers other large priority service areas including waste and leisure. We understand teams are working hard to try to deliver WHQS but they do not have adequate direction and oversight to accelerate progress.
- 78 As the Council is aware, we have previously raised concerns about the Council's overview and management of its large priority programmes, including leisure. Our findings about WHQS have escalated these concerns.

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WHQS - Internal Works Programme

Appendix 2

Community Area	Number of Properties in Community	Internal Contract Name	Internal Contract Year	Contract Completed
ABERBARGOED LOWER	47	INT16C-UC14 ABERBARGOED LOWER - PHASE 1	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-UC15 ABERBARGOED LOWER - PHASE 2	2016/17	Y
ABERBARGOED MIDDLE	88	INT16C-UC12 ABERBARGOED MIDDLE - PHASE 1	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-UC13 ABERBARGOED MIDDLE - PHASE 2	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-UC16 ABERBARGOED MIDDLE - PHASE 3	2016/17	Y
ABERBARGOED UPPER	216	INT17C-UC26 COMMUN RD/HEATHFIELD WALK/TY LLWYD WAL	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC27 ROCKLEIGH AVE/SANNAN ST	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC28 THOMAS STREET	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC29 HIGHFIELD CRESCENT	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC30 COEDYMOETH ROAD	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC31 PANTYFID ROAD	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC32 LEWIS STREET	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC33 WILLIAM FORBES BUNGALOWS	2017/18	N
ABERCARN	37	Contract not yet created		N
ABERTRIDWR	133	INT16C-LC13 - ABERTRIDWR PHASE 1	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-LC14 - ABERTRIDWR PHASE 2	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-LC15 - ABERTRIDWR PHASE 3 - CEFN ILAN	2016/17	N
		INT16C-LC16 - ABERTRIDWR PHASE 4 - ILAN ROAD	2016/17	Y
		INT17D-L42 ABERTRIDWR CS MOP UP	2017/18	N
ABERTYSSWG	81	Contract not yet created		N
		INT17D-U35 ABERTYSSWG PHASE 1	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U36 GREENSWAY	2017/18	N
ARGOED	30	INT15C-EC18 GREENFIELD TCE/LWR JAMES ST/PENYLAN RD	2015/16	Y
BARGOED	155	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18D-U46 MOORLAND RD/HEOLDDU DR,GR,RD/PARK LODGE	2018/19	N
		INT18D-U47 HEOLDDU CRES/HEOLDDU AVE/MT PLEASANT	2018/19	N
		INT18D-U48 HEOLDDU GROVE	2018/19	N
		INT18D-U49 ST GWLADYS AVENUE	2018/19	N
BEDWAS	254	Contract not yet created		N
		INT17C-LC27 EAST AVE/GLEBE/NEWPORT RD/THE CRESCENT	2017/18	N
		INT17C-LC28 BRYNFEDW AVE / HILLSIDE TCE	2017/18	N
		INT17C-LC32 GREENACRE DRIVE	2017/18	N
		INT17D-L38 CONTRACT SERVICES REALLOCATION (FULL)	2017/18	N
		INT17D-L39 CONTRACT SERVICES REALLOCATION (PARTIAL)	2017/18	N
		INT18D-L43 BRYNAWEL / BRYNCANOL	2018/19	N
		INT18D-L44 BRYNHEOL	2018/19	N
BLACKWOOD	307	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18D-E41 APOLLO WAY/CROESO SQ/ATLEE RD	2018/19	N
		INT18D-E42 CHARTIST WAY/FROST PLACE	2018/19	N
		INT18D-E43 COEDCAE WALK/ALDERMAN/GIBBS/CEFN/DAVID	2018/19	N
		INT19C-EC80 MONTCLAIRE AVENUE	2019/20	N
		INT19C-EC81 ALBANY RD/CORONATION RD	2019/20	N
		INT19C-EC82 MORRISON ST/WOODBINE RD	2019/20	N
		INT19C-EC83 PARFITT PLACE	2019/20	N
		INT19C-EC84 WAUN LLWYN CRESCENT	2019/20	N
		INT19C-EC85 BLOOMFIELD/PLEASANT/SUNNYBANK/TREE/TYI	2019/20	N
		INT19C-EC86 LEWIS LEWIS AVENUE	2019/20	N
BRITANNIA	83	INT15C-EC19 BRITANNIA WALK/FARM VIEW	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC20 HODGES CRESCENT/ORCHARD LANE	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC21 SALWAY AVENUE	2015/16	Y
BRITHDIR	8	INT16C-UC17 BRISTOL TERRACE	2016/17	Y
BRYNCENYDD	32	INT14D-L15 BRYNCENYDD	2014/15	Y
CAERBRAGDY	24	INT17D-L35 CAERBRAGDY	2017/18	N
CASCADE	18	INT15D-U28 LLWYN ONN	2015/16	Y
CEFN FFOREST	349	Contract not yet created		N
		INT15C-EC04 DYLAN AVENUE/PWLLGLAS ROAD	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC05 ST MARGARETS AVE/FAIRVIEW	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC06 CEFN FFOREST AVE/TYNYCOED CRES	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC07 DAVIES ST/BRYNGOLEU ST/BRYN RD	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC08 GREENWOOD RD/WHEATLEY PL	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC09 ADDISON ST/BEVAN CRES	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC10 WAUNBORFA/TWYNYFFALD/OLD POLICE STATIO	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC11 BEDWELTY ROAD	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC12 PENCOED AVE - PART 1	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC13 PENCOED AVE - PART 2	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC14 PENCOED AVE - PART 3	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC15 PENYBRYN AVE/MARIANWEN ST	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC16 CENTRAL AVE/CRAIGLAS/DERWENDEG	2015/16	Y
CEFN HENGOED	165	INT15D-U23 HEOL Y FELIN/GELLIGAER RD/DERWENDEG AVE	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-U24 LANSBURY AVENUE 1-69	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-U25 LANSBURY AVENUE 75-143	2015/16	Y
		INT17D-U21 HENGOED H CL/HENG H DRV/WOODLAND/3 ELMS	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U22 BIRCH CRES/HENGOED AVE/HENGOED CRES	2017/18	N
CHURCHILL PARK	178	Contract not yet created		N
		INT16C-LC20 - CHURCHILL PARK - PHASE 1	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-LC21 - CHURCHILL PARK - PHASE 2	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-LC22 - CHURCHILL PARK - PHASE 3	2016/17	Y

		INT16C-LC23 - CHURCHILL PARK - PHASE 4	2016/17	Y
CLAUDE ROAD	70	INT17D-L40 CLAUDE ROAD - PHASE 1 - 2 STOREY	2017/18	N
		INT17D-L41 CLAUDE ROAD - PHASE 2 - 3 STOREY	2017/18	N
CROESPENMAEN	62	Contract not yet created		N
		INT17C-EC54 CROESPENMAEN	2017/18	N
CROSSKEYS	148	Contract not yet created		N
		INT17C-EC45 CROSSKEYS PHASE 1	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC46 CROSSKEYS PHASE 2	2017/18	N
CWMCARN	104	INT17C-EC47 ABERCARN FACH	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC48 GEORGE ST / TRIBUTE AVE	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC49 NANTCARN ROAD	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC50 EDWARDSVILLE	2017/18	N
DERI	28	INT13D-U08 YSGWYDDGWYN	2013/14	N
		INT16C-UC17 BRISTOL TERRACE	2016/17	Y
FAIRVIEW	31	INT15C-EC22 ANEURIN AVE/EDWARD ST/FLORAL AVE	2015/16	Y
FLEUR-DE-LYS	46	INT15C-EC23 BEILI G/COUNDLEY/SCHOOL ST/SUMMERFIELD	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC24 FRANCIS ST/WARNE ST/GWENT CT/HAFOD CL	2015/16	Y
FOCHR IW	154	INT18D-U50 GLANYNANT	2018/19	N
		INT18D-U51 CORONATION CRESCENT/HEOL IAGO/RHODFA GA	2018/19	N
		INT18D-U52 CAE GLAS NEWYDD/THE GROVE/BRYN NANT	2018/19	N
		INT18D-U53 HEOL Y BRYN/HILLSIDE/PONTLOTTYN RD	2018/19	N
GELLIGAER	346	Contract not yet created		N
		INT17D-U37 ST CATTWGS AVE/PENYWRLOD	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U38 ANEURIN BEVAN AVENUE	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U39 CLAERWEN	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U40 DAN Y GAER/GAER PL/GREENHILL PL	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U41 HEOL CATTWG/HEOL EDWARD LEWIS	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U42 HEOL PENALLTA/HEOL Y WAUN/CHURCH RD	2017/18	N
		INT17D-U43 HAMAN PLACE	2017/18	N
GELLIGROES	58	Contract not yet created		N
		INT16C-EC43 GELLIGROES	2016/17	Y
GILFACH LOWER	108	INT18C-UC40 AERON COURT/PLACE	2018/19	N
		INT18C-UC41 ANDREWS CL/CROSS ST/ST ANNES	2018/19	N
		INT18C-UC42 GWERTHONOR RD/LEWIS CRES/THE CLOSE/THE	2018/19	N
		INT18C-UC43 VERE PLACE/STREET/THE AVENUE	2018/19	N
GILFACH PHASE 1 GIL1	72	Contract not yet created		N
		INT16C-UC19 BRYNTEG/HEOL FACH/HEOL FARGOED	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-UC20 HILLSIDE VIEW/VALE VIEW/WESTERN DRIVE	2016/17	Y
GILFACH PHASE 2	178	INT16C-UC21 ASH PLACE	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-UC22 BEECH CT/BRYNTEG/OAK PLACE	2016/17	Y
		INT17C-UC23 SYCAMORE COURT	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC24 PARK VIEW	2017/18	N
GILFACH PHASE 3	137	INT17C-UC34 HEOL Y MYNYDD	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC35 HEOL CARADOC	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC36 HEOL COEDCAE	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC37 HEOL BRYCHAN/HEOL PENGARREG	2017/18	N
		INT17C-UC38 HEOL CAE DERWEN	2017/18	N
GRAIG Y RHACCA	388	INT15D-L17 COLERIDGE GARDENS	2015/16	N
		INT15D-L18 DICKENS COURT ODD NUMBERS	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-L19 DICKENS COURT EVEN NUMBERS	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-L20 GRAYS GARDENS ODD NUMBERS	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-L21 GRAYS GARDENS EVEN NUMBERS	2015/16	Y
		INT16D-L28 BURNS CLOSE / SHELLEY COURT	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-L29 MILTON PLACE	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-L30 LONGFELLOW GARDENS	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-L31 KEBLE COURT 1-61	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-L32 KEBLE COURT 62-130 & HERRICK PLACE	2016/17	Y
HENGOED	105	Contract not yet created		N
		INT14D-U15 CEFN RD/HEOL CELYN/DERW/DEWI/UCHAF/HILL	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-U16 ASHGR/BEECH/BRYNGL/MYRTLE/ACACIA/HENGOE	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-U17 CHAPEL TERRACE/HAWTHORN AVENUE	2014/15	Y
HEOL TRECASTELL	57	INT18D-L45 HEOL BEDDAU/GLEDYR/NANTGARW RD/PLAS TH	2018/19	N
		INT18D-L46 HEOL TRECASTELL	2018/19	N
HIGHMEADOW	42	INT14D-E11 HIGH MEADOW - PART 1	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-E12 HIGH MEADOW - PART 2	2014/15	Y
LANSBURY PARK	520	Contract not yet created		N
		INT14C-LC01 HALDANE COURT	2014/15	Y
		INT14C-LC02 ATTLEE COURT	2014/15	Y
		INT14C-LC03 GREENWOOD COURT	2014/15	Y
		INT15C-LC04 ALEXANDER COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-LC05 BUXTON COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-LC06 GRAHAM COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-LC07 TREVELYAN COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-LC08 WEDGEWOOD COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-LC09 HARTSHORN COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-LC10 SNOWDON COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-LC11 MAXTON COURT	2015/16	Y
		INT17D-L39 CONTRACT SERVICES REALLOCATION (PARTIAL	2017/18	N
LLANBRADACH	76	INT16C-LC17 - GARDEN STREET - LLANBRADACH PHASE 1	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-LC18 - PLASCAE/THOMAS/WOODLAND - LLAN PH 2	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-LC19 - SCHOOL STREET - LLANBRADACH PHASE 3	2016/17	Y
LLANFACH	24	INT14D-E15 CLYTHA/PENRHIW/TWYN PLACE	2014/15	Y
MACHEN	63	INT17D-L33 MACHEN PHASE 1	2017/18	N
		INT17D-L34 MACHEN PHASE 2	2017/18	N

