



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

# Annual Improvement Report – **Conwy County Borough Council**

Audit year: 2018-19

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This Annual Improvement Report has been prepared on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales by Gwilym Bury, Charlotte Owen, and Jeremy Evans under the direction of Huw Rees.

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This document is also available in Welsh.

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# Summary report

## 2018-19 performance audit work

- 1 To decide the range and nature of the work we would undertake during the year, we considered how much we already know from all previous audit and inspection work and from other sources of information including Conwy County Borough Council (the Council) own mechanisms for review and evaluation. For 2018-19, we undertook improvement assessment work; an assurance and risk assessment project and work in relation to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act at all councils. At some councils, we supplemented this work with local risk-based audits, identified in the Audit Plan for 2018-19.
- 2 The work carried out since the last Annual Improvement Report (AIR), including that of the relevant regulators, is set out in [Exhibit 1](#).

## The Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement but, as with all councils in Wales, it faces challenges going forward

- 3 Based on, and limited to, the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure (2009) during 2019-20. However, all councils face significant financial pressures which will need continued attention in the short and medium term to enable them to reach a stable and sustainable financial position.

## Recommendations and proposals for improvement

- 4 Given the wide range of services provided by the Council and the challenges it is facing, it would be unusual if we did not find things that can be improved. The Auditor General is able to:
  - make proposals for improvement – if proposals are made to the Council, we would expect it to do something about them and we will follow up what happens;
  - make formal recommendations for improvement – if a formal recommendation is made, the Council must prepare a response to that recommendation within 30 working days;
  - conduct a special inspection, publish a report and make recommendations; and
  - recommend to ministers of the Welsh Government that they intervene in some way.

- 5 During the course of the year, the Auditor General did not make any formal recommendations. However, we have made a number of proposals for improvement and these are repeated in this report. We will monitor progress against them and relevant recommendations made in our national reports ([Appendix 3](#)) as part of our improvement assessment work.

## Audit, regulatory and inspection work reported during 2018-19

Exhibit 1: audit, regulatory and inspection work reported during 2018-19

Description of the work carried out since the last Annual Improvement Report, including that of the relevant regulators, where relevant.

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
February 2019	<p><b>Assurance and Risk Assessment</b></p> <p>Project to identify the level of audit assurance and/or where further audit work may be required in future years in relation to risks to the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources;</li> <li>• putting in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement; and</li> <li>• acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle in setting wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Arising from our review and discussions with the Council we identified the following challenges for the Council for inclusion in our 2019-20 audit programme<sup>1</sup>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assurance and risk assessment: to identify the level of audit assurance and/or where further audit work may be required in future years in relation to risks to the Council putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources.</li> <li>• financial sustainability: a project common to all local councils that will assess financial sustainability in light of current and anticipated future challenges.</li> <li>• social services budgetary and cost pressures: to assess the challenges associated with social services budgets.</li> </ul>	Not applicable

<sup>1</sup> Subject to change should any matters of risk arise in year

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
	objectives and taking steps to meet them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>digital: an overview of the level of digital risk the Council faces through a diagnostic review.</li> <li>Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFG Act) examinations: Focus on leisure services.</li> </ul>	
June 2019	<p><b>Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFG Act) examinations</b></p> <p>Examination of the extent to which the Council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when taking the following step:</p> <p><b>Early Intervention and Prevention for Children, Young People and Families Project ('the step') towards meeting its well-being objectives.</b> The Council has developed a family centre model to deliver its early intervention and prevention approach. The model enables families to access support in the community from multi-agency teams. We reviewed the processes the Council is following to develop and implement the family centre model.</p>	<p><b>In a challenging financial climate, the Council is taking promising action to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle when taking steps to implement its Early Intervention and Prevention for Children, Young People and Families Project but needs to consider its next steps to further embrace the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Council is taking steps to balance current and long-term needs through the focus on long-term prevention but needs to consider the financial sustainability of the work;</li> <li>the Council understands the needs of local families and has considered how family centres can address those needs and prevent problems escalating, but should further consider how preventative programmes could be used more widely across the Council;</li> <li>the Council has taken an integrated, multi-agency approach to delivering the work and has considered how outcomes will benefit its partners as well as its own well-being objectives but there are opportunities for the Council to strengthen its approach;</li> </ul>	The Council elected to undertake a number of actions as a result of the review: these are detailed in our full report.

