



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23RD JANUARY 2023

**SUBJECT: AUDIT WALES ‘SPRINGING FORWARD – WORKFORCE’ REPORT
JULY 2022**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee with the Audit Wales report ‘Springing Forward – Workforce’ report, July 2022.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Audit Wales have conducted a review to examine how Councils are strengthening their ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services, including those delivered in partnership with key stakeholders and communities.
- 2.2 The report is attached at Appendix 1 for Members’ consideration.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Policy & Resources Scrutiny Members are asked to
- 1) note the contents of the Audit Wales Springing Forward - Workforce report at Appendix 1
 - 2) scrutinise the management response to the Springing Forward – Workforce report in Appendix 2

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Scrutiny members are part of the Council’s Performance Framework and are a critical part of scrutinising and reviewing matters relating to the workforce.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Audit Wales review examined the Council's overall arrangements and approach in relation to its strategic management of its workforce. They sought to answer the question 'Is the Council's strategic approach strengthening its ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of its services in the short and longer term?' Their focus was on the challenges highlighted during the pandemic that have exacerbated some long-standing workforce issues.
- 5.2 As part of their review, Audit Wales were expecting public bodies to be able to demonstrate that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is integral to their thinking and genuinely shaping what they do.
- 5.3 The project had had three main aims:
- to gain assurance that councils are putting in place arrangements in relation to its workforce to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services;
 - to explain the actions that councils are taking both individually and collectively to strengthen their arrangements; and
 - to inspire councils and other organisations to further strengthen their arrangements through capturing and sharing notable practice examples and learning and making appropriate recommendations.
- 5.4 The review sought to answer the question: Is the Council's strategic approach strengthening its ability to transform adapt and maintain the delivery of its services in the short and longer term? In doing this work we have identified some issues arising as a direct impact of the pandemic as well as some operational planning exacerbated by the pandemic.
- 5.5 Overall, Audit Wales found that the Council's Transformation Strategy prioritises Workforce Development, and the Council maintains a good overview of its current workforce challenges, but recognises it needs to apply the sustainable development principle to strengthen its workforce planning.
- 5.6 Within the report Audit Wales recommend that in developing its service-level workforce plans, the Council should place the sustainable development principle at the heart of its considerations, and specifically ensure it:
- builds on its experience of the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - takes account of longer-term trends that may affect service provision and the efficient use of workforce;
 - aligns with other strategic plans and outcomes;
 - takes account of the needs of staff, service users and partners, and
 - sets out SMART performance measures and appropriate monitoring and reporting arrangements.
- 5.7 The Management response to these recommendations is attached at Appendix 2 for Members consideration.

5.8 Conclusion

Audit Wales finding is that the Council's Transformation Strategy prioritises Workforce Development, and the Council maintains a good overview of its current workforce challenges, but recognises it needs to apply the sustainable development principle to strengthen its workforce planning was based on the following conclusions:

- the Council's Transformation Strategy prioritises Workforce Development and supporting strategies are in place;
- the Council maintains a good overview of its current challenges, and is dealing with the impact that the pandemic has on its workforce, but recognises it needs to formalise and complete its workforce planning arrangements; and
- the Council has monitoring arrangements in place but needs to assure itself as to how it will measure and evaluate progress in delivering its workforce plans.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No assumptions have been made in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has not been completed as this report provides Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee with the Audit Wales report 'Springing Forward – Workforce' report, July 2022.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 All consultation responses have been incorporated in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 1972

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Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Nicola Chapman, HR Service Manager
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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Audit Wales 'Springing Forward – Workforce' report, July 2022
Appendix 2 Management response