MAES MABON	148	INT16D-U31 LAN Y PARC/HEOL LLYSWEN	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-U32 LLWYN YR EOS	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-U33 CHURCH LANE/MAES YR ONEN	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-U34 PRIMROSE CLOSE/YNYS LAS	2016/17	Y
MAESYCWMMER	112	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18C-UC44 GWERNA CRESCENT/PARK ROAD	2018/19	N
		INT18C-UC45 CHAVE/THE CRESCENT/GLEN/VALE/PLEASANT	2018/19	N
		INT18C-UC46 GLENCOED/HILL VIEW	2018/19	N
MARKHAM-HOLLYBUSH	127	INT15C-EC26 MOUNTAIN VIEW 1-29	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-EC27 MOUNTAIN VIEW 31-64	2015/16	Y
		INT16C-EC28 MONMOUTH WALK	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC29 JAMES ST/COMMUN CL/JOHN ST/HOLLYBUSHX2	2016/17	Y
MORRISVILLE	12	INT15D-E20 MORRISVILLE/NINE MILE POINT ROAD	2015/16	Y
NANTDDU	52	INT16C-LC24 - NANTDDU	2016/17	Y
		INT17D-L39 CONTRACT SERVICES REALLOCATION (PARTIAL	2017/18	N
NELSON	79	Contract not yet created		N
NEW TREDEGAR	140	INT15D-U26 BRYNCELYN/RHIWFER/TAI SIRIOL	2015/16	Y
		Contract not yet created		N
NEWBRIDGE	88	INT19D-U54 JUBILEE/QUEENS	2019/20	N
		INT19D-U56 RHOSYN GWYN/LONG ROW	2019/20	N
		INT19D-U58 GREENFIELD ST	2019/20	N
		Contract not yet created		N
OAKDALE	73	INT17C-EC51 NEWBRIDGE PHASE 1	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC52 NEWBRIDGE PHASE 2	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC53 ASHFIELD ROAD / TROWEN	2017/18	N
PANTSIDE LOWER	221	INT16C-EC30 UNDERWOOD/HIGHTREE/GROVESIDE/PARK VIEW	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC31 PENMAEN CORNER/IVY BUSH COURT	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC32 CENTRAL AVENUE/FARM CLOSE	2016/17	Y
PANTSIDE UPPER	77	Contract not yet created		N
		INT13D-E01 CLAREMONT ROAD\HAZELWOOD ROAD	2013/14	N
		INT13D-E02 ELLESMERE COURT\OLD PANT ROAD	2013/14	N
		INT13D-E03 CORONATION CRESCENT\HILARY ROAD	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-E04 NEWLYN ROAD\STONERWOOD VIEW	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-E06 GREENLANDS\HILLTOP CRESCENT\SUNNYCREST	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-E07 PANT VIEW\QUEENS ROAD	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-E08 CARLYON RD\ROSE CT\CEFN CT	2013/14	N
		INT14D-E13 CENTRAL AVENUE - PART 1	2014/15	N
		INT14D-E14 CENTRAL AVENUE - PART 2	2014/15	Y
PENGAM	28	INT13D-E08 CARLYON RD\ROSE CT\CEFN CT	2013/14	N
		INT13D-E09 GLANSHON\LINDEN\WILLOW COURTS	2013/14	Y
		INT14D-E10 ELM/LIME/OAK/PENYCAEAU COURT	2014/15	Y
PENLLWYN LOWER	71	INT15C-EC25 BONT CLOSE/ISLWYN CLOSE	2015/16	Y
PENLLWYN UPPER	253	INT16C-EC35 PENLLWYN LOWER	2016/17	Y
		INT17D-E31 FLEUR DE LYS AVE	2017/18	N
		INT17D-E32 TROWEN/LLANOVER/GROVE/ST MARYS	2017/18	N
		INT17D-E33 RUSHMERE/RHYMNEY CL/MYNYDDISLWYN/ST SAN	2017/18	N
		INT17D-E34 HEOL TRELYN/BROADMEAD/PENYMEAD/EDGE/BEE	2017/18	N
		INT18D-E39 HIGHMEAD	2018/19	N
PENPEDAIRHEOL	8	INT18D-E40 HILL VIEW	2018/19	N
PENTWYNMAWR	62	INT18C-UC47 HENGOED RD/OAKS END/CYLLA/PENYBRYN TCE	2018/19	N
		Contract not yet created		N
PENYBRYN	4	INT16C-EC42 PENTWYNMAWR	2016/17	Y
		INT18C-UC47 HENGOED RD/OAKS END/CYLLA/PENYBRYN TCE	2018/19	N
PENYRHEOL LOWER	167	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18C-LC51 BRYNGLAS/BRYNHEULOG	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC52 BRYNTIRION/H-T-COED/RHIW FACH/TROED-Y-	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC53 HEOL TIR GIBBON	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC54 GELLI DEG	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC55 BRYNTEG/CAE GLAS/MAES HIR	2018/19	N
PENYRHEOL UPPER	322	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18C-LC44 HEOL ANEURIN	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC45 Y CILGANT	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC46 PENYBRYN	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC47 HEOL FER/H-PENTWYN/H-Y-GOGLEDD	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC48 CEFN-Y-LON/GLAN FFRWD/HEOL TIR BACH	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC49 HEOL FAWR	2018/19	N
		INT18C-LC50 PENYGROES	2018/19	N
PERSONDY	29	INT15D-E23 ACACIA/LABURNAM/MAPLE/PERSONDY/SYCAMORE	2015/16	Y
PHILLIPSTOWN	159	INT19D-U55 CROFT/FIELD/ORCHARD/PRITCHARDS/SOUTH V	2019/20	N
		INT19D-U57 MEADOW/PENRHYN/FARM TCE	2019/20	N
		INT19D-U59 DAVALOG/FERNHILL	2019/20	N
		INT19D-U60 DERLWYN STREET	2019/20	N
		INT19D-U61 JONES STREET	2019/20	N
		Contract not yet created		N
PONTLOTTYN	231	INT15C-UC04 DANYGRAIG/HEOL Y WAUN/SOUTHEND TCE	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-UC05 SUNNYVIEW/BRYNGLAS	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-UC06 BRYNHYFRYD 1-50	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-UC07 BRYNHYFRYD 51-121	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-UC08 HILL RD/QUEEN S/HEOL EW/BOARD S/RIVER	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-UC09 FARM RD/WINE ST/CHAPEL ST	2015/16	Y
		INT15C-UC10 MOUNT ST/HIGH ST/MERCHANT ST/UNION ST	2015/16	Y
PONTYMISTER	162	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18C-EC66 HILL STREET/WOODVIEW RD	2018/19	N
		INT18C-EC68 TANYBRYN/TYNYCWM RD	2018/19	N
		INT18C-EC69 FIELDS/MEADOW/NEWPORT/TY ISAF CRES	2018/19	N

		INT18C-EC70 TY ISAF PARK AVE/CRESCENT/VILLAS	2018/19	N
		INT18C-EC71 TY ISAF PARK CIRCLE/ROAD	2018/19	N
		INT18C-EC72 SPRINGFIELD ROAD	2018/19	N
PONTYWAUN	75	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18C-EC77 GARDEN SUBURBS/NORTH RD	2018/19	N
PORSET PARK	179	INT18D-L48 CLOS GUTO/GWAUN NEWYDD	2018/19	N
		INT18D-L49 COED CAE	2018/19	N
		INT18D-L50 LON YR ODYN	2018/19	N
		INT18D-L51 COED PWLL	2018/19	N
		INT18D-L52 COED MAIN	2018/19	N
PWLLYPANT	38	INT13D-L01 CASTLE VIEW\CENTRAL STREET\MOUNTAIN VIE	2013/14	N
RHYMNEY NORTH	398	Contract not yet created		N
		INT12D-U06 GLAN YR AFON	2012/13	N
		INT13D-U01 GLANYNANT	2013/14	N
		INT13D-U02 ANEURIN TERRACE\ISFRYN	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-U03 HEOLYTWYN	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-U04 HEOL UCHAF\LOWER ROW\PHILLIPS WALK	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-U05 PENYDRE	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-U09 TY COCH (1-40)	2013/14	Y
		INT13D-U10 TY COCH (41-116)	2013/14	Y
		INT14D-U11 BRYN CARNO	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-U12 GOLWG Y MYNYDD/HIGH ST/TWYN CARNO	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-U19 ROWAN PLACE	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-U20 ROWAN PLACE	2014/15	Y
RHYMNEY SOUTH	443	Contract not yet created		N
		INT12D-U01 NURSERY CRESCENT	2012/13	N
		INT12D-U02 GARDEN CITY\MAES YR HAF\SUNNYHILL	2012/13	N
		INT12D-U03 HAFODYMYNYDD	2012/13	N
		INT12D-U04 IDRIS DAVIES PLACE\PLANTATION TERRACE	2012/13	N
		INT12D-U05 ST CLARES\WELLINGTON WAY	2012/13	Y
		INT14C-UC01 MOUNTBATTEN/RAMSDEN/JENKINS/HAVARDS RO	2014/15	Y
		INT14C-UC02 BEULAH/DUFFRYN/FORGE/THOMAS FIELDS	2014/15	Y
		INT14C-UC03 BROOKFIELD AVE/EGLWYS FAN/BRYNHYFRYD	2014/15	Y
RISCA	164	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18C-EC73 CLYDE STREET	2018/19	N
		INT18C-EC74 DANYGRAIG BU/CRESCENT/EXCHANGE/GROVE R	2018/19	N
		INT18C-EC75 FERNLEA	2018/19	N
		INT18C-EC76 RAGLAN ST/CROMWELL RD INCL BUNGS	2018/19	N
RUDRY	15	INT17C-LC26 RUDRY / TRAPWELL	2017/18	N
		INT17D-L38 CONTRACT SERVICES REALLOCATION (FULL)	2017/18	N
SENGHENYDD	118	Contract not yet created		N
		INT13D-L04 PLAS CWM PARC	2013/14	N
		INT13D-L05 PLAS CWM PARC	2013/14	N
		INT13D-L06 ALEXANDER TERRACE\CENYDD TERRACE\COMM	2013/14	N
		INT13D-L07 TAN Y BRYN TERRACE	2013/14	N
SPRINGFIELD	239	Contract not yet created		N
		INT16C-EC36	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC37 ALDER/BROOK/UPLAND/HIGHL/ORCHARD/MUSSL	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC38 PEMBREY/CWMALSIE/MILL ROAD	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC39 BROOKFIELD ROAD	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC40 MEADOW ROAD	2016/17	Y
		INT16C-EC41 MILLBROOK RD/OAKFIELD	2016/17	Y
THOMASVILLE	31	INT13D-L02 THOMASVILLE	2013/14	N
TIRPHIL	39	INT16C-UC18 TIRPHIL	2016/17	Y
TIRYBERTH	44	INT15D-U29 CHURCHFIELD CLOSE/ORCHID CLOSE	2015/16	Y
TRAPWELL	10	INT17C-LC26 RUDRY / TRAPWELL	2017/18	N
		INT17D-L38 CONTRACT SERVICES REALLOCATION (FULL)	2017/18	N
TRECENYDD	201	Contract not yet created		N
		INT13D-L08 FIRST AVENUE	2013/14	Y
		INT14D-L09 WEST AVENUE/TY ISAF BUNGALOWS	2014/15	N
		INT14D-L10 SECOND AVENUE	2014/15	N
		INT14D-L11 THIRD AVENUE/TEGFAN	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-L12 GRANGE CLOSE	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-L13 THE CRESCENT TRECENYDD	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-L14 HEOL FACH/PEN Y FFORDD/EAST AVE	2014/15	Y
TRELYN UPPER	79	INT14C-EC01 PERTH COURT/ADELAIDE COURT	2014/15	Y
		INT14C-EC02 MELBOURNE COURT/SYDNEY COURT	2014/15	Y
		INT14C-EC03 BRISBANE COURT/CWRT Y WAUN	2014/15	Y
TREOWEN	11	INT17C-EC53 ASHFIELD ROAD / TREOWEN	2017/18	N
TRETHOMAS	141	Contract not yet created		N
		INT15D-L24 REDBRK/STANDD/NAVIGTN/ASH/BIRCH/HAZEL	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-L25 AELYBRYN/THE BRYN	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-L26 BEVAN CLOSE/BEVAN RISE/BRYN Y FRAN AVE	2015/16	Y
TRINANT	240	Contract not yet created		N
		INT17C-EC55 TRINANT TERRACE - ODDS	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC56 TRINANT TERRACE - EVENS	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC57 BELVEDERE CL / CONWAY ROAD	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC58 LLANERCH RD / MARSHFIELD RD	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC59 PENYFAN CL / PENYWAUN RD / THORNLEIGH	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC60 CEDAR RD / OSBOURNE RD / PRINCE ANDREW	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC61 PENTWYN TCE / PHILIP ST / PRINCESS CRE	2017/18	N
TWYN GARDENS	37	INT16C-EC33 TWYN GARDENS	2016/17	Y
TY ISAF	7	INT14D-L09 WEST AVENUE/TY ISAF BUNGALOWS	2014/15	N
TY NANT	29	INT13D-L03 TY NANT	2013/14	N

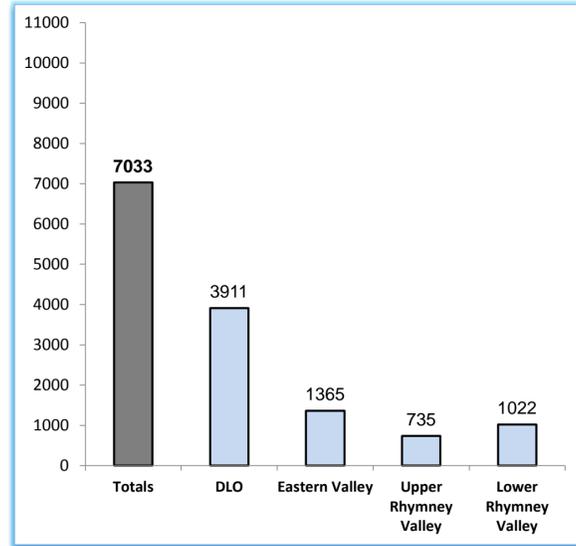
TY-SIGN LOWER	153	Contract not yet created		N
		INT17C-EC63 MAPLE/SYCAMORE/THISTLE	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC64 CHARTIST/ISLWYN/MACHEN/SEVERN	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC65 CHANNEL VIEW	2017/18	N
		INT17C-EC67 WOODVIEW CRESCENT	2017/18	N
		INT18C-EC66 HILL STREET/WOODVIEW RD	2018/19	N
TY-SIGN UPPER	305	INT15D-E16 ELM DRIVE - EVENS PART 1	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-E17 ELM DRIVE - EVENS PART 2	2015/16	Y
		INT15D-E18 ELM DRIVE - ODDS	2015/16	Y
		INT16D-E26 MANOR COURT/ALMOND AVE/ASTER CLOSE	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-E27 BIRCH GROVE/FAIRVIEW AVENUE	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-E28 HOLLY ROAD	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-E29 MANOR WAY	2016/17	Y
		INT16D-E30 FORSYTHIA CLOSE	2016/17	Y
WATTSVILLE	49	Contract not yet created		N
		INT15D-E21 ISLWYN ROAD	2015/16	Y
WAUNFACH	17	INT18D-L47 WAUNFACH	2018/19	N
WESTEND	12	INT15D-E24 RAILWAY TERRACE/TROEDYRHIW	2015/16	Y
YNYSDDU-CWMFELINFACH	41	Contract not yet created		N
		INT18C-EC78 YNYSDDU-CWMFELINFACH	2018/19	N
YSTRAD MYNACH	48	INT14D-U13 BRYNMYNACH AVE/COED YR HAF	2014/15	Y
		INT14D-U14 CENTRAL/EDWARD/GRIFFITHS/HILL/PANTYCELY	2014/15	Y

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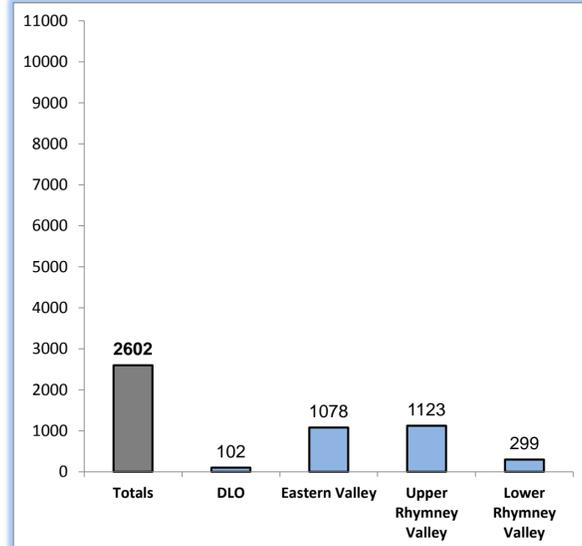
WHQS - PERFORMANCE SCORECARD - LEVELS OF COMPLIANCE

(Standards Met - by Number of Properties)

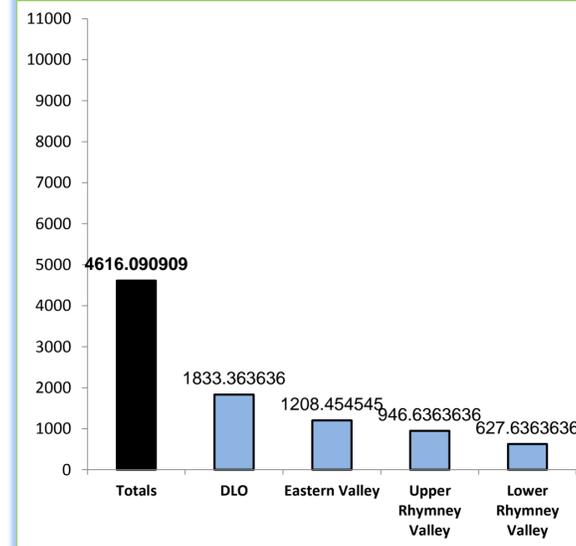
**WHQS - *INTERNAL Works Programme
Proportionate Compliance**



**WHQS - ~ EXTERNAL Works Programme
Proportionate Compliance**

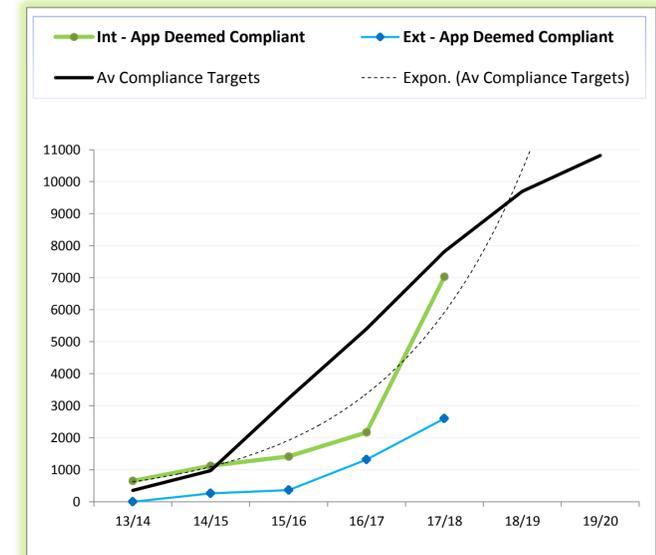


**WHQS - INTERNAL & EXTERNAL
Proportionate Compliance (to date)**



WHQS - INTERNAL & EXTERNAL - Proportionate Completed Works:

Number of properties progressing towards -> Total Compliance



Tenant Satisfaction



Tenant Satisfaction



Notes.

