

FRIDAY, 1 MARCH 2024

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A **MULTI-LOCATION MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN, SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT **10.00 AM ON FRIDAY, 8TH MARCH, 2024** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA.

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Julie Owens
Telephone (Direct Line):	01267 224088
E-Mail:	juowens@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP:-

8 MEMBERS PLUS FOUR LAY PERSONS WITH VOTING RIGHTS

PLAID CYMRU GROUP (4)

- | | | |
|----|------------|----------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Kim Broom |
| 2. | Councillor | Karen Davies |
| 3. | Councillor | Alex Evans |
| 4. | Councillor | Elwyn Williams |

LABOUR GROUP (2)

- | | | |
|----|------------|----------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Phil Warlow |
| 2. | Councillor | Janet Williams |

INDEPENDENT GROUP (1)

- | | | |
|----|------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Giles Morgan [Vice-Chair] |
|----|------------|---------------------------|

UNAFFILIATED (1)

- | | | |
|----|------------|---------|
| 1. | Councillor | Vacancy |
|----|------------|---------|

EXTERNAL VOTING LAY MEMBERS

Period of appointment – until the Local Government Elections in May 2027

- | | |
|----|----------------------------|
| 1. | Mrs Julie James |
| 2. | Mr Malcolm MacDonald |
| 3. | Mr David MacGregor [Chair] |
| 4. | Mrs Karen Jones |

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS
3. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY AUDIT WALES:-
 - 3.1 AUDIT WALES WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE 5 - 24
 - 3.2 USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: SERVICE USER PERSPECTIVE AND OUTCOMES - CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL 25 - 44
 - 3.3 AUDIT WALES FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF CORPORATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFEGUARDING - CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL 45 - 74
4. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN UPDATE 2023/24 75 - 86
5. INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS 87 - 94
6. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25 & PLANNED COVERAGE FOR 2024-27 95 - 102
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8. HOUSING RENT ARREARS 175 - 182
9. GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTION LOG 183 - 188
10. GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 189 - 194
11. MINUTES OF RELEVANT GROUPS TO THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE:-
 - 11.1 MINUTES OF THE GRANT PANEL 02 OCTOBER 2023 199 - 204
12. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 15 DECEMBER 2023 205 - 212

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2024

AUDIT WALES WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Purpose:

To note the quarterly update on Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable up to December 2023.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To note the quarterly update on Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable up to December 2023

Reasons:

The Council has a duty to consider regulatory report findings, recommendations and proposals for improvement.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted NO

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Cllr. Philip Hughes

Directorate:
Audit Wales

Report Author:
Audit Wales

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUDIT WALES WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

The quarterly update on Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable up to December 2023 gives an overview of progress with audit work relevant to Carmarthenshire County Council.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

The report is an Audit Wales Report and any implications are detailed within the report.

Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – Carmarthenshire County Council

Quarterly Update: 31 December 2023

Annual Audit Summary

Description	Timetable	Status
A report summarising completed audit work since the last Annual Audit Summary, which was issued in January 2022.	<u>Report issued to the Council February 2023</u>	Complete

Financial Audit work

Description	Scope	Timetable	Status
Audit of the Council's 2022-23 statement of accounts	To confirm whether the statement of accounts provides a true and fair view.	Audit Opinion by 30 November 2023	Complete – Audit Opinion provided 31 October 2023
Audit of the Dyfed Pension Fund 2022-23 statement of accounts	To confirm whether the statement of accounts provides a true and fair view.	Audit Opinion by 30 November 2023	Complete – Audit Opinion provided 31 October 2023

Description	Scope	Timetable	Status
Audit of the Swansea Bay City Deal 2022-23 statement of accounts	To confirm whether the statement of accounts provides a true and fair view.	Audit Opinion by 30 November 2023	Complete – Audit Opinion provided 23 November 2023
Audit of the 2022-23 Return for Wales Pension Partnership	To confirm that the return has been properly completed.	Audit Opinion by 30 November 2023	Complete – Audit Opinion provided 26 July 2023
Audit of the 2022-23 Annual Return for South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee	To confirm that the return has been properly completed.	Audit Opinion by 30 November 2023	Complete – Audit Opinion provided 31 October 2023
Audit of the 2022-23 Annual Return for Burry Port Harbour Authority	To confirm that the return has been properly completed.	Audit Opinion by 30 November 2023	Complete – Audit Opinion provided 20 December 2023
Audit of the Council's 2022-23 Grants and Returns	Audit of the grants and returns as required by their terms and conditions.	In line with the deadlines for each individual grant and return.	In progress

Performance Audit work

2022-23 Performance Audit work	Scope	Timetable	Status
Assurance and Risk Assessment	<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 putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources and acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial position • Capital programme management 	<p>Ongoing monitoring of financial position</p> <p>September – December 2023</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>AW will not undertake detailed work at all councils as part of our 2022-23 work programme. We are currently exploring our options for undertaking a detailed piece of work on this topic either in 2023-24 or future years.</p>

2022-23 Performance Audit work	Scope	Timetable	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of performance information – with a focus on service user feedback and outcomes • Setting of well-being objectives • We will also follow up on some of the proposals for improvement issued in earlier Audit Wales reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follow-up Review: Planning Services 	<p>Final report sent to the Council January 2023</p> <p><u>Report issued to the Council July 2023</u></p> <p><u>Report issued to the Council October 2022</u></p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>Thematic Review – Unscheduled Care</p>	<p>A cross-sector review focusing on the flow of patients out of hospital. This review will consider how the Council is working with its partners to address the risks associated with the provision of social care to support hospital discharge, as well as prevent hospital admission. The work will also consider what steps are being taken to provide medium to longer-term solutions.</p>	<p>August 2022 – October 2023</p>	<p>Reporting from February 2024 onward.</p>
<p>Thematic review – Digital</p>	<p>A review of councils’ strategic approach to digital, and the extent to which this has been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle; and that it will help to secure value for money in the use of councils’ resources.</p>	<p><u>Report issued to Council September 2023</u></p>	<p>Complete</p>

2023-24 Performance Audit work	Scope	Timetable	Status
Assurance and Risk Assessment	<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 putting in place proper arrangements to secure value for money in the use of resources and acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle.</p> <p>We will also follow up on some of the proposals for improvement issued in earlier Audit Wales' reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • corporate safeguarding • waste services. 	<p>April 2023 – March 2024</p> <p>Final report issued to the Council December 2023</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p>
Thematic review – commissioning arrangements	<p>A review focusing on how councils' arrangements for commissioning, and contract management apply value for money considerations and the sustainable development principle.</p>	<p>January – July 2024</p>	<p>Scoping</p>
Thematic review – Financial Sustainability	<p>A review of councils' financial sustainability including a focus on the actions, plans and arrangements to bridge funding gaps and address financial pressures over the medium term.</p>	<p>March – June 2024</p>	<p>Scoping</p>

Local government national studies planned/in progress

Study	Scope	Timetable	Status	Fieldwork planned at Carmarthenshire County Council
Planning for sustainable development – Brownfield regeneration	Review of how local authorities are promoting and enabling better use of vacant non-domestic dwellings and brownfield sites	October 2022 – September 2023	Report drafting – publication due January 2024	Yes – interview with nominated officer at seven councils and survey.
Governance of special purpose authorities – National Parks	Review of systems and effectiveness of governance	November 2022 – September 2023	Report drafting – publication due February 2024.	No
Governance in Fire and Rescue Authorities	Review of systems and effectiveness of governance	September 2023 – August 2024	Fieldwork underway	No
Homelessness	Examining how services are working together to progress the response to homelessness.	tbc	Scoping	tbc

Estyn

Our link inspectors are continuing to work with Torfaen as part of our follow-up process for an authority causing significant concern. We inspected Conwy local government education service in the week beginning 6 November 2023, and the report will be published early in January 2024. We will be piloting our new inspection arrangements in the Vale of Glamorgan on the week beginning 11 March 2024. We will also be inspecting the Vale of Glamorgan’s youth work services on the week beginning 19 February 2024, and the findings of that inspection will contribute to the evidence base for the LGES inspection.

We have published a report outlining the approaches of local authorities and secondary schools in promoting attendance. The report will be published on 18 January 2024.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

CIW planned work 2023-25	Scope	Timetable	Status
Thematic reviews Community Learning Disability Team (CLDT)	Working with HIW we will complete a small sample of joint CLDT inspections in 2024. We will use this approach to evaluate and consider our approach to joint inspection.	2024-25	Planning
Stroke pathway	Working in collaboration with HIW a National Review of Patient Flow: a journey through the stroke pathway (hiw.org.uk) has recently been published.	Complete	Published

CIW planned work 2023-25	Scope	Timetable	Status
<p>National review of Care Planning for children and young people subject to the Public Law Outline pre-proceedings</p>	<p>Purpose of the review To provide external scrutiny, assurance and to promote improvement regarding the quality of practice in relation to the care planning for children and young people subject to the public law outline pre-proceedings. To consider the extent to which practice has progressed since the publication of both the CIW ‘National Review of care planning for children and young people subject to public law outline pre-proceedings’ and the publication of the PLO working group report 2021 including best practice guidance.</p>	<p>Awaiting publication</p>	<p>Publication January 2024</p>
<p>Child Protection Rapid Review</p>	<p>The review looked at to what extent the current structures and processes in Wales ensure children's names are appropriately placed on, and removed from, the child protection register (CPR) when sufficient evidence indicates it is safe to do.</p> <p>Rapid review of child protection arrangements, Care Inspectorate Wales</p> <p>Rapid review of child protection arrangements - interim findings, Care Inspectorate Wales</p>	<p>Published</p>	<p>Published</p>
<p>Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Annual Monitoring Report for Health and Social Care 2022-23</p>	<p>The 2020-21 report was published on 7 February 2021</p> <p>The 2021-2022 report is underway</p>	<p>Published</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>	<p>Published</p> <p>Preparing</p>

CIW planned work 2023-25	Scope	Timetable	Status
Joint Inspection Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA)	<p>We will complete a further two multi-agency joint inspections in total.</p> <p>The findings following Denbighshire County Council have been published - Joint Inspectorate Review of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA): Denbighshire 2023 Care Inspectorate Wales</p> <p>The findings following Bridgend County Borough Council have been published - Joint Inspectorate Review of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA): Bridgend 2023 Care Inspectorate Wales</p> <p>The findings from Powys County Council are underway</p> <p>We will publish a national report in late spring 2024.</p>	<p>April 2023 – April 2024</p>	<p>Delivery</p>
Performance review of Local Authorities	<p>We continue to inspect Local Authorities in line with our updated Code of Practice for our local authority inspection activity Care Inspectorate Wales</p> <p>How we inspect local authority services and CAFCASS Cymru</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Audit Wales national reports and other outputs published since December 2022

Report title	Publication date and link to report
Corporate Joint Committees – commentary on their progress	November 2023
Governance arrangements relating to an employment dispute at Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales	November 2023
Failures in financial management and governance and losses incurred – Harlech Community Council	November 2023
Putting out the false alarms: Fire and Rescue Authorities’ responses to Unwanted Fire Signals	October 2023
Covering teachers’ absence – follow-up (letter to the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee)	October 2023
NHS workforce – data briefing	September 2023
Income Diversification for National Park Authorities in Wales	September 2023
Approaches to achieving net zero across the UK	September 2023
Springing Forward: Lessons learnt from our work on workforce and assets (in local government)	September 2023
Local Government Financial Sustainability Data tool update (further update planned in January 2024)	September 2023
NHS finances data tool – to 31 March 2023	September 2023

Report title	Publication date and link to report
Public interest reports – Ammanford Town Council and Llanferres Community Council	September 2023
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board - Quality Governance Arrangements Joint Review Follow-up	August 2023
'Cracks in the Foundations' – Building Safety in Wales	August 2023
Maximising EU funding – the Structural Funds Programme and the Rural Development Programme	June 2023
Digital inclusion in Wales (including key questions for public bodies)	March 2023
Orthopaedic Services in Wales – Tackling the Waiting List Backlog	March 2023
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – Review of Board Effectiveness	February 2023
Welsh Government purchase of Gilestone Farm	January 2023
Together we can – Community resilience and self-reliance	January 2023
A Picture of Flood Risk Management	December 2022
'A missed opportunity' – Social Enterprises	December 2022

Audit Wales national reports and other outputs (work in progress / planned)^{1, 2}

Title	Indicative publication date
Ukrainian refugee services	February 2024
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – review of board effectiveness follow up	February 2024
A465 Section 2 – update	February 2024
NHS quality governance	March 2024
Local government digital strategy review – national summary	March 2024
Local government use of performance information, outcomes and service user perspective – national summary	March 2024
Affordable housing	Spring 2024
Active travel	Spring 2024

¹ We will continue to keep our plans under constant review, taking account of the evolving external environment, our audit priorities, the context of our own resourcing and the capacity of audited bodies to engage with us. Follow up work could also lead to other outputs, as may other local audit work where we consider there is merit in a national summary output of some kind.

² We have also published to our website a paper – [Our work programme for 2023-2026](#) – that provides additional detail about our national work (including local thematic reviews). In addition to new work that we will be taking forward in 2023-24, the paper includes details about indicative topics for work to start in 2024-24 or 2025-26.

Title	Indicative publication date
Audit Committees. 'What does good look like?'. R&D work to understand the broad audit committee landscape across all sectors in Wales. Outputs to support Good Practice Exchange events and potential future audit work.	R&D work Sept – Dec 2023 Good Practice Event Spring 2024
NHS Workforce planning (national messages)	Late spring 2024
Cancer services	Late summer 2024
The senior public service	To be confirmed (scoping early 2024)
Challenges for the cultural sector	To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24)
Rebalancing care and support	To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24)
Tackling NHS waiting lists (local audit work at health boards)	To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24)
Access to education for children with Additional Learning Needs	To be confirmed (starting in 2023-24)
Addressing biodiversity decline (pan-public sector and at Natural Resources Wales)	R&D work underway September to December 2023. Data gathering with representative groups. Outputs will inform any further audit work. Pan-public sector review – Autumn 2024
Velindre Cancer Centre	To be confirmed (scoping)
Welsh Government capital and infrastructure investment	To be confirmed (scoping)

Title	Indicative publication date
Further and higher education funding and oversight – Commission for Tertiary Education and Research	To be confirmed (scoping)

Good Practice Exchange events and resources

Title	Link to resource
The Good Practice Exchange – Our yearly round up of events and resources	December 2023
Integrity in the Public Sector ‘Trust is built and maintained through competence, reliability, and honesty, as well as the building of genuine and sound relationships between the public sector and the public it serves. That means the public sector must be accountable for the management and delivery of public services and outcomes, for the direction and control of the work it does, the resources it manages, and for its behaviour and ethics.’ This event will look at how public services can promote a culture of integrity.	5 December 2023 10:00 – 12:00 Online
Working in partnership to improve wellbeing This event will bring together the North Wales Insight Partnership, the Public Service Boards and the C4C community to share wellbeing plans across the North Wales region, as well as sharing the innovative work being undertaken by a range of sectors around wellbeing in our communities. The event will provide opportunities to discuss how we can connect all of this work to deliver real change.	24 October 2023 09:30 – 16:30 Cardiff date TBC
Strategy to Action: How digital makes a difference to everyday lives This event will take a practical and honest view at the digital landscape in Wales and will offer practical ideas for public and third sector organisations which will help them achieve the best value for money.	27 September 2023 09:00 – 13:00 – North Wales 5 October 2023 09:00 – 13:00 – Cardiff

Title	Link to resource
<p>Podcast: Auditing Community Resilience In this edition of The Exchange, our Local Government team discuss some of the factors that cause poverty in Wales, as well as the value provided by social enterprises, and the importance of keeping wealth in communities.</p>	<p><u>To listen</u></p>

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

AUDIT WALES REPORT: USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: SERVICE USER PERSPECTIVE AND OUTCOMES – CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose:

To consider the findings and recommendations of the Audit Wales local report.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To note the Audit Wales report and the Carmarthenshire County Council response to the recommendations of the report relevant to the Council.

Reasons:

We have a duty to consider regulatory report recommendations and Proposals for Improvement.

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER
Cllr Philip Hughes, Cabinet Member for Organisation and Workforce

Chief Executive's Department	Designations:	Tel:
Jason Jones	Head of Regeneration, Digital & Policy	JaJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Gwyneth Ayers	Corporate Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager	GAyers@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUDIT WALES REPORT: USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION: SERVICE USER PERSPECTIVE AND OUTCOMES – CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The report looks at the service user perspective and outcome data provided to members and senior officers, and how this information is used. It will not be a full review of the Council's performance management arrangements or an in-depth data quality review.

Audit Wales - Key findings

The performance information provided by the Council to senior leaders to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities is limited.

- *The performance information the Council provides to its senior leaders on the perspective of service users is limited.*
- *The performance information the Council provides to senior leaders largely focuses on activity and output, rather than evaluating their impact.*
- *The Council has limited arrangements to ensure that service user perspective and outcomes information provided to senior leaders is accurate.*
- *As the information provided on outcomes and the perspective of service users is limited, the extent to which the Council can use this information to help it achieve its outcomes is also limited.*
- *The Council recognises it needs to strengthen the information it provides to its senior leaders to help them better understand the service user perspective and has been exploring how other councils do this.*

The report makes three recommendations:

R1	<p>Information on the perspective of the service user</p> <p>The Council should ensure that the information provided to its senior leaders enables them to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users. This should include strengthening its arrangements to assure itself that this information is drawn from the diversity of service users.</p>
R2	<p>Information on progress towards outcomes</p> <p>The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and intended outcomes.</p>
R3	<p>Quality and accuracy of data</p> <p>The Council should assure itself that it has robust arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the information it provides to senior leaders relating to service user perspective and outcomes.</p>

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

1. Audit Wales Report
2. Carmarthenshire response to recommendations

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Jason Jones, Head of Regeneration, Policy & Digital

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets	Bio-diversity & Climate Change
YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

- All regulatory report recommendations are entered onto the Council's performance monitoring system (PIMS) and any reasons for discounting recommendations should be explained and recorded. Progress against recommendations is monitored and reported.
- All regulatory reports will be considered by Corporate Management Team, Cabinet Member, Governance and Audit Committee and where appropriate relevant scrutiny committees.

Governance and Audit Committee

- The role of the Governance and Audit Committee is to review and assess the risk management, internal control, performance management and corporate governance arrangements of the Council, it is expected that the Council's Governance and Audit Committee formally consider all reports of external review bodies – principally; Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).
- As well as actively considering reports, committees are expected to assure themselves that there are arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate progress against any recommendations contained in them. The focus here should be on holding executives and officers to account to ensure that reports and recommendations have been acted upon.

Scrutiny

Some reports may also be relevant for consideration by scrutiny committees.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Jason Jones, Head of Regeneration, Policy & Digital

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	NA –
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered:-	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-	

- 2. Local Member(s):** Not applicable
- 3. Community / Town Council:** Not applicable
- 4. Relevant Partners:** Not applicable
- 5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations:** Not applicable

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED YES	Cllr. Philip Hughes aware of report, recommendations and response
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Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection

Use of performance information: service user perspective and outcomes – Carmarthenshire County Council

Audit year: 2022-23

Date issued: January 2024

Document reference: 3980A2023

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

In the event of receiving a request for information to which this document may be relevant, attention is drawn to the Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The section 45 code sets out the practice in the handling of requests that is expected of public authorities, including consultation with relevant third parties. In relation to this document, the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office are relevant third parties. Any enquiries regarding disclosure or re-use of this document should be sent to Audit Wales at infoofficer@audit.wales.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

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Report summary

- 1 We considered the service user perspective and outcome information provided to senior officers and senior members (senior leaders), and how this information is used.
- 2 Overall, we found **the performance information provided by the Council to senior leaders to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities is limited.**
- 3 We have made three recommendations to strengthen the information given to senior leaders.
- 4 Our findings are based on fieldwork we did between June and July 2023.

What we looked at – the scope of this audit

- 5 We 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. We 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.
- 6 We have set out our audit questions and audit criteria in **Appendix 1**. The audit criteria essentially set out what good looks like and what we would expect to find.
- 7 Overall, we were looking for performance information to be shared with senior leaders to help them understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users and how well they are helping the Council to achieve the outcomes it is working towards. We were also looking to see that senior leaders use this information to monitor progress and take action where necessary to improve outcomes.
- 8 This is an important part of arrangements to ensure that councils are securing value for money in the use of their resources. It is also an important way in which the Council can assure itself that it is acting in accordance with the 'involvement' way of working in taking steps to meet its well-being objectives. Without this information, it is difficult to see how senior leaders can understand whether their policies and actions are having the intended impact and make changes where they are not.
- 9 Our findings are based on document reviews and interviews with the Cabinet Member, Chief Executive, and senior officers with responsibility for the Council's performance management arrangements. The evidence we have used to inform our findings is limited to these sources.