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaborative working is a key component of the Council's early intervention and prevention approach and it has worked closely with partners on the design and delivery of the family centres but the project links with neighbouring councils could be strengthened; and</li> <li>• the Council is effectively involving stakeholders in the design and delivery of its family centres and is responsive to local needs but recognises further work is needed to involve stakeholders and learn from its approach to date</li> </ul>	
December 2018	<p><b>Annual audit letter 2017-18</b> Letter summarising the key messages arising from the Auditor General's statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and his reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice. The Annual Audit Letter is in <b>Appendix 2</b> of this report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources;</li> <li>• I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources;</li> <li>• my work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the 2018-19 accounts or key financial systems; and</li> <li>• the Council has a track record of managing its finances but the financial challenge is significant over the medium term</li> </ul>	None
<b>Local risk-based performance audit</b>			
December 2018	<b>Local government use of data local report</b>	The accompanying national report to the local report concluded that local authorities across Wales	P1 The Authority already holds a wealth of data and breaking down



Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
		<p>are slow to develop a culture that values and uses data effectively to improve services and outcomes.</p>	<p>departmental silos to integrate data across the Authority will help other services to put it to best use. The Authority is well-placed to begin this process by building on the work of the Conwy and Denbighshire Public Service Board (PSB) and the collaboration work done to produce the Social Services and PSB Assessments.</p> <p>P2 The Authority's evolving work on making better use of data could be strengthened with a clear data vision and services working within an agreed corporate approach. Completing a data audit to identify who holds what data, for what purpose and how it is used will help the Authority identify how best to streamline and integrate data. Setting corporate data management standards and coding for services' core data will also support data sharing across different teams and service areas and identify where there are opportunities to reduce duplication in data collection.</p>

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
			<p>P3 The Authority collects data at almost every interaction with its citizens, whether face to face, over the phone or on social media. Data tool respondents cited culture, resources, data protection legislation and the timeliness of data as challenges in both gathering and making better use of data. To address this, the Authority should provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share and update data sharing protocols. Corporate data collection and management standards will also improve compatibility of different datasets, therefore facilitating data integration across service areas and sharing with other partners, such as health bodies.</p> <p>P4 A data tool response showed that within the Authority, 'the IT and Welsh Language services have been commended for the use of a combined in-house developed</p>

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
			<p>'pop-up' to gather up-to-date information regarding IT asset usage and Welsh Language skills.' The Authority should build on this positive work and map the staff who have a role in analysing and managing data to build and develop capacity in data usage. This will enable it to effectively invest and support the development of staff data analytical, mining and segmentation skills. Investing to make better use of data will result in better outcomes for citizens and create long term efficiencies for the Authority. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the perfect impetus for the Authority to think long-term.</p> <p>P5 The Authority should set data reporting standards to ensure the data that is presented to decision makers is accessible, easily understandable and supports decision makers to fulfil their responsibilities.</p>

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
March 2019	Follow up review on proposals for improvement	<b>The Council has satisfactory processes for addressing proposals for improvement and recommendations from the Wales Audit Office.</b>	None
June 2019	Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements	<p><b>The Council has addressed most of the recommendations in our national safeguarding report but could strengthen some of its arrangements and aspects of performance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Council has clear arrangements for overseeing whether it is meeting its safeguarding responsibilities and a strong culture that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, but some arrangements could be stronger;</li> <li>• the Council could improve its safeguarding training arrangements; and</li> <li>• the Council monitors and evaluates appropriate safeguarding information and has identified some areas of under-performance</li> </ul>	<p>P1 The Council should improve its approach to safeguarding training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Council needs to assure itself that all staff have had mandatory safeguarding training and improve the rate of compliance.</li> <li>• the Council should consider amending the performance measure of 'percentage of staff receiving training within 12 months of commencing post' to a shorter timeframe.</li> <li>• the Council should accelerate the rate at which staff can complete the mandatory Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (VAWDASV) training, particularly in the Education – Non schools service.</li> </ul>

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Council should make sure its proposed safeguarding refresher training for elected members takes place</li> <li>• the Council should make clear how often mandatory safeguarding training for staff needs to be refreshed.</li> <li>• the Council should clarify if safeguarding training is mandatory for school governors.</li> </ul> <p>P2 The Council should address the areas of under performance it has identified</p> <p>P3 The Council needs to assure itself that schools have robust safeguarding arrangements and encourage schools to adopt corporate safeguarding policies, such as the corporate Engaging Volunteers Policy.</p> <p>P4 The Council should ensure it is able to monitor volunteer information centrally, including any training records, Disclosure and Barring Service checks.</p>