Work schedules are delivered in a 'phased' (blocks of work) approach across each of the three regions.

Delivered works are reported by surveyors/contractors upon 'property completions' (not upon completions of individual components of work).

Data is collated at site level: Operatives report on completions to site Clerk of Works/Surveyors, who report completions to the Housing Office Operational/Project (Region) Managers, who report completions to the Housing Performance Team for final analysis and reporting purposes.

Completions status indicator (Component boxes):

Red = <= 50%
 Amber = > 50.1% < 79.9%
 Green = >= 80%

Financial Programme	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18 Projected	18/19 Projected	19/20 Projected
Budget (£,000's)	19,100	48,320	77,990	107,660	136,880	166,100	195,320	220,000
Actual Spend	19,057	33,707	49,051	77,683	109,061	162,643	203,259	222,429
Balance	43	14,613	28,939	29,977	27,819	3,457	-7,939	-2,429

The above finance table details accumulative budget allocations and spend profiles to date, which are subject to annual review and re-profiling.

The charts above, have been based on properties surveyed, improvement works undertaken, post-works inspections and portfolio updates,

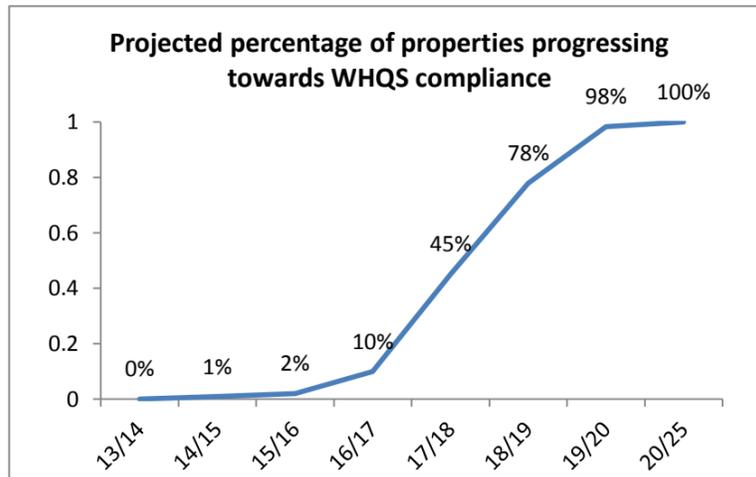
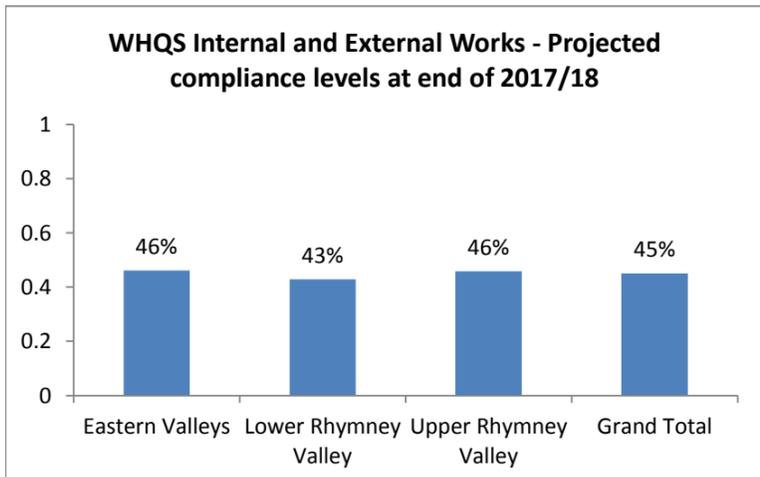
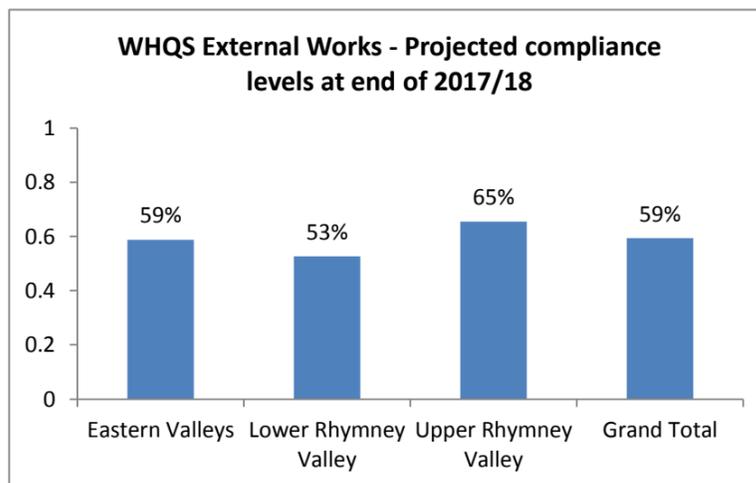
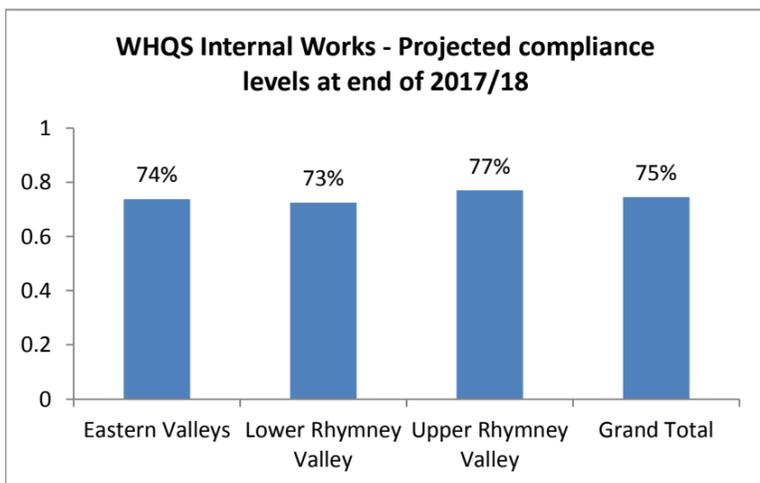
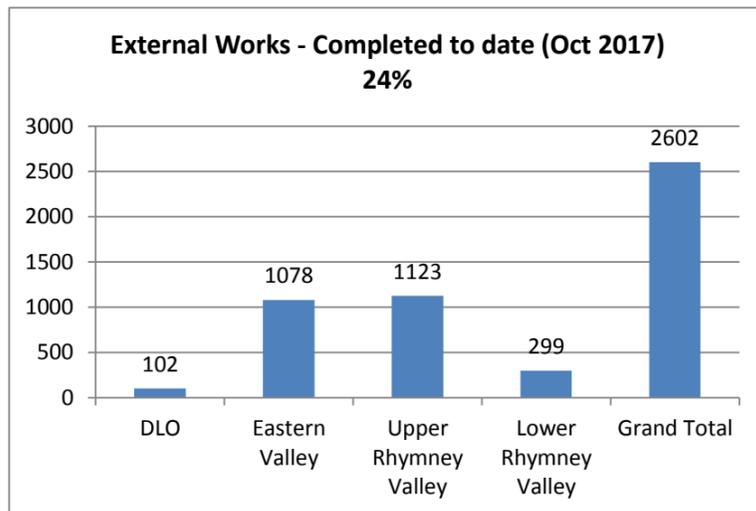
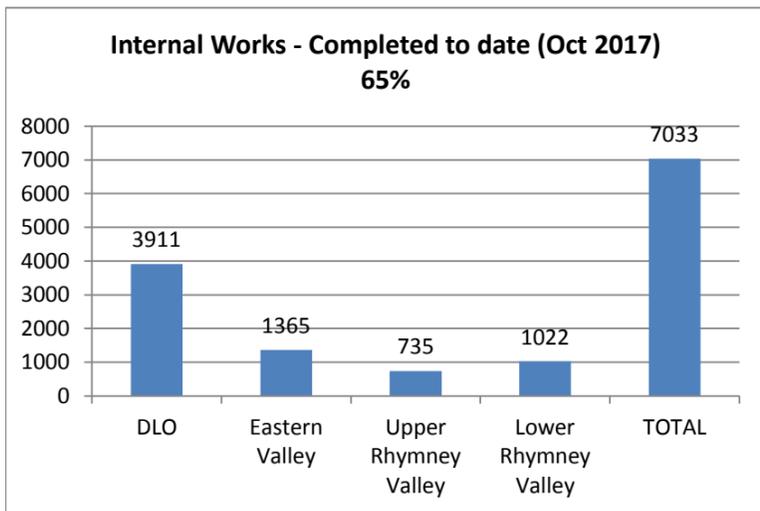
focusing on the following WHQS key components:

Internal Works: Kitchens, Bathrooms, Boilers and Central Heating, Electrical Systems (wiring), Mains - Smoke Detectors.

External Works: Roofs, Walls, Windows, External Doors, Insulation, Paths/Fences/Gardens.

Other specialist works/improvements are also undertaken in conjunction with the WHQS Programme, such as 'Adaptations'.

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Actual Compliance to date 10.2%

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Recommendations	Actions	Owner	Progress/ Due Date
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive, overarching, financial and operational programme setting out how the Council will achieve WHQS by 2020.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that the Keystone Asset Database provides up to date survey information. 2. Review projected programme costs by replacing Savill’s estimates with more accurate actual costs based on recently completed contract information. 3. Amend existing programme in order to reflect communities where work has been completed, is currently ongoing or is planned. Programme to also incorporate a breakdown of the communities to clarify which streets are included. 4. Ensure adequate resources to enable surveys to be completed at the earliest opportunity in order to better inform future investment requirements and budget forecasting. 	<p>MRL</p> <p>LA</p> <p>MRL</p> <p>MRL</p>	<p>Sept 2017/ Completed</p> <p>Sept 2017/ Completed</p> <p>Sept 2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Recommendation 1a</p> <p>Review procurement arrangements to ensure value for money.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure adequate procurement arrangements are in place to cover all aspects of the programme. 2. Undertake an independent benchmarking exercise in relation to the single source supply arrangement to assess value for money. 3. Undertake an exercise to compare costs of the in-house workforce to those of external contractors, whilst also considering quality and performance to determine value for money. 4. Introduce a flexible Dynamic Purchasing System for the external works in the lower Rhymney valley, whilst also providing options to deliver contracts for internal and external works throughout the borough. 	<p>MRL</p> <p>KRW</p> <p>MRL</p> <p>MRL</p>	<p>April 2017/ Completed</p> <p>March 2018</p> <p>March 2018</p> <p>April 2017/ Completed</p>

	5. Contracts for internal works are in place until 2020 and were procured in open competition. External work packages are tendered individually from existing frameworks and more recently the D.P.S. Tenders are evaluated on receipt and if deemed to be uncompetitive, the work is re-tendered in an attempt to improve value for money.	MRL	Ongoing
Recommendation 1b Provide clear and transparent information to members and tenants about the current position of the programme and a commitment to stakeholders with accurate projected completion dates.	1. Review existing programme information being provided to members and tenants and amend this to ensure it is accurate, easily understood and timely.	MRL	March 2018
	2. Review the way performance information is presented to all stakeholders to ensure that this provides a good overview on the progress of the overall programme is easily understood and timely.	SC/MRL	Dec 2017
D 20 09 50 Recommendation 1c Secure the resources needed to deliver the programme by 2020.	1. Business case approved for the appointment of additional staff and operatives to support the in-house team in view of the additional work they will be undertaking to deliver WHQS works to our sheltered housing schemes.	MRL	April 2017/ Completed
	2. Business case approved for the appointment of Surveyors/Clerks of Works to support the delivery of the external works programme following the implementation of the DPS.	MRL	April 2017/ Completed
	3. Use of agency workers ongoing to supplement directly employed staff as workforce will need to reduce post 2020.	MRL	Ongoing
	4. Introduction of DPS has provided an additional pool of contractors to deliver all aspects of the programme and to act as a contingency in case any issues are encountered with existing contracts.	MRL	April 2017/ Completed
	5. Use of other in-house teams, both within and outside Caerphilly Homes, has been implemented to provide further assistance and resources for the delivery of the programme, e.g. Housing Repair	SC/MRL	Ongoing

	<p>Operations, Network Contracting Services, Highways Operations Group, Grounds Maintenance.</p> <p>6. Additional financial resources being sourced to assist with the delivery of the programme and to provide additional improvements to the housing stock and communities, e.g. ECO, Arbed, V.V.P.</p>	MRL/JRW	Ongoing
<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Assure itself that the Council is meeting its statutory landlord responsibilities in relation to gas servicing.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council's performance in relation to gas servicing averages 98% which results in approximately 200 properties not having a valid gas safety certificate, which has been identified as an issue with no access. A review of the no access procedure has been undertaken. 2. To improve compliance the gas servicing cycle will be changed to operate on a 10 month cycle rather than the existing 11 months. 3. To reduce issues with no access, a charge will be introduced for tenants who fail to provide access at the appointment time. 4. The timescales for issuing letters to tenants seeking access will be reduced and if required a Notice of Seeking Possession will be issued prior to the expiry of the gas certificate. 5. Failure to provide access during the NOSP period will result in arrangements being made to force entry, with the tenant being provided with advanced notice of such action. 	<p>SC</p> <p>PS</p> <p>PS</p> <p>Housing Managers</p> <p>Housing Managers/ PS</p>	<p>July 2017/ Completed</p> <p>Sept 2017/ Completed</p> <p>August 2017/ Completed</p> <p>August 2017/ Completed</p> <p>Sept 2017/ Completed</p>
<p>Recommendation 2a</p> <p>Ensure that arrangements for undertaking asbestos surveys and recording the results of these surveys, is robust.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the accuracy and timeliness of asbestos information being recorded within the Keystone Asset Database. 2. Ensure that all relevant staff have access to asbestos records to ensure these are checked prior to commissioning surveys. 3. Submit a business case to appoint a Technical/Admin Officer to input surveys and cleanliness certificates into Keystone in a timely manner, and also act as a central point of contact. 	<p>PS</p> <p>PS</p> <p>PS</p>	<p>August 2017/ Completed</p> <p>Dec 2017/ Completed</p> <p>August 2017/ Completed</p>

<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Ensure the Council has sufficient project management capacity to deliver the WHQS programme by 2020.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business case approved for the appointment of additional resources, allowing recruitment to take place as and when required. 2. Project management of the sheltered housing programme being carried out by the in-house team following consultation with tenants. 3. Project management of various aspects of the programme is being undertaken by other services to spread workload and maximise use of existing resources, e.g. work to leaseholder properties being managed by Private Sector Housing, WHQS work to voids and statutory maintenance being undertaken by Housing Repair Operations Team, environmental programme being progressed by utilising services of Grounds Maintenance, Highways Operations Group, Network Contracting Services. 4. A restructure of Caerphilly Homes to be undertaken to further improve integration and better align key functions with the aim of improving capacity to support the programme. 	<p>MRL</p> <p>MRL</p> <p>SC/MRL</p> <p>SC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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Shaun Couzens
Prif Swyddog Tai/Chief Housing Officer

