

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 13 June 2024
Report Subject	Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Report Author	Strategic Performance Advisor
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes audit was undertaken to help fulfil the Auditor General's duties under Section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and Section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This was a national study and Audit Wales undertook this work at Flintshire County Council during July and September 2023 and report was issued in December 2023.

The audit sought to:

- Gain assurance that the performance information the Council provides to senior officers and elected members enables them to understand the service user perspective and the outcome of its activities;
- Gain assurance that this information forms part of the Council's arrangements to secure value for money in the use of its resources and its application of the sustainable development principle; and
- Identify opportunities for the Council to strengthen its arrangements.

No formal recommendations were identified and three recommendations for improvement have arisen from this audit, with the Council providing a planned action in response to the recommendations for improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee considers the response to the recommendations for improvement.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: SERVICE USER PERSPECTIVE AND OUTCOMES REPORT
1.01	The scope of the audit focused on the performance information provided to senior officers and senior members (senior leaders) about service user perspective and outcomes, and how this information is used. Audit Wales did not undertake a full review of the Council's performance management arrangements or an in-depth review of the quality of the data that the Council collects. Neither did the review focus on engagement with service users on specific service changes or the development of policies and strategies.
1.02	<p>The scope of the audit was to answer the question 'Does the Council's performance data enable senior leaders to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of its activities to effectively manage its performance?'</p> <p>This was done by exploring the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the perspective of service users? • Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the outcomes of the Council's activities? • Does the Council have robust arrangements to ensure that the data provided is accurate? • Does the Council use the information to help it achieve its outcomes? • Does the Council review the effectiveness of its arrangements?
1.03	<p>Audit Wales focused on the Council's key performance reporting mechanisms:</p> <p>The Council's Cabinet, Chief Officer Team and Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive six monthly performance reports that include details of service performance, progress towards wellbeing objectives and financial monitoring information. These forums also receive various annual performance reports. These include the Council's Annual Self-assessment, complaints report and the Director of Social Services' report.</p>
1.04	Audit Wales found that limited performance information is provided to senior leaders to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities. This audit confirms what the Council are already aware of and these are highlighted within the Corporate Self-assessment findings (questions within Theme G – Customer and Community Engagement), and actions were already in development to address these findings.
1.05	<p>The three recommendations for the Council following the audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation One: Information on the perspective of the service user The Council should strengthen the information it provides to its senior leaders to enable them to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users. • Recommendation Two: Outcomes information The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them

	<p>evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and the intended outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation Three: Arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data The Council needs to assure itself that it has robust arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the data it provides to senior leaders relating to service user perspective and outcomes. <p>The Council's response and action plan to the Audit Wales report and the three recommendations is attached at Appendix C (Organisational Response Form). These actions were already under development in relation to the Corporate Self-Assessment findings (as mentioned above).</p> <p>Additionally, Flintshire County Council also asked Audit Wales if they could identify another Council to liaise with for best practice or provide examples of what this looked like and Audit Wales are currently reaching out to England for this.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>There are no specific resource implications to Recommendations One and Two, however, it has been identified that for Recommendation Three, arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data beyond existing arrangements would require additional capacity and resources that the present financial environment would not allow.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT		
3.01	<p>An Impact Assessment is not required as this report is summarising the work already completed by Audit Wales when undertaken their audit. Findings from the Audit have been risk managed and considered when providing a response to the three recommendations and will be monitored ongoing.</p> <p>It has been identified for Recommendation Three, that it is the responsibility of service area to review the accuracy of their data and the information it provides to senior leaders. Arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of data beyond existing arrangements would require additional capacity that the present financial environment would not allow.</p> <p>All audits, regulatory and inspection work carried out by Audit Wales, including this report considers the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Development Principle and the Well-being Goals as part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 <p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Long-term</td> <td>The development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance that services are inclusive for all. Strengthening and evaluating the Council is</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	The development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance that services are inclusive for all. Strengthening and evaluating the Council is
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	delivering its objective and the intended outcomes will deliver, short, medium and long-term benefit to our citizens and communities.
Prevention	The development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance the opportunities for the Council to consider the needs of the citizens of Flintshire and undertake preventative measures.
Integration	Consultation and Engagement Strategy, and as part of the development of this strategy a key focus will be to consider the needs of citizens of Flintshire and how we gather and use this information and the Council's intended outcomes.
Collaboration	Portfolios already use the opportunity to work collaboratively (also share data and information), where possible. However, an opportunity to further improve collaboration will be through the development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy.
Involvement	The development of a Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance that services are involving the relevant persons, are inclusive for all and will help to shape services.
Well-being Goals Impact	
Prosperous Wales	To use current resources efficiently and proportionately.
Resilient Wales	Creating services that are prevention focused and support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change, using perspective of service users / citizens of Flintshire to inform decision making and supporting change.
Healthier Wales	Consultation and Engagement Strategy will further enhance that the Council considers and enables the citizens / service user of Flintshire to benefit future health.
More equal Wales	Services are delivered in a way that are inclusive for all. Consideration given to local and regional gaps in provision.
Cohesive Wales	Developing a Consultation and Engagement Strategy and using data to identify gaps for service improvement to ensure communities are well-connected.

	Vibrant Wales	Developing a Consultation and Engagement Strategy and using data to identify gaps for service improvement to enhance a vibrant Wales.
	Globally responsible Wales	Actions proposed to the recommendations of the audit will support with future improvements to the well-being of the citizens of Flintshire.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>Audit Wales engaged with Cabinet Members, Senior Leaders and Officers as part of their audit.</p> <p>Governance and Audit Committee, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet will receive this report.</p> <p>In response to the Recommendation One, a key focus will be to develop a Consultation and Engagement Strategy to strengthen how we consult and use this information.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	<p>Appendix A: Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes (Welsh)</p> <p>Appendix B: Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes (English)</p> <p>Appendix C: Organisational Response Form</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	A number of accessible background documents and information is available on Audit Wales' website .

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Emma Heath (Strategic Performance Advisor)</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 702 744</p> <p>E-mail: emma.heath@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Audit Wales: Work 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>