- 10 We set out 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?**’ We did this by exploring the following questions:
- 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?

Why we undertook this audit

- 11 This 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.
- 12 We 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.

The Council’s performance reporting arrangements

- 13 The Corporate Management Team (CMT) holds quarterly performance monitoring meetings. CMT receives quarterly Observation Reports that include information on the progress towards well-being objectives; details of service performance; internal audit findings; financial monitoring; complaints and compliments information; risk; consultation feedback; workforce; assets; procurement; and regulatory reports. These reports are also discussed with Cabinet Members.
- 14 Quarterly performance reports, based on the performance monitoring information, are provided to all scrutiny committees.
- 15 The Council published its Annual Self-Assessment for 2021-22 as part of its Annual Report 2021-22 In October 2022. Prior to this, the Governance and Audit

Committee considered it in, in line with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

- 16 Our review focused on these key performance reporting mechanisms.

What we found: The performance information provided by the Council to senior leaders to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities is limited

The performance information the Council provides to its senior leaders on the perspective of service users is limited

- 17 The Council's performance reports do not generally include information on the perspective of service users, apart from a few limited examples.
- 18 The Council amended its performance reporting arrangements in 2021 and introduced its quarterly Observation Report. This is a detailed report that presents performance by Well-being Objective and draws together information from a wide range of sources. This report contains some narrative and measures relating to the perspective of service users, but these examples are limited. It is, therefore, difficult to see how senior leaders would be able to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users.

The performance information the Council provides to senior leaders largely focuses on activity and output, rather than evaluating their impact

- 19 Most of the performance information the Council provides to senior leaders talks about activities and outputs. We found limited examples of where the Council presents information on outcomes and an assessment of progress against the outcomes the Council is seeking to achieve. This limits the ability of senior leaders to understand the impact of the Council's activities and assess whether it is meeting its overall objectives.
- 20 The Council's Annual Report 2021-22 contains a section under each of the 13 Well-being Objectives entitled 'Is anyone Better Off?' These sections contain case study examples to show where the work of the Council has made a difference. These examples contain a range of information, including feedback and quotes from service users. The quarterly Observation Reports and associated dashboards also contain some examples of outcome information. Sharing this information can help senior leaders understand the impact of the Council's activities. However, the

small number of examples does not provide a comprehensive picture of performance and does not enable senior leaders to fully understand the impact of the Council's activities.

The Council has limited arrangements to ensure that service user perspective and outcomes information provided to senior leaders is accurate

- 21 The Council does not have comprehensive arrangements in place to routinely check the data quality of performance information relating to outcomes and the service user perspective. The Council's Corporate Performance Team 'sense check' the data they collate for quarterly reports by looking for outlying values or anomalies. The Corporate Performance Team relies on service managers to enter accurate information into the performance management system.
- 22 The Council has a set of record cards which explains the detail behind each performance measure it uses. The cards detail the reporting frequency, owner, source, calculation, and improvement direction by measure. This arrangement provides rigour and consistency for the measures the Council uses, but there are no arrangements in place to check the accuracy of the data used in the calculations.
- 23 The Council's Internal Audit team reviewed the Council's performance management arrangements in July 2022. Internal Audit found there was no mechanism in place to provide assurance that the performance data was a true reflection of the actual situation. Internal Audit's report stated that data entered by managers was accepted as being accurate and there were no subsequent checks in place to ensure the integrity of the data.
- 24 The Council's Performance Management Framework states that the Risk and Internal Audit Team is responsible for assessing the effectiveness of internal control mechanisms, including the quality assurance of performance information. However, aside from the broader review mentioned above, we found no evidence of the Council's Internal Audit team completing data quality reviews in the last five years.
- 25 As a result of the Council having limited arrangements in place to check the accuracy of its service user perspective and outcomes information, there is a risk that the actions and decisions it takes, and the resources it deploys, are based on inaccurate information.

As the information provided on outcomes and the perspective of service users is limited, the extent to which the Council can use this information to help it achieve its outcomes is also limited

- 26 As set out above, our main finding is that the Council provides limited performance information to senior leaders to enable them to understand the service user perspective and the outcomes of the Council's activities. Therefore, it follows

logically that the extent to which the Council uses the service user perspective and outcomes information to help it achieve its outcomes from this performance information is limited.

- 27 Where we did find examples of the Council providing information on the perspective of service users and outcomes, we found some evidence of the Council using this information to make changes. For example, the Council receives and records complaints information and monitors the outcomes of the action it takes in response to those complaints. The quarterly Observation Reports also contain further examples, such as homelessness prevention and responding to fly tipping.

The Council recognises it needs to strengthen the information it provides to its senior leaders to help them better understand the service user perspective and has been exploring how other councils do this

- 28 The Council has recently reviewed the performance information it provides to senior leaders. For the 2020-21 financial year, it created the quarterly Observation Reports to bring together a range of performance information in one place. However, this review did not focus on providing senior leaders with information to better understand the service user perspective and/or the outcomes of the Council's activities.
- 29 The Council acknowledges that the service user perspective and the achievement of outcomes are not well represented in its current performance reporting arrangements. In its Annual Report for 2021-22, it identified the need to further develop its performance monitoring and reporting arrangements.
- 30 Consequently, the Council is in the process of developing a Corporate Data Suite (CDS) which will include a set of population indicators as well as service level measures. It has produced a 'starter version' of the CDS for senior leaders to use and provide feedback on. The CDS will use a range of service user perspective measures currently contained in the annual consultation exercise the Council undertakes with its residents. It will be important for the Council to ensure that this information is drawn from the diversity of service users including groups who share protected characteristics.
- 31 Since 2022, the Council surveys residents, local businesses, staff, and trades unions to inform future planning and priority setting. The Council presents the findings from these surveys in its Annual Report. The Council has identified that it has a rich source of data in these surveys and has acknowledged it can use this information going forwards to better provide the service user perspective. The Council is currently planning how it can present this information to senior leaders as part of its performance reporting arrangements.
- 32 The latest Corporate Strategy 2022-27 clearly lists the outcomes the Council is aiming to achieve under its four Wellbeing Objectives. To deliver the outcomes, the

Council has identified thematic (e.g., tackling poverty) and service priorities (e.g., housing) that it will focus on. The Council plans to use its new performance reporting arrangements, based on the Corporate Development Suite, to report on service priorities, themes, and outcomes.

- 33 In recognising the need to include more information about the service user perspective, the Council has looked at other councils throughout the United Kingdom to see how they collect and present this information. The Council is also using a range of informal and formal networks to develop its future performance management arrangements. Learning how other organisations are providing information on the service user perspective and outcomes is an important element of the Council's arrangements to secure value for money. It will, therefore, be important that the Council continues to benchmark its arrangements with those from other organisations.

Recommendations

Exhibit 1: recommendations

Information on the perspective of the service user

- R1 The Council should ensure that the information provided to its senior leaders enables them to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users. This should include strengthening its arrangements to assure itself that this information is drawn from the diversity of service users.

Information on progress towards outcomes

- R2 The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and intended outcomes.

Quality and accuracy of data

- R3 The Council should assure itself that it has robust arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the information it provides to senior leaders relating to service user perspective and outcomes.

Appendix 1

Key questions and what we looked for

Exhibit 2: key questions and what we looked for

The table below sets out the question we sought to answer in carrying out this audit, along with the audit criteria we used to arrive at our findings.

Level 1	
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?	
Level 2	Audit Criteria ¹ (what we are looking for)
2.1 Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the perspective of service users?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The information is:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– relevant to the objectives the Council has set itself;– sufficient to enable an understanding of the service user perspective;– sufficient to provide an understanding of progress towards the outcomes the Council is planning to achieve;– drawn from the diversity of service users including groups who share protected characteristics; and– used to inform comparisons with the performance of similar bodies where relevant.• The Council has involved service users in determining which information to collect.
2.2 Does the performance information provided to senior leaders include appropriate information on the outcomes of the Council's activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The information draws on a range of evidence sources to provide a holistic view of progress.• The information enables senior leaders to monitor progress over the short, medium and long term.• The information enables senior leaders to monitor the delivery of outcomes that cover multiple service areas and/or organisations.

¹ Our audit criteria have been informed by our cumulative knowledge of previous audit work, as well as the question hierarchy and positive indicators we have developed to support our sustainable development principle examinations.

Level 1

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?

Level 2

Audit Criteria¹ (what we are looking for)

2.3 Does the Council have robust arrangements to ensure that the data provided is accurate?

- The Council has clear arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the data it provides to senior leaders.
- Where weaknesses in data quality are identified, the Council addresses them.

2.4 Does the Council use the information to help it achieve its outcomes?

- Where poor performance is identified, the Council uses the information to make changes/interventions.
- There is evidence of the Council improving its progress towards its outcomes as a result of interventions.

2.5 Does the Council review the effectiveness of its arrangements?

- The Council reviews the information provided to senior leaders to ensure it is appropriate and relevant.
- The Council compares the information it collects with the information collected by similar organisations to identify opportunities to strengthen its arrangements.



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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

Organisational response

Report title: Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes

Completion date: January 2024

Document reference: 3980A2023

Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response <small>Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations</small>	Completion date <small>Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete</small>	Responsible officer (title)
R1	<p>Information on the perspective of the service user</p> <p>The Council should ensure that the information provided to its senior leaders enables them to understand how well services and policies are meeting the needs of service users. This should include strengthening its arrangements to assure itself that this information is drawn from the diversity of service users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new involvement strategy which will allow for the collection of service user perspective information from the diversity of service users. Utilise the findings of consultation activity undertaken by the Council and relevant stakeholders to identify areas of focus for further targeted service user engagement. Map existing and planned activity which aims to capture the service user perspective by Council services and ensure that this feeds into wider corporate reporting. 	<p>July 2024</p> <p>Ongoing as part of Service Delivery Plans</p> <p>May 2024</p>	<p>Deina Hockenhull and Gwyneth Ayers</p> <p>Rachel Clegg / Robert James</p> <p>Rachel Clegg / Robert James</p>

R2	<p>Information on progress towards outcomes</p> <p>The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and intended outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will ensure that the developing Corporate Data Suite, which will focus on monitoring delivery against the Corporate Strategy objectives and outcomes, also embeds service user perspective and feedback as part of its performance monitoring framework. 	March 2025	Rachel Clegg
R3	<p>Quality and accuracy of data</p> <p>The Council should assure itself that it has robust arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of the information it provides to senior leaders relating to service user perspective and outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and amend as necessary our arrangements to check the quality and accuracy of our performance information. 	March 2025	Rachel Clegg / Robert James

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

AUDIT WALES FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF CORPORATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFEGUARDING – CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To note the Audit Wales report and the Carmarthenshire County Council response to the recommendations of the report relevant to the Council.

Reasons:

We have a duty to consider regulatory report recommendations and Proposals for Improvement.

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr Jane Tremlett, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Services.

Communities & Chief Executive's Department	Designations:	Tel:
Avril Bracey	Head of Adult Social Care	ABracey@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Paul Thomas	Assistant Chief Executive (People Management)	PRThomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUDIT WALES FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF CORPORATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFEGUARDING – CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

- In 2015 the Auditor General for Wales published a report into the Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils. That report made eight recommendations, of which seven related directly to councils and one related to Welsh Government. This review focuses on whether the Carmarthenshire County Council has addressed the recommendations in the 2015 national report.
- The review focussed on the Council-wide corporate arrangements for safeguarding. It was not a review of specific safeguarding arrangements in Education or Social Services.
- The report examines progress against the eight recommendations in the 2015 national report on corporate safeguarding.
- In addition, it makes 5 new recommendations arising from the follow up review.

Key finding:

That the Council has not addressed all the recommendations in the 2015 national report on corporate safeguarding and there are weaknesses in its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements that need addressing so the Council can assure itself that risk is minimised.

The Council has drafted an action plan in response and several actions have been completed already. These are documented in the attached action plan response.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

1. Audit Wales Report
2. Carmarthenshire County Council response

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Avril Bracey, Head of Adult Social Services
Paul Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management)

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets	Bio-diversity & Climate Change
YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	YES	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

- All regulatory report recommendations are entered onto the Council's performance monitoring system (PIMS) and any reasons for discounting recommendations should be explained and recorded. Progress against recommendations is monitored and reported.
- All regulatory reports are considered by the lead Director, Cabinet Member, Governance and Audit Committee and where appropriate relevant scrutiny committees.
- The role of the Governance and Audit Committee is to review and assess the risk management, internal control, performance management and corporate governance arrangements of the Council, it is expected that the Council's Governance and Audit Committee formally consider all reports of external review bodies – principally; Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).
- As well as actively considering reports, committees are expected to assure themselves that there are arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate progress against any recommendations contained in them. The focus here should be on holding executives and officers to account to ensure that reports and recommendations have been acted upon.
- Some reports may also be relevant for consideration by scrutiny committees.

5. Risk Management Issues

Recommendation 5 in the report makes recommendations on Risk Management.

7. Staffing Implications

Recommendations 2 and 3 in the report:

- R2 - Safe recruitment of staff and volunteers
- R3 - Safeguarding Training

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Avril Bracey, Head of Adult Social Services
 Paul Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management)

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	N/A
If yes include the following information: -	
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered:-	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-	

- 2. Local Member(s) - N/A**
- 3. Community / Town Council - N/A**
- 4. Relevant Partners - N/A**
- 5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A**

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED YES	Cllr. Jane Tremlett
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Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information		
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:		
Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
None		

Follow-up Review of Corporate Arrangements for Safeguarding – Carmarthenshire County Council

Audit year: 2023-24

Date issued: December 2023

Document reference: 3788A2023

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

In the event of receiving a request for information to which this document may be relevant, attention is drawn to the Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The section 45 code sets out the practice in the handling of requests that is expected of public authorities, including consultation with relevant third parties. In relation to this document, the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office are relevant third parties. Any enquiries regarding disclosure or re-use of this document should be sent to Audit Wales at infoofficer@audit.wales.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

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Assessment of the Council's progress against the recommendations

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Summary report

The Council has not addressed all the recommendations in our 2015 national report on corporate safeguarding and there are weaknesses in its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements that need addressing so the Council can assure itself that risk is minimised

What we reviewed and why

- 1 In 2015 the Auditor General for Wales published a report into the [Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils](#). That report made eight recommendations, of which seven related directly to councils and one related to Welsh Government. In this follow up review we have focused on whether the Council has addressed the recommendations in the 2015 national report.
- 2 Having effective arrangements for corporate safeguarding is important for the Council to ensure that its residents - both children and adults in the county - are kept safe from harm. Our review focussed on the Council-wide corporate arrangements for safeguarding. It was not a review of specific safeguarding arrangements in Education or Social Services.
- 3 We undertook the review between June and August 2023.

What we found

- 4 We include a summary of our findings at **Exhibit 3**. Overall, we found that **the Council has not addressed all the recommendations in our 2015 national report on corporate safeguarding and there are weaknesses in its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements that need addressing so the Council can assure itself that risk is minimised.**
- 5 The key areas where the Council needs to strengthen arrangements include:
 - its oversight of safe recruitment and safeguarding training to ensure safeguarding duties are being adhered to and responsibilities are understood; and
 - its monitoring and reporting of the effectiveness of its corporate safeguarding arrangements, including providing an annual report to senior officers and Elected Members, to assure itself that it has proper arrangements in place for corporate safeguarding.
- 6 We recognise that the Council is currently taking steps to strengthen its HR policies in respect of safeguarding. It is also planning to introduce new systems in Autumn

2023 to strengthen its oversight of safeguarding training and compliance with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

7 We have issued new recommendations in this report at **Exhibit 2**.

Exhibit 1: overview of findings

The table below sets out an overview of our findings against the eight recommendations in our 2015 national report on corporate safeguarding. We provide further detail in **Exhibit 3**.

2015 Recommendations	Subject area	Audit Wales finding
R1	Improve corporate leadership and comply with Welsh Government policy on safeguarding.	Partially met
R2	Ensure there is a corporate-wide policy on safeguarding covering all council services to provide a clear strategic direction and clear lines of accountability across the council.	Partially met
R3	Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers.	Not met
R4	Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities.	Not met
R5	This recommendation was for Welsh Government.	N/A
R6	Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and council-wide set of performance information.	Not met

2015 Recommendations	Subject area	Audit Wales finding
R7	Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.	Met
R8	Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the Council.	Met

Recommendations

Exhibit 2: new recommendations arising from this follow up review

The table below sets out the new recommendations that we have identified for the Council from this follow up review.

New recommendations arising from this follow up review
<p>R1 Roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements</p> <p>a) The Council should clarify who will be the Lead Member for corporate safeguarding and ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that the Council constitution sets out clearly who the Lead Member for corporate safeguarding is and that it is consistent with the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy; - that corporate safeguarding is reflected in the relevant Cabinet Member and related scrutiny committee portfolio responsibilities; and - that information about the Lead Member role for corporate safeguarding is communicated to all staff and stakeholders, including updating the Council website. <p>This will help to clarify responsibilities and facilitate accountability.</p> <p>b) The Council should update its Corporate Safeguarding Policy to ensure that the governance arrangements and oversight for corporate safeguarding are</p>

New recommendations arising from this follow up review

clearly set out, including identifying which scrutiny committee will have oversight of corporate safeguarding arrangements.

- c) The Council should ensure that the name of the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group is used consistently in its documentation on safeguarding to ensure clarity and avoid any confusion.
 - d) The Council should assure itself that the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group is discharging its role effectively and in accordance with its Terms of Reference.
-

R2 Safe recruitment of staff and volunteers

- a) The Council needs to strengthen its current arrangements for monitoring compliance with DBS checks for staff and particularly for volunteers and put in place effective corporate oversight arrangements to ensure that safe recruitment practices are being followed to protect service users.
 - b) The Council should review its revised process of using risk assessments to allow staff to work prior to the required DBS checks being received (that it introduced in response to challenges presented during the Covid-19 pandemic), to assure itself that it has safe recruitment arrangements in place, that are fully complied with, and which do not expose the Council and its service users to risk.
 - c) The Council should assure itself that it has arrangements in place to ensure that contractual provisions in relation to safeguarding are adhered to and those commissioned to do work on behalf of the Council are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities, thereby minimising the risk to the Council and its residents.
-

R3 Safeguarding training

The Council should ensure that there is effective corporate oversight of compliance with safeguarding training provided to all staff, Elected Members, school governors and volunteers to assure itself that safeguarding responsibilities are understood.

R4 Reporting on corporate safeguarding

The Council should strengthen its reporting on the effectiveness of its corporate arrangements for safeguarding to Corporate Management Team and Elected Members, including the provision of performance information. This will help to strengthen the Council's oversight and assurance arrangements for

New recommendations arising from this follow up review

corporate safeguarding and ensure it applies its Corporate Safeguarding Policy in practice.

R5 Risk management

- a) The Council should consider whether a specific corporate safeguarding risk should be reinstated on its corporate risk register to strengthen corporate oversight.
- b) The Council should assure itself that all departments are fully considering safeguarding risks and, if appropriate, include those risks in the departmental risk registers. Such risks can then be managed and mitigated.

Detailed report

Assessment of the Council's progress against the recommendations issued in our national report 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils' (2015)

Exhibit 3: recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

The table below sets out a summary of our findings against each recommendation issued in our 2015 national report.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Recommendation 1 (from our 2015 national report) – Improve corporate leadership and comply with Welsh Government policy on safeguarding through:

- the appointment of a senior lead officer who is accountable for safeguarding and protecting children and young people with corporate responsibilities for planning improvements;
- the appointment of a lead member for safeguarding; and
- regularly disseminating and updating information on these appointments to all staff and stakeholders.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Finding from this follow up review – recommendation partially met

- The position in respect of the senior lead officer for safeguarding is clear. The Council has appointed the Director of Communities as the senior lead officer for safeguarding. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy sets out information on the role of the senior lead officer for safeguarding. This provides the necessary clarity over ultimate accountability for safeguarding.
- There has been a lack of clarity over the role of Lead Member for corporate safeguarding. The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy states that the Lead Member/Champion for corporate safeguarding is the Leader of the Council. However, this responsibility is not included in the Leader's portfolio responsibilities in the Council's constitution or in the Cabinet portfolios section of the Council's website. 'Adult Safeguarding' and 'Safeguarding Children' is noted in the constitution as responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Services. This has led to confusion internally as to whom is responsible for **corporate** safeguarding.
- The omission of corporate safeguarding from the Leader's portfolio of responsibilities in the constitution has consequently left a gap in respect of scrutiny's oversight of corporate safeguarding.
- We understand that as a result of our follow up review, the Council is now considering changing the Lead Member role for corporate safeguarding from the Leader to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Services' portfolio of responsibilities. Clarifying the arrangements for the Lead Member for corporate safeguarding is important so that there is appropriate and clear oversight and accountability for corporate safeguarding within the Council.