October 2017



CABINET – 1ST NOVEMBER 2017

SUBJECT: ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2016-17

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report issued at the end of August 2017 outlines the key messages from the Wales Audit Office (WAO) Annual Improvement Report (AIR). The AIR makes a judgement as to whether we have and are likely to comply with our statutory duty in compliance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to 'make arrangements to demonstrate continuous improvement'.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This AIR is two-fold. It summarises the work carried out by the WAO during the year of 2016/17 and provides the regulators judgement as to whether we will comply with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. For 2016/17 the WAO judgement is:

"Based on, and limited to, the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure (2009) during 2017-18 providing it responds constructively and in a timely way to our statutory recommendations" [Para 3 of appendix A]

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Although the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been introduced and replaces Part 2 of the 2009 Local Government Measure, Part 1 is still a legal requirement and this part places a duty on an authority to 'make arrangements to continuously improve'. These arrangements and their effectiveness are assessed by the WAO.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 As noted in 2.1 the WAO judgement is that "The Council is likely to meet its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement providing it responds constructively and in a timely way to our statutory recommendations"
- 4.2 The report then summaries the three statutory recommendations that are made with regard to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and this report is on the Cabinet Work Programme for the 1st November 2017.
- 4.3 The report details in exhibit 1 a brief description and conclusions to a range of work carried out in 2016/17. This includes a review completed in August 2017 called IT and Asset Management. There were no specific recommendations or proposals for improvement but the work has led the WAO to plan a review of effectiveness of the way the Council's manages its

projects through the Business Improvement Board as part of their 2017/18 local work. The IT and Asset Management Review are reported on in more detail in a separate report which is also on the Cabinet Work Programme for 1st November 2017

- 4.4 Individual reports received are reported to members throughout the year and the AIR is a summary of those pieces of work.
- 4.5 In November 2016 the Wales Audit Office carried their annual assessment of performance and concluded that the Council had complied with its statutory improvement reporting duties and issued a certificate. The Certificate of Compliance (Appendix 1) and Annual Audit Letter for 2015/16 was reported to the Audit Committee on the 8th March 2017.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Its aim is to make public bodies listed in the Act to think more about the long term, working better with communities and each other. It is about preventing problems and taking a more joined-up approach. The arrangements we have in place to comply with the Act are progressing well and are reported on to a range of audiences, including the member led Future Generations Advisory Panel.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not needed because there are no 'protected characteristics to consider therefore the Council's full EIA process does not need to be applied.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications to this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications to this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The report is noted by members and the content discussed (where required) with the WAO when they come to present their findings.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The AIR is the public judgement of the regulators on the Authority. It is important Cabinet are aware of its judgements and have the opportunity to discuss the context further.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Part 1). Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

Author: Ros Roberts, Corporate Performance Manager, roberr@caerphilly.gov.uk
Consultees: Nicole Scammell - Acting Director Corporate Services and Section S151 Officer
Rob Hartshorn - Head of Public Protection
Councillor Barbara Jones – Cabinet Member Performance
Kathryn Peters – Corporate Policy Manager

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Annual Improvement Report 2016-17

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Annual Improvement Report 2016-17 Caerphilly County Borough Council

Issued: October 2017

Document reference: 124A2017-18



This Annual Improvement Report has been prepared on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales by Sara-Jane Byrne and Non Jenkins under the direction of Huw Rees.

**Huw Vaughan Thomas
Auditor General for Wales
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24 Cathedral Road
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Together with appointed auditors, the Auditor General audits local government bodies in Wales, including unitary authorities, police, probation, fire and rescue authorities, national parks and community councils. He also conducts local government value for money studies and assesses compliance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

Beyond local government, the Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Assembly Commission and National Health Service bodies in Wales.

The Auditor General and staff of the Wales Audit Office aim to provide public-focused and proportionate reporting on the stewardship of public resources and in the process provide insight and promote improvement.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

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Summary report

2016-17 performance audit work

- 1 In determining the breadth of work undertaken during the year, we considered the extent of accumulated audit and inspection knowledge as well as other available sources of information including Caerphilly County Borough Council's (the Council) own mechanisms for review and evaluation. For 2016-17, we undertook improvement assessment work at all councils under three themes: governance, use of resources, and improvement planning and reporting. At some councils, we supplemented this work with local risk-based audits, identified in the Audit Plan for 2016-17.
- 2 The work carried out since the last Annual Improvement Report (AIR), including that of the relevant regulators, is set out in **Exhibit 3**.

The Council is likely to meet its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement providing it responds constructively and in a timely way to our statutory recommendations

- 3 Based on, and limited to, the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure (2009) during 2017-18 providing it responds constructively and in a timely way to our statutory recommendations.
- 4 In our June 2017 report 'Welsh Housing Quality Standard' we made three statutory recommendations to the Council as detailed in **Exhibit 1** below. We received a statement of action by the Council's Corporate Director - Communities on 19 July 2017, which is subject to the Cabinet's endorsement. We will follow up the Council's progress in due course as part of our ongoing audit work at the Council.
- 5 As stated in our 2015-16 Annual Improvement Report, internal investigations are continuing in relation to the issues concerning some senior officers. Consequently, there are still a number of interim or acting posts at senior management level and a degree of uncertainty remains at the Council until the internal investigations are concluded.

Recommendations and proposals for improvement

- 6 Given the wide range of services provided by the Council and the challenges it is facing, it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:
 - make proposals for improvement – if proposals are made to the Council, we would expect it to do something about them and we will follow up what happens;
 - make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made, the Council must prepare a response to that recommendation within 30 working days;
 - conduct a special inspection, and publish a report and make recommendations; and
 - recommend to ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way.
- 7 Formal recommendations made by the Auditor General during the course of the year are set out below. Authorities must prepare a response within 30 working days of receiving them.
- 8 A number of proposals for improvement have also been made and these are repeated in this report. We will monitor progress against the Auditor General's recommendations, proposals for improvement, and relevant recommendations made in our national reports ([Appendix 3](#)) as part of our improvement assessment work.

Exhibit 1: formal recommendations made in the year.

Formal recommendations made in the year

The Council should take urgent action to achieve the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) by 2020. It should:

- R1 By September 2017, develop a comprehensive, overarching, financial and operational programme setting out how the Council will achieve the WHQS by 2020. This programme should:
- establish the full scope of investment needed in the Council's housing stock based on accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date stock condition information;
 - set out how the Council, by March 2018, will:
 - review its procurement arrangements to ensure value for money;
 - provide clear and transparent information to members and tenants about the current position of the programme and a commitment to stakeholders with accurate projected completion dates; and
 - secure the resources needed to deliver the programme by 2020.
 - contain clear and measurable milestones and relevant performance measures for delivering the programme up to 2020; and
 - set out the programme management, governance and accountability responsibilities and arrangements so that urgent remedial action can be taken if further slippage occurs and those tasked with delivering the programme can be held to account at appropriate decision-making levels.
- R2 Assure itself that it is meeting its statutory landlord responsibilities by ensuring that:
- all properties have a valid gas safety certificate in place, or are having the Council's non-compliance arrangements applied to them fully; and
 - arrangements for undertaking asbestos surveys and recording the results of these surveys are robust.
- R3 Ensure it has sufficient project management capacity to deliver the Council's WHQS programme effectively by 2020.

Audit, regulatory and inspection work reported during 2016-17

Exhibit 1: audit, regulatory and inspection work reported during 2016-17

Description of the work carried out since the last AIR, including that of the relevant regulators, where relevant.

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
Governance			
February 2017	<p>Good governance when determining service changes</p> <p>Review of the Council's governance arrangements for determining service changes.</p>	<p>The Council's approach to service change has been proportionate to the scale of changes it has made to date and it is strengthening its arrangements to prepare for potentially more significant future service changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Council has a clear set of principles for determining service change that support its current vision, but it recognises the need to review its strategic; the Council continues to strengthen its governance and accountability arrangements and these have the potential to assist it to deliver future service change effectively; options appraisals are generally sound and improving but there is a need for more consistency in the quality of information included; the Council's arrangements to engage stakeholders in service changes have been effective; the Council monitors the impact of service changes but arrangements are not systematic or transparent; and in recent years, the Council has strengthened its governance and decision-making arrangements, and has responded positively to our audit reports. 	<p>The Council's governance arrangements for service change could be strengthened by:</p> <p>P1 Introducing a more systematic and transparent arrangement for monitoring the impact of service changes.</p> <p>P2 More clearly setting out in reports how feedback from engagement and consultation has been taken account of in developing proposals for service change.</p>

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
Use of resources			
November 2016	<p>Annual audit letter 2015-16 Letter summarising the key messages arising from the Auditor General's statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and his reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice. The Annual Audit Letter is in Appendix 2 of this report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources. We are satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Our work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the 2016-17 accounts or key financial systems. 	<p>P1 That the Council reviews how the Logotech Asset System calculates depreciation for revalued assets as our work identified that revalued assets are being depreciated one year too quickly due to the incorrect 'Useful Economic Life' being used post revaluation.</p> <p>P2 That aged debtor and creditor balances should be written off and removed from the brought forward balances.</p>
March 2017	<p>Savings planning Review of the Council's financial savings arrangements, including how well it is delivering the required savings and whether it has robust approaches to plan, manage and deliver budget savings, at a pace that supports financial resilience.</p>	<p>The Council has an effective and improving savings planning approach, which is supporting future financial resilience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Council has reported achievement of 96% of its planned 2015-16 savings in-year and can demonstrate that individual savings have been delivered; the Council has an effective corporate framework for financial planning and whilst the Council has well considered savings plans, some savings proposals are insufficiently developed when the budget is agreed; and the Council has detailed savings plans and is forecasting that 96% of its 2016-17 savings plan will be achieved in-year. 	<p>Strengthen financial planning arrangements by ensuring that savings plans are underpinned by robust business cases.</p>

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
Local risk-based performance audit			
June 2017	<p>Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Review of the Council's arrangements to enable it to meet the WHQS by 2020.</p>	<p>The majority of tenants' homes remain below the WHQS due to longstanding inefficient and ineffective programme management and the Council is unlikely to achieve the Standard by 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the majority of tenants' homes remain below the WHQS and the Council is making insufficient progress to achieve the Standard by 2020; • there are weaknesses in the Council's arrangements to meet its statutory landlord responsibilities; • the Council has not met all the minimum requirements of the Welsh Government's WHQS policy because it lacks a comprehensive programme that sets out to stakeholders how it will meet the Standard by 2020; • the Council does not have adequate and up-to-date stock condition information to enable it to shape its housing investment programme; • the Council has a range of mechanisms to engage with tenants about the WHQS but these are ineffective and are not being used to shape planning and drive performance; • the Council is unable to ensure that it is achieving value for money in delivering its WHQS works; and • arrangements to oversee, challenge, monitor and scrutinise the progress of the WHQS programme are weak and fail to provide sufficient oversight of the totality of the programme. 	<p>We made the following formal recommendations:</p> <p>The Council should take urgent action to achieve WHQS by 2020. It should:</p> <p>R1 By September 2017, develop a comprehensive, overarching, financial and operational programme setting out how the Council will achieve the WHQS by 2020. This programme should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish the full scope of investment needed in the Council's housing stock based on accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date stock condition information; • set out how the Council, by March 2018, will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – review its procurement arrangements to ensure value for money; – provide clear and transparent information to members and tenants about the current position of the programme and a commitment to stakeholders with accurate projected completion dates; and

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – secure the resources needed to deliver the programme by 2020. • contain clear and measurable milestones and relevant performance measures for delivering the programme up to 2020; and • set out the programme management, governance and accountability responsibilities and arrangements so that urgent remedial action can be taken if further slippage occurs and those tasked with delivering the programme can be held to account at appropriate decision-making levels. <p>R2 Assure itself that it is meeting its statutory landlord responsibilities by ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all properties have a valid gas safety certificate in place, or are having the Council's non-compliance arrangements applied to them fully; and • arrangements for undertaking asbestos surveys and recording the results of these surveys are robust.

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
			R3 Ensure it has sufficient project management capacity to deliver the Council's WHQS programme effectively by 2020.
August 2017	Asset management Review to consider the extent to which the Council's asset management arrangements support strategic and effective decision-making and improvement.	The Council recognises the key role its assets have in helping to deliver its priorities but weaknesses in its new Corporate Asset Management Strategy and its delivery undermines its ability to shape the future of its assets.	We did not make any specific recommendations or proposals for improvement but identified that we would undertake a review of the effectiveness of the Council's Business Improvement Board as part of our 2017-18 local performance audit work.
August 2017	Digital risk diagnostic Review to identify 'potential' digital risks and issues at the Council.	The Council has a range of Information Management and Technology (IM&T) related policies, plans and processes but lacks an overarching digital strategy to drive its activities.	We did not make any specific recommendations or proposals for improvement but identified that we will consider carrying out more specific work, focussing on one or more of the following areas as part of our ongoing performance audit programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to explore more fully the Council's approach to digital and IT after it has made a decision about joining the SRS in the autumn; • IM&T resilience (IT business continuity, disaster recovery, and backups); and • Information and cyber security.

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
Improvement planning and reporting			
June 2016	<p>Wales Audit Office Annual 'Improvement Plan' Audit</p> <p>Review of the Council's published plans for delivering on improvement objectives.</p>	The Council has complied with its statutory improvement planning duties.	None
November 2016	<p>Wales Audit Office Annual 'Assessment of Performance' Audit</p> <p>Review of the Council's published performance assessment.</p>	The Council has complied with its statutory improvement reporting duties.	None
Reviews by inspection and regulation bodies			
No reviews by inspection and regulation bodies have taken place during the time period covered in this report.			

Appendix 1

Status of this report

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake a forward-looking annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. Improvement authorities (defined as local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities) have a general duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions'.

The annual improvement assessment considers the likelihood that an authority will comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. The assessment is also the main piece of work that enables the Auditor General to fulfil his duties. Staff of the Wales Audit Office, on behalf of the Auditor General, produce the annual improvement report. The report discharges the Auditor General's duties under section 24 of the Measure, by summarising his audit and assessment work in a published annual improvement report for each authority. The report also discharges his duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether (as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17) he believes that the authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

The Auditor General may also, in some circumstances, carry out special inspections (under section 21), which will be reported to the authority and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22). An important ancillary activity for the Auditor General is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments.

Appendix 2

Annual Audit Letter

Mr Chris Burns
Chief Executive
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Penallta House
Tredomen Park
Ystrad Mynach
CF82 7PG

22 November 2016

Dear Mr Burns

Annual Audit Letter – Caerphilly County Borough Council 2015-16

This letter summarises the key messages arising from our statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and our reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources

It is the Council's responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the accounting statements;
- review the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that we have completed the audit of the accounts.

Local authorities in Wales prepare their accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This Code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards. On 30 September 2016 we issued an unqualified audit opinion on the accounting statements confirming that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions. Our report is contained within the Statement of Accounts.

The key matters arising from the accounts audit were reported to members of the Audit Committee in our Audit of Financial Statements report on 14 September 2016. The significant items are summarised as follows:

- there were no misstatements identified in the financial statements, which remained uncorrected.
- there were a number of misstatements that were corrected by management. This included an adjustment of £137.8 million to the value of Council Dwellings following a change in the valuation basis to the adjusted vacant possession (using the beacon principle).
- two high-risk recommendations were also made. We recommended that the Council reviews how the Logotech Asset System calculates depreciation for revalued assets as our work identified that revalued assets are being depreciated one year too quickly due to the incorrect 'Useful Economic Life' being used post revaluation. We also recommended that aged debtor and creditor balances should be written off and removed from the brought forward balances.

We are satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Our consideration of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The Auditor General will highlight areas where the effectiveness of these arrangements has yet to be demonstrated or where improvements could be made when he publishes his Annual Improvement Report.

We issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts has been completed on 30 September 2016.

Our work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the 2016-17 accounts or key financial systems.

A more detailed report on my grant certification work will follow in January 2017 once this year's programme of certification work is complete.

