

Wales Audit Office Certificate 1: Improvement Plan 2014/15

August 2014

Executive Response

The Auditor General for Wales has provided a positive Certificate of Compliance in relation to the audit of the Improvement Plan 2014/15 which overall, is a fair and positive summary of the position of the Council. The report is a welcome endorsement of a full year of improved improvement reporting following the introduction of this year's Improvement Plan.

There are no new statutory recommendations or proposals for improvement.

In our response we set out how we will make improvements to ensure full compliance with the spirit and detail of the national guidance.

Listed below are the principal topics highlighted by the Wales Audit Office along with our response.

Issue	Response
Avoid inconsistency and ambiguity when future Plans are produced:	
– ensure that success measures are capable of demonstrating whether planned outcomes are being met;	The example to demonstrate this point has perhaps not been fully understood; as the planned outcome is “Independent living”, to which all these measures contribute. Some planned outcomes need to be measured with ‘proxies’ as exact measurement may only be achieved over a long period of time or cannot be directly measured.
– if future targets are intentionally lower than recent outturn performance, explain why;	Yes, noted.
– focus the Improvement Plan on areas where the Council intends to make a “bigger impact’ – and reflect this in the targets; and	The example to illustrate this point “effective streetlighting” does contribute to community safety, which is why it has been included.
– ensure that aspirations to improve outcomes are reflected in achievement measures which target improved performance.	Noted; this is an area that needs to be improved in a small minority of cases.
Explore cost-effective ways to improve access to, and awareness of, the 2014-15 Improvement Plan (and other key plans) – for all citizens	Access to key documents is usually searched using a key search engine such as Google or using the ‘search’ tool on the FCC website itself. Further opportunities to promote the Improvement Plan will be taken with the introduction of the new e-newsletter.