Issue date	Brief description	Conclusions	Proposals for improvement
<b>Improvement planning and reporting</b>			
April 2018	<b>Wales Audit Office annual improvement audit</b> Review of the Council's published plans for delivering on improvement objectives.	The Council has complied with its statutory improvement planning duties.	None
October 2018	<b>Wales Audit Office annual assessment of performance audit</b> Review of the Council's published performance assessment.	The Council has complied with its statutory improvement reporting duties.	None
<b>Reviews by inspection and regulation bodies</b>			
Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Estyn	<b>There were no Conwy County Borough Council inspections in this period, but as usual Estyn inspected schools and services that are registered with CiW were subject to regular review</b>		Not Applicable

# Appendix 1

## Status of this report

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (the Measure) requires the Auditor General to undertake a forward-looking annual improvement assessment, and to publish an annual improvement report, for each improvement authority in Wales. Improvement authorities (defined as local councils, national parks, and fire and rescue authorities) have a general duty to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of [their] functions'.

The annual improvement assessment considers the likelihood that an authority will comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. The assessment is also the main piece of work that enables the Auditor General to fulfil his duties. Staff of the Wales Audit Office, on behalf of the Auditor General, produce the annual improvement report. The report discharges the Auditor General's duties under section 24 of the Measure, by summarising his audit and assessment work in a published annual improvement report for each authority. The report also discharges his duties under section 19 to issue a report certifying that he has carried out an improvement assessment under section 18 and stating whether (as a result of his improvement plan audit under section 17) he believes that the authority has discharged its improvement planning duties under section 15.

The Auditor General may also, in some circumstances, carry out special inspections (under section 21), which will be reported to the authority and Ministers, and which he may publish (under section 22). An important ancillary activity for the Auditor General is the co-ordination of assessment and regulatory work (required by section 23), which takes into consideration the overall programme of work of all relevant regulators at an improvement authority. The Auditor General may also take account of information shared by relevant regulators (under section 33) in his assessments.

# Appendix 2

## Annual Audit Letter

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Please contact us in Welsh or English.

Cysylltwch â ni'n Gymraeg neu'n Saesneg.

Councillor Gareth Jones – Leader,  
Iwan Davies – Chief Executive  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Bodlondeb  
Conwy  
LL32 8DU

**Reference:** 1001A2018-19

**Date issued:** 20 December 2018

Dear Councillor Jones and Mr Davies

### Annual Audit Letter - Conwy County Borough Council 2017-18

This letter summarises the key messages arising from my statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

This letter summarises the key messages arising from my statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and my reporting responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice.

#### The Council complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting and use of resources

It is Conwy County Borough Council's (the Council's) responsibility to:

- put systems of internal control in place to ensure the regularity and lawfulness of transactions and to ensure that its assets are secure;
- maintain proper accounting records;
- prepare a Statement of Accounts in accordance with relevant requirements; and
- establish and keep under review appropriate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.



The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires me to:

- provide an audit opinion on the accounting statements;
- review the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources; and
- issue a certificate confirming that I have completed the audit of the accounts.

Local authorities in Wales prepare their accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This code is based on International Financial Reporting Standards.

The draft financial statements were shared with us on 20 June 2018 which was earlier than the statutory deadline of 30 June 2018. The draft financial statements were prepared to a reasonable standard and were generally supported by comprehensive and timely working papers. The key matters arising from the audit of the financial statements were reported to members of the Audit and Governance Committee in my Audit of Financial Statements report on the 24 September 2018.

On 28 September 2018, I issued an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements confirming that they present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and transactions. I also issued the certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts had been completed on the same day.

**I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

My consideration of the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness has been based on the audit work undertaken on the accounts as well as placing reliance on the work completed under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The Auditor General published his Annual Improvement Report in September 2018 and concluded that the Council was meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement.

**My work to date on certification of grant claims and returns has not identified significant issues that would impact on the 2018-19 accounts or key financial systems**

My ongoing work on the certification of grants claims and returns has not identified any significant issues to date in relation to the accounts or the Council's key financial systems. I will report any key issues to the Strategic Director – Finance and Efficiencies once this year's programme of certification work is complete.