The financial audit fee for 2015-16 is currently expected to be in line with the agreed fee set out in the Annual Audit Plan.

Yours sincerely

Grant Thornton LLP
For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales

Appendix 3

National report recommendations 2016-17

Exhibit 3: national report recommendations 2016-17

Summary of proposals for improvement relevant to local government, included in national reports published by the Wales Audit Office, since publication of the last AIR.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
August 2016	Financial Resilience of Local Authorities in Wales 2015-16	<p>In our report of 2014-15 (The Financial Resilience of Councils in Wales, April 2015) we made a number of recommendations for local authorities. Many of these recommendations remained relevant and required further work from authorities to address them during 2016-17. In addition, we also made the following recommendations based on our more recent review:</p> <p>R1 Local authorities should strengthen their financial-planning arrangements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing more explicit links between the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and its corporate priorities and service plans; • aligning other key strategies such as workforce and asset management plans with the MTFP; • developing comprehensive multi-year fully-costed savings plans which underpin and cover the period of the MTFP, not just the forthcoming annual budget; • categorising savings proposals so that the shift from traditional-type savings to transformational savings can be monitored over the period of the MTFP; and • ensuring timescales for the delivery of specific savings proposals are realistic and accountability for delivery is properly assigned. <p>R2 Local authorities should develop corporate Income Generation and Charging Policies.</p> <p>R3 Local authorities should ensure that they have a comprehensive reserves strategy, which outlines the specific purpose of accumulated useable reserves and the impact and use of these in the MTFP.</p> <p>R4 Local authorities should develop key performance indicators to monitor the MTFP.</p> <p>R5 Local authorities should ensure that savings plans are sufficiently detailed to ensure that members are clear as to what the plans are intended to deliver and that the delivery of those plans can be scrutinised appropriately throughout the year.</p> <p>R6 Local authorities should ensure that corporate capacity and capability are at a level that can effectively support the delivery of savings plans in the MTFP at the pace required.</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
October 2016	<u>Community Safety in Wales</u>	<p>The seven recommendations within this report required individual and collective action from a range of stakeholders – the Welsh Government, Home Office Wales Team, police and crime commissioners, public service board members and local authorities:</p> <p>R1 Improve strategic planning to better co-ordinate activity for community safety by replacing the existing planning framework with a national strategy supported by regional and local plans that are focused on delivering the agreed national community-safety priorities.</p> <p>R2 Improve strategic partnership working by formally creating effective community-safety boards that replace existing community-safety structures that formalise and draw together the work of the Welsh Government, police forces, local authorities, health boards, fire and rescue authorities, WACSO and other key stakeholders.</p> <p>R3 Improve planning through the creation of comprehensive action plans that cover the work of all partners and clearly identify the regional and local contribution in meeting the national priorities for community safety.</p> <p>R4 Review current grant-funding arrangements and move to pooled budgets with longer-term funding commitments to support delivery bodies to improve project and workforce planning that focuses on delivering the priorities of the national community-safety strategy</p> <p>R5 Ensure effective management of performance of community safety by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting appropriate measures at each level to enable members, officers and the public to judge progress in delivering actions for community-safety services; • ensuring performance information covers the work of all relevant agencies; and • establishing measures to judge inputs, outputs and impact to be able to understand the effect of investment decisions and support oversight and scrutiny. <p>R6 Revise the systems for managing community-safety risks and introduce monitoring and review arrangements that focus on assuring the public that money spent on community safety is resulting in better outcomes for people in Wales.</p> <p>R7 Improve engagement and communication with citizens through public service boards in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing plans and priorities for community safety; • agreeing priorities for action; and • reporting performance and evaluating impact.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
November 2016	<u>Charging for Services and Generating Income by Local Authorities</u>	<p>This report made eight recommendations, of which six required action from local authorities. Recommendations R4 and R6 required action from the Welsh Government and Welsh Local Government Association:</p> <p>R1 Develop strategic frameworks for introducing and reviewing charges, linking them firmly with the MTFP and the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>R2 Review the unit and total costs of providing discretionary services to clearly identify any deficits and, where needed, set targets to improve the current operating position.</p> <p>R3 Use the impact assessment checklist whenever changes to charges are considered.</p> <p>R5 Identify opportunities to procure private sector companies to collect charges to improve efficiency and economy in collecting income.</p> <p>R7 Improve management of performance, governance and accountability by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regularly reporting any changes to charges to scrutiny committee(s); • improving monitoring to better understand the impact of changes to fees and charges on demand, and the achievement of objectives; • benchmarking and comparing performance with others more rigorously; and • providing elected members with more comprehensive information to facilitate robust decision-making. <p>R8 Improve the forecasting of income from charges through the use of scenario planning and sensitivity analysis.</p>
January 2017	<u>Local Authority Funding of Third Sector Services</u>	<p>This report made three recommendations, of which two required action from local authorities. Recommendation R3 required action from the Welsh Government:</p> <p>R1 To get the best from funding decisions, local authorities and third-sector bodies need to ensure they have the right arrangements and systems in place to support their work with the third sector. To assist local authorities and third sector bodies in developing their working practices, we recommend that local authority and third-sector officers use the <u>Checklist for local authorities effectively engaging and working with the third sector</u> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-evaluate current third sector engagement, management, performance and practice; • identify where improvements in joint working are required; and • jointly draft and implement an action plan to address the gaps and weaknesses identified through the self-evaluation. <p>R2 Poor performance management arrangements are weakening accountability and limiting effective scrutiny of third-sector activity and performance. To strengthen oversight of the third sector, we recommend that elected members scrutinise the review checklist completed by officers, and regularly challenge performance by officers and the local authority in addressing gaps and weaknesses.</p>

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CABINET – 1ST NOVEMBER 2017

SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES ASSISTED TRANSPORT POLICY.

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

-
- 1.1 The attached report was presented to Health, Social Care and Wellbeing on 24th October 2017.
 - 1.2 The recommendations of the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will be reported at the meeting.
 - 1.3 Cabinet are asked to consider the views expressed by the Scrutiny Committee.

Author: C. Evans, Committee Services Officer
Ext. 4210

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Health Social Care and Wellbeing Report – 24th October 2017.

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HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 24TH OCTOBER 2017

SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES ASSISTED TRANSPORT POLICY

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report is to seek the views of members of the scrutiny committee on the proposed assisted transport policy for adults, prior to it going to cabinet for a decision on implementation.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report will outline the need to have a policy that reflects the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, explaining the ethos of the policy being to promote independence choice and control for individuals building on people's strengths and networks
- 2.2 The report will propose and time scale and method for implementation the new policy to ensure equity across all current and future service users

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The policy discussed within this report is written in line with the ethos of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, it also contributes to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:
- A resilient Wales
 - A healthier Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Assisted transport is the discretionary provision of transport by social services to enable individuals to access the community support service for which individuals have been assessed as eligible to attend for example; day services.
- 4.2 Adult Social Services are facing considerable challenges. Through legislation such as the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and The Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015, the council is required to change the way in which it works with people, promoting a focus on actively supporting people to develop lifestyles that are not reliant on statutory services. Therefore policies are required to reflect this.

- 4.3 The aim of the Assisted Transport policy (Appendix 1 and 2) is to provide a clear framework for practitioners to assess and support individuals to identify methods of promoting independence when accessing transport. By identifying what is available within the local community and provide a consistent approach to determining eligibility for funded transport where it has been identified as a requirement to access services commissioned by Social Services.
- 4.4 Appendix 1 the easy read version of the policy outlines the key elements:
- How we decide, everyone will be subject to an individual assessment or review
 - Provision of transport is only considered when linked to an eligible need for an assessed service, for example someone can be eligible for day care but not for transport.
 - Implementation of the Social Care and Well-being Act principles of promoting independence, is paramount this could result in travel training for individuals to enable them to access their community as well as attend services.
 - The policy will look to build on existing strengths and networks exploring all other options for example provision of a bus pass and /or companion bus pass
 - Existing resources will be looked at and maximised for example mobility allowance access to and use of a mobility car
 - Sign posting to help with other transport requirements such as attending hospital appointments, education and employment
 - Detail how to appeal if someone is unhappy with the decision.
- 4.5 To provide a framework that is working within the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and is working in parallel with other Social Services policies for transport across the Gwent region. The policy takes account of guidance under Part 4 of the code of practice outlining that eligibility for assistance from social service is relating to provision of service under care and support and not the provision or health care, employment or education. Therefore the policy is applicable to the provision of assisted transport to access services commissioned directly by Adult Social Services.
- 4.6 The ethos of the policy is in keeping with the aforementioned legislative changes in that it seeks to:
- *Promoting independence*
 - *Maximising choice and control*
 - *Builds on strengths of someone's own network*
 - *Supporting a healthy lifestyle*
 - *Improving quality of life*
 - *Maximising dignity and respect*
 - *Developing local and community networks.*
- 4.7 The overriding principle of this policy is that the decision to provide transport is based on needs, intended outcomes and on promoting independence, as part of the Council's commitment to inclusion and independence.
- 4.8 It is proposed that the policy is implemented from 1st January 2018 for all new requests for transport made to Adult Social Services.
- 4.9 It is proposed that the policy is applied to the review of existing transport provisions at the time of the annual review of the care and support plan for those individuals who currently get it. Where individuals are identified as having access to alternative transport options, it is proposed that they be given an 8 week period in which to implement the new arrangements.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that it aims to promote the use of local resources where possible and local transport options, developing stronger networks and community links for individuals who reside within them.
- 5.2 The implementation of this policy aims to improve equality for access to funded services, promote independence, increase individual resilience and ensure longer term sustainable service for those who require it. The policy aims to strengthen use of public transport by local communities and increase choice and control for the individuals accessing services.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An equalities impact assessment has been completed please refer to Appendix 4.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 It is not possible to quantify financial implications in respect of implementation of this policy at this stage However it is anticipated that in due course there would be a reduction in the amount of transport provided, therefore reduce demands upon the existing budget.
- 7.2 Current budget is £1,435,771 inclusive of staffing costs

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct personnel implications in relation to this policy.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 Public consultation was conducted from 25th August 2017 to 25th September 2017. This consultation was implemented by:
- A mail drop of consultation packs to 100 individuals in receipt of services from social services.
 - Promoting the consultation through email correspondence to social services staff and relevant parties across the council
 - Promoting the consultation through email correspondence to partner agencies.
 - Posting the consultation of the boroughs consultation webpages
- 9.2 Following consultation with professionals, partner agencies and the general public; feedback has been very positive.
93% of respondents thought that the policy encourages people to access support in their local communities
90% felt that the policy went far enough to promote independence
97% felt the policy was clearly written
See appendix 3 for full details including additional comments.
- 9.3 It has been highlighted that there are examples presented that demonstrate the current provision of transport is somewhat over subscribed and there has been a dependency upon the local authority to provide transport even when individuals have alternative options available to them.

9.4 This has resulted in situations arising where individuals who do not have alternative transport options and have specialist transport needs, are unable to commence services they have been assessed to need that are commissioned by Social Services, more often due to limited availability of appropriate vehicles; due to vehicles being at full capacity.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Member are requested to give their views on endorsing the Assisted Transport Policy

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Scrutiny members views will be included in the future cabinet report regarding a decision to implement the policy in the time frame outlined.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 None

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Consultees:

Transport department
Adult Services Staff
Adult Services DMT
Social Services SMT
Public consultation
Caerphilly Peoples First and relevant partner agencies.
Cllr Carl Cuss Cabinet Member Social Services

Appendix 1 Adult Social Services Assisted Transport Policy – Easy Read Version

Appendix 2 Adult Social Services Assisted Transport Policy – Full Version

Appendix 3 consultation summary, consultation feedback

Appendix 4 Equalities impact assessment

Adult Social Services Assisted Transport Policy



Adult Social Services Assisted Transport Policy

Easy Read

What is Adult Social Services Assisted Transport?

Assisted Transport usually helps people to go to places in Caerphilly borough as part of their arranged care plan, like day services.

You may need support due to disability or health problems.

You may need support because you don't have a car or transport of your own.

You may need support because your family doesn't have a car.

Support can be taxis and mini buses or through council transport contracts.

Why we support you to travel

You need to get to day service and can't travel by yourself or with the help of family and friends. The council will look at ways to help you to travel.

This does not mean Social Services will meet your needs. It means that any service in the local authority might help you.

Aim of the policy

When assessing for transport the aim is to help you to

- Be more independent
- Have more choice and control
- Build on your strengths and help you make the most of where you live
- Have a healthier lifestyle
- Improve your quality of life
- Be shown more dignity and respect from others
- Meet more people and make friends.

How do we decide?

To get help with transport you will need an assessment. An assessment is when someone meets with you to find out what you need and what is important to you.

The assessment will look at whether it is safe and reasonable to expect you, or your family or friends, to make transport arrangements.

As part of the assessment, all transport options will be looked at.

They will write down your needs and what is important to you.

Who can be helped with transport?

- People over the age of 18 who have had an assessment that agreed they need care and support from Adult Social Services.
- You have been assessed and agreed to attend a service away from home, like day services
- The service away from home must be in Caerphilly Borough
- You must be eligible for the service.

When assessing eligibility for transport and different ways to access services away from home, the following things will be taken into account:

- If you already have access to transport;
- If you have mobility allowance or other money to pay for transport
- How well you can move around or your mobility
- How well you can travel by yourself
- If transport is available to take you where you need to go
- How well you do in travel training to learn how to travel by yourself.

Who can't get help with social services assisted transport?

You might not get help with transport

- If you can travel to a community activity that meets your needs by yourself or with help from family, friends or support providers
- If you get mobility component of DLA / PIP
- If you have a vehicle which you drive yourself.
- If you or your family have a vehicle which you do not drive yourself but it is reasonable for family or friends to drive you.
- If you get Mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and are able to use it to get to where you need to go. If you can't use the DLA to get to where you need to go the council will look at why. If the money is not enough, the council will help you check if you are getting the right benefits. If there is a different reason, like it's too far or your wheelchair costs too much to transport, you may still be able to get help with transport.

- If you live in a registered care home and the care home has agreed to help you travel.
- If you live somewhere else that your care needs are funded by Social Services. For example, a Residential Care placement, supported living scheme or shared lives placement. This is because the council may already pay the support provider to support all your needs, including travelling to community activities.
- If you rely on a relative or other carer to drive a mobility car and your carer's needs mean they can't drive you.

If you and your carer can't agree on how to use your Motability car the council may need to consider safeguarding issues. You might want to give the Motability car back and get money instead to pay for your travel needs.

- If you need help with transport to work, to education or to Doctor or hospital appointments.
- If you need help with transport to a service outside Caerphilly borough.

Complaints and Appeals

If you or your carer are unhappy with the decision of the assessment of your transport needs, you can ask the Council to look at how your needs were assessed. You can find out more here:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/My-Council/Complaints-and-feedback/Adult-services-complaints>

Turning down services

If you are assessed and it is decided you can make your own transport arrangements but you decide not to so you can't attend the service you need, it will be seen that you have turned down services.

Other ways to get help with transport

- Transport for health care – you can ask for an assessment from the NHS via your GP to attend health appointments.
- Transport to employment – you can ask for an assessment from employment services such as the Job Centre Plus or Access to Work
- Transport for college or education – you can find out more information here

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Schools-and-learning/School-travel>

Caerphilly County Borough Council operates the Concessionary Travel Scheme. This scheme provides free bus travel at all times and every day on most local bus services.

You can use this scheme

- if you live in Caerphilly Borough
- and have a disability
- or are over 60

If you need support to travel on public transport you could get a companion pass. This lets someone supporting you to travel free too.