Future action required – In order that everyone is clear, the Council should clarify who is the Lead Member for corporate safeguarding. In doing so, it should ensure that its constitution sets out clearly who the Lead Member for corporate safeguarding is, that this is consistent with the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy, and that corporate safeguarding is reflected in the relevant Cabinet Member and related scrutiny portfolio responsibilities. The Council should also ensure that information about the Lead Member role for corporate safeguarding is communicated to all staff and stakeholders, including updating the Council's website.

Recommendation 2 (from our 2015 national report) – Ensure there is a corporate-wide policy on safeguarding covering all council services to provide a clear strategic direction and clear lines of accountability across the council.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Finding from this follow up review – recommendation partially met

- The Council’s Corporate Safeguarding Policy, which was updated in March 2023, needs to be clearer about which scrutiny committee has responsibility for scrutinising the Council’s corporate safeguarding effectiveness. The Council’s Corporate Safeguarding Policy includes information relating to corporate safeguarding roles and responsibilities, but the Policy should clarify the role of scrutiny to help to ensure lines of accountability are clear.
- During our fieldwork we identified a lack of clarity in the information provided to us by the Council about the name and purpose of the Council’s internal group with responsibility for corporate safeguarding. The Council has a Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group, but this group was sometimes referred to as a board in documents. Because there is a Regional Safeguarding Board (which has a different remit and purpose) it is important that there is clarity about how these two separate entities are referred to, so as to avoid confusion.
- The Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group needs to ensure it is operating in accordance with its Terms of Reference, including how often it should meet, in order to discharge its role effectively. The group’s Terms of Reference states that the group ‘would meet monthly in the first instance to establish an appropriate work programme – frequency would then be reviewed with meetings at least quarterly’. The Council’s Corporate Safeguarding Policy states that the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group will meet monthly, however, the group have only met four times since March 2022.

Future action required – The Council should update its Corporate Safeguarding Policy to ensure that the governance arrangements and oversight for corporate safeguarding are clearly set out, including identifying which scrutiny committee will have oversight of corporate safeguarding arrangements. The Council should ensure that the name of the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group is used consistently in its documentation on safeguarding to ensure clarity and avoid any confusion. The Council should also assure itself that the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group is discharging its role effectively in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

Recommendation 3 (from our 2015 national report) – Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by:

- ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children;
- creating an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks; and
- requiring safe recruitment practices amongst partners in the third sector and for volunteers who provide services commissioned and/or used by the council which are underpinned by a contract or service level agreement.

Finding from this follow up review – recommendation not met

- The Council has recently reviewed its HR practices in relation to safeguarding and identified areas where its policies/practices need to be strengthened. The Council's Corporate Management Team considered a report on this in August 2023. The report makes 15 recommendations for improvements. The Council has drafted a new suite of HR policies and these will go forward to Members for consideration/adoption.
- The Council is unable to report on its compliance rate for the percentage of post holders in post requiring a DBS check that have the relevant checks in place. This is because of the limitations of the current HR system. The Council told us that it is planning to implement a new HR system in the Autumn 2023 which we are told will address this issue. Currently the Council is using spreadsheets to track that Council staff that are new starters have the necessary HR checks in place, but this tracking has identified that there have been some limited examples of staff having started in post without the required statutory checks. However, the Council's corporate tracking spreadsheets do not cover volunteers.
- The Council's current HR system also only covers Council staff, it does not include corporate records for volunteers. Service departments hold volunteer records. There is no corporate oversight of whether safe recruitment of volunteers is being complied with across the Council. At the current time there are no plans for the new HR system to be used to monitor compliance with DBS checks for volunteers, so the risk related to safe recruitment of volunteers and a lack of corporate oversight in this area remains. The Council's current arrangements for corporately monitoring compliance with DBS checks for volunteers are weak and this poses a risk that volunteers who require a DBS check could be operating without the required checks in place. Our review did not cover the Council's supervision arrangements in this area.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic, due to the Council's need to fill staff vacancies as a matter of urgency and due to the time taken to process DBS checks, as a means of mitigation, the Council introduced a revised process where it undertook risk assessments of some new starters to commence in post prior to a DBS check being received. This practice is still continuing within the Council, and no end date has been set. The Chair of the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group asked the Council's Internal Audit service to review this revised process to gain assurance as to the level of compliance. In June 2023, the Council's Internal Audit service finalised its review. The Internal Audit report found high levels of non-compliance with the revised process and gave a low assurance rating for the Council's current approach. The Council has provided a management response to the findings of the Internal Audit report.
- The Council does not have corporate oversight of whether services are complying with safe recruitment practices for third sector providers, volunteers and/or commissioned services delivered under contract or service level agreement. The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy states that, 'Service Commissioners will be responsible for ensuring that contractual arrangements specify responsibilities in relation to safeguarding in accordance with this Policy and existing commissioning policy. Contractors, sub-contractors or other organisations funded by or on behalf of the Council are responsible for arranging checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (where required) and for ensuring that their staff comply with regulatory and contractual arrangements relating to safeguarding children and adults'. However, the Council does not have corporate assurance and oversight of whether this is the case, and as a result the Council is unable to assure itself and the public as to any potential risks.

Future action required – The Council needs to strengthen its current arrangements for monitoring compliance with DBS checks for staff and particularly for volunteers and put in place effective arrangements for corporate oversight of this area to ensure that safe

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

recruitment practices are being followed to protect service users. The Council should review its revised process of using risk assessments to allow staff to work prior to the required DBS checks being received (that it introduced in response to challenges presented during the Covid-19 pandemic), to assure itself that it has safe recruitment arrangements in place, that are fully complied with, and which do not expose the Council and its service users to risk. If the Council decides to continue with this process, then it needs to assure itself that the risks it poses are effectively mitigated and that recruiting officers fully comply with it in order to ensure safe recruitment. The Council should assure itself that it has arrangements in place to ensure that contractual provisions in relation to safeguarding are adhered to and those commissioned to do work on behalf of the Council are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities, thereby minimising the risk to the Council and its residents.

Recommendation 4 (from our 2015 national report) – Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities by:

- ensuring safeguarding training is mandated and coverage extended to all relevant council service areas, and is included as standard on induction programmes;
- creating a corporate-wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance on attending safeguarding training in all council departments, elected members, schools, governors and volunteers; and
- requiring relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned to work for the council in delivering services to children and young people to undertake safeguarding training.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Finding from this follow up review – recommendation not met

- The Council has told us that it offers Level 1 safeguarding training to all staff. However, unlike many other councils, it is not mandated for all staff, only to those in regulated activity. The Council told us that it intends to mandate safeguarding training for all staff once it adopts its new HR learning system in the Autumn 2023. Mandating safeguarding training for all staff is a way of helping to ensure everyone understands their safeguarding responsibilities and helps to mitigate against the risks to all council services and the county's residents.
- The Council does not currently have a corporate-wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance of staff, Elected Members, governors or volunteers attending safeguarding training. The Council was able to produce a summary of staff training compliance for us as part of this review, but this information is not readily available or reported to Members. The Council's new HR learning system should help enable it to identify, track and monitor compliance on safeguarding training of staff members. Whilst the new HR learning system is due to start in the Autumn 2023, the Council has told us that it will be implemented on a rolling programme basis so will take time to embed across the organisation. At the current time it is not clear if the new system will be used to monitor compliance with safeguarding training delivered to non-staff members e.g. Elected Members, school governors and volunteers.
- The Council has provided examples to us of contracts that specify the requirement for safeguarding training for relevant staff in organisations who are commissioned to work for the Council. This is positive as it is a means of helping to ensure such staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Future action required – The Council should ensure that there is effective corporate oversight of compliance with safeguarding training provided to all staff, Elected Members, school governors and volunteers to assure itself that safeguarding responsibilities are understood.

Recommendation 5 (from our 2015 national report) – This recommendation was for Welsh Government.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Recommendation 6 (from our 2015 national report) – Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and council-wide set of performance information covering:

- benchmarking and comparisons with others;
- conclusions of internal and external audit/inspection reviews;
- service-based performance data;
- key personnel data such as safeguarding training, and DBS recruitment checks; and
- the performance of contractors and commissioned services on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Finding from this follow up review – recommendation not met

- The Council does not produce an annual report on its corporate arrangements for safeguarding performance and progress in accordance with its Corporate Safeguarding Policy. There is a Director of Social Care Services' Annual Report which is a statutory requirement for the Director to report on the Council's Social Services function. This report for 2021-22 was reported to Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Council. The Terms of Reference of the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group, and the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, states that the group will report annually on activity as a section in the annual Statutory Director of Social Services' report. However, this is not happening as this report does not feature corporate safeguarding. The lack of reporting on corporate safeguarding matters is a weakness in the Council's oversight arrangements and in the way the Council implements its Corporate Safeguarding Policy in practice.
- The Council has identified actions and measures for safeguarding which are included on the Council's Performance Information Management System (PIMS). This suite of actions and ten measures is reported to the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group, but is not reported to Corporate Management Team, Cabinet or to a scrutiny committee. Of the Council's safeguarding performance measures, seven relate to education and social services, and three cover other corporate areas (although data is only available for one of these other three measures). These are:
 - percentage of e-learning training on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) completed by staff (2022-23 result - 69%)
 - percentage of post holders in post requiring a DBS that have the relevant checks in place (2022-23 result - data not available)
 - percentage of starters commenced before full employment checks complete (2022-23 result - data not available).
- The one measure on the percentage of e-learning training on VAWDASV completed by staff is included as part of the Council's reporting arrangements on the progress of its Corporate Strategy.
- The Council's Governance and Audit Committee have oversight of the Internal Audit programme for the Council. Internal audit reports which are 3 star rated (low assurance) are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee. The June 2023 Internal Audit report on safeguarding was reported to Governance and Audit Committee in September 2023.

Future action required – The Council should strengthen its reporting on the effectiveness of its corporate arrangements for safeguarding to Corporate Management Team and Elected Members, including the provision of performance information. This will help to strengthen the Council's oversight and assurance arrangements for corporate safeguarding and ensure it applies its Corporate Safeguarding Policy in practice.

Recommendation 7 (from our 2015 national report) – Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Finding from this follow up review – recommendation met

- The Council's Internal Audit plan each year includes a safeguarding review. The Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group makes suggestions for potential areas that the Internal Audit service may wish to consider including in its audit plan. The Internal Audit Service has undertaken a number of reviews related to the Council's safeguarding practices over recent years, including: adult safeguarding referral process, adult front door process, children's safeguarding process, safeguarding processes for transport driver/passenger assistants, process for recording allegations of abuse against an employee, and the more recent one in June 2023 on risk assessments/DBS checks for new staff.

Future action required – The Council could consider how Internal Audit can further support the Council to gain assurance on its arrangements for corporate safeguarding.

Recommendation 8 (from our 2015 national report) - Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the Council.

Recommendations from our 2015 national report, our findings from this follow up review, and future action identified

Finding from this follow up review – recommendation met

- The Council no longer has a specific corporate safeguarding risk on its corporate risk register. We understand from the Council that it used to have a separate safeguarding risk register. Those previous risks included ones directly linked to corporate safeguarding arrangements, for example failure to maintain a sound framework for governance arrangements for safeguarding. The Council decided to merge this separate safeguarding risk register into the Council's corporate risk register. In doing this, the Council no longer has a specific corporate safeguarding risk on its corporate risk register. There are two specific safeguarding risks on the Council's corporate risk register relating to children and vulnerable adults, and a general corporate risk relating more broadly to people management, as follows:
 - Deliver Effective Safeguarding Arrangements – Children (CRR190009 - risk rating high). The control owner of this risk is the Head of Children's Services. In the title of this risk it states that the detail is provided in a separate Safeguarding Risk Register but we have been told that no separate risk register exists. This needs to be amended to reflect the updated position.
 - Deliver Effective Safeguarding Arrangements - Vulnerable Adults (CRR190020 - risk rating medium). The control owner of this risk is the Director of Communities.
 - There is also a corporate related risk – 'Ensuring effective people management' (CRR19006). The control owner of this risk is the Assistant Chief Executive. As part of the Council's August 2023 update risk report to CMT it states that, 'We have undertaken a complete review of our Employment Safeguarding policies and procedures and have developed an action plan to address areas that require improvement. We now have a new updated policy and procedure which are in the process of being signed off.'
- Based on the findings of this review the Council should consider if there is a benefit/need for reinstating a specific safeguarding risk covering corporate safeguarding arrangements on its corporate risk register.
- There are safeguarding risks on the departmental risk registers for Adult Social Care and Children's Services. There is also a risk on the People Management and Performance departmental risk register entitled 'failure to comply with employment matters'. The controls for this risk include having safe recruitment guidance and monitoring compliance with it. Safeguarding risks have not been identified on any other departmental risk registers of any other Council service. The Council should assure itself that all departments and services are fully considering safeguarding risks and, if appropriate, include those risks on departmental risk registers.

Future action required – The Council should consider whether a specific corporate safeguarding risk should be reinstated on its corporate risk register to strengthen corporate oversight. The Council should also assure itself that all departments are fully considering safeguarding risks and, if appropriate, include those risks on departmental risk registers. Such risks can then be managed and mitigated.



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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

Organisational response form

Report title: Follow-up review of Corporate Arrangements for Safeguarding – Carmarthenshire County Council

Date: October 2023

Document reference: 3788A2023

Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	Responsible officer (title)
R1	<p>R1 Roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements</p> <p>a) The Council should clarify who will be the Lead Member for corporate safeguarding and ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that the Council constitution sets out clearly who the Lead Member for corporate safeguarding is and that it is consistent with the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy; - that corporate safeguarding is reflected in the relevant Cabinet Member and related scrutiny committee portfolio responsibilities; - that information about the Lead Member role for corporate safeguarding is communicated to all staff and stakeholders, including updating the Council website. 	<p>Clarification provided- Lead member for corporate safeguarding confirmed as Cabinet Member for Health and Social Services – Cllr Jayne Tremlett.</p> <p>Corporate Safeguarding Policy to be refreshed to ensure Lead Member for Corporate Safeguarding role and responsibilities are explicit.</p> <p>Health and Social Services Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Committee Portfolios to be refreshed to ensure Corporate Safeguarding responsibilities are explicit.</p> <p>Communication plan to be developed to ensure refreshed Corporate Safeguarding Policy (including Lead Member role) is communicated to all staff and stakeholders. Website to be refreshed (work already commenced)</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Partially Completed. Target Date - End of January 2024</p>	<p>Director of Communities (Statutory Director)</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>

	<p>This will help to clarify responsibilities and facilitate accountability.</p> <p>b) The Council should update its Corporate Safeguarding Policy to ensure that the governance arrangements and oversight for corporate safeguarding are clearly set out, including identifying which scrutiny committee will have oversight of corporate safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>c) The Council should ensure that the name of the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group is used consistently in its documentation on safeguarding to ensure clarity and avoid any confusion.</p> <p>d) The Council should assure itself that the Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group is discharging its role effectively and in accordance with its Terms of Reference.</p>	<p>Corporate Safeguarding Policy to be refreshed and to include updated governance structure (including Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee responsibilities).</p> <p>Corporate Safeguarding Officers Group membership to be refreshed and re-named Corporate Safeguarding Group. This will be consistently used on all safeguarding documentation and communications.</p> <p>Corporate Safeguarding Group assurance framework to be developed.</p> <p>Annual report submitted to Corporate Management Team and Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Feb 2024</p> <p>May 2024</p>	<p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>
<p>R2</p> <p>Page 71</p>	<p>R2 Safe recruitment of staff and volunteers</p> <p>a) The Council needs to strengthen its current arrangements for monitoring compliance with DBS</p>	<p>Action to review, refresh and approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DBS Guidance document - Safer Recruitment Policy 	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive</p>

	<p>checks for staff and particularly for volunteers and put in place effective corporate oversight arrangements to ensure that safe recruitment practices are being followed to protect service users.</p> <p>b) The Council should review its revised process of using risk assessments to allow staff to work prior to the required DBS checks being received (that it introduced in response to challenges presented during the Covid-19 pandemic), to assure itself that it has safe recruitment arrangements in place, that are fully complied with, and which do not expose the Council and its service users to risk.</p> <p>c) The Council should assure itself that it has arrangements in place to ensure that contractual provisions in relation to safeguarding are adhered to and those commissioned to do work on behalf of the Council are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities, thereby minimising the risk to the Council and its residents.</p>	<p>- Ex offenders' Policy</p> <p>- Volunteering Policy</p> <p>CSG to review use of risk assessments- DBS Policy to clearly set out considerations for working prior to DBS check- amendments agreed and DBS policy updated and approved.</p> <p>Review DBS policy to ensure explicit reference to contractors safeguarding responsibilities.</p> <p>Review/ update contracting policy to ensure Safeguarding responsibilities are explicit in all contracts.</p> <p>Establish a framework for monitoring compliance- eg spot check on contactors on site</p>	<p>End of Jan 2024</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>January 2024</p> <p>January 2024</p>	<p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>
R3	<p>R3 Safeguarding training</p> <p>The Council should ensure that there is effective corporate oversight of compliance with safeguarding training provided to all staff, Elected Members, school</p>	<p>Establish a framework for gathering safeguarding training data including compliance with National Safeguarding</p>	<p>March 2024</p>	<p>Assistant Chief Executive</p>

	governors and volunteers to assure itself that safeguarding responsibilities are understood.	Training Framework and evaluate effectiveness.		
R4	<p>R4 Reporting on corporate safeguarding</p> <p>The Council should strengthen its reporting on the effectiveness of its corporate arrangements for safeguarding to Corporate Management Team and Elected Members, including the provision of performance information. This will help to strengthen the Council's oversight and assurance arrangements for corporate safeguarding and ensure it applies its Corporate Safeguarding Policy in practice.</p>	Refresh corporate safeguarding performance measures to ensure they are relevant and provide appropriate assurances to CMT /Scrutiny Committee.	Partially completed. Target date end of Jan 2024	Director of Communities (Statutory Director)
R5	<p>R5 Risk management</p> <p>a) The Council should consider whether a specific corporate safeguarding risk should be reinstated on its corporate risk register to strengthen corporate oversight.</p> <p>b) The Council should assure itself that all departments are fully considering safeguarding risks and, if appropriate, include those risks in the departmental risk registers. Such risks can then be managed and mitigated.</p>	<p>Re introduce corporate safeguarding Risk register</p> <p>Refresh framework for identifying safeguarding risks for inclusion on risk register.</p> <p>Refresh process for mitigating or escalating corporate safeguarding Risks. CSG to consider introduction of annual departmental safeguarding Audits</p>	<p>January 2024</p> <p>January 2024</p> <p>Partially completed</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Services</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN UPDATE 2023/24		
Recommendations / key decisions required: To receive the report.		
Reasons: Regular progress report to be presented to each Governance & Audit Committee meeting.		
Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A		
Cabinet Decision Required: N/A		
Council Decision Required: N/A		
CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr A Lenny		
Directorate: Corporate Services Name of Head of Service: Helen Pugh Report Author: Caroline Powell	Designation: Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance Principal Auditor	Tel No.: 01267 246223 E Mail Address: HLPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk CaPowell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2024

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN UPDATE 2023/24

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

To provide Members with progress of the Internal Audit Plan. The following Reports are attached:

Report A: Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 Progress Report

Report B: Summary of Completed Final Reports Relating to Key Financial Systems
A summary of the Final Report for the following key financial system completed during the last Quarter is attached:

Assignment	Final Report Issued	Assurance Rating
Deputyships (Corporate Services)	27 December 2023	High
Treasury Management	27 February 2024	Acceptable

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

Finance

Reviews carried out to ensure systems in place comply with the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