**The Council has a track record of managing its finances, but the financial challenge is significant over the medium term**

Austerity funding remains the most significant challenge facing local government bodies in Wales and these financial pressures are likely to continue for the medium term. The recent provisional local government funding settlement will see the Council's settlement

decrease by 0.3% on a like for like basis giving an overall cash reduction of £0.464 million compared with 2018-19.

In 2017-18, the Council managed within its net revenue budget but reduced its useable reserves by £2 million. As at 31 March 2018, the Council had useable reserves of £22.7 million, £6.3 million in the General Fund reserve and a further £16.4 million in earmarked reserves.

In setting its 2018-19 budget, the Council identified a resource shortfall of £11.3 million, which was funded with a combination of savings £6.1 million, use of balances £2.4 million and an increase in council tax £2.8 million. Budget monitoring information as at 30 September 2018 shows that the Council is projecting a balanced budget in 2018-19, however, this is after addressing further significant budgetary pressures in social services. These additional in year pressures have been funded from reserves and balances (net £2 million) which results in the general balances being depleted further with just £2.4 million remaining. Work is being done to minimise any further impact on the 2018-19 budgetary position.

Since 2013-14, the Council has delivered £48 million of savings and raised an additional £14 million in Council Tax income but further savings and Council Tax rises will be required in the future. The Council's latest medium term financial plan projects a revenue funding shortfall of £27.5 million over the two-year period 2019-20 to 2020-21. In addressing the £15.5 million shortfall in 2019-20, the Council has already supported proposals, subject to the Council's final budget determination in March 2019, to increase Council Tax by 11.6% and apply budget reductions of 4% for Education and Social Services and 7% for all other services. Plans are being put in place to achieve these budget reductions through both efficiencies and cuts to services.

Given the recent rapid depletion of reserves and the substantial level of financial pressures in the short to medium term, the current budget approach is not sustainable.

The financial audit fee for 2017-18 is currently expected to be in line with the agreed fee set out in the Annual Audit Plan.

Yours sincerely,



**Derwyn Owen**  
**Engagement Director**  
**For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales**

cc: Andrew Kirkham, Strategic Director – Finance and Efficiencies

# Appendix 3

## National report recommendations 2018-19

### Exhibit 2: national report recommendations 2018-19

Summary of proposals for improvement relevant to local government, included in national reports published by the Wales Audit Office, since publication of the last AIR.