To find out more:

Over 60's bus pass:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Transport-and-parking/Bus-pass-for-over-60s>

Disabled bus pass and companion bus pass:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Transport-and-parking/Bus-passes>

Adult Social Services Assisted Transport Policy

1 What is Adult Social Services Assisted Transport?

Adult Social Services Assisted Transport is a transport service provided to people over the age of 18, to access 'community activities' within Caerphilly borough. A community activity is a care and support service that an individual attends away from their home, which is provided by Adult Social Services as part of a care and support plan.

These people generally cannot use public transport independently due to disability or health problems and have no reasonable access to private transport. It can be provided through taxis and mini buses either through direct provision by the Council, or sourced by the Council through transport contracts.

2 Policy Framework

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 is the legislative framework for Social Services to identify an individual's outcomes and assess their need for care and support services. The Local Authority will have a duty to meet that need if the need cannot be met by the person's own resources or community resources.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 outlines principles and ways of working which include the responsibility for ensuring sustainable developments for individuals to connect with their local communities and the needs of the present being met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This links directly to the well-being principles underpinning this policy.

3 Principles of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to reflect national and local priorities and is based upon the following principles:

- Promoting independence
- Maximising choice and control
- Builds on strengths of someone's own network
- Supporting a healthy lifestyle
- Improving quality of life
- Maximising dignity and respect
- Developing local and community networks.

The overriding principle of this policy is that the decision to provide transport is based on needs, outcomes and on promoting independence, as part of the Council's commitment to inclusion and independence.

4 Policy Statement

This policy outlines how we will ensure that we have a consistent and equitable way of supporting individuals in the provision of Adult Social Services Assisted transport.

This policy sets the criteria that will be used to assess how people access transport to services identified in a care and support plan and provided by Adult Social Services. Caerphilly County Borough Council is committed to promoting independence across all areas of service provision and seeks to ensure that people live as independently as possible within their own communities and continue to access services and support in ways which meet their needs.

As the need for transport is not an eligible need in its own right, but simply a means of accessing services, this policy rests upon a general assumption and expectation that clients will meet their own needs for transport to access services.

Funded transport will only be provided if, in the opinion of the assessor, ***if it is the only reasonable way to allow the person to safely access an eligible service***. Where there is appropriate transport available, it will be assumed that the individual will use this as a first option.

Adult Social Services will signpost individuals to appropriate transport options in order to promote the independence of that person.

5 Assessment for Assisted Transport to a Care and Support Service

Assessment for assisted transport will only be considered where the person is eligible for a community service provided by Adult Social Services. The assessment must be part of the assessment of a person's outcomes and needs, and will be considered at any subsequent care and support plan review(s).

In completing this assessment, emphasis will be placed on the person's strengths and capabilities, and focus on solutions that enable them to do things for themselves rather than become dependent. The assessment will aim to establish whether it is safe and reasonable to expect the person, or their representative, to make transport arrangements. As part of the assessment, all transport options will be examined and the outcomes will be identified and evidenced.

The need for, and purpose of transport should be clearly stated on an individual's Care and Support Plan. The provision and/or funding for assisted transport should only be considered if the service user's own resources and all other options have been exhausted.

When assessing eligibility for transport and feasibility of different ways to access provision of services, the following factors will be taken into account:

- Access to existing transport;
- Access to mobility allowance or alternative funds

- Assessment of mobility;
- Assessment of ability to travel independently;
- Identification of appropriate transport provision for those eligible.
- People may have the financial means to fund their own travel arrangements
- Outcome of a period of travel training

Following an assessment, transport will only be provided to help meet an assessed need that cannot be met by the person themselves, having explored all alternatives. The transport provided will be appropriate for that need, will provide value for money and be cost effective.

6 People will normally not be eligible for transport if:

- They have the physical and/or mental ability to travel to a community activity, either independently or with assistance from family, friends or support providers.
- They are eligible for and receive mobility component of DLA / PIP.
- They have their own vehicle, access to family vehicle or a Motability vehicle which they drive themselves.
- They have a mobility vehicle of which they are not normally the driver themselves.
- Where the individual has access to a family/ household car, consideration will be made regarding whether it is reasonable to expect the person's family and friends network to help them travel to the location of the care service/ activities.
- They are in receipt of the Mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, the purpose of which is to assist those who have mobility problems, with severe difficulty walking or who need help getting around outdoors and in the community. These people will only be eligible for transport if they are assessed as not capable of independent travel or if the mobility element of the benefit does not fully cover their needs (due to distance from services, the nature of the disability, wheelchair type, carer support requirements etc). As part of the full financial assessment, Caerphilly County Borough Council's officers will also help people maximise their access to any benefits they may be entitled to.
- They live in a registered care home as these are subject to the terms and conditions of the contract between the Council and the care home. However, if the individual is assessed as having the ability to travel independently, or with minimal intervention, the care home will make provision to support independent travel if they are responsible for transport arrangements.
- They live in settings where their care needs are funded by the Adult Social Services Service e.g. Residential Care, supported living schemes (such as those for people

with a learning disability or younger adults with mental health disorders), or shared lives placement, as the cost of the placement needs to cover the full range of support needs, including transport, to attend community activities.

- Where the individual is reliant on a relative or other carer to drive a mobility car, consideration must be given to supporting carer's respite needs. Nonetheless, if an individual or carer makes the decision that the car will not be used for the intended purpose the onus must be on the individual and/ or carer to make alternative appropriate arrangements. Assessing officers must also ensure that a carer's reluctance or inability to assist with transport does not prevent an individual from accessing a service that meets their assessed needs and the individual/ carer will need to make alternative arrangements.
- Where there is conflict between the individual and carer, regarding Motability cars, officers may need to consider safeguarding issues. The worker will need to consider discussing with the individual the possibility of reverting back to a monetary allowance, if the individual so wishes. This would promote independence and allow the individual to take control of their own transport requirements. Consideration will be given to the impact of this option on individual-carer relationships and the need to avoid creating unnecessary conflict.

If it is established during the assessment process that the person can travel to a community activity that meets their outcomes, either independently or with assistance from family, friends or support providers, the Local Authority will not provide transport, or pay for travel costs. However, this does not prevent people using their own financial resources to pay for transport should they choose to do so.

People who qualify for concessionary travel (i.e. bus passes), will be expected to apply and use these as and when appropriate. Where access to a companion bus pass would enable the person to travel by means of public transport, this will be considered for their carer/ companion. The constraints of concessionary travel will also be taken into account during the assessment.

7 Complaints / Appeals

If an individual or their carer is unhappy with the outcome of the assessment of their transport needs, they have the option to ask the Council to reconsider the way in which the application has been assessed.

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/My-Council/Complaints-and-feedback/Adult-services-complaints>

8 Declining Services

If an individual has been assessed as able to make their own transport arrangements but declines to do so, and as a result is unable to attend the service for which they have an assessed eligible need, this will be viewed as the person declining services.

9 Access to Transport for services not provided by Adult Social Services:

The codes of practice for eligibility within the Social Service and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014, Part 4.1 states: *“It is not the purpose of the eligibility criteria to draw local authority care and support services into challenges they cannot address (such as provision of health care, employment, or education).”* Therefore:

Where there is a requirement for access to transport health care, an individual can seek assessment from the NHS via their GP for transport services to the hospital or out patient department they are required to attend.

Where there is a requirement for access to transport to employment, an individual can seek assessment from employment service such as the Job Centre Plus or Access to Work.

Where there is a requirement for access to transport for college or education. Education is not a provision of service under a care and support plan by adult social services and therefore assessment for such a requirement falls under the Education and transport department policy regarding post 16 transport to educational settings is outlined in a separate policy:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Schools-and-learning/School-travel>

10 Alternative Methods of Transport in the Borough

There are several community transport schemes across the county, mainly covering areas with less reliable transport links but not restricted to these areas.

The Council ensures, through its support to the voluntary and community sector, that such schemes continue to be sustainable and serve the areas most in need.

Caerphilly County Borough Council also has a robust Local Transport Plan, outlining current options for public transport and future proposed developments, this is updated as and when needed.

Caerphilly County Borough Council operates the Concessionary Travel Scheme, this scheme provides free bus travel at all times, everyday on most local bus services for anyone with a disability and anyone over 60 who is a resident of Caerphilly Borough. The scheme also provides concessionary companion bus passes to anyone unable to travel on public transport alone.

For eligibility and how to apply:

Over 60's bus pass:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Transport-and-parking/Bus-pass-for-over-60s>

disabled bus pass and companion bus pass:

<http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Transport-and-parking/Bus-passes>

Consultation for: Adult Social Services Assisted Transport Policy

The Social Service and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 place a duty on the Local Authority to promote independence, to encourage people to broaden and develop networks of support within their local communities. These factors have been integral to underpinning this policy.

The policy outlines when an individual is entitled to an assessment for assisted transport and how the assessment process and eligibility works.

In order to gain feedback and to consult upon this proposed policy, please can you read the policy and provide a response to the following questions:

Q1 Are you: (please tick one)

- 6 A member of CCBC staff
- 6 A member of the public
- 14 Receiving a service from Social Services
- 3 A relative (of the above)
- 1 A professional (not CCBC)
- 0 Other

please state

6

Q2 Do you feel this policy encourages people to access support in their local community?

28 Yes

2 No

Please comment

6

Q3 Do you feel this policy goes far enough to promote independence?

26 Yes

3 No

Please comment

6

Q4 Is the policy clearly written?

29 Yes

1 No

Please comment

1

Q5 Do you have any other comments you wish to make?

17

Equalities

Q6 Do you feel that your experience in dealing with the Council was better or worse in any way, because of who you are (e.g. because of your age, your ethnic origin, your language requirements, your disabilities, your sexual orientation or gender, or anything else that makes you an individual)?

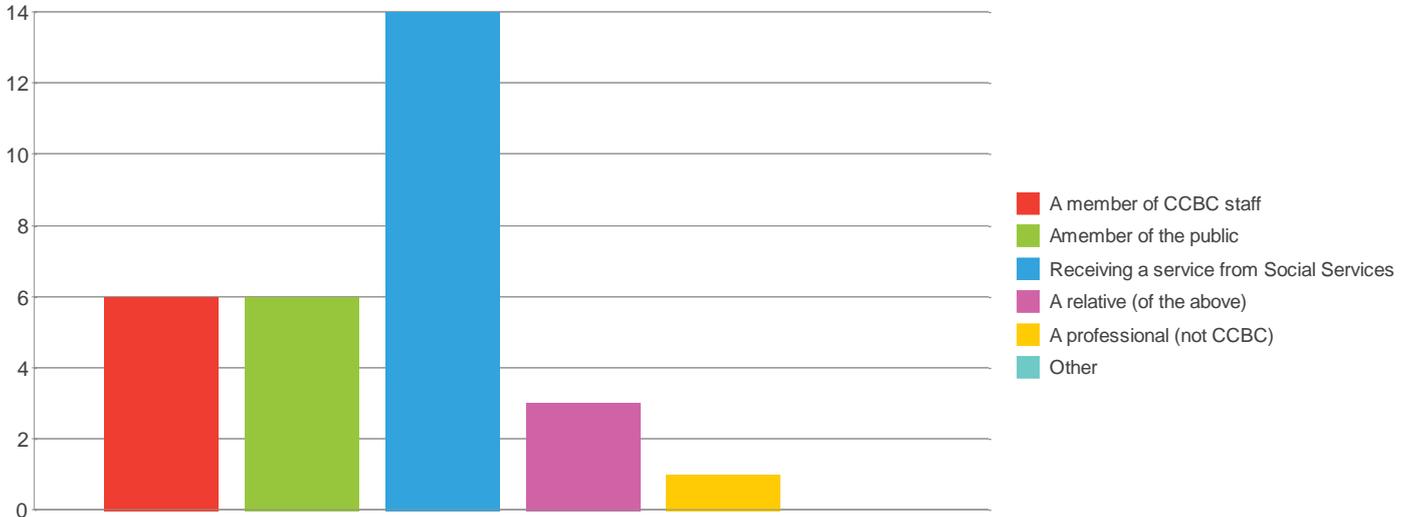
Please write in:

16

Thank you for taking the time to complete our questionnaire.
Your views are important to us.

Consultation for: Adult Social Services Assisted Transport Policy 32 Respondents

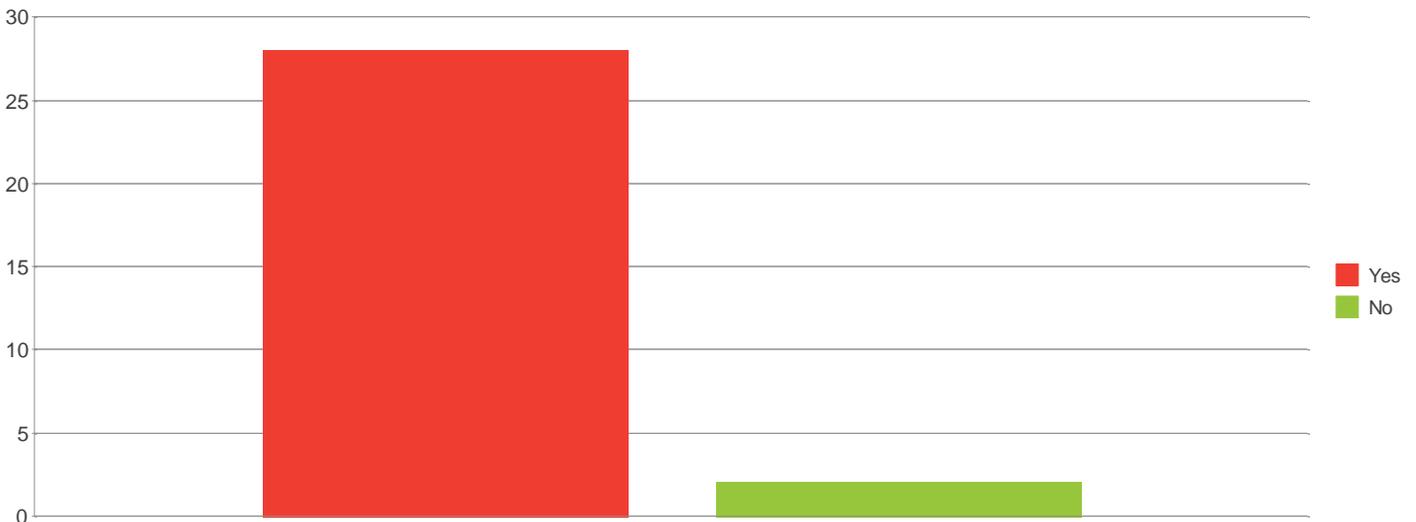
Q1. Are you: (please tick one)



please state

- Receiving care from Radis Care
- (Lee's mother) Linda LLoyd
- Care Worker visits me every week
- Daughter of this individual
- A member of the public
- Charity

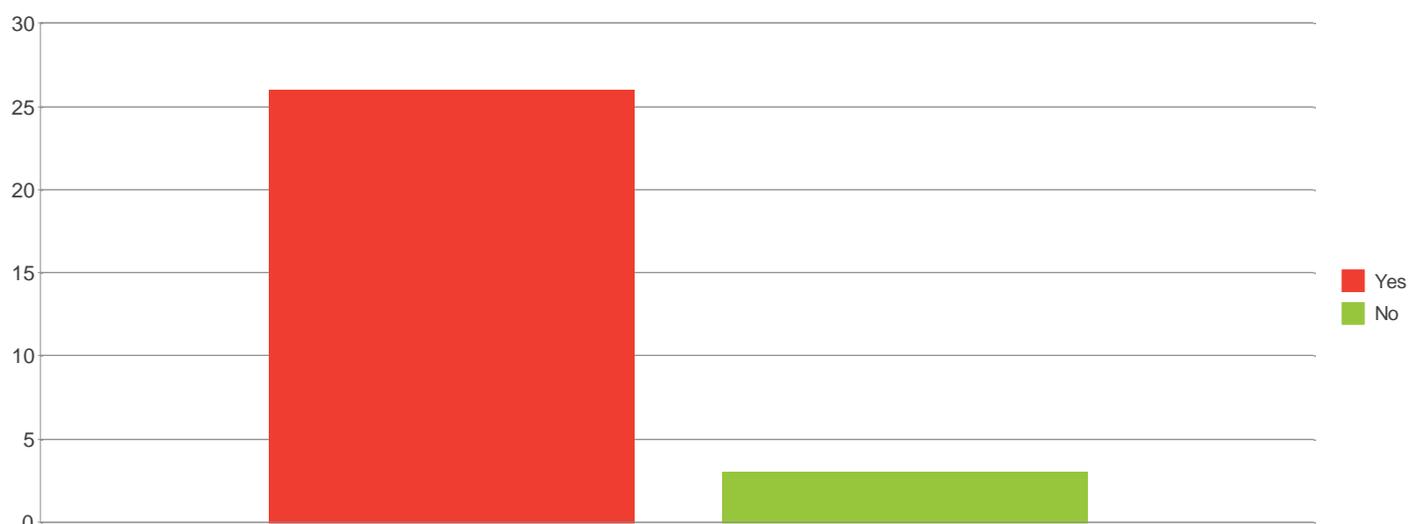
Q2. Do you feel this policy encourages people to access support in their local community?