1. Scrutiny Committee: Not Applicable
2. Local Member(s): Not Applicable
3. Community / Town Council: Not Applicable
4. Relevant Partners: Not Applicable
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations: Not Applicable

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)
AWARE/CONSULTED: Yes

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Internal Audit Plan 2023/24	G&AC 17-03-23	Agenda for Governance & Audit Committee on Friday, 17th March, 2023, 10.00 am

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INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023/24 - as at 29 February 2024

2023/24 % Plan Completion to Date: 76%

Job No	Departments	Days Planned	Pre-Audit Meeting	Terms of Reference Issued	Commented	Field Work Complete	Draft Report Issued	Complete / Final Report Issued	Actual Days	Assurance Rating / Engagement Type
Fundamental Audits										
1123001	Budget Setting & Monitoring	15	*	*	*					
1123002	Council Tax	20	*	*	*	*				
1123003	Creditor Payments	30	*	*	*					
1123004	Deputyships	20	*	*	*	*	*	*	16	High
1123005	Main Accounting	20	*	*	*	*	*	*	20	High
1123006	Payroll System	30	*	*	*					
1123007	Petty Cash / Sundry Expenses	15	*	*	*	*	*			
1123008	Treasury Management - Loans & Investments	15	*	*	*	*	*	*	15	Acceptable
Corporate Review Work										
2123001	CCC Companies Governance	20	*							
2123002	Contract Management	20	*	*	*	*				
2123003	Procurement	20	*	*	*	*				
2123004	Safeguarding	20	*							
2123005	Staffing Matters	20	*	*	*					
Corporate Governance Assurance										
3123001	Corporate Governance Arrangements	20	*	*	*	*				
3123002	Data Protection	20	*	*	*	*	*	*	19	Acceptable
3123003	Declaration of Interests	20	*	*	*					
3123004	Corporate Strategy / Policy Making	20	*	*	*					
3123005	Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	20	*	*	*					
Duplication Checks										
4123001	Payments Duplication Checks	40	/	/	*					
Counter Fraud										
5123001	Fraud Prevention, Detection and Investigation	40	/	/	*					
5123002	Proactive Fraud Testing	20	/	/	*					
5123003	National Fraud Initiative	20	/	/	*	*	/	/	32	Fraud Detection
Grants & Certification										
6123001	Burry Port Harbour	10	*	*	*	*	*	*	6	Certification
6123002	Children & Communities Grant	25	*	/	*	*	*	*	14	Certification
6123003	Education Improvement Grant	30	*	/	*	*	*	*	23	Certification
6123004	Enable Grant	10	*	/	*	*	*	*	8	Certification
6123005	Housing Support Grant	40	*	/	*	*	*	*	28	Certification
6123006	Local Authority Education Grant	20	*	/	*	*	*	*	21	Certification
6123007	Other Grants (where assurance is required for sign-off)	15	*	/	*	*	*	*	20	Certification
6123008	Wales Pension Partnership	5	*	/	*	*	*	*	4	Certification
6123009	Post 16 Grant	10	*	/	*	*	*	*	9	Certification
6123010	Pupil Development Grant	30	*	/	*	*	*	*	23	Certification
6123011	Youth Justice Grant 2022-23	15	*	/	*	*	*	*	10	Certification

6123012	Trust Funds - Arbour Stephens	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	Certification
6123013	Trust Funds - Dyfed Welsh Church Fund	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	5	Certification
6123014	Trust Funds - Minnie Morgan	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	Certification
6123015	Trust Funds - Oriel Myrddin	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	Certification
6123016	Regional Development Coordinator	5	*	/	*	*	*	*	5	Certification
Chief Executive's Department (not incl IT)										
7123001	Levelling Up Fund: Debenhams HWBS and Tywi Cycle Path	20	*	*	*					
7123002	Communications: Social Media	10								
7123003	Carmarthen Mart	10	*	*	*	*				
7123004	Legal Charges	15	*	*	*					
Chief Executive's Department: IT										
7223001	IT Systems	20	*	*	*	*				
7223002	IT Disaster Recovery	15	*	*	*					
7223003	Active Directory	15	*	*	*	*	*	*	15	Acceptable
7223004	Cloud	10	*	*	*	*	*	*	14	Acceptable
Communities										
7323001	Pembrey Country Park	20	*	*	*	*	*	*	22	Acceptable
7323002	Caban Hotel Pendine	10	*	*	*	*	*	*	9	High
7323003	Leisure Centres	20	*	*	*	*	*	*	21	Low
7323004	Voids - Follow up	10	*	*	*	*	*	*	14	Acceptable
7323005	Support for Unpaid Carers	15	*	*	*					
7323006	Care Homes	20	*	*	*	*	*	*	19	Acceptable
7323007	Museum of Land Speed Pendine	10	*	*	*	*	*	*	9	Acceptable
Corporate Services										
7423001	Community Benefits	15	*	*	*	*	*	*	20	Acceptable
7423002	Dyfed Pension Fund - Governance & Investments	15	*	*	*	*				
Education & Children										
7523001	Children's Services: Carers, including Young Carers	15	*							
7523002	School Meals Allergens - Follow Up	10	*	*	*	*				
7523003	Schools Questionnaires	20	/	/	*	*	*	*	21	Assurance
7523004	School Visits 1	10	*	/	*	*	*	*	7	Acceptable
7523005	School Visits 2	10								
7523006	Parent Pay	15	*	*	*					
7523007	Pupil Referral Units	15	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	Request for deferral
Place and Infrastructure										
7623001	Car Parking	15	*	*	*	*	*			
7623002	Place & Sustainability	15	*	*	*	*	*	*	17	High
7623003	Council Buildings (School & Non-School)	20	*	*	*					
7623004	Highways	15	*	*	*	*	*			
7623005	Waste	15	*	*	*					
7623006	Property	15	*	*	*					

DEPARTMENT Corporate Services	AUDIT REVIEW Deputyships (2023/24)	FINAL REPORT ISSUED 27 December 2023
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BACKGROUND

A Deputy is appointed by the Court of Protection to manage the property and affairs of another person, who lacks the mental capacity to manage them themselves. A Deputy can only act under a court order from the Court of Protection.

Upon completion of a Deputyship appointment, the client’s finances are managed by the Corporate Services Department with the Director of Corporate Services as the Deputy. As Deputy, the Director of Corporate Services has numerous responsibilities including a duty to look after the client’s assets, open a receivership account, claim all benefits due to the client and make sure that all income is collected, and all bills are paid on time.

SCOPE

The purpose of the Audit was to assess the extent to which there are adequate procedures and controls in place within the Corporate Services Department to appropriately fulfil the Deputyship responsibility, ensuring the Office of Public Guardian’s ‘Deputyship Standards’ are adhered to.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The audit findings and recommendations are detailed in the attached Action Plan. A summary of these recommendations by priority is outlined below:

Priority	3*	2*	1*	Total
Number of Recommendations	0	0	1	1

ASSURANCE RATING

The post review assurance level for systems relating to Deputyships is categorised as: **HIGH.**

Internal Audit review – Deputyships (2023/24)

Action Plan

Ref	Summary of Issue Identified	Recommendation	Priority Level	Planned Action · Responsible Officer(s) Target Date	Updated Position
1	<p>Document Storage</p> <p>Client files are currently stored in an open cupboard within the Corporate Services office; whilst entry to both the building and corridor is by key card only, given the sensitive nature of information contained within the files, it would be prudent to maintain the files in a locked receptacle, accessible only to authorised officers.</p>	<p>Client files should be maintained in a locked receptacle, accessible only to authorised officers, to maintain confidentiality. Files should also be stored securely to limit the risk of damage to key documents (e.g., fire-safe receptacle).</p>	*	<p>Available lockable cabinets have been identified within the offices of Parc Dewi Sant. As furniture is moved down to County Hall from this site as teams relocate, the Deputyship team within the corporate accountancy section will substitute the current cupboards for the more secure lockable cabinets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <p>Gareth Davies Finance Manager - Corporate</p> <p>29 February 2024</p>	<p>The lockable storage units have been identified for use and are due to be available imminently.</p> <p>In the meantime, Deputyship files and documents continue to be maintained in a secure office.</p>

DEPARTMENT	AUDIT REVIEW	FINAL REPORT ISSUED
Corporate Services	Treasury Management (2023/24)	27 February 2024

BACKGROUND

Carmarthenshire County Council defines its treasury management activities as the management of the Authority’s borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions, and the effective control of the risks associated with those activities, including the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

The treasury management loans, and investment roles are managed by employees within the Treasury & Pensions Investment Division of the Corporate Services Department.

SCOPE

The purpose of the audit was to assess the extent to which there are adequate controls and procedures in place to provide effective control over loans and investments; in particular:

- Adequate procedures exist for the administration of treasury management;
- Loans and borrowing comply with the Treasury Management Policy;
- Adequate authorisation controls and contingency arrangements exist;
- Interest calculations are accurate and appropriately recorded;
- Adequate fidelity cover is provided for officers involved in loans management and accounting;
- Appropriate treasury management information is made available to relevant officers/management.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The audit findings and recommendations are detailed in the attached Action Plan.

A summary of these recommendations by priority is outlined below:

Priority	3*	2*	1*	Total
Number of Recommendations	0	3	0	3

ASSURANCE RATING

The post review assurance level for systems relating to Treasury Management is categorised as: **ACCEPTABLE**.

Internal Audit review – Treasury Management (2023/24)

Action Plan

Ref	Summary of Issue Identified	Recommendation	Priority Level	Planned Action Responsible Officer(s) Target Date	Updated Position
1	<p>Supporting Documentation</p> <p>Testing identified that a record of the rationale, to support the decisions to make investments, and take out long-term loans, had not been maintained, as required by the Treasury Management Procedural Manual.</p>	<p>A record of the rationale to support decisions to make investments, and take out long-term loans should be maintained by the Treasury Management Section, as required by the Treasury Management Procedural Manual, to include the retention of all information that supports the decision-making process.</p>	**	<p>Agreed. We will implement immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anthony Parnell - Treasury and Pensions Investment Manager <p>1 February 2024</p>	<p>Action implemented.</p> <p>A record of the rationale to support decisions will be maintained in all instances moving forward.</p>
2	<p>Reconciliations</p> <p>A review of a sample of fifteen monthly reconciliations identified that twelve reconciliations had not been undertaken and reviewed promptly.</p> <p>In addition, testing identified that reconciliations were signed as completed and reviewed using photos of signatures. Evidence was not available to demonstrate that the documents had been seen and signed by the actual officers.</p>	<p>All reconciliations should be completed and reviewed promptly.</p> <p>All documentation requiring proof that the signer has approved the document should be supported by evidence to demonstrate that the actual authorising officer has seen, and approved the document in question</p>	**	<p>Agreed. We will implement immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anthony Parnell - Treasury and Pensions Investment Manager <p>1 February 2024</p>	<p>Action implemented.</p> <p>All reconciliations will be completed and reviewed promptly moving forward.</p> <p>Documentation is now being maintained to evidence the appropriate approval when wet signatures are not used.</p>
3	<p>Fidelity Insurance</p> <p>Fidelity Insurance cover is in place, however the cover is not consistent with the current level of investment and borrowing, nor is the level of cover</p>	<p>A review of the current insurance cover should be undertaken to ensure the Authority has appropriate fidelity cover, which is consistent with the</p>	**	<p>Agreed. We will work with the Insurance team to review the appropriate fidelity cover, and implement accordingly.</p>	<p>In progress – target date not yet reached.</p>

Internal Audit Update: Report B

Ref	Summary of Issue Identified	Recommendation	Priority Level	Planned Action · Responsible Officer(s) Target Date	Updated Position
	consistent with details specified in the Treasury Management Manual.	staff within the current structure of the Treasury Management Section, and their level of trading. In addition, the level of cover should be consistent with the details specified in the Treasury Management Manual.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anthony Parnell - Treasury and Pensions Investment Manager 31 March 2024	

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS		
Recommendations / key decisions required: To receive the report.		
Reasons: An update on Internal Audit recommendations to be presented to the Audit Committee on an annual basis.		
Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A		
Cabinet Decision Required: N/A		
Council Decision Required: N/A		
CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr A Lenny		
Directorate: Corporate Services	Name of Head of Service: Helen Pugh	Designation: Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance
Report Author: Caroline Powell	Designation: Principal Auditor	Tel No.: 01267 246223 E Mail Address: HLPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk CaPowell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

The Internal Audit division maintains a log of all Internal Audit Reports issued. The recommendations made as part of these Reports are uploaded onto the Council's Performance Information Monitoring System (PIMS).

The responsible officer for each recommendation is required to update PIMS with the actions taken to address the identified issues.

The information in the attached report details the progress status of Internal Audit recommendations relating to the 2022/23 financial year.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

Yes

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

Finance

Reviews carried out to ensure systems in place comply with the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

1. Scrutiny Committee: Not Applicable
2. Local Member(s): Not Applicable
3. Community / Town Council: Not Applicable
4. Relevant Partners: Not Applicable
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations: Not Applicable

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)
AWARE/CONSULTED: Yes

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Internal Audit Plan 2022/23	AC 11-03-22	Agenda for Governance & Audit Committee on Friday, 11th March, 2022, 10.00 am

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Update on Internal Audit Recommendations 2022/23

The Internal Audit division maintains a log of all Internal Audit Reports issued. The recommendations made as part of these Reports are uploaded onto the Council's Performance Information Monitoring System (PIMS).

The responsible officer for each recommendation is required to update PIMS with the actions taken to address the identified issues.

The information below details the progress status of Internal Audit recommendations relating to the 2022/23 financial year.

Recommendation Ratings	Total Recommendations Made	Action Complete	Action Outstanding / Off-Target	Target date not yet reached	% Complete per Recommendation Rating
3*	3	2	0	1	67%
2*	77	62	2	13	81%
1*	33	28	1	4	85%
	113	92	3	18	
		81%	3%	16%	

Information relating to all outstanding, or off-target, recommendations is detailed on the following pages.

ACTION OUTSTANDING / OFF TARGET

Report Reference: 1122008 VAT
Action Status: Off Target – with revised Target Date set
Action Target Date: 31.12.2023 (Revised Target Date: 15.03.2024)
Recommendation Rating: **

Brief Description of Issue/Recommendation:

A guidance document to provide basic VAT advice has not been drafted or distributed to Authority staff members.

Agreed Action:

A VAT guidance document is in the process of being drafted which will act as a basic reference document and will also contain key contacts/information for any further VAT queries.

Current Position:

Good progress is being made with production of the VAT guidance document, however, unfortunately we have not achieved the 31 December 2023 target. Revised target date for completion of the document is 15 March 2024.

Report Reference: 2122006 Risk Management Arrangements
Action Status: Off Target
Action Target Date: 31.12.2023
Recommendation Rating: **

Brief Description of Issue/Recommendation:

The Risk Management Strategy in being covers the period 2017-2022.
The Risk Management Strategy should be reviewed, updated, approved, and published as a priority.

Agreed Action:

The Risk Management section is in the process of reviewing and updating the Risk Management Strategy.

Current Position:

A consultation review of Risk Management arrangements has taken place during 2023 with an external Consultant; the results of that review have recently been received, with recommended enhancements to be actioned. The review of the Risk Management Strategy was delayed to enable us to fully consider the results of the external consultation review, and ensure all relevant aspects raised within that review would be covered within the revised Strategy. Revised Strategy to be complete by 30 September 2024.

Report Reference: 2122006 Risk Management Arrangements

Action Status: Off Target

Action Target Date: 31.12.2023

Recommendation Rating: *

Brief Description of Issue/Recommendation:

It was recommended in the previous audit that: 'A complete audit trail of the initial risk being identified, either from the Department or CMT, through to the authorisation provided to the Principal Risk Officer to update the Register should be available for all risks either added to, or removed from, the Corporate Risk Register'.

The Principal Risk Officer has advised that a new process was implemented in December 2021, however this process hasn't been documented.

The new process, to provide a complete audit trail of risks, implemented in December 2021, should be documented.

Agreed Action:

The Transformation team will assist the Risk Management section to review and update the process and document.

Current Position:

Whilst the process has been developed, agreed and adopted, it has not yet been formally documented.

The process will be formally documented by 31 March 2024.

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25 & PLANNED COVERAGE FOR 2024-27		
Recommendations / key decisions required: To approve the Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 and to confirm the planned coverage for 2024-27.		
Reasons: The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require a risk-based Internal Audit Plan to be prepared each year to determine the priorities of Internal Audit and ensure they are consistent with the Council's goals and objectives.		
Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A		
Cabinet Decision Required: N/A		
Council Decision Required: N/A		
CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr A Lenny		
Directorate: Corporate Services Name of Head of Service: Helen Pugh Report Author: Helen Pugh	Designation: Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance	Tel No.: 01267 246223 E Mail Address: HLPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25 & PLANNED COVERAGE FOR 2024-27

BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

The Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 has been compiled considering the Authority's Corporate Risk Register and Service Risk Registers, thus ensuring appropriate coverage and consideration of the Authority's highest risks. In addition to this, the Governance & Audit Committee has requested the inclusion of specific reviews, along with Internal Audit identifying areas where a review is deemed appropriate.

Internal Audit has liaised with the Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service in devising the plan and also taken account of any changes in services.

The following reports are attached:

Internal Audit Plan 2024/25

Internal Audit Planned Coverage 2024-2027

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

Finance

Reviews carried out to ensure systems in place comply with the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules.

Risk Management

The Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 has been compiled considering the Authority's Corporate Risk Register and Service Risk Registers.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

1. Scrutiny Committee: Not Applicable
2. Local Member(s): Not Applicable
3. Community / Town Council: Not Applicable
4. Relevant Partners: Not Applicable
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations: Not Applicable

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)
AWARE/CONSULTED: Yes

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Strategic Audit Plan 2023-2026	AC 17-03-23	Agenda for Governance & Audit Committee on Friday, 17th March, 2023, 10.00 am

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Carmarthenshire County Council - Internal Audit Plan 2024/25

Required Assurance - Fundamental Audits	Type of Engagement	Risk Consideration	Audit Plan Days
Creditor Payments	Assurance	Fundamental	30
Debtors	Assurance	Fundamental	20
Deputyships - Communities	Assurance	Fundamental	20
Expenditure	Assurance	Fundamental	30
NNDR	Assurance	Fundamental	20
Payroll System	Assurance	Fundamental	30
Travel & Subsistence System	Assurance	Fundamental	20
Total			170

Corporate Review Work	Type of Engagement	Risk Consideration	Audit Plan Days
CCC Companies Governance	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Contract Management	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Procurement	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Safeguarding	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Staffing Matters	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Total			100

Corporate Governance Assurance	Type of Engagement	Risk Consideration	Audit Plan Days
Complaints	Assurance	G&AC Request	25
Corporate Governance Arrangements	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Net Zero Carbon	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Performance Management/Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Whistleblowing	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Workforce Planning	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Total			125

Counter Fraud	Type of Engagement	Risk Consideration	Audit Plan Days
Fraud Prevention, Detection and Investigation	Investigatory	Corporate Risk Register	40
Proactive Fraud Testing	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Total			60

Grants and Certification	Type of Engagement	Risk Consideration	Audit Plan Days
Burry Port Harbour	Accounts Return	Certification	10
Children & Communities Grant	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	20
Communities for Work +	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	10
Enable Grant	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	10
Housing Support Grant	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	40
Local Authority Education Grant	Assurance for Sign Off	Corporate Risk Register	25
Other Grants (where assurance is required for sign-off)	Assurance for Sign Off	Corporate Risk Register	20
Post 16 Grant	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	10
RCSIG - Education Improvement Grant	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	20
Trust Funds	Certification	Certification	20
Turnaround Grant	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	10
Wales Pension Partnership	Accounts Return	Certification	5
Youth Justice Grant	Certification	Corporate Risk Register	10
Total			210

Departmental Reviews	Type of Engagement	Risk Consideration	Audit Plan Days
Chief Executive's Department (not including IT)			
Civil Registrations	Assurance	Service Risk Register	10