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
October 2018	<u><a href="#">Procuring Residual and Food Waste Treatment Capacity</a></u>	<p>R1 The projections for the three residual waste projects in the Programme assume that, across the 14 councils involved, the overall amount of residual waste will increase through the lifetime of the contracts. If these projections are accurate then something significant would have to occur beyond 2040 to reach zero waste across these council areas by 2050. If the projections are not accurate then there is the risk that councils will pay for capacity they do not need. <b>We recommend that the Welsh Government:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in reviewing the Towards Zero Waste strategy, considers how its ambition of there being no residual waste by 2050 aligns with current projections for residual waste treatment; and</li> <li>• works with councils to consider the impact of changes in projections on the likely cost of residual waste projects and any mitigating action needed to manage these costs.</li> </ul> <p>R2 The Welsh Government’s programme support to date has mainly focused on project development and procurement. Now that most of the projects are operational, the focus has</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
		<p>shifted to contract management. <b>We recommend that the Welsh Government continue its oversight of projects during the operational phase by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>building on its existing model of providing experienced individuals to assist with project development and procurement and making sure input is available to assist with contract management if required;</b></li> <li>• <b>setting out its expectations of councils regarding contract management;</b></li> <li>• <b>ensuring partnerships revisit their waste projections and associated risks periodically, for example to reflect updated population projections or economic forecasts; and</b></li> <li>• <b>obtaining from partnerships basic management information on gate fees paid, amount of waste sent to facilities and quality of contractor service.</b></li> </ul>
November 2018	<a href="#"><u>Local Government Services to Rural Communities</u></a>	<p>R1 Socio economic change, poor infrastructure and shifts in provision of key services and facilities has resulted in the residualisation of communities in rural Wales. <b>We recommend that Welsh Government support public bodies to deliver a more integrated approach to service delivery in rural areas by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>refreshing rural grant programmes to create sustainable financial structures, with multi-year allocations; and</b></li> <li>• <b>helping people and businesses make the most of digital connectivity through targeted and more effective business and adult education support programmes.</b></li> </ul> <p>R2 The role of Public Service Boards is evolving but there are opportunities to articulate a clearer and more ambitious shared vision for rural Wales (see paragraphs 2.2 to 2.9 and</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
		<p>2.28 to 2.31). <b>We recommend that PSB public services partners respond more effectively to the challenges faced by rural communities by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>assessing the strengths and weaknesses of their different rural communities using the Welsh Governments Rural Proofing Tool and identify and agree the local and strategic actions needed to support community sustainability; and</b></li> <li>• <b>ensuring the Local Well-Being Plan sets out a more optimistic and ambitious vision for ‘place’ with joint priorities co-produced by partners and with citizens to address agreed challenges.</b></li> </ul> <p>R3 To help sustain rural communities, public services need to think differently in the future (see paragraphs 3.1 to 3.12). <b>We recommend councils provide a more effective response to the challenges faced by rural communities by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ensuring service commissioners have cost data and qualitative information on the full range of service options available; and</b></li> <li>• <b>using citizens’ views on the availability, affordability, accessibility, adequacy and acceptability of council services to shape the delivery and integration of services.</b></li> </ul> <p>R4 To help sustain rural communities, public services need to act differently in the future (see paragraphs 3.1 to 3.12). <b>We recommend councils do more to develop community resilience and self-help by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>working with relevant bodies such as the Wales Co-operative Centre to support social enterprise and more collaborative business models;</b></li> </ul>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing tailored community outreach for those who face multiple barriers to accessing public services and work;</li> <li>• enhancing and recognising the role of town and community councils by capitalising on their local knowledge and supporting them to do more;</li> <li>• encouraging a more integrated approach to service delivery in rural areas by establishing pan-public service community hubs, networks of expertise, and clusters of advice and prevention services;</li> <li>• enabling local action by supporting community asset transfer identifying which assets are suitable to transfer, and having the right systems in place to make things happen; and</li> <li>• improving community-based leadership by developing networks of interest, training and coaching, and encouraging volunteering.</li> </ul>
November 2018	<p><b><u>Waste Management in Wales: Municipal Recycling</u></b></p>	<p>R1 Benchmarking work has found that the cost of certain waste management services show surprising variation (paragraphs 1.31-1.39). <b>The Welsh Government should work with councils to understand better the basis of the variation in spending on waste management services that are fundamentally the same and ensure that waste management costs are accounted for in a consistent way.</b></p> <p>R2 The Welsh Government believes that, if applied optimally, its Collections Blueprint offers the most cost-effective overall means of collecting recyclable resources but is planning further analysis (paragraphs 1.40-1.51). <b>When undertaking its further analysis to understand better the reasons for differences in councils' reported costs, and the impact on costs where councils have adopted the Collections Blueprint, we recommend that the Welsh Government:</b></p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explores how the cost of collecting dry recyclables may affect the overall cost of providing kerbside waste management services to households; and</li> <li>• compares the actual costs with the costs modelled previously as part of the Welsh Government-commissioned review of the Collections Blueprint for councils that now operate the Collections Blueprint.</li> </ul> <p>R3 The Welsh Government has undertaken to consider alternatives to the current weight-based recycling targets which can better demonstrate the delivery of its ecological footprint and carbon reduction goals (paragraphs 2.38-2.45). <b>We recommend that the Welsh Government replace or complement the current target to recycle, compost and reuse wastes with performance measures to refocus recycling on the waste resources that have the largest impact on carbon reduction, and/or are scarce. We recognise that the Welsh Government may need to consider the affordability of data collection for any alternative means of measurement.</b></p> <p>R4 In refreshing Towards Zero Waste, the Welsh Government needs to show that wider sustainability benefits sought through municipal recycling offer value and cannot be more readily attained in other ways and at lower cost including, but not necessarily limited to, other waste management interventions (paragraphs 2.52-2.53). <b>The Welsh Government should demonstrate in the revised waste strategy that not only is it possible to recycle a greater proportion of municipal waste, but how doing so maximises its contribution to achieving its sustainable development objectives.</b></p>
November 2018	<b><u>Provision of Local Government Services to Rural</u></b>	R1 Local authorities need to do more to make CATs (Community Asset Transfers) simpler and more appealing,

