

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 27 January 2016
Report Subject	External Regulators and Inspections Reports
Cabinet Member	Not Applicable
Report Author	Internal Audit Manager
Type of Report	Assurance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council receives reports from various external regulators and inspectors in the normal course of events. It is part of the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee to ensure that effective processes are in place for setting and monitoring actions arising from these reports.

This summary report provides assurance to the Audit Committee that the reports have been discussed and considered in the appropriate member committees and action taken in response to the recommendations received.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	To note how reports by external auditors, other regulators and inspectors have been dealt with during 2015.
---	---

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE EXTERNAL REGULATORS AND INSPECTIONS REPORT
1.01	The Local Government (Wales) Measure contains various provisions relating to the work of audit committees. Statutory guidance made under Section 85 of the Measure was issued in June 2012. That guidance

	advised that audit committees should receive and consider reports from external auditors, other regulators and inspectors.
1.02	At an informal meeting between members of the Audit Committee and Chairs and Vice-chairs of Overview and Scrutiny in 2013 it was agreed that officers should put in place a process to monitor all reports issued by external auditors, regulators and inspectors. This to include details of which committees such reports have been reported to.
1.03	Following that meeting officers put in place arrangements for such records to be maintained by the Policy and Performance Team within the Chief Executive's portfolio. Attached as Appendix 1 is a table detailing the reports issued during 2015 by various external regulators and inspectors, a short summary of the findings and the member bodies to which those reports have been reported and when.
1.04	Where a report by an external auditor, other regulator or inspector contains recommendations, it is important that those recommendations receive proper consideration by both officers and members and are responded to. The responses will, on occasion, require an action plan to implement changes and appropriate procedures need to be in place to oversee the implementation of such action plans.
1.05	It is part of the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee to ensure that effective processes are in place for setting and monitoring such action plans. Whilst the Audit Committee has the responsibility for ensuring all audit reports issued by the external auditor are implemented, for other reports the Committee's Terms of Reference make clear it is sufficient that it is satisfied that there are effective processes in place. These processes may, for example, include the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
1.06	Appendix 1 shows all the reports received from external regulators during 2015, the summary findings and response from the Council and where they were reported to.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	With officers in the Policy and Performance Team.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The work of the external regulators, and the actions in response to their reports provide assurance to the Council that adequate and effective controls are in place to mitigate risks.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – External Audit Report Summary.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None Contact Officer: David Webster, Internal Audit Manager. Telephone: 01352 702248 E-mail: david.webster@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Wales Audit Office: works to support the Auditor General as the public sector watchdog for Wales. They aim to ensure that the people of Wales know whether public money is being managed wisely and that public bodies in Wales understand how to improve outcomes.</p> <p>Improvement Plan: the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW): The powers and functions of CSSIW are enabled through legislation. CSSIW has the powers to review Local Authority social services at a local and national level, to inform the public whether services are up to standard, to promote improvement of services and to help safeguard the interests of vulnerable people who use services and their carers. They provide professional advice to Welsh Ministers and policy makers.</p> <p>Estyn: Estyn is the education and training inspectorate for Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting primary and secondary schools and nursery schools maintained by, or receiving funding from, local authorities.</p>