Freedom of Information (follow-up)	Assurance	G&AC Request	10
Levelling Up Fund: Debenhams HWBS and Tywi Cycle Path	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Property Leases (Concessions)	Assurance	IA identified	15
Chief Executive's Department: IT			
CCTV	Assurance	IA identified	15
Cyber Security	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
Network User Access	Assurance	Service identified	15
Gold/Core System Applications	Assurance	Service identified	15
Communities			
Actif Communities	Assurance	Service Risk Register	15
Commissioned Care - Care Homes	Assurance	Service Risk Register	20
Housing Rents	Assurance	Service Risk Register	20
Licensing	Assurance	IA identified	20
Supported Living	Assurance	Service Risk Register	20
Theatres	Assurance	Service Risk Register	20
Corporate Services			
Risk Register	Assurance	Service identified	20
Education & Children's Services			
Foster Care/Looked After Children	Assurance	Service Risk Register	20
School Balances	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
School Questionnaires	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	20
School Visit	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	10
Thematic Review - School Fund	Assurance	IA identified	20
Universal Free School Meals	Assurance	IA identified	20
Welfare Cards - Follow-up	Assurance	G&AC Request	20
Place & Infrastructure			
Asset Management HAVS - Follow up	Assurance	IA identified	10
Transport Management & Maintenance	Assurance	Service Risk Register	20
Grounds Maintenance	Assurance	Service Risk Register	15
Planning Applications - Extensions of Time	Assurance	Service Risk Register	15
Public Transport	Assurance	Service Risk Register	15
Section 106: Affordable Homes	Assurance	Corporate Risk Register	15
Total			475

TOTAL DAYS	1140
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Additional Work	Days
Departmental Advisory Work (10 days allocated per Dept)	50
Various Departmental Working Groups (10 days allocated per Dept)	50
Total	100

TOTAL DAYS	1240
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Carmarthenshire County Council - Internal Audit 3 Year Plan 2024/25

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Required Assurance - Fundamental Audits			
Appointeeships		✓	
Budget Setting and Monitoring			✓
Capital Accounting including Fixed Asset Register		✓	
Cash & Bank		✓	
Council Tax			✓
Creditor Payments	✓	✓	✓
Debtors System	✓		
Deputyships - Communities	✓		
Deputyships - Corporate Services			✓
Expenditure	✓		
Housing Benefits		✓	
Income		✓	
Main Accounting			✓
NNDR	✓		
Payroll System	✓	✓	✓
Pensions Payroll System		✓	
Petty Cash / Sundry Expenses			✓
Travel & Subsistence System	✓		
Treasury Management - Loans & Investments (CCC and DPF)			✓
VAT		✓	
Corporate Governance Assurance			
Complaints	✓		
Corporate Governance Arrangements/Annual Governance Statement	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Strategy/Policy Making			✓
Data Protection			✓
Declaration of Interests			✓
Net Zero Carbon	✓		
Performance Management/Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	✓		
Risk Management Arrangements		✓	
Welsh Language Standards		✓	
Whistleblowing	✓		
Workforce Planning	✓		
Corporate Review Work			
CCC Companies Governance	✓	✓	✓

Contract Management	✓	✓	✓
Procurement	✓	✓	✓
Safeguarding	✓	✓	✓
Staffing Matters	✓	✓	✓
Counter Fraud			
Fraud Prevention, Detection and Investigation	✓	✓	✓
National Fraud Initiative		✓	
Proactive Fraud Testing	✓	✓	✓
Grants and Certification			
Burry Port Harbour	✓	✓	✓
Children & Communities Grant	✓	✓	✓
Communities for Work +	✓	✓	✓
Enable Grant	✓	✓	✓
Housing Support Grant	✓	✓	✓
Local Authority Education Grant	✓	✓	✓
Other Grants (where assurance is required for sign-off)	✓	✓	✓
Post 16 Grant	✓	✓	✓
RCSIG - Education Improvement Grant	✓	✓	✓
Trust Funds	✓	✓	✓
Turnaround Grant	✓	✓	✓
Wales Pension Partnership	✓	✓	✓
Youth Justice Grant	✓	✓	✓
Departmental Reviews			
Chief Executive's Department	✓	✓	✓
Communities	✓	✓	✓
Corporate Services	✓	✓	✓
Education & Children	✓	✓	✓
Place & Infrastructure	✓	✓	✓

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 2023/24

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To receive the Corporate Risk Register

Reasons:

- To ensure that the Governance and Audit Committee are made aware of the Corporate Risks

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A

Cabinet Decision Required: No

Council Decision Required: No

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr A Lenny

Directorate:

Corporate Services

Name of Head of Service:

Helen Pugh

Report Author:

Helen Pugh

Designation:

Head of Revenues and
Financial Compliance

Tel No.: 01267 246223

E Mail Address:

HLPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 2023/24

The Authority maintains a Corporate Risk Register to evaluate its exposure to key strategic risks. The Corporate Assessment recommended that the Corporate Risk Register as agreed by CMT should be shared with the Governance & Audit Committee. Review and monitoring of the Corporate Risk Register is delegated to the Governance & Audit Committee in line with the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

The Register will be reviewed by the Governance & Audit Committee at its March and September meetings.

Removal of risks from the Corporate Risk Register **NONE**

New risks added to the Corporate Risk Register

CRR190080 – Corporate Safeguarding – Failure to ensure that adequate Corporate Safeguarding arrangements are in place.

New risks suggested but decision taken that they should be managed through Departmental Risk Registers **NONE**

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
None	None	None	None	Yes	None	None

Risk Aims of the Corporate Risk Register to collate strategic risks facing the Authority.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

1. Scrutiny Committee: Not Applicable
2. Local Member(s): Not Applicable
3. Community / Town Council: Not Applicable
4. Relevant Partners: Not Applicable
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations: Not Applicable

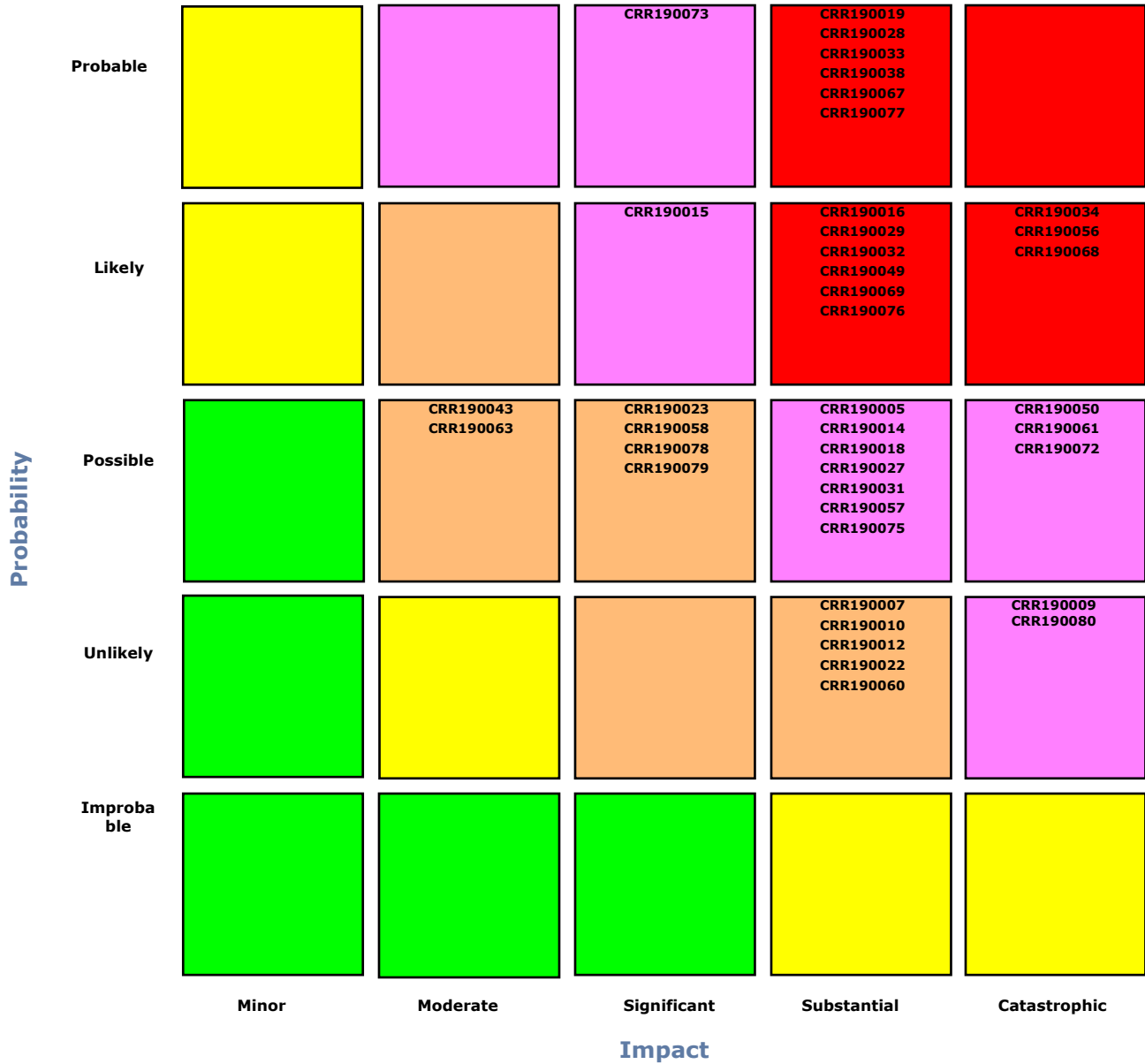
CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)
AWARE/CONSULTED: No

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

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Carmarthenshire Heatmap



Detailed Risk Information

Current Risk Rating	Risk Ref	Details	Assigned To
20	CRR190019	Failure to ensure that schools effectively manage their resources and respond to the challenges of reduced funding	Director of Education & Children Services
20	CRR190028	School Leadership - Our ability to recruit and retain high quality and resilient school leaders who can respond to and deal with the transformation of education in Wales	Director of Education & Children Services

Detailed Risk Information

Current Risk Rating	Risk Ref	Details	Assigned To
20	CRR190033	<p>Extreme Weather Event - Operational Risk</p> <p>The physical effects of more frequent and intense weather patterns including storms and significant heat extremes conditions that compromise and stretch our operational ability to respond to widespread and prolonged emergencies both in the immediate response phase and recovery phase of a flood event, whilst also maintaining normal services. This will also include the risk of managing the public's expectation as the Council cannot respond to all requests for help during storm conditions. Response is curtailed by the resources available and the priorities at the time.</p>	Corporate Management Team
20	CRR190034	<p>Cyber Risk such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ransomware or malware infection - Denial of Service Attack (DOS) - Unauthorised network access (hacking) - External and Internal - Phishing Email Attack - staff approach - Increased risk of cyber crime due to phishing and malware attacks exploiting Covid-19 	Head of ICT & Policy
20	CRR190038	Increasing sickness absence and management of stress in the workplace.	Assistant Chief Executive
20	CRR190056	Ensuring that the Authority effectively manages its financial resources and responds to the challenges of reduced funding (formerly CRR190004)	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services
20	CRR190067	Lack of availability of domiciliary care to support vulnerable adults which leads to the risk of people being unsupported and potentially unsafe in the community, as well as people being delayed leaving hospital preventing others being able to access urgent medical treatment.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning
20	CRR190068	Continued deterioration of the condition of highways infrastructure and assets. Failure to address maintenance backlog (£63 million), as a consequence of falling investment levels leading to high levels of demand and Increased level of claims.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways
20	CRR190077	Significant operational pressures within the Fleet Services unit including a difficulty to retain or recruit skilled technicians and technical support staff, as well as vehicle supply chain pressures (hire/lease/purchase) combined with escalating parts, materials costs and fuel costs.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways
16	CRR190016	Delivery of the Authority's Waste Management and Recycling Strategy to ensure that we meet our statutory recycling targets and wider obligations including improvements to the quality of recyclable materials to support circular economy principles and reduce carbon outputs in accordance with Welsh Governments Beyond Recycling national strategy	Head of Waste & Environmental Services
16	CRR190029	<p>Net Zero Carbon</p> <p>Failure to deliver the Council's commitment to become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030</p>	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Place and Sustainability

Detailed Risk Information

Current Risk Rating	Risk Ref	Details	Assigned To
16	CRR190032	Flood - Strategic Risk The physical effects of more frequent and intense storm conditions that compromise homes, businesses, essential infrastructure and services. This will also include the risk of managing the public's expectation that the Council can completely address, control and mitigate all flood risks regardless of source or asset owner.	Director of Place & Infrastructure
16	CRR190049	Risk of local business and economy not recovering from the cost-of-living crises and rises in energy and inflation.	Head of Regeneration
16	CRR190069	Contractor and internal capacity issues leading to a high backlog of housing responsive repairs and housing voids which reduces the number of homes available to let and a delay in repairs being completed.	Director of Communities
16	CRR190076	Failure to secure the full extent of home-to-school transport services from third party providers due to a range of economic and market specific issues including increasing fuel costs, driver and maintenance technician shortages across the industry, supply market challenges (vehicles and parts) and an increasing complexity in demand management.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/ Head of Transportation & Highways
15	CRR190050	Risk of contractor and suppliers failing to deliver projects/schemes, because of highly volatile macro economic conditions and inflation/disruption to suppliers, service goods and materials, which has an impact of the non-delivery of capital works. - Failure to meet grant expenditure conditions. - contractors resources depleted - contract failure - cost increases - sourcing materials - Contractors unwilling to carry out work at framework prices	Property Maintenance Manager
15	CRR190061	Attracting, recruiting and retaining talent	Assistant Chief Executive
15	CRR190072	Deterioration of the condition of school and non-school buildings due to resource pressures (financial and human) necessitating postponement of timely interventions	Property Maintenance Manager
15	CRR190073	Ensure effective Business Continuity Arrangements are in place.	Corporate Management Team
12	CRR190005	Ensuring effective management of Grant Funding (including accessing Grant Funding) Threat of having to repay significant Grant monies. Failure to manage grants and maximise on the funding resources available Failure to secure funding Failure to deliver current projects within the set timescales Failure to deliver outputs in line with the T&Cs of grant paying department	Director of Corporate Services
12	CRR190014	Delivery of the Pentre Awel Project (Outcomes / Budget)	Chief Executive
12	CRR190015	Delivery of the Approved Capital Programme (Outcomes / Budget)	Director of Corporate Services
12	CRR190018	Failure to deliver a quality Education Service	Director of Education & Children Services
12	CRR190027	Fraud & Corruption The cost of fraud to the Welsh Public Sector is estimated to be in the region of between £100million and £1billion annually (as reported by Audit Wales)	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/ Director of Corporate Services

Detailed Risk Information

Current Risk Rating	Risk Ref	Details	Assigned To
12	CRR190031	Failure to comply with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act	Corporate Management Team
12	CRR190057	Maintain and develop an effective Local Development Plan	Head of Place & Sustainability
12	CRR190075	Continuing to improve the way we respond to the current pressures on Homeless Services through innovative working practices, support, flexibility and investment. Failure to do so will result in us not meeting housing need, increasing homelessness, an unsustainable service and residents not having the right home at the right time.	Director of Communities
10	CRR190080	Corporate Safeguarding Failure to ensure that adequate Corporate Safeguarding arrangements are in place	Director of Communities
10	CRR190009	Deliver Effective Safeguarding Arrangements - Children (Detail in separate Safeguarding Risk Register)	Head of Children Services
9	CRR190023	Management and delivery of UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund	Economic Development Manager
9	CRR190058	SAC Phosphate & NRW Interim Planning Advice	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Place and Sustainability
9	CRR190078	Failure to address recent concerns regarding the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in non-housing properties.	Head of Regeneration
9	CRR190079	Managing Premises with emphasis of Fire Safety in the Hybrid working environment.	Head of Regeneration
8	CRR190007	Ensuring effective management of Procurement / Contract Management and Partnership arrangements	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance
8	CRR190010	Deliver Effective Safeguarding Arrangements - Vulnerable Adults	Director of Communities
8	CRR190012	Failure to adhere to an effective Corporate Governance Framework	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance
8	CRR190022	Manage and Develop Cwm Environmental & Llesiant Delta Wellbeing	Corporate Management Team
8	CRR190060	Critical Authority wide IT systems	Head of ICT & Policy
6	CRR190043	Post Covid19 - Strategic Financial Implications - loss of income Financial implications - increased costs due to Covid-19 demands and compliance with Cabinet and Welsh Government instructions	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services/Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance
6	CRR190063	Failure in Determination of Major Planning Applications (Failure to determine major planning applications within timescale is adversely impacting on our ability as an Authority to achieve our regeneration ambitions)	Head of Place & Sustainability

Carmarthenshire Risk Register for CMT 22nd February 2024

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190034	Cyber Risk such as: - Ransomware or malware infection - Denial of Service Attack (DOS) - Unauthorised network access (hacking) - External and Internal - Phishing Email Attack - staff approach - Increased risk of cyber crime due to phishing and malware attacks exploiting Covid-19	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190034/001	Cyber incident response plan	Head of ICT & Policy			Significant	Significant	
CRR190034/002	Staff awareness training	Head of ICT & Policy			25	20	
CRR190034/003	Firewalls	Head of ICT & Policy				Catastrophic	
CRR190034/004	Application control on servers	Head of ICT & Policy				Likely	
CRR190034/005	Security updates continuously rolled out	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190034/006	Annual, certified vulnerability assessments are carried out to find out if known vulnerabilities exist within our systems	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190034/007	Cyber Security Team conducts internal vulnerability scans continuously to ensure compliance with software update schedule and to quickly identify high risk issues.	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190034/008	Proactive monitoring of network and endpoint activity to detect and alert on potential adversarial behaviour - this includes post-compromise hacker activity as well as insider threats.	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190034/009	National Cyber Security Centre Advanced Cyber Defence tools are being used to help prevent commodity attacks.	Head of ICT & Policy					
Action Items							

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

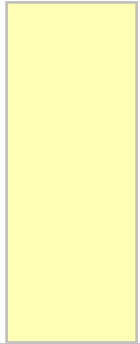
Manager

Corporate Management Team

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

We are working with the elections team to understand the cyber risks that have been highlighted by electoral services to the upcoming elections. We are still receiving a high number of phishing emails which are bypassing the email filtering system (Microsoft Cloud Filtering). We are looking to review options and potentially migrate to another systems. The launch of the ThinkQi L&D system is expected to happen in Q1 on this year. Cyber awareness training will then be delivered to all staff on an annual basis.

The current risk is significant. That is because we've increased the probability from possible to likely. We've had a very clear message from Audit Wales and the Welsh Government that "it's a matter of when, not if" we become victims of a successful attack of some sort. We're also seeing a large number of phishing attacks via email, some of which are getting through. UK Government have also put all public sector organisations on "high alert" due to the war in Ukraine, as of January this year.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190038	Increasing sickness absence and management of stress in the workplace.	Assistant Chief Executive				
Control Measures						
CRR190038/001	Robust sickness absence management framework	Assistant Chief Executive	Assistant Chief Executive	Significant 20	Significant 20	
CRR190038/006	Resilience, self-service training availability (preventative action)	Assistant Chief Executive	Assistant Chief Executive		Substantial Probable	
CRR190038/007	Mental health / wellbeing checks integral part of 1-1's, supervision etc.	Assistant Chief Executive	Assistant Chief Executive			
CRR190038/002	Robust stress management in the workplace framework	Assistant Chief Executive	Assistant Chief Executive			
CRR190038/003	Provision of an adequately resourced occupational health service	Assistant Chief Executive	Assistant Chief Executive			
CRR190038/004	Wellbeing Champions network	Assistant Chief Executive	Assistant Chief Executive			
CRR190038/005	Mental Health First Aiders	Assistant Chief Executive	Assistant Chief Executive			
Action Items						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>Continues to be an area of concern. Short term absences are more problematic In relation to long term absences, NHS waiting lists and access to secondary care is a factor, meaning staff are off for longer. Work is underway within some departments to establish the underlying causes of absence. Training for additional MHFA being organised for March 2024 Detailed monitoring reports considered at Scrutiny and CMT in the last 6 months. Dedicated HoS / CMT meeting scheduled in March to look at how we address the problem moving forward. Referrals into our OH service are increasing but recruitment into key posts is problematic. Despite the above control measures, absence levels do not appear to be reducing. No change to score.</p>					

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Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To
CRR190033	<p>Extreme Weather Event - Operational Risk</p> <p>The physical effects of more frequent and intense weather patterns including storms and significant heat extremes conditions that compromise and stretch our operational ability to respond to widespread and prolonged emergencies both in the immediate response phase and recovery phase of a flood event, whilst also maintaining normal services. This will also include the risk of managing the public's expectation as the Council cannot respond to all requests for help during storm conditions. Response is curtailed by the resources available and the priorities at the time.</p>	Corporate Management Team
Control Measures		
CRR190033/002	<p>Management of the response to a storm event in accordance with our strategic emergency plans, protocols and command structures.</p> <p>Available resources are prioritised according to strategic requirements.</p>	<p>Control Owner: Director of Place & Infrastructure</p> <p>Uncontrolled Risk Rating: Significant (20)</p> <p>Current Risk Rating: Significant (20)</p> <p>Previous Rating since 14/11/2023: Substantial, Probable</p>
Action Items		
Empty area for action items		

- Departmental Review for CMT
January 2024 Update (Daniel John/ Ben Kathrens)

Recent analysis as suggested that in total, there are 12,600 addresses at risk of flooding from any source in Carmarthenshire.
10,486 dwellings
1,471 businesses

We have 2720 addresses at risk of tidal inundation
5808 at risk of fluvial flooding and
7099 at risk of surface water flooding

In contrast to last year, it has been a busy year with multiple storms and significant flooding. During Storm Gerrit and Henk over the Christmas and New Year period, we were significantly stretched in terms of our operational and strategic response, and we are investigating how we manage these situations better in the future, in partnership with blue lights services and partner Orgs.