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
	<u>Communities: Community Asset Transfer</u>	<p>help build the capacity of community and town councils, give them more guidance in raising finance, and look to support other community development models such as social enterprises that support social value and citizen involvement. <b>In addition, we recommend that local authorities monitor and publish CAT numbers and measure the social impact of CATs.</b></p> <p>R2 Local authorities have significant scope to provide better and more visible help and support before, during, and after the community asset transfer process. <b>We conclude that there is considerable scope to improve the business planning, preparation, and aftercare for community asset transfer. We recommend that local authorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>identify community assets transfer’s role in establishing community hubs, networks of expertise and clusters of advice and prevention services;</b></li> <li>• <b>work with town and community councils to develop their ability to take on more CATs;</b></li> <li>• <b>identify which assets are suitable to transfer, and clarify what the authority needs to do to enable their transfer;</b></li> <li>• <b>ensure their CAT policy adequately covers aftercare, long term support, post transfer support, signposting access to finance, and sharing the learning about works well; and</b></li> <li>• <b>support community-based leadership by developing networks of interest, training and coaching, and encouraging volunteering.</b></li> </ul>
December 2018	<u>The maturity of local government in use of data</u>	<p>R1 <b>Part 1 of the report highlights the importance of creating a strong data culture and clear leadership to make better use of data. We recommend that local authorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>have a clear vision that treats data as a key resource;</b></li> </ul>



Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establish corporate data standards and coding that all services use for their core data;</li> <li>• undertake an audit to determine what data is held by services and identify any duplicated records and information requests; and</li> <li>• create a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services.</li> </ul> <p><b>R2 Part 2 of the report notes that whilst it is important that authorities comply with relevant data protection legislation, they also need to share data with partners to ensure citizens receive efficient and effective services. Whilst these two things are not mutually exclusive, uncertainty on data protection responsibilities is resulting in some officers not sharing data, even where there is agreement to provide partners with information.</b> We recommend that authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share; and</li> <li>• review and update data sharing protocols to ensure they support services to deliver their data sharing responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p><b>R3 In Part 3 of our report, we conclude that adequate resources and sufficient capacity are ongoing challenges. However, without upskilling staff to make better use of data, authorities are missing opportunities to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.</b> We recommend that authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify staff who have a role in analysing and managing data to remove duplication and free up resources to build and develop capacity in data usage; and</li> </ul>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• invest and support the development of staff data analytical, mining and segmentation skills.</li> </ul> <p><b>R4 Part 4 of our report highlights that authorities have more to do to create a data-driven decision-making culture and to unlock the potential of the data they hold. We recommend that local authorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set data reporting standards to ensure minimum data standards underpin decision making; and</li> <li>• make more open data available.</li> </ul>
March 2019	<u><a href="#">Waste Management in Wales - Preventing waste</a></u>	<p><b>R1 Increasing the focus on waste prevention to reflect the overall aims of Towards Zero Waste</b></p> <p>Available data on the amount of waste produced suggests mixed progress to deliver the Welsh Government’s waste prevention targets. We recommend that the Welsh Government:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) revisits the relative priority it gives to recycling and waste prevention as part of its review of Towards Zero Waste;</li> <li>b) sets out clearly the expectations on different organisations and sectors for waste prevention; and</li> <li>c) revisits its overall waste prevention targets and the approach it has taken to monitor them in light of progress to date, examples from other countries and in the context of current projections about waste arising through to 2050.</li> </ol> <p><b>R2 Improving data on commercial, industrial, construction and demolition waste</b></p> <p>The Welsh Government is a partner in initial work to assess the feasibility of developing a new digital solution to track all waste. If this preferred option does not succeed, we recommend that the Welsh Government works with Natural Resources Wales to explore the costs and benefits of other options to improve non-municipal waste data in Wales, including additional powers to require waste data from businesses.</p>

Date of report	Title of review	Recommendation
		<p><b>R3 Enhancing producer responsibility and using more legal, financial and fiscal levers</b></p> <p>The Welsh Government has opportunities to influence waste prevention through legislation and financial incentives. It can also influence changes at UK level where fiscal matters are not devolved. We recommend that the Welsh Government consider whether provisions to extend producer responsibility and the use of financial powers such as grant conditions, fiscal measures and customer charges and incentives, are needed to promote and to prioritise waste prevention.</p>

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