Please comment

- Would be ideal for me.
- But it is not suitable for Lee's needs.
- If this includes ambulance to transport my mum to hospital for appointments as is immobile
- I know individuals that I see shopping in Brecon, Merthyr and local areas that do this via public transport however they are brought to day services via social services transport. It would be promoting independence if these individuals that use public transport at weekend used public transport to access services on a daily basis.
- However, there are not many examples given about the kind of private provision people might be expected to be supported to look into (e.g. use of private taxi providers, private providers with escorts, wheelchair accessible taxis)
- it helps people to be part of the community

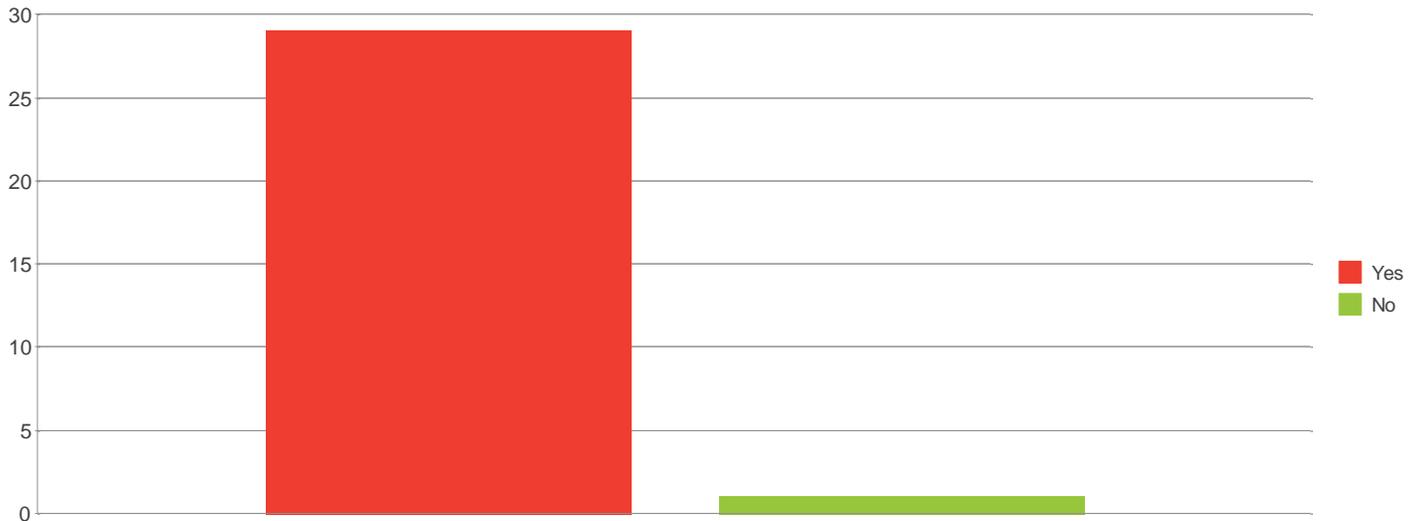
Q3. Do you feel this policy goes far enough to promote independence?



Please comment

- Get to use it more
- Could be better for the right person.
- The policy does only if a person knows about it?
- Don't really know
- As above.
- If people learn to travel independently it gives them more Independence to visit doctors, shopping, dentist, hospital and leisure

Q4. Is the policy clearly written?



Please comment

- Transport staff are brilliant and very understanding of Lee's needs.

Q5. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?

- Would be nice to get out and about in the community with a van that can accommodate a wheelchair.
- No
- My carer takes me everywhere
- No
- No thank you
- None
- Lee has to have a seat on her own, it has to be the 2nd seat on the driver's side. *No other person to sit with her as she likes her space and could start to pull hair or push at you upset starts problems and Lee will start to have fits.
- How is a person to know that this help exists, as until I received this form I didnt know there was such a policy?
- No not really.
- No
- As discussed previously, we fully support the principles outlined in the consultation document and feel it will support the provision of transport for those most vulnerable and genuinely unable to access day care facilities otherwise. Just a couple of observations. Section 5 Following on from our recent discussions, we would like to see a statement to the effect that if a person is assessed and deemed to be eligible for transport, appropriate transport will be considered, but the ability of the Council to meet these needs will depend on the mobility requirements of the individual and there being appropriate access to the property to facilitate this. Similarly, if the individual is a wheelchair user, an individual can only be transported if the chair has been appropriately crash tested for transport. In the case of electric wheelchairs, these would normally be expected to be dual controlled and capable of being isolated when

boarding and alighting via the passenger lift such that the driver or escort assisting has sole control over the chair. Section 10 Paragraph 4everyday on most local bus services for anyone with a disability and anyone over 60 who is a resident of Caerphilly Borough Can this be qualified – for anyone with an eligible disability. The scheme also provides concessionary companion bus passes to anyone unable to travel on public transport alone. Can this be qualified – to those meeting the defined criteria and unable to travel on public transport alone.

- The only comment I have from my perspective as a complaints officer in education. I cannot see how either departments policy can accommodate 19+aged persons going into further education. These few cases tend to slip through our policy and Social Services Policy as ours doesn't allow based on age and SS. Based on if they go on to further education. I am sorry I am not sure what a solution is but case in hand we have had an issue with this over the last few weeks. Apologies would like to be part of a solution on this.
- I have difficulty understanding why individuals that have mobility allowance/cars are picked up from and returned home when the car that was for their mobility needs is parked on the drive. I feel that the individuals that receive the mobility car/allowance should be used to transport them, then the allowance/car could be given to social services transport department to be used to transport the individual. I know a family that have the mobility car however their son in in supported living and is transported via Social services transport how is that car for him ?
- Would it be possible for people who do may not have eligible needs for transport (e.g. those in receipt of mobility benefits) to choose to pay a non-subsidised rate for our transport to access this service. The availability in the community for vulnerable people to safely access transport if they need to have an escort is limited and this might mean that our service is the only option. Other services like Meals on Wheels have a non-subsidised rate and this would be a useful option for us to be able to explore under The Act if it were an available option.
- if people learn to travel independently it will help parents and careers when they get older to not worry about different things such as appointments and leisure activities and helping them meet friends and be part of the community
- The policy supports the ethos of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.
- I strongly feel some changes were required to the old policy. This policy will ensure that transport services are used fairly and will ensure staff look at the persons own community for resources and services they can access which is a key feature within the new Act.

Q6. Do you feel that your experience in dealing with the Council was better or worse in any way, because of who you are (e.g. because of your age, your ethnic origin, your language requirements, your disabilities, your sexual orientation or gender, or anything else that makes you an individual)?

- At present, I am unable to use the services you are offering as I am on bed rest (32 weeks to date) and I have to have ambulance to go to and from the hospital as I am not able to use my Motability car. If thing change in the future I would be interested in your service.
- They treated me well.
- Don't understand what this says.
- No
- Could do better

- It got worse with the cuts. I have gone at A+C, Lee gets picked up very late each day (10 o'clock). I could drop her off as its only 5 mins up road, (but she would lose her independence) which she needs as she's like my shadow now.
- N/A
- No, always been good to me
- My mum has dementia so has no understanding, fortunately I deal with things for her, but if she didnt have me I dont think she would cope.
- I haven't had much contact with the council so cannot honestly comment.
- In my experience when dealing with the council they have always been extremely helpful and willing to provide any help and assistance required.
- Yes
- I have not experienced any difficulty when dealing with the council.
- No
- I have not experienced any change with the Council
- All of our dealings over the years with the council has been brilliant in joint working and partnership and if we have got a problem we discuss it with the real-vent bodies

END OF ANALYSIS
27 SEPTEMBER 2017

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

April 2016

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL *	Assisted Transport policy
DIRECTORATE	Social Services
SERVICE AREA	Adult Services
CONTACT OFFICER	Becky Griffiths
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION	TBC

***Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, 'proposal' is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

INTRODUCTION

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities and Welsh Language issues have been proactively considered throughout the decision making processes governing work undertaken by every service area in the Council as well as work done at a corporate level.

The form should be used if you have identified a need for a full EIA following the screening process covered in the [Equalities Implications in Committee Reports](#) guidance document (available on the [Equalities and Welsh Language Portal](#) on the Council's intranet).

The EIA should highlight any areas of risk and maximise the benefits of proposals in terms of Equalities. It therefore helps to ensure that the Council has considered everyone who might be affected by the proposal.

It also helps the Council to meet its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and supports the wider aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. There is also a requirement under Human Rights legislation for Local Authorities to consider Human Rights in developing proposals.

Specifically, Section 147 of the Equality Act 2010 is the provision that requires decision-makers to have 'due regard' to the equality implications of their decisions and Welsh Language Standards 88-97 require specific consideration of Welsh speakers under the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015.

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales has also published 'Good Practice Guidance for Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments and Scrutinising Changes to Community Services in Wales' to ensure that Local Authorities, and other service providers, carry out thorough and robust impact assessments and scrutiny when changes to community services are proposed, and that every consideration is given to mitigate the impact on older people and propose alternative approaches to service delivery.

The Council's work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the [Equalities and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan 2016-2020](#).

This approach strengthens work to promote Equalities by helping to identify and address any potential discriminatory effects before introducing something new or changing working practices, and reduces the risk of potential legal challenges.

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the [Equalities and Welsh Language Portal](#) and the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team can offer support as the EIA is being developed. Please note that the team does not write EIAs on behalf of service areas, the support offered is in the form of advice, suggestions and in effect, quality control.

Contact equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for assistance.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

1	<p>What is the proposal intended to achieve?</p> <p>The aim of the Assisted Transport is to provide a clear framework for practitioners to assess and support individuals to identify methods of promoting independence when accessing transport. By identifying what is available within the local community and provide a consistent approach to determining eligibility for funded transport where it has been identified as a personal outcome.</p> <p>To provide a framework that is working within the principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and is working in parallel with other Social Services policies for transport across the Gwent region. The policy takes account of guidance under Part 4 of the code of practice outlining that eligibility for assistance from social service is relating to provision of service under care and support and not the provision or health care, employment or education. Therefore the policy is applicable to the provision of assisted transport to access services commissioned directly by Adult Social Services.</p>
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2	<p>Who are the service users affected by the proposal?</p> <p>All individual's who have been assessed as eligible for services commissioned by social services that take place at a base away from the home environment, eg day centre.</p>
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IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3	<p>Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals?</p> <p>The ethos of the policy is in keeping with the legislative changes in that it seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting independence• Maximising choice and control• Builds on strengths of someone's own network• Supporting a healthy lifestyle• Improving quality of life• Maximising dignity and respect• Developing local and community networks. <p>The overriding principle of the policy is that the decision to provide transport is based on needs, outcomes and on promoting independence, as part of the Council's commitment to inclusion and independence.</p> <p>The current approach to assessing for transport is not equitable and has resulted in some individuals being unable to access services they require due to over</p>
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	<p>subscription of transport provision where individuals have access to alternative transport options but decline to make use of these.</p> <p>There are also inconsistencies between teams and departments in respect of the provision of transport to access services.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <p>Implement the policy across all teams in adult service; to provide a consistent and equitable approach to transport assessment and provision.</p> <p>Provide staff and service users with a clear framework for assessment.</p>

<p>4</p>	<p>What are the consequences of the above for specific groups?</p> <p>The consequences are that individuals will be encouraged to access more community based options within their local communities, which will promote independence and enable them to become more integrated in the local community.</p> <p>Where this is not possible, transport will be assessed and solutions identified as per the principles of the policy.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <p>Support individuals to make use of public transport where they are able to do so. be provide support to enable individuals to access discretionary transport passes provided by the local authority.</p> <p>Support individual's to make use of their mobility vehicles which they have been provided by the Department of Work and Pensions as assessed as a requirement for their disability.</p>

5	<p>In line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. (No.1) Regulations 2015, please note below what effects, if any (whether positive or adverse), the proposal would have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>None applicable. The welsh language Act is applicable for all aspects of public sector communication and the policy will not effect implementation of the welsh language act.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <p>Policy is available bilingually</p>

INFORMATION COLLECTION

6	<p>Is full information and analysis of users of the service available?</p> <p>Data of individuals accessing services or who may be awaiting services due to transport requirements is available from transport colleagues.</p> <p>At this time savings have not been considered as the implementation of the policy is to introduce an equitable approach to assessment for assisted transport and enable anyone who requires so to have support identifying transport options available to them.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <p>N/A</p>

CONSULTATION

7	What consultation has taken place? Public consultation took place 25 th August 2017 – 25 th September 2017 This was facilitated through raising public awareness of the policy via the CCBC consultation web pages. Email to relevant staff and partner agencies Postal consultation of 100 individual's receiving a service from social services.
	Actions required: Minor wording amendments requested by transport departments and this has been undertaken.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

8	How will the proposal be monitored? The policy following implementation will be reviewed after 1 year to determine if it is providing the equity that is anticipated. Thereafter every 3 years.
	Actions required: n/A

9	<p>How will the monitoring be evaluated?</p> <p>Survey of service users in receipt of services from social services.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <p>Conduct survey 1 year post implementation</p>

10	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified?</p> <p>Staff will require training and awareness raising to be aware of the changes in policy and to ensure all staff are implementing the policy in the same manner.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <p>Facilitate awareness raising for staff and training for practitioners.</p>

11	<p>Where you have identified mitigating factors in previous answers that lessen the impact on any particular group in the community, or have identified any elsewhere, please summarise them here.</p> <p>N/A</p>
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12	<p>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment?</p> <p>Appendix to scrutiny report</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIA, when completed, to be returned to equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for publishing on the Council's website.

Completed by:	Becky Griffiths
Date:	03/10/2017
Position:	Service Manager
Name of Head of Service:	Jo Williams



CABINET – 1ST NOVEMBER 2017

SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE (WAO) LOCAL RISK BASED REVIEWS: ASSET MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY - CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of the outcome of the review undertaken by WAO in respect of Asset Management and Information Management and Technology (IM&T). The WAO review has no statutory recommendations or proposals for improvement, hence Cabinet will be asked to consider endorsing the report and to note future work WAO are proposing to undertake.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report presents findings by WAO after a review of Asset Management and Information Management and Technology. WAO are proposing further work particularly around the Business Improvement Board. At this point there are no proposals for improvement or statutory recommendations.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Effective Asset Management Plans along with a proactive use of technology support the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:
- *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A resilient Wales*

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The WAO concluded that the Council has a good understanding of its assets and current IT arrangements but lacks a strategic approach to direct their use.
- 4.2 In respect of IM&T WAO concluded that the Council has a range of related policies, plans and processes but lacks an overarching digital strategy to drive its activities.
- 4.3 WAO acknowledged that as the Council is currently developing an outline business case to consider whether to join the regional Shared Resource Service (SRS) consideration would be given to carrying out more specific work, focussing on one or more of the following areas as part of their 2017-18 performance audit programme:
- to explore more fully the Council's approach to digital and IT after it has made a decision about joining the SRS in the autumn;
 - IM&T resilience (IT business continuity, disaster recovery and backups); and
 - Information and cyber security.