We have continued to benefit from Welsh Government capital flood grant but the loss of a £225k revenue grant to the RSG is of concern. This year, significant capital projects have been delivered at Ammanford and Newcastle Emlyn and we will continue to manage our assets as efficiently as possible, utilising new technology.

Our current funded works programme will benefit 1500 properties and businesses (only 12% of those at risk in Carmarthenshire).

Financial pressure will impact on our ability to undertake preventative works but more importantly, we are struggling to recruit skilled Flood Risk Management officers and engineers. The team has operated with a vacancy rate of 15-20% this financial year but currently (Jan 24) the rate is closer to 35%.

- Financial position updated
February 2024

£300k emergency repairs to 2 sections of highway following recent storms seeking Welsh Government funding (uncertain).



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190019	Failure to ensure that schools effectively manage their resources and respond to the challenges of reduced funding	Director of Education & Children Services			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190019/001	Lead the TIC Schools project, working with colleagues and schools to identify significant savings as set by the County Council through the budget efficiency programme	Director of Education & Children Services / Head of Education & Inclusion	Significant 20	Significant 20 Substantial Probable	
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>The current Risk Rating remains at Significant 20 (impact Substantial 4 and the probability remains Probable 5. This rating was increased in August 2023. School balances have reduced from £15 million March 2022 to £11 million March 2023. Director of Corporate Services presentation to Head Teachers Conference in June 2023 to highlight financial issues and to raise profile. Previous update still relevant for 2023 of 'Threat to reduced grant incomes as grants are flat cash v significant scale of pay rewards. It is hard to accurately cost grant bids due to the scale of uncertainty over pay awards and construction cost inflation thus increasing the risk', as well as 2022 Soulbury still not agreed. Senior officers and ESAs work closely with Chairs and other members of the Governing Body to address issues in relation to finance and staffing. Governors receive detailed support and guidance from Education Support Advisers when recruiting senior leaders within their schools and when re-structuring their staffing. This is ensuring an effective use of resources. Governors have been well supported to make very difficult decisions in many schools due the effective analysis of financial data. However, a minority of schools still face significant budgetary challenges and with the situation worsening more schools will be going into deficit. The Schools' Transformation Project in relation to schools will support school leaders with ensuring value for money and securing further efficiencies. A significant pressure is being placed on all schools' budgets due to delegation limitations. The number of schools serviced by the budget is placing general delegated budgets and ALN budgets under severe pressure, with services unable to meet the demands of our most vulnerable pupils. Any proposal to cut the delegated budget to schools will place more schools into deficit budget and will increase the deficit in those schools already in deficit. The risk rating will be reviewed after the 2024-25 Budget consultation has been concluded. As a result of our Service Evaluation Report for Estyn and in light of additional financial savings required by schools, we need to review the funding formula for primary and secondary schools, and this is an Action in our Development Plan for 2023 24, currently work being undertaken by two experienced seconded headteachers to discuss current model with schools and explore possibilities in relation to formula funding.</p>					

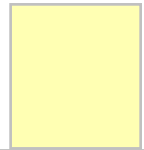
Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

- Financial position updated February 2024

HOS of financial service raised profile in Chair of Governors Autumn Conference, Draft budget includes £2.454m. Forecast £8-9 million draw on school reserves by April 2024. Current trend not sustainable in the longer term.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190028	School Leadership - Our ability to recruit and retain high quality and resilient school leaders who can respond to and deal with the transformation of education in Wales	Director of Education & Children Services				
Control Measures						
CRR190028/001	Develop and use a more robust competency based process to recruit school leaders		Head of Education and Inclusion	Significant 20	Significant 20	
CRR190028/002	Provide each new school leader with a mentor who's an experienced and successful school leader		Head of School Effectiveness		Substantial Probable	
CRR190028/003	Encourage leaders and prospective leaders to enrol on Partneriaeth's leadership courses/programmes		Head of School Effectiveness			
CRR190028/004	Provide Educational Support Adviser support for all new school leaders and provide bespoke induction/mentoring programme		Head of School Effectiveness			
CRR190028/005	Use the Headteacher Performance Management process effectively to challenge, develop and support school leaders		Head of School Effectiveness			
Action Items						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>The current Risk Rating remains at the increased score of Significant 20, the impact remains Substantial 4 and the probability remains Probable 5. This is due to the fall out of the pandemic which has led to a rise in early retirements with less of an appetite for deputies to step up. There is a risk that the current school footprint, which still contains many small schools which need school leaders covering multiple schools, is not an attractive role for applicants.</p> <p>Currently, there is significant demand on leadership in our primary sector. A number of headteachers retired at the end of the last academic year placing significant pressure on the system and officers to identify new leaders and attract appropriate qualified candidates. This has proved to be the case for a number of vacancies during the last couple of months.</p> <p>We continue to use an Assessment Centre approach to recruit Headteachers; provide each new school leader with a mentor, encourage prospective leaders to enrol on Partneriaeth's leadership courses/programmes; provide Educational Support Adviser support for all new school leaders and use the Headteacher Performance Management process effectively to challenge, develop and support school leaders.</p> <p>The recruitment and retention consultation group have researched extensively the demand both locally and nationally, informing key priorities for improvement. The group has reported to scrutiny who have agreed all actions; subsequently action plans have been drafted, focussing specifically on developing a leadership academy, marketing education in Carmarthenshire, the recruitment process and the ongoing analysis of recruitment and retention data. A focus on shared roles, and the development of apprenticeship opportunities are also being pursued. In addition we have been selected by Cardiff University to work alongside them in exploring this national crisis further, sharing challenges and action plans.</p>						

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Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190056	Ensuring that the Authority effectively manages its financial resources and responds to the challenges of reduced funding (formerly CRR190004)	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services					
CRR190056/001	Medium Term Financial Strategy - 3 Year Plan (including efficiency targets)	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services			Significant 20	Significant 20	
CRR190056/002	Full County Council Elected Member Engagement on an annual basis to set priorities and allocate the Budget	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services				Catastrophic Likely	
CRR190056/003	Challenge from Scrutiny Committees	Head of Administration & Law					
CRR190056/004	Public Consultation regarding budget priorities on an Annual Basis	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services					
CRR190056/005	Engagement with Welsh Government via WLGA to ensure Carmarthenshire County Council receives fair funding from Welsh Government	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services					
CRR190056/006	Transformation programme to support services to become more commercial ensuring operating costs are fully recovered	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190056/007	Robust workforce planning framework to ensure Services consider and predict future needs and demands and plan accordingly knowledge, skills, service delivery models.	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190056/008	Wales Audit Office external challenge and assessment	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services					
CRR190056/010	Transformation programme to identify and delivery projects aimed at reducing duplication and waste	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190056/011	Transformation programme to maximise the benefits that AI can help us deliver	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190056/009	Individual Heads of Service to develop efficiencies following external budget challenge reports	Director of Corporate Services					
Action Items							

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

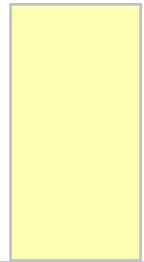
Manager

Corporate Management Team

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

Very significant draw on School balances (£9m forecast vs £11m held at year end). Draft 24/25 budget based on £38m budget gap vs £11m WG funding. £10.8 m departments savings, £2m vacancy factor and 6.5%CT increase. Still requires £0.8m gap to be bridged. Budget includes significant risks over future pay awards & assumptions regarding full funding of teachers & fire fighters pensions.

Risk rating score has been considered and to remain at Significant as control measures are in place and monitored closely.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190077	Significant operational pressures within the Fleet Services unit including a difficulty to retain or recruit skilled technicians and technical support staff, as well as vehicle supply chain pressures (hire/lease/purchase) combined with escalating parts, materials costs and fuel costs.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190077/001	Review employee remuneration to ensure competitive offer in marketplace and targeted promotion of vacancies.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways	Significant	Significant	
CRR190077/002	Continue to engage with market to try to secure additional resources.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways	25	Substantial	
CRR190077/003	Prioritise HGV fleet and maintain Operator's licence.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways		Probable	
CRR190077/004	Ensure fuel security with monitoring of fuel supplies and bunkered store and have contingencies in place.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways			
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT January 2024 Update (Daniel John/ Richard Waters) <p>Market engaged and additional resource secured with external contractors utilise to address peaks in demand. Operators Licence and service critical vehicles prioritised. Service performance monitored with Fleet availability targeted to be above 95%. Operational risk mitigated through supply chain engagement. Fleet transitioning to support net zero carbon goals with electric vehicles and charging infrastructure. Nature of risk is changing from operational to strategic.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190068	Continued deterioration of the condition of highways infrastructure and assets. Failure to address maintenance backlog (£63 million), as a consequence of falling investment levels leading to high levels of demand and Increased level of claims.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190068/001	Manage network in accordance with Highways Asset Management Plan adopting a risk based approach in accordance with the National Code.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways	Significant 20	Significant 20	
CRR190068/002	Continue to present the case for additional investment of capital ,grant and revenue. Improve information systems on vulnerable assets such as drainage.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways		Catastrophic Likely	
CRR190068/003	Inspection regime and response in line with highways asset management plan in compliance with Highways Maintenance Code of Practice	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways			
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial position update February 2024 2024-25 Capital Programme increased allocation from £600k to £2M, though recognition that this is still not enough. Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>Continued deterioration of the condition of highways infrastructure and assets. Failure to address maintenance backlog (£63 million), as a consequence of falling investment levels leading to high levels of demand and Increased level of claims.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To
CRR190067	Lack of availability of domiciliary care to support vulnerable adults which leads to the risk of people being unsupported and potentially unsafe in the community, as well as people being delayed leaving hospital preventing others being able to access urgent medical treatment.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning

Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190067/001	Support the sector to grow the workforce.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning	Significant 25	Significant 20
CRR190067/002	Review of all those receiving care to look at opportunities to safely reduce arrangements to release care hours to support others	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning		Substantial Probable
CRR190067/003	Ongoing review of those waiting for care to reduce level of care needed.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning		
CRR190067/004	Consideration of temporary placement where appropriate to support those waiting for care.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning		
CRR190067/005	Bridge packages of care wherever possible.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning		
CRR190067/006	Refresh of domiciliary care commissioning framework completed	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning		
CRR190067/007	Commissioned preventative services in the third sector to develop five community hubs to reduce demand pressures.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning		
CRR190067/008	Developed the Care Academi.	Director of Communities/Head of Adult Social Care/Head of Integrated Services/Head of Commissioning		

Action Items

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- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

We continue to experience pressures, however, there is a gradual reduction in numbers of people waiting for a package of care and on going action are as follows:

We have recently refreshed our domiciliary care framework and this has attracted a number of new providers to the market.

Our strategic approach to grow the in house service remains, but recruitment challenges has impacted on our ability to achieve this.

However, we are seeing an increased number of applicants in recent weeks which will have a positive impact.

We are seeing positive results in relation to our integrated home based care service, a partnership initiative with the Health Board which is impacting on the numbers able to leave hospital and numbers waiting I hospital for care have reduced significantly. The Care and Support Coordinators are continuing to review all those receiving or waiting for care to see whether levels of care can safely be reduced, and care hours released. In addition, we are risk assessing all those waiting for care so we can prioritise those waiting when hours become available. Waiting lists are down, time taken to carry out assessments has also reduced. Whilst this currently indicates a stable position and a reduced risk, the situation in the home care market remains volatile and is under constant review.

- Financial position updated
February 2024

Draft budget papers reference need for national debate over funding mechanisms as weekly cap has remained fixed despite high inflation.



Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190049	Risk of local business and economy not recovering from the cost-of-living crises and rises in energy and inflation.	Head of Regeneration			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190049/001	Financial support to businesses	Head of Regeneration	Significant 20	Significant 16	
CRR190049/002	Advice to businesses	Head of Regeneration		Substantial Likely	
CRR190049/003	Support to businesses	Head of Regeneration			
CRR190049/004	Embed the Carmarthenshire 1st approach as part of our progressive procurement process.	Head of Regeneration			
CRR190049/005	Robust economic plans to protect jobs and safeguard businesses.	Head of Regeneration			
Action Items					

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

Work continues to deliver the Carmarthenshire Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) £4.5m of financial support has been made available to businesses over the next two years through the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) business anchor projects via the Property development Fund (PDF), Business Renewable Energy Fund (BREF) and Business Growth & Start Up Fund. - The PDF, BREF and Business Growth & start Up funds were all launched March 2023. Business Renewable Energy Fund - 39 Expressions of Interest have been approved to the value of the available fund. Of those EOI's 17 grant awards have been made totalling £471,000. Property development Fund - 5 Stage 1 applications totalling a value of £3m have been assessed and a prioritisation exercise has been undertaken which has resulted in 3 of those projects being invited forward to submit detail applications for the available £1.5m fund. Two of the three projects have now received formal awards totalling £960,000 and work has commenced on site. To end December 2023, 69 awards (18 start up and 51 Growth) totalling £464k have been approved under the business growth and Start up fund. Funding has also been secured under the SPF business anchor to deliver the Sir Gâr Business Engagement Project that will see support provided to businesses to encourage inter trading, support local supply chains, support delivery of progressive procurement initiative and encouraging entrepreneurship – work has commenced on delivery of business engagement project in October 2023 with a 18mth plan in place to deliver the project. The Christmas Pop up initiative has been successfully delivered in Carmarthen, Ammanford and Llanelli Town Centres supporting 66 local businesses. The Business Engagement team have supported the procurement team and the various purchasing managers / teams to raise awareness of up and coming CCC tenders / contracts among the business community. Recent contracts included Minor works, PPE & Workwear, Drainage and Civils, Property Work Framework as well as the 2nd tier opportunities of Pentre Awel. The team have also worked in partnership with the procurement team to run Procurement & Business Support Surgeries, which have proven very successful. Each session, of which there have been 7 to date, have been fully booked with the maximum of 12 businesses per day. These have been held in The Beacon, Yr Egin, and the Carmarthen Hwb with more being planned for 2024 which will take place in the rural towns throughout the County. The team are also mapping businesses which can be added to lists for procuring officers in CCC to request quotes for work less than £25k, resulting in more work being sourced from Carmarthenshire businesses. Generally the CCC business team have also engaged with 6 large employers in relation to business development and provided a further 56 businesses with general engagement / enquiries / referrals to support and funding.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190069	Contractor and internal capacity issues leading to a high backlog of housing responsive repairs and housing voids which reduces the number of homes available to let and a delay in repairs being completed.	Director of Communities					
CRR190069/001	Parcel work based on type and geographical location to encourage take up by contractor			Head of Housing Property & Strategic Projects	Significant 20	Significant 16	
CRR190069/002	Introduce a new Property Works Framework by August 2023			Head of Housing Property & Strategic Projects		Substantial Likely	
CRR190069/003	Staffing resources to be reviewed as part of Divisional realignment in 2022			Head of Housing Property & Strategic Projects			
CRR190069/005	Employment of additional operational staff to provide greater in-house resilience and to reduce dependence on limited contract contractor base in the area			Head of Housing Property & Strategic Projects			
CRR190069/006	Undertake a review of Voids repair processes			Head of Housing Property & Strategic Projects			
CRR190069/007	Upgrade Total Repairs property maintenance job management system to Total Connect and Asset Management system to CX Assets to improve data management and issuing of work to contractors / in-house staff, plus improved communication with tenants			Head of Housing Property & Strategic Projects			
CRR190069/008	Discussions with contractors to encourage take up of work during remaining period of the Minor Works Framework			Head of Housing Property & Strategic Projects			
Action Items							

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

Work continues to be packaged by geographic area and by type to facilitate delivery by the limited number of contractors available via the current Minor Works Framework. We are also trialling in-house operatives working on Saturdays to make further progress in reducing the backlog. The volume of work being delivered has increased from 26,000 last financial year to a projected 32,000 this year. While turnaround times have improved in some key areas, other repairs continue to take longer than desired. The new Property Works Framework is to be issued for tender by the end of January for implementation from 1st August 2024.

Staffing resources continue to be reviewed and the 2024/27 HRA Business Plan sets out that "We plan to increase our in-house provision around managing and implementing repairs and re-balance the current split between internal and external contractors." and "In 2024/25 we will introduce a new handy person service which will give our officers more "tools" to do their job and have direct access to preventative services on our estates. The handy person service will focus on carrying out low level repairs on tenant's homes, ground maintenance and general improvement works on priority estates in the Carmarthen, Ammanford and Llanelli areas."

Discussions have been held with a number of contractors to identify reasons for not taking work, with some success, although framework rates, skills shortages and high demand remain barriers to framework contractors taking work. The new Framework and batching of work should lead to improvements.

Some additional operational staff have been recruited for responsive maintenance and voids, but approval is awaited to employ in-house staff for Adaptations. The ambition remains to significantly further increase in-house resources from spring 2024, subject to a review of productivity and efficiency of the current in-house team.

The Voids Review was completed in May 2022 and all the recommendations have been accepted. Implementation of many have completed and some are ongoing. A cross-Divisional Implementation Group has been established to monitor and deliver ongoing progress. We have also worked with House Mark to undertake an external review of our Voids Service with additional actions identified for the Action Plan. Voids have reduced from a peak of 434 at the end of May 2022 to a current level of 197 at the end of January 2024.

Implementation of Total Connect is ongoing and is due to be completed on a phased basis over various teams between now and April 2024.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190032	Flood - Strategic Risk The physical effects of more frequent and intense storm conditions that compromise homes, businesses, essential infrastructure and services. This will also include the risk of managing the public's expectation that the Council can completely address, control and mitigate all flood risks regardless of source or asset owner.	Director of Place & Infrastructure			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190032/001	Flood Risk Strategy and FRMPs	Director of Place & Infrastructure	Significant 20	Significant 16	
CRR190032/002	Community Plans in terms of self-help where practicable	Director of Place & Infrastructure		Substantial Likely	
CRR190032/003	Continue to work with our professional partners (as a LLFA)	Director of Place & Infrastructure			
CRR190032/004	S19 Reports and action plans	Director of Place & Infrastructure			
CRR190032/005	Pro-active maintenance programme for flood assets	Director of Place & Infrastructure			
CRR190032/006	Making more use of contemporary flood data and information from partner agencies	Director of Place & Infrastructure			
CRR190032/007	SAB for future development and TAN 15 compliance	Director of Place & Infrastructure			
CRR190032/008	Effective communication strategy	Director of Place & Infrastructure			
Action Items					

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

- Departmental Review for CMT
January 2024 Update (Rhodri Griffiths/ Ben Kathrens)

Maintain existing rating.

In 2024, we are currently completing a flood risk management strategy which will seek to evaluate the risk across the county and in our 6 primary risk catchments. The strategy and associated plan will set out our priorities for managing flood risk over the next 7 years (2024-2030).

Our annual works programme also involves the strategic evaluation of flood risk at community level.

This has included to date:

Llanybydder, Llandysul, Llangennech, Kidwelly, Penyfan and Trostre (East Llanelli), Heol Buckey (Llanelli), Bynea (Llanelli), Ammanford and Whitland.

