

Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report 2012

Executive Response

This Annual Improvement Report (AIR) is broadly a fair, evidenced and agreeable summary of the position of the Council. The report is a further positive endorsement of another year of achieving continuous improvement in Flintshire.

There are no new statutory recommendations or proposals for Improvement.

Listed below are the principal topics within the AIR. The number in brackets refers to the paragraph in the AIR where the issue can be found

Topic	Issue	Response
Carbon Reduction (11)	Performance	Greater organisational commitment and action on energy usage reduction required
Domestic Waste (15)	Performance	Organisation confident of meeting collection and recycling targets post service changes
Vulnerable Residents (17)	Performance	Council has a full action plan in response to CSSIW recommendations
Education (21)	Performance	Council has a full action plan in response to 2011 Estyn inspection and 2013 monitoring visit
Housing (31)	Achieving the Wales Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)	Council has a revised and updated Housing Business Plan showing achievement of the WHQS by 2022. Negotiations are advanced with the Welsh Housing Task Force on options to achieve WHQS by 2020
Housing Benefits (38)	Performance	The Housing Benefits Services is a priority service for continued local improvement
Economy (41)	Strategic impact	Economic Development continues to be a top Council priority
Performance Systems and Information (46, 64 and 70)	Further improving and simplifying performance systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Improvement Plan and Annual Performance Report formats and contents have been reviewed to improve the impact of the documents • The reviewed and streamlined outcome-based Council Priorities/Improvement Objectives are to be reported in June with a new style Improvement Plan to be published in June 2013 • The Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges will be incorporated in the Improvement Plan • The organisation is improving the consistency of its self-evaluation methods
Governance (63)	Improving Governance systems	The Council has strengthened its arrangements for reviewing and reporting on Governance. A recent Wales Audit Office national study has made positive conclusions on the arrangements in Flintshire
Information Management (66)	Performance	The Council has an adopted ICT and Customer Services Strategy and is reviewing the structure and priorities of the ICT Division

Single Status (80)	Achieving a Single Status Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All work-streams in the 'recovery plan' from 2009 have been completed • A provisional agreement on Part 3 Terms and Conditions has been agreed • Final options on a future Pay and Grading Model are being reviewed against affordability • There is a parallel strategy to settle against potential Equal Pay liabilities
Flintshire Futures (81)	Clear planning for and achievement of efficiency targets through organisational change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governance and management of the Flintshire Futures five work-streams has been improved • Overall achievement of efficiency targets runs at around 85% • Further efficiency target planning is running as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan and Council Priorities review
Human Resources Strategy (82)	Progress with the Strategy	The strategy has been reprioritised and performance of the strategy and the individual work-streams are reported regularly to both Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny
Financial Planning (84)	Publication of the second Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The second MTFP will be published in June 2013 alongside the Improvement Plan • The MTFP will be far more advanced in planning the costs of Council Priorities and investments and in setting new efficiency targets for the period to 2018 • The changing financial national picture and it's impact on Council financial planning is important context
Welsh Language (91)	Performance	The Council has an adopted Welsh Language Plan which is under continuous review