- 4.4 WAO concluded that the Council recognises the key role its assets have in helping to deliver its priorities but weaknesses in its new Corporate Asset Management Strategy and its delivery undermines its ability to shape the future of its assets.
- 4.5 Paragraph 21 of the WAO report says “It is difficult to see how in its current form, the Council will usefully use the Strategy to shape the way it manages its assets. For example for each of the Council’s asset categories, the Strategy does not set out the gap between its existing asset base and where the Council needs to be and the implications for its assets. Neither does the Strategy include information about the Council’s capital and revenue expenditure on its main asset categories or forecast future expenditure. Including this additional information and analysis would help provide a more comprehensive and holistic consideration of the Council’s assets. We understand the Council intended that this information would be included in individual asset management plans, but these are not yet in place”.
- 4.6 Paragraph 25 of the WAO report says “The Council acknowledges that as a result of the level of savings it now has to achieve, it will have to make some difficult decisions about the level and nature of its services. This will include decisions which relate to some of its major assets, such as its leisure services and schools. We are also aware that the Council is in the process of carrying out a number of other reviews, which could impact upon the Council’s assets. These include libraries, waste, and community centres. As set out in paragraph 11, the Council is also in the process of developing an outline business case to consider whether to join the regional Shared Resource Service for its IT services. We understand the Council is of the view that as a result of these ongoing reviews, it would not be helpful to have a corporate asset management plan and service asset management plans covering those services currently under review. As these reviews are completed, the Council will need to consider if its corporate asset management strategy should be updated to accommodate any asset related issues”.
- 4.7 We have advised WAO that Individual asset management plans are not yet in place for a number of service areas pending reviews as a consequence of more difficult and challenging savings targets.
- 4.8 The WAO also concluded as a result of the findings from a number of reviews over the last 12-18 months that there was a need to carry out a detailed review of the effectiveness of Council’s Business Improvement Board in providing strategic overview and direction for the Council’s key business improvement projects.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with four out of the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act as detailed as follows:-
- Long Term – The Authority’s asset base should be a size that is sustainable and fit for purpose.
 - Prevention – Technological advances can be used to manage demand.
 - Collaboration – Opportunities to collaborate should be considered where appropriate when service changes are determined, where there is a viable business case. IT is a service subject to a proposal to collaborate on a regional basis.
 - Involvement – Proposed service changes should be subject to consultation and engagement. There should be evidence that the feedback has been considered prior to the decision being made. A consultation process would be undertaken in respect of collaboration proposals and asset rationalisation.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct equalities implications stemming from this report on any group identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, therefore an impact assessment has not been carried out.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications that relate directly to this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are none.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 There are no consultations that have not been included in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Cabinet are asked to note and endorse the report.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 To ensure that Cabinet is aware of the review work undertaken by the WAO and the resultant findings, conclusion and proposals for improvement.

Author: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Consultees: Corporate Management Team
Councillor B Jones, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance & Governance
Councillor L Phipps, Cabinet Member for Homes & Places
Councillor C Gordon, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Paul Lewis, Acting Head of IT
Mark Williams, Acting Head of Property
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Ros Roberts, Corporate Performance Manager

Appendices:
Appendix 1 WAO report: Local risk based reviews: Asset Management and Information Management and Technology – Caerphilly County Borough Council

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru
Auditor General for Wales

Local risk based reviews: Asset management and Information Management and Technology – **Caerphilly County Borough Council**

Audit year: 2016-17

Date issued: August 2017

Document reference: 469A2017

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

The team who delivered the work comprised Ron Price, Gareth Lewis and Sara-Jane Byrne under the direction of Huw Rees.

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Summary report

The Council has a good understanding of its assets and current IT arrangements but lacks a strategic approach to direct their use

- 1 During April and May 2017, as part of our 2016-17 local risk based work at Caerphilly County Borough Council (the Council), we undertook work in the following areas:
 - Information management and technology (IM&T)
 - We carried out an initial digital risk diagnostic to understand the Council's digital services and identify potential digital risks and issues at the Council. This diagnostic was not designed to provide information that could be relied upon for auditing the Council's financial statements. We also used the findings from the risk diagnostic to identify areas where further, more specific IM&T performance work might be needed.
 - Asset management
 - Our asset management review considered the extent to which the Council's asset management arrangements support strategic and effective decision-making and improvement. This review also looked at the Council's progress in addressing the proposals for improvement we made in our asset management review undertaken in 2013.
- 2 The effective development and innovative use of IM&T provides the enabling and supporting foundation for the digital transformation of public sector services in Wales. It is important that councils have proper digital governance arrangements in place and make the best possible use of their available resources, to modernise and transform digital services. This will include, in the future, contributing to the delivery of the Council's well-being objectives.
- 3 In 2013, we reviewed the Council's asset management arrangements and concluded that:
 - Due to a lack of prioritisation and appropriate governance arrangements for managing assets, the Council did not have an appropriate and agreed Asset Management Strategy which clearly set out how its assets would be used to deliver its priorities and support service improvements.
- 4 In 2013, we made the following proposals for improvement that the Council should:
 - Develop a robust Asset Management Strategy for its property and associated infrastructure. The strategy should:
 - set out a vision for each type of asset that shows how it contributes to the delivery of the Council's priorities;
 - set targets for assessing progress, including the condition and suitability of each asset;

- describe an overall plan for implementing the Strategy; and
 - be approved by members.
 - Ensure that the individual service asset management plans are developed as soon as possible and are used to inform the Council's financial planning process.
 - Finalise its current review of property performance data and agree which data should be monitored and reported at an officer and member level.
 - Develop and implement arrangements to monitor the delivery of the strategy.
 - Formalise the role of the Asset Management Group to improve governance and accountability. This should include:
 - reviewing the membership of the group;
 - developing terms of reference to include responsibility for: leading on all corporate asset management issues; and leading on decisions around individual assets; and
 - ensuring that meetings are recorded appropriately.
- 5 Since our asset management review in 2013, the Council updated its Asset Management Strategy, which was approved by Council in November 2016.
- 6 Following our reviews in April and May 2017, we concluded that **the Council has a good understanding of its assets and current IT arrangements but lacks a strategic approach to direct their use.** We came to this conclusion because:
- the Council has a range of information management and technology (IM&T) related policies, plans and processes but lacks an overarching digital strategy to drive its activities; and
 - the Council recognises the key role its assets have in helping to deliver its priorities but weaknesses in its new Corporate Asset Management Strategy and its delivery undermines its ability to shape the future of its assets.
- 7 We have previously stressed to the Council the benefits of having a robust and strategic approach to managing its assets. This included at the Council's Audit Committee in December 2015. We met with the Council's officers in January 2016 together with Grant Thornton to discuss this. We reinforced our view that a robust asset management plan supported by service asset management plans is more vital in a period of austerity to ensure the Council is using its resources efficiently and to help inform its decisions about savings. Therefore, it is disappointing that the Council has not fully addressed our previous asset management related proposals for improvement.
- 8 This is not the first time we have been critical of the Council's lack of a strategic approach to plan and manage its services. In June 2016, we were critical about the Council's review of its leisure services, which had not been underpinned by a clear vision or an integrated sports and leisure strategy that set a clear direction for future leisure provision. In addition, our recent Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) review has concluded that the majority of tenants' homes remain below

the WHQS due to longstanding inefficient and ineffective programme management and the Council is unlikely to achieve the WHQS by 2020.

- 9 As a result of the findings from our reviews in the past 12-18 months, we are increasingly concerned about the Council's ability to manage large projects and take a strategic and coordinated approach to its services. We have raised similar concerns about the Council's oversight of major programmes previously. The Council introduced its Business Improvement Board in June 2016 to provide strategic overview and direction for its key business improvement projects; leadership and management development; and communication and engagement across the Council to help address this concern. Therefore, as part of our 2017-18 performance audit work, we will carry out a detailed review of the effectiveness of Council's Business Improvement Board in providing strategic overview and direction for the Council's key business improvement projects.

Detailed report

The Council has a good understanding of its assets and current IT arrangements but lacks a strategic approach to direct their use

The Council has a range of information management and technology (IM&T) related policies, plans and processes but lacks an overarching digital strategy to drive its activities

- 10 The Council's strategic vision relating to digital and IM&T is unclear, as it does not have an up to date digital strategy. The Council has a range of IM&T related policies, plans and processes at an operational level. However, because of the lack of an overarching digital/IT strategy, it cannot easily be known if these meet the Council's needs.
- 11 The Council is developing an outline business case to consider whether to join the regional Shared Resource Service (SRS)¹, and is due to consider the business case in the autumn with a decision expected in December. The Council currently has an interim Head of IT, and has put the development of a strategic IT/digital plan on hold pending the decision on joining the SRS. As part of its business case, we would expect the Council to consider its future IM&T/digital needs as this would influence its decision whether to join the SRS or not. If the Council does join the SRS, it will still retain the ultimate responsibility for ensuring any IM&T/digital arrangements it has in place meets the Council's needs.
- 12 The Council takes part in IT benchmarking comparisons. At the moment, the Council feels well placed in terms of its IM&T resource but acknowledges this may not be sufficient should it advance in digital transformation.
- 13 The Council is taking steps to ensure it can meet the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in 2018 and Council staff have reported no specific concerns around IM&T resilience or cyber-security. The Council is ISO27001 Information Security Management accredited and retained its Public Services Network (PSN) connection compliance certificate. These accreditations would suggest that the Council has appropriate incident plans and policies in place. However, we have not looked at these in detail.
- 14 The 2017 quarter two 'Sitemorse'² (website auditing service) index ranked the Council website 37th in the UK, and the best in Wales. The 'Sitemorse' review also highlighted that not all service users have the means to access the website, and

¹ The Shared Resource Service (SRS) is a collaborative ICT provision in South Wales that provides ICT services to a number of public sector organisations.

² Sitemorse is an independent company which undertakes website auditing. [Findings from the Sitemorse INDEX for the Council](#)

accessibility did not score highly, but the performance improved compared to quarter one 2017 and previous years' performance. The Council's website allows for a variety of key online transactions and enquiries.

- 15 We will consider carrying out more specific work, focussing on one or more of the following areas as part of our 2017-18 performance audit programme:
- to explore more fully the Council's approach to digital and IT after it has made a decision about joining the SRS in the autumn;
 - IM&T resilience (IT business continuity, disaster recovery and backups); and
 - Information and cyber security.

The Council recognises the key role its assets have in helping to deliver its priorities but weaknesses in its new Corporate Asset Management Strategy and its delivery undermines its ability to shape the future of its assets

- 16 As set out in paragraph 4, in our review in 2013, we made a proposal for improvement that the Council should develop a robust Asset Management Strategy for its property and associated infrastructure. The Council agreed its Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2016-2026 (the Strategy) in November 2016.
- 17 The Strategy recognises the key role the Council's assets have in delivering the Council's priorities and sets out a series of principles which will influence the individual strategies and activities that underpin the Strategy. These principles include working with other public bodies to deliver joint asset management solutions. The Strategy also outlines a number of outcomes which will be applied to the management of the Council's assets (compliance, condition, suitability, sufficiency, accessibility and sustainability).
- 18 The Strategy states that it is looking at the long-term (10 years) but Section Two only describes activities for the period from 2013 to 2017. The coverage of these activities is also limited. For example, in setting out the activities under Outcomes 3 (Suitability) and 4 (Sufficiency), the Strategy does not include some of the Council's key services such as leisure, waste and social services. These services are not listed in the Strategy as those where they are existing asset strategies in place. The Strategy refers to ongoing work to develop a strategy for its sports and leisure services but this is not yet in place.
- 19 In October 2016, officers presented the Strategy to Cabinet and the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. The Strategy and the related covering committee reports emphasise that the Strategy provides an overview of planned actions to produce the Council's strategic outcomes and that service delivery strategies should identify the assets required over time. The covering committee reports and Strategy also state that these plans will be reviewed to ensure that they accord with the strategic outcomes. However, in March 2017, officers informed us that the Council has not developed service asset management plans due to the ongoing

period of austerity. This is despite us making a proposal for improvement in our 2013 asset management report that the Council should ensure that the individual service asset management plans are developed as soon as possible and are used to inform the Council's financial planning. The Council did not provide us with any completed service asset management plans as part of our review in 2017.

- 20 We also found that there were some key errors in the Strategy which the Council had not picked up. These included dates for actions which pre-dated the development of the Strategy. The Strategy primarily provides a 'look back' at what had taken place rather than providing a clear, strategic direction for the use of the Council's assets.
- 21 It is difficult to see how in its current form, the Council will usefully use the Strategy to shape the way it manages its assets. For example for each of the Council's asset categories, the Strategy does not set out the gap between its existing asset base and where the Council needs to be and the implications for its assets. Neither does the Strategy include information about the Council's capital and revenue expenditure on its main asset categories or forecast future expenditure. Including this additional information and analysis would help provide a more comprehensive and holistic consideration of the Council's assets. We understand the the Council intended that this information would be included in individual asset management plans, but these are not yet in place.
- 22 The former Head of Property provided a helpful position statement of the Council's assets in his first State of the Estate report in July 2016 to the Council's Cabinet. The report set out the overall performance in relation to the Council's assets and included performance relating to energy efficiency and disability access. In the report, it stated that such a report would be provided annually. At the time of our fieldwork in March/April 2017 the Council had not yet prepared an updated State of the Estate report but the Council has informed us that it is scheduled to be tabled as a 'for information' item for the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 November 2017.
- 23 We understand that the Council feels that it has an effective approach to asset management even though there are weaknesses in its recently agreed Strategy. In recent years, the Council has made changes to its asset base and taken steps to rationalise its assets in order to achieve savings. For example, it has closed the Civic Centre in Pontllanfraith and made changes to its stores at its Tir-y-Birth site. The Council has appointed a preferred bidder for the sale of the Pontllanfaith House site and has continued with its 21st century schools programme. During 2016-17, the Council completed the last Phase of the Y Gwindy Welsh Medium campus and Islwyn High School and work is underway at the Abertysswg and Pontlottyn Primary School.
- 24 As outlined in our governance of significant change report, the Council is aware that it has not yet had to make some of the relatively significant or controversial decisions on service changes that other councils have made because it has had a prudent approach to its finances in the past. Overall, the Council has managed to

protect most front line services only making small changes to services, such as reducing library and customer centre opening hours.

- 25 However, the Council acknowledges that as a result of the level of savings it now has to achieve, it will have to make some difficult decisions about the level and nature of its services. This will include decisions which relate to some of its major assets, such as its leisure services and schools. We are also aware that the Council is in the process of carrying out a number of other reviews, which could impact upon the Council's assets. These include libraries, waste, and community centres. As set out in paragraph 11, the Council is also in the process of developing an outline business case to consider whether to join the regional Shared Resource Service for its IT services. We understand the Council is of the view that as a result of these ongoing reviews, it would not be helpful to have a corporate asset management plan and service asset management plans covering those services currently under review. As these reviews are completed, the Council will need to consider if its corporate asset management strategy should be updated to accommodate any asset related issues.
- 26 However, many of these reviews have been ongoing for a while. There is a risk that the Council is considering these reviews and assets in isolation rather than taking a strategic overview of the current and future use of its assets and how these relate to the current and future needs of its services in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act). Part 1 of the Shared Purpose: Shared Future statutory guidance on the Act outlines that applying the requirements of the Act to a core sets of activities, such as asset management, is likely to most effectively secure the type of change required.

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