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190016	Delivery of the Authority's Waste Management and Recycling Strategy to ensure that we meet our statutory recycling targets and wider obligations including improvements to the quality of recyclable materials to support circular economy principles and reduce carbon outputs in accordance with Welsh Governments Beyond Recycling national strategy	Head of Waste & Environmental Services			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190016/001	Maintain current provision and infrastructure for recycling	Head of Waste & Environmental Services	Significant 20	Significant 16	
CRR190016/002	Continue education and awareness activity to improve participation	Head of Waste & Environmental Services		Substantial Likely	
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT January 2024 Update (Daniel John/ Geinor Lewis) <p>Improvements in current infrastructure for recycling- Following the initial stage of the Waste Strategy by implementing improvements to kerbside recycling facilities, further work to plan the Bring Site review has been finalised and an operational programme of works is due to commence in February to reduce the bring site network by 75%. Due to the kerbside glass collection handling 2,686 tonnes from one year January 2023 – January 2024 there is no longer a requirement for the extensive network of community bring sites as they are no longer receiving the volumes of glass with 96% of households receiving kerbside provisions. Reducing the bring site numbers allows efficiencies in terms of resource requirements and reducing carbon footprint through less vehicle movements and allowing for more glass to be collected at kerbside promoting increased recycling opportunities and reducing the material entering the non-recyclable waste stream.</p> <p>Education, Awareness and Enforcement Community Recycling Advisors, Waste Wardens and Enforcement Officers have been actively engaging within the community to initially raise awareness and educate residents into full compliance with the kerbside recycling scheme. Proactive targeted engagements have been undertaken in hotspot areas where larger areas have been identified with non-compliance and a collaborative team approach has been established to deal with the issues of concern. This allows for a tailored approach whereby pending the issues the relevant officers can deal with the matter, ranging from advice and recycling item provisions to s.46 notice. Programmes of work have been created to undertake proactive engagement and the teams undertake reactive call outs when identified issues are raised. Communications in terms of recycling scheme and key messages around recycling items have been developed.</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial position updated February 2024 £2M pressure included in 24-25 budget to recognise increased ongoing costs of interim waste collection service. 					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190029	Net Zero Carbon Failure to deliver the Council's commitment to become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Place and Sustainability			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190029/001	The Council has adopted a realistic, pragmatic and achievable approach in its Net Zero Carbon Plan.	Head of Place & Sustainability	Significant 20	Significant 16 Substantial Likely	
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT – 22nd February 2024 January 2024 Update (Rhodri Griffiths/ Kendal Davies) <p>Increase the risk rating to Substantial x Likely = 16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2022/23, our finalised total reported emissions reduced by -6.3% compared to 2021/22 i.e., Streetlighting (-2.8%), Fleet (+0.3%) and Business Mileage (+7.5%). There was a significant -9.1% reduction in emissions from our Non-Domestic Buildings (these account for ~70% of our total reported carbon emissions). Since 2016/17 our reported carbon emissions have reduced by -36%. In August 2023 we secured Welsh Government Low Carbon Heat Grant funding for six primary schools. Total project cost is £4.42m with 90% funding of £3.57m (2023/24) plus £0.41m (2024/25). Welsh Government are funding Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) to ensure coverage across each local authority area by 31/03/2024. We are the lead local authority for the SW Wales Region, and work is progressing well. We are on target to publish a revised Net Zero Carbon (NZC) / Decarbonisation Plan by 31/03/2024 that will incorporate Welsh Government guidance, together with trajectories for carbon emission reductions accompanied by milestone targets. The estimated cost of achieving the council's low carbon net zero plan is £166+m. This estimate is based on £133m in achieving 80% compliance with the target recognising the disproportionate cost of additional mitigation measures in achieving the residual 20% reduction through carbon mitigation measures. It is anticipated that the 20% residual carbon would likely be delivered through carbon offsetting. Total cost is therefore likely in excess of £166m+ to achieve the net zero commitment. In light of the budget settlement and while the council will explore all avenues of funding to support the programme, the total cost of monies to fund the programme is yet to be identified ahead of 2030. 					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190076	Failure to secure the full extent of home-to-school transport services from third party providers due to a range of economic and market specific issues including increasing fuel costs, driver and maintenance technician shortages across the industry, supply market challenges (vehicles and parts) and an increasing complexity in demand management.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190076/001	Introduce emergency fuel supplement payments to operators to sustain services.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways	Significant 20	Significant 16	
CRR190076/002	Continue to engage with operators.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways		Substantial Likely	
CRR190076/003	Work closely with Education.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways			
CRR190076/004	Continue to make representations to WG via the WLGA.	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Transportation & Highways			
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT January 2024 Update (Daniel John/ Richard Waters) <p>Officers continue to work with private transport operators to ensure the supply of transport services continue to meet the changing demand for home to school transport. Active engagement by officers on a national and regional basis with WG takes place to maximise passenger transport services for the available funding with services adjusted in accordance with allocated WG funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial position updated February 2024 <p>Significant overspend in current year budget pressure funded in 24/25 budget.</p>					

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190061	Attracting, recruiting and retaining talent	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190061/001	Improved internal recruitment processes including approach to interviews.	Assistant Chief Executive			Significant	High	
CRR190061/002	Flexible People Management policies	Assistant Chief Executive			25	15	
CRR190061/003	Up to date Workforce Strategy	Assistant Chief Executive				Catastrophic	
CRR190061/004	Robust Workforce Planning	Assistant Chief Executive				Possible	
CRR190061/005	Improved employer branding	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190061/011	Visible career pathways with sponsored qualification frameworks for progression (alternative routes to higher education)	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190061/006	Flexible People Management policies	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190061/007	Opportunities to develop	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190061/008	Provision of wellbeing support	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190061/009	Providing staff with a voice	Assistant Chief Executive					
CRR190061/010	Employer of Choice - Improve linkages between L&D and Education Department to promote career opportunities within schools e.g.	Assistant Chief Executive					
Action Items							

- Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update
 - New Recruitment System go live date 15 February which will see all services accessing it by the end of 2024. This will go some way to improving employer brand.
 - People Management policies are regularly reviewed, updated and developed to respond to changing employment legislation and needs of the organisation
 - New Workforce Strategy on target to published from April 2024
 - New Workforce Planning toolkit available and promoted to managers. We have a robust workforce planning framework in place, with a range of resources available to managers, who have access to people management data to help them. Managers now need to use these resources and DMT's now need to come up with departmental workforce plans.
 - New Learning Management System on target to be launched this year
 - New Learning & Development Policy on target to be published during 2024 – ensuring fair access to learning opportunities for all.
 - There are concerns about the ability of the internal wellbeing team to continue providing the level of support as previously due to reduced staffing, recruitment freeze and funding.
 - Staff Forum meeting once a quarter. Annual staff survey completed. Hybrid working survey completed. Digital Skills survey completed.
 - Work underway with education colleagues. People Management representation at January Insight event to promote the careers available.
 - No change to risk rating.



Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190073	Ensure effective Business Continuity Arrangements are in place.	Corporate Management Team			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190073/001	Risk Management group to establish and coordinate working group on behalf of CMT to look at Business Continuity Plans across the Authority.	Corporate Management Team	Significant 20	High 15 Significant Probable	
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>The Business Continuity Task & Finish Group met on 21st November 2023; amended Business Continuity templates to go forward to the next Contingency Planning Working Group meeting scheduled for 26th February 24 for sign-off.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190050	<p>Risk of contractor and suppliers failing to deliver projects/schemes, because of highly volatile macro economic conditions and inflation/disruption to suppliers, service goods and materials, which has an impact of the non-delivery of capital works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to meet grant expenditure conditions. - contractors resources depleted - contract failure - cost increases - sourcing materials - Contractors unwilling to carry out work at framework prices 	Property Maintenance Manager				
Control Measures						
CRR190050/001	Review pipeline of projects with clients to align project delivery and budget with supply side capacity and market conditions.	Property Maintenance Manager		Significant 20	High 15	
CRR190050/003	Undertake regular financial checks on suppliers.	Property Maintenance Manager			Catastrophic Possible	
CRR190050/004	Approved exception process in place for exceptional circumstances	Property Maintenance Manager				
CRR190050/005	Undertake a review of the Council's Contract Risk allocation	Property Maintenance Manager				
Action Items						

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update - Andrew D Tidy

Propose to maintain existing risk rating.

CRR 190050/001 – The remainder of pipeline of projects for SWWRFC20 continues to be reviewed with Sponsors as part of ongoing project progress, budget monitoring and scheme governance meetings. We continue to gather contractor data via our Key Performance Indicators. The pipeline for SWWRFC24 is currently being developed in readiness for the targeted launch of the new framework in November 2024.

CRR 190050/003 – In line with current protocol, financial checks continue to be undertaken as part of the contractor procurement process for each major project. Framework contractors are required to maintain the minimum financial requirements to allow qualification. In terms of individual major projects, budget monitoring continues to be undertaken on a continuous basis.

CRR 190050/004 – As per last report, the approved exception process continues to be used when required to progress projects (Section 151).

CRR 190050/005 – As per last report, the Head of Risk and Compliance has examined the contractual limitation of liability and has made a deliberated decision to align the cap with the level of Professional Liability. The determination of the Professional Liability level will be established by the Risk Section as an integral part of a procurement call off process. Discussions are continuing with the Risk Section in respect of professional service contracts in outlining of the particulars of Employers' Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity policies. This is being supported by external legal advice.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190072	Deterioration of the condition of school and non-school buildings due to resource pressures (financial and human) necessitating postponement of timely interventions	Property Maintenance Manager				
Control Measures						
CRR190072/001	Building condition surveys on non-school buildings and reports to be reinstated	Property Maintenance Manager		Significant 25	High 15	
CRR190072/002	Building condition surveys on school buildings and reports to be reinstated	Property Maintenance Manager			Catastrophic	
CRR190072/003	Risk Management bid to be considered to fund urgent building condition surveys	Property Maintenance Manager			Possible	
CRR190072/004	Establishment of a Schools Handy Van service for Primary school, with 2 inspections by an inspector annually.	Property Maintenance Manager				
Action Items						

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update - Jason G Jones

001 & 002 Ongoing condition surveys of educational facilities are being conducted as per the established program, in accordance with the framework agreed upon with Corporate Property. Notably, the most recent condition surveys indicate a noteworthy enhancement in overall facility conditions. However, it is essential to acknowledge that this improvement may be attributed to the implementation of a revised methodology introduced by the Welsh Government.

Presently, our projections indicate a substantial projected requirement of £80 million over the ensuing five years. This funding is necessary to ensure the continued maintenance of our entire commercial property portfolio at a level that aligns with reasonable condition standards.

004 The TIC Programme Board is overseeing the progress of the Schools Handy Van service. As part of this oversight, regular inspection visits for primary schools by the Handyvan team and Building Inspectors persist.

In our Property Maintenance team, we've compiled a thorough list of repair needs that require budget approval from the relevant schools. Unfortunately, there have been delays in obtaining these approvals. However, after recent proactive communication with the schools, we've managed to decrease the number of jobs awaiting budget approval. The remaining tasks have been forwarded to the Head of Education & Inclusion Services for approval.

In parallel, we have undertaken a cost analysis for the expansion of our services to encompass Secondary Schools and Corporate buildings. A business case has been developed and is presently under consideration through the development of a DOR.

In pursuit of continuity beyond the trial period, the Education Department has been tasked with the responsibility of formulating a growth bid to sustain the Primary Schools Handyvan Service.



Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To				
CRR190014	Delivery of the Pentre Awel Project (Outcomes / Budget)	Chief Executive				
Control Measures			Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190014/001	Project Board is operational with suitable governance and representative membership	Chief Executive		Significant 16	High 12	
CRR190014/002	Development of Zones 1-4 of Pentre Awel consisting of business, education and skills, research and clinical delivery and leisure facilities (Zone 1), assisted living (Zones 2 and 3), affordable and social housing (Zone 2) and hotel and open market housing (Zone 4)	Chief Executive			Substantial Possible	
CRR190014/003	Financial Planning	Director of Corporate Services				
Action Items						

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

From a construction perspective, Zone 1 works are being delivered through the appointment of Bouygues UK Ltd as the principal contractor. The contract is being managed and administered in accordance with the NEC form of contracts. Works have been progressing well with the steel frame due to be completed in mid January and a topping out ceremony proposed for the end of February. Recent Health Board changes to scope and provision of space for the Zone 1 building is being captured and managed with impact on time and programme being considered. Community benefits are being delivered in line with the contractor's commitments and obligations. The plans for Zones 2 and 3 are being reviewed against the original business case and current demand/population need, with a view to providing a clear scope and timeline for the way forward. The hotel development in Zone 4 is on track and the Council will be going out to the market in late January 2024 for a development partner to take this aspect forward.

There has been significant progress over the last quarter, to reduce the risk in terms of the long-term operation of Pentre Awel as follows:

- Swansea University has signed their intention to lease for their Health and Wellbeing Academy.
- The final designs for the Health Board demise are in the process of being agreed and signing of the intention to lease is anticipated during February 2024.
- Funding has been secured via the Shared Prosperity Fund for two aligned bids delivered in partnership with Swansea and Cardiff Universities. The purpose of these grants is to provide the support to draw in potential business start ups/established businesses to secure space in Pentre Awel. A working group is due to commence in February 2024 to deliver the wider Business and Innovation Strategy for the development.
- Dialogue continues with education partners surrounding potential proposals to utilise the remaining space.

The risk surrounding long-term financial viability however still remains as current tenants secured equate to 28% occupancy against a target of 70% occupancy required on day 1 of operation to make the business case financially viable. A detailed project plan is in place and being delivered with a view to pursuing every possible angle to secure tenants for Zone 1 to mitigate the risk.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190075	Continuing to improve the way we respond to the current pressures on Homeless Services through innovative working practices, support, flexibility and investment. Failure to do so will result in us not meeting housing need, increasing homelessness, an unsustainable service and residents not having the right home at the right time.	Director of Communities					
CRR190075/001	Managing demand at the front end through the newly formed "Housing Gateway" team that will ensure a full assessment of housing and support needs to ensure accommodation offered is sustainable.	Director of Communities			Significant 16	High 12	
CRR190075/002	Weekly monitoring of homelessness presentations use, and availability of temporary and permanent accommodation.	Director of Communities				Substantial Possible	
CRR190075/003	Continuing with direct allocation of homes to those in greatest need as per Emergency Allocation Policy.	Director of Communities					
CRR190075/004	Implementation of Rapid Rehousing Transitional Plan in partnership with internal and external stakeholders to ensure right home	Director of Communities					
CRR190075/005	Continued delivery of affordable homes programme to increase availability of affordable homes through new build (ourselves and RSLs), access to additional private rented accommodation, buying private sector homes, bringing more empty properties back into use and s106 agreements.	Director of Communities					
CRR190075/006	Continuing to deliver our commitments to the resettlement programmes in a managed and co-ordinated way.	Director of Communities					
Action Items			Target Date				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>There is no change to the current risk rating. There are still significant housing pressures which we are mitigating.</p>							

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190031	Failure to comply with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act	Corporate Management Team				
Control Measures						
CRR190031/001	Public participation strategy being produced	Corporate Management Team	Corporate Management Team	High 12	High 12	
CRR190031/002	Petition scheme being developed	Corporate Management Team	Corporate Management Team		Substantial Possible	
CRR190031/005	Collaborative working with Principal councils - awaiting further guidance from WG	Corporate Management Team	Corporate Management Team			
CRR190031/006	Corporate Joint Committees - Guidance awaiting from WG - LG engagement will be expected in developing regulation	Corporate Management Team	Corporate Management Team			
CRR190031/007	Webcasting of meetings arrangements in place and work ongoing on developing the arrangements for moving from remote attendance meetings to hybrid meetings	Corporate Management Team	Corporate Management Team			
Action Items						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>A growing concern is the lack of internal staff who are interested in taking up election duties, particularly Polling Station duties, hence this Council is looking to recruit externally where reliability is often questioned. A high risk as on election day, these staff are on the front line delivering the vote. Impact of not implementing relevant legislation, poor planning assumptions, no comprehensive project plan and lack of coordination with other Returning Officers will lead to electors being disenfranchised, inconsistent voter experience and potential breach of legislation. The control measures we have in place such as a recruitment initiative, increasing fees, robust Project Team that has a wealth of experience in Finance, Communication, IT and election law, live issue and risk registers ensure that all necessary activities are planned for and sufficient resources are available.</p>					

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190015	Delivery of the Approved Capital Programme (Outcomes / Budget)	Director of Corporate Services			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190015/001	Strategic Asset Steering Group	Head of Financial Services	Significant	High	
CRR190015/002	Project Grants Manual and Project Management Tool Kit	Head of Regeneration	16	12	Significant
CRR190015/003	Project Management Training	Assistant Chief Executive		Likely	
CRR190015/004	Long term Treasury management / loan funding	Director of Corporate Services			
CRR190015/005	Consideration to be given to prioritisation of approved schemes to maximise outcomes, subject to grant conditions.	Director of Corporate Services			
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>October budget monitoring indicates £53M potential variance/slippage, risk of potential delays to a high profile levelling up projects.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To
CRR190005	Ensuring effective management of Grant Funding (including accessing Grant Funding) Threat of having to repay significant Grant monies. Failure to manage grants and maximise on the funding resources available Failure to secure funding Failure to deliver current projects within the set timescales Failure to deliver outputs in line with the T&Cs of grant paying department	Director of Corporate Services

Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190005/005	Recovery Group reviewing financial position		Significant 16	High 12
CRR190005/006	Reprioritisation of funding to best address the current liabilities	Director of Corporate Services		Substantial Possible
CRR190005/007	Reprioritisation of capital programme	Director of Corporate Services		
CRR190005/001	Project Management Training	Director of Corporate Services		
CRR190005/002	Grant Funding Bodies Guidance Briefings and Training	Director of Corporate Services		
CRR190005/003	Grants Panel	Director of Corporate Services		
CRR190005/004	Grants Manual / CPRs / FPRs	Director of Corporate Services		
CRR190005/008	Effective Budget Monitoring	Director of Corporate Services		
CRR190005/009	Contract management toolkit has been developed & E-Learning to be launched	Director of Corporate Services		

Action Items
<p>Page 146</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>Majority of WG grants are again flat cash which is a significant real terms reduction due to high pay awards & inflation.</p>

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190057	Maintain and develop an effective Local Development Plan	Head of Place & Sustainability				
Control Measures						
CRR190057/001	Development of an effective Local Development Plan (LDP)	Head of Place & Sustainability		High 12	High 12	
CRR190057/002	Adopted LDP in place with no defined end date – continued monitoring through Annual Monitoring Reports to assess effective implementation.	Head of Place & Sustainability			Substantial Possible	
CRR190057/003	Develop policy interventions to ensure the effective implementation of the adopted LDP including use of LDO's etc enabling policy approaches to be agile and adaptable to changes in context and strategic objectives.	Head of Place & Sustainability				
CRR190057/004	To continue the preparation of the Revised LDP reflecting of the Councils corporate and strategic objectives whilst having appropriate regard to national policy and legislation.	Head of Place & Sustainability				
CRR190057/005	Put in place a revised Delivery Agreement and timetable by April 2022 for the preparation of the Revised LDP with WG agreement.	Head of Place & Sustainability				
CRR190057/006	To participate and collaborate regionally on the preparation of the Strategic Development Plan for South-West Wales.	Head of Place & Sustainability				
Action Items						

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT January 2024 Update (Rhodri Griffiths/Ian Llewelyn) <p>CRR190057/001 AND 004 – Revised LDP 2nd Deposit and supporting documents published for public consultation between 17 February to the 14 April 2023. The response received are currently being registered with over 1200 representations received in relation to all aspects of the LDP as well as 12 for the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal and 17 for the Habitat Regulations Assessment predominately from technical and regulatory technical consultees.</p> <p>The responses received will moving forward be considered and will form part of the suite of documentation to be submitted to the Welsh Government as part of the Examination into the Revised LDP. The meeting on Cabinet considered a report on the Habitat Regulations Assessment and Integrated Sustainability Assessment on the 29th January 2024. At this meeting, the need to undertake a further consultation on these documents was considered. This further consultation specifically on these documents and the focused changes to their content reflects matters of evidence in relation to the issues relating to phosphates in protected rivers and procedural matters and regulatory compliance. Following this consultation, the Revised LDP will be submitted to the Welsh Government for examination.</p> <p>CRR190057/006 – Joint evidence has been prepared regionally with the dual benefit of supporting the preparation to a future Strategic Development Plan but also informing reviews of the LDPs across the region. This evidence has included a regional Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment, Defining the extent of the National Growth Area for Swansea Bay and Llanelli as well as Nutrient Credit Trading Feasibility Study.</p> <p>CRR190057/002 – Annual Monitoring Report for 2022/23 in relation to the Adopted LDP was submitted to the Welsh Government by the 31st October deadline.</p>			
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Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190018	Failure to deliver a quality Education Service	Director of Education & Children Services			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190018/003	Raise standards at each key stage	Head of Education and Inclusion	Significant 16	High 12	
CRR190018/004	Support schools to develop and deliver new curriculum	Head of Education and Inclusion / Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing		Substantial Possible	
CRR190018/005	Support schools to implement ALN reform	Head of Education and Inclusion			
CRR190018/007	Provide appropriate support for vulnerable learners - ALN, LAC, EAL, Travellers, e-FSM	Head of Education and Inclusion			
CRR190018/008	Manage the 21st Century School Programme and reduce the number of surplus places with the schools system	Head of Access to Education			
Action Items					

- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

The risk rating remains High 12 (the Impact remains Substantial 4, and possibility is now Possible 3), as increased in October 2023. The Education service will be severely disrupted due to any proposed cuts in the education service budget. The department will have to identify what services need to be reduced and what services can no longer be delivered. The Budget Consultation process has restarted and will be reflected in the Risk score on conclusion of this process in February 2024.

The Departments work on our Service Evaluation and individual Service reviews coupled with Estyn school inspections and our quality assurance in school's success indicates that the possibility of failure to deliver a quality Education Service has reduced. However, we will continue to monitor wellbeing issues in schools amongst the children and staff which has been a concern following the lockdown period. Attendance in our schools also remains below the Welsh average. This may be linked to the difficulties arising from the pandemic. Attendance at the start of the new term has improved for most schools and overall, compared to the same period last year, however the overall figure remains below the pre COVID benchmark of 90%. Education Services and Children's Services will continue to work to link together to tackle all wellbeing issues.

Standards at each key stage remain high but slightly below pre COVID benchmarks. Following WG guidance, Standards are also moving away from attainment and toward progress and wellbeing. While we await a national set of measures for progress and wellbeing, we are currently reflecting progress based on Education Support Advisors conversations with schools and evidence of individual progress during the academic year.

The majority of schools feel that they are supported appropriately in curriculum reform, with particular strengths in certain key areas such as Digital Learning and Foundation Phase Learning. However, the regional professional learning offer needs to strengthen. The ECS department continues to work robustly with Partneriaeth to ensure that the professional learning offer in relation to the curriculum meets the needs of all our schools.

Our ability to support ALN reform has been impacted by the Authority being unable to secure funding for the statutory posts of Designated Coordinators. This means that the LA will not be able to transfer pupils from existing statements to new IDPs. This will mean that the LA will miss statutory deadlines, leading to appeals and tribunals against the LA.

The Vulnerable Learners Strategic Focus Group draws together all officers and services involved with supporting vulnerable learners to provide a supportive structure to provide appropriate support for all vulnerable learners. Therefore, the department is able to provide a wide range of effective mechanisms of support and deploys its resources well in support of the bespoke needs of all vulnerable learners. The LA's integrated approach caters very well for the full range of needs, making provision that supports all categories of identified vulnerable pupils as well as providing universal provision, targeted intervention and additional learning provision for those identified and those who may be at risk of becoming vulnerable.

The Modernising Education Programme MEP is currently undertaking a review in order to re invigorate the 21st Century School Programme. The revised MEP Strategy has now been agreed by Cabinet as will go out to consultation asap.

The Department was inspected by Estyn during July 2023. We believe we have produced a robust Service Evaluation Report which coupled with any recommendations from the inspection will give us a Development Plan going forward to allow us to continue to deliver a quality Education Service. The inspection report is due later in September 2023 and this external view of our services will be used to review the risk rating and commentary in the next update.

Estyn concluded that Carmarthenshire's education services are led robustly by senior leaders and elected members, who share a clear vision for education within the authority. This is supported by an open and positive culture and self evaluation and improvement planning processes that are rigorous, on the whole. Through this, leaders have a positive effect on improving education provision and learners' outcomes in most of their areas of responsibility and are able to set a clear direction for further improvement in the future.

The authority has productive working relationships with schools and other providers. This contributes beneficially towards ensuring that new initiatives, changes in provision and sharing of ideas happen jointly, in partnership.

Over time, the inspection outcomes of schools in Carmarthenshire vary, although more recently, since 2022, the proportion requiring follow up activity by Estyn has decreased.



Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

- Financial position updated February 2024

Draft budget plans reduce school budgets by £2.454m.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190027	Fraud & Corruption The cost of fraud to the Welsh Public Sector is estimated to be in the region of between £100million and £1billion annually (as reported by Audit Wales)	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/001	Anti-Fraud & Anti-Corruption Strategy	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services			Significant 20	High 12	
CRR190027/002	Whistleblowing Policy	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services				Substantial Possible	
CRR190027/003	Financial Procedure Rules	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/004	Code of Conduct - Members & Officers	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/005	Participation in the National Fraud Initiative Exercise	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/006	Dedicated Fraud Investigation Officer dealing with Revenue & Benefit Frauds	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/007	Counter Fraud proficiency within the Internal Audit Team	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/008	Effective relations with Dyfed Powys Police	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/009	CRR190027/0009 Financial controls in place to mitigate fraud	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
CRR190027/010	CRR190027/0010 Fraud is specifically included in the Internal Audit Plan	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance/Director of Corporate Services					
Action Items							

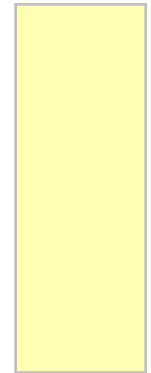
- Departmental Review for CMT
February 2024 Update

The Anti-Fraud & Anti-Corruption Strategy and the Financial Procedure Rules are available to staff via the Council's Intranet. The Anti-Fraud Strategy and Anti-Fraud message is actively promoted through various channels such as the staff newsletter and has recently been promoted again via the screensaver. The Financial Procedure Rules have been promoted via the staff weekly newsletter and on the front page of the Intranet.

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI), which is an exercise that matches electronic data within and between public and private sector bodies to prevent and detect fraud, has recently been undertaken.

A new Fraud e-learning training module has been developed, which is due to be rolled out imminently; completion of this e-learning module will be mandatory for all Council staff.

The Financial Procedure Rules for Schools document has been revised and is currently in draft format, awaiting approval through the appropriate Governance channels; once approved the document will be actively promoted across schools and the Authority.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190009	Deliver Effective Safeguarding Arrangements - Children (Detail in separate Safeguarding Risk Register)	Head of Children Services					
CRR190009/002	Develop implement and regularly monitor effective safeguarding policies and procedures for Children's Services	Head of Children Services		Head of Children Services	Significant 25	High 10	
CRR190009/003	To have a sound procedure for professional abuse allegations effectively promptly and correctly			Head of Children Services		Catastrophic	
CRR190009/004	To respond appropriately to Regulators reports and recommendations			Head of Children Services		Unlikely	
CRR190009/005	To proactively monitor adequate procedures are being effectively operated by third party providers			Head of Children Services			
CRR190009/006	Ensure sexual exploitation Risk Assessments (SERAFs) and Missing Persons Risk Assessments are completed as required			Head of Children Services			
CRR190009/010	New arrangements implemented for our leaving care services in accordance with the Social and Well-being Act 2014			Head of Children Services			
Action Items							

- Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update

The Risk Rating remains High, the impact of failing to deliver effective safeguarding remains Catastrophic 5. Circumstances have not changed since the last review and therefore the probability remains Unlikely 2.

The corporate parenting panel has had their first meeting with new council members. The corporate parenting strategy is due for review and will need to be re written with new targets based on more specific corporate parenting expectations placed on councils and specifically education, housing, community and leisure services. There is an increase in the number of looked after children. There is an increase in the number of children requiring specialist residential care. There is a reduction in the number of foster carers able to provide care for our looked after children in their own communities. There is an increase in the number of children being temporary excluded from schools or without a school placement. The new corporate parenting strategy will have to ensure that there is commitment to sufficient resources to fulfill the local authority's corporate parenting responsibilities effectively.

Regular MALAC (Multi Agency Care Management meetings) and CYSUR Audit and Evaluation Meetings have continued to take place virtually to ensure the council fulfils its corporate parenting role and progress is monitored as part of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. Service Managers continue to carry out monthly audits and assessments, plans and reviews. Internal inspection is carried out within the Internal Audit and Evaluation sub group of the Safeguarding Board.

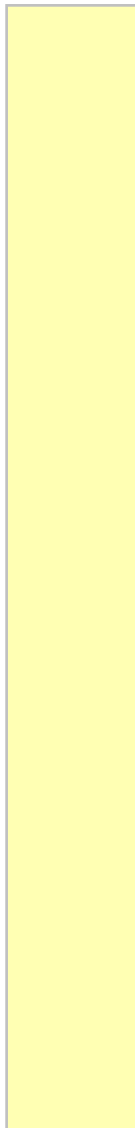
There is a sound procedure for professional abuse allegations to be dealt with effectively, promptly and correctly. We continue to ensure the regional threshold and multi agency child protection arrangements are working effectively.

We continue to contribute widely to the Regional Safeguarding Board and have representatives in most of their subgroups; this allows Children Services to share new policies, procedures and social work practice to the wider workforce in a timely manner. An example of our active involvement being that two senior managers are currently chairing child practice reviews within the region and therefore are able to bring the rich debates back to the service. Furthermore we continue to hold internal threshold meetings to consider whether we are consistently applying the threshold for S47 investigations, care and support assessments and early help. Internally we also ensure that we are meeting our national safeguarding standards by considering our data as a management group each quarter.

We continue to ensure that appropriate Safeguarding measures are included in all Third Party contracts.

Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessments (SERAFs) are regularly monitored via the Childrens Safeguarding Audit and Evaluation Group and the Multi Agency Operational Group.

Schools are required to undertake a School Safeguarding Review to identify effective practice and challenges. All schools have completed and submitted their reviews. All Safeguarding Training for schools is currently up to date and all within timescales including Governors' training. The current school leadership issue, see Risk CRR190028, could have an impact on safeguarding in schools. Therefore we have added a specific Safeguarding in schools Risk to the Department RR which will become a control measure within this Risk and which we may propose is escalated as a Risk in the Corporate Risk Register.



Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190078	Failure to address recent concerns regarding the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in non-housing properties.	Head of Regeneration				
Control Measures						
CRR190078/002	Stock Condition Team inspections have been completed for all non-housing properties, revealing no RAAC except within one isolated building	Head of Regeneration		High 15	Medium 9	
CRR190078/003	A specialised contractor with expertise in working with RAAC has been engaged	Head of Regeneration			Significant	
CRR190078/004	A specialist Structural Engineer has been commissioned to generate a comprehensive report identifying necessary remedial actions	Head of Regeneration			Possible	
CRR190078/001	Initial desktop inquiries have been conducted across our maintained property estate. Additional extensive surveying to be undertaken over next 3 months. Corporate RAAC Task & Finish group established to provide effective oversight of the investigation and management of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within the Council's building assets.	Head of Regeneration				
CRR190078/005	Temporary propping has been installed to alleviate structural risks during the production of the detailed report	Head of Regeneration				
Action Items						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>Extensive survey of buildings to be undertaken and RAAC management plan to be subsequently developed and implemented.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190079	Managing Premises with emphasis of Fire Safety in the Hybrid working environment.	Head of Regeneration			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190079/001	Identify staff regularly based at relevant venues to ensure continuity of fire warden cover	Head of Regeneration	High 15	Medium 9	
CRR190079/002	Provide appropriate training to additional staff identified	Head of Regeneration		Significant	
CRR190079/003	Review procedures for management	Head of Regeneration		Possible	
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>Heads of Service have been contacted requesting details of senior staff to provide adequate coverage for relevant areas of administrating buildings during opening hours. Deadline for return 31st January. Partial response received. Reminders to be issued with extended deadline of February 29th.</p> <p>Drafting of training documentation / online material underway.</p> <p>Review of PRPs, management plans and information management in progress. Confirmation of details of Senior Responsible Officers from Heads of Service will inform the management review and any training requirements in relation to the above.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190023	Management and delivery of UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund	Economic Development Manager				
Control Measures						
CRR190023/001	Corporate Funding Group with representations from all council services to ensure compliance and timely delivery.	Economic Development Manager		High 12	Medium 9	
CRR190023/002	Ongoing review of external funding opportunities emanating from all CCC services / business plans	Economic Development Manager			Significant Possible	
CRR190023/003	Follow guidance from and regular dialogue with UK Government and WLGA	Economic Development Manager				
CRR190023/004	Communications with communities and businesses	Economic Development Manager				
Action Items						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>A dedicated Programme Management Office is now in place to monitor and evaluate the delivery of Carmarthenshire's £38.38m Shared Prosperity funds, 98% of the pot has already been committed to projects across the County. Regular reports are provided to the Regeneration Partnership and the Cabinet Member on progress.</p> <p>The Bureau works corporately across all departments, especially on the delivery of the authority's SPF funds. Officers from different departments have been also involved in the SPF project Assessment Panels, this is to ensure that expertise on appropriate areas can be drawn upon. The Corporate Funding Group meet regularly and information on new funds from external providers is disseminated.</p> <p>We are currently working closely with the WLGA to lobby UK Government for a successor programme for SPF. We have fed into a position paper compiled by the WLGA on what any future funding should look like, e.g. the importance of flexibility and localised decision making. We will also be making contact with English LAs in order to have a unified voice when lobbying Government.</p> <p>A dedicated Officer is now in place to communicate the successes of regeneration in the County.</p>						

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190058	SAC Phosphate & NRW Interim Planning Advice	Director of Place & Infrastructure/Head of Place and Sustainability				
Control Measures						
CRR190058/001	Identify and triage "major" applications and those related to the Council's Covid Recovery Strategy along with those with grant related potential - identify opportunities for consideration where available.		Head of Place & Sustainability	Significant 20	Medium 9	
CRR190058/002	Lobby and work with WG/NRW to get clarity around the scope of the requirements resulting from the Interim Advice to ensure that the authority can progress with determinations whilst still meeting its duties as a Competent authority in relation to the Habitat Regulations		Head of Place & Sustainability		Significant Possible	
CRR190058/003	Stakeholder Engagement - Instigate a communication and awareness raising programme reaching out across all sectors to ensure the implications are known and to develop an understanding of shared ownership and solution finding in addressing the issue		Head of Place & Sustainability			
CRR190058/004	Developer and Applicant Guidance - Preparation of a guidance pack for applicants and developers on the type and application of mitigation in relation to proposals impacted by the NRW guidance		Head of Place & Sustainability			
CRR190058/005	Develop a Catchment based Phosphate Calculator - Develop and implement including NRW endorsement. Calculator would enable the phosphate loading from any given development to be understood and consequential mitigation/compensation schemes to be identifiable.		Head of Place & Sustainability			
CRR190058/006	Specialist Legal and Ecological Support - Ensure decision making is supported by robust interpretations of the Council's duties and of the NRW guidance including identifying opportunities to refine the scope of the guidance and our understanding of the types of development that may be permissible.		Head of Place & Sustainability			
CRR190058/007	Provide a dedicated and continually refreshed webpage to set out the latest information and any updated guidance. To include also provide guidance for planning applicants, businesses and other interested parties - ensuring support and information is available.		Head of Place & Sustainability			
CRR190058/008	Collaborate across sectors on developing an understanding of the issues and in establishing solution based approaches.		Head of Place & Sustainability			
Action Items						

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

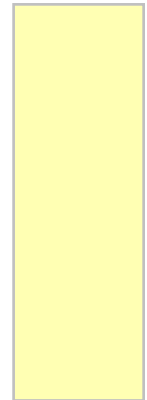
Manager

Corporate Management Team

- Departmental Review for CMT
January 2024 Update (Rhodri Griffiths/Ian Llewelyn)

CRR190058/002 – As part of NRW's wider Review of Permits for wastewater treatment works (WwTW) in phosphorus sensitive Special Area of Conservation (SAC) river catchments, updated permits are being issued for WwTWs which where appropriate include a total phosphorus limit reduction. These may have implications on the potential headroom for development to take place which discharges into a particular treatment works. We are monitoring the implications of the review of permits on pending and future planning applications as well as allocations within the Revised LDP.

CRR190058/003, 007 and 008 – The latest meeting of the Nutrient Management Board (NMB) took place on the 16th October. This has been followed by subsequent meetings of the Nutrient Stakeholder group on the 31st January and the Technical Advisory Group on the 17th January. Subsequent meetings of the NMB and the TAG are scheduled for the 5th June and 22nd May respectively. The Phosphate webpage has been refreshed and updated to explain the nature of the Review of Permits and the implications of any changes on the calculations in phosphate loading on development proposals.



Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Measures	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190060	Critical Authority wide IT systems	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190060/001	Main server and backup server at different sites	Head of ICT & Policy			Significant 20	Medium 8	
CRR190060/002	Microsoft database SQL expertise in IT department	Head of ICT & Policy				Substantial Unlikely	
CRR190060/003	Frequent DR testing to simulate different loss of availability scenarios	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190060/004	Two data centres located in Ammanford and Carmarthen, benefiting from independent power supply. Each data centre has the capacity to accommodate all systems independently of the other if required.	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190060/005	UPS (uninterruptable power supply) and generator backup power supply options at both locations.	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190060/006	Remote workers can access internal critical systems via two internet connections which will also work independently if one is lost.	Head of ICT & Policy					
CRR190060/007	Key network components facilitating connectivity to critical systems are configured in high availability (HA) mode for redundancy.	Head of ICT & Policy					
Action Items							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>This risk remains at substantial. We continue to work on cloud migrations, disaster recovery, and have two data centres located in 3 Spilman Street and Ty Parcyrhun. We have a DR plan schedule for 2024 where we will test core infrastructure at each site to ensure there is resiliency.</p>							

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To				
CRR190010	Deliver Effective Safeguarding Arrangements – Adults at Risk	Director of Communities				
Control Measures			Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190010/001	Representation at the Regional Board	Director of Communities		Significant 16	Medium 8	
CRR190010/002	Implementing effective safeguarding policies and procedures for adults at risk	Director of Communities			Substantial Unlikely	
CRR190010/003	Monitoring the performance of safeguarding within adult services	Director of Communities				
CRR190010/004	Responding to regulators reviews and recommendations	Director of Communities				
CRR190010/005	Monitoring of third party providers to ensure safeguarding procedures are being effectively operated	Director of Communities				
CRR190010/006	Robust process for professional concerns and increase staffing resource to respond to increasing demands	Director of Communities				
Action Items						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>There are currently no areas of risk or concern in relation to adult safeguarding. It has been decided however, that this risk remains on the Corporate Risk Register for discussion and review following the Audit Wales report. The corporate safeguarding policy has been reviewed and presented to Cabinet, an action plan to respond to the audit and several actions have already been completed. . A mandatory programme of training is being rolled out across the Council. Compliance with the action plan will be monitored via the Corporate Safeguarding Group.</p>						

Risk Register - Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190022	Manage and Develop Cwm Environmental & Llesiant Delta Wellbeing	Corporate Management Team			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190022/001	Governance arrangements incl management and Councillor representation on Shareholder/Governance Boards	Corporate Management Team	Significant 16	Medium 8	
CRR190022/002	Compliance with Companies Act and relevant legislation	Corporate Management Team		Substantial Unlikely	
CRR190022/003	Financial Planning Financial Reporting arrangements Audit programme	Corporate Management Team			
CRR190022/004	Training to be arranged for Directors	Corporate Management Team			
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>A review of the Governance arrangements for both Local Authority Trading Companies with a view to aligning the arrangements and clarifying roles of Members and Scrutiny Committees in relation to Local Authority Trading Companies is being led by Linda Rees Jones and is now nearing completion and will shortly be reporting to Cabinet. Governance reporting through to Scrutiny and training for Directors was discussed at the CWM Shareholders during the last year and the outcome was that this would be incorporated into the review being led by Linda Rees Jones.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190007	Ensuring effective management of Procurement / Contract Management and Partnership arrangements	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190007/002	Participation in the WLGA Heads of Procurement Forum	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance	Significant 16	Medium 8	
CRR190007/003	Procurement strategy - this was updated and endorsed by CMT in July 2023	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance		Substantial Unlikely	
CRR190007/005	TIC Expenditure Stream	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance			
CRR190007/006	Economic Recovery Plan / Progressive procurement approach - agreed and signed off by CMT, P&R, Scrutiny and Cabinet	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance			
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial position updated February 2024 2024- 25 budget increased resources for Place & infrastructure Department. Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>The Procurement Strategy was approved by Cabinet on the 11th December 2023 and has been uploaded onto the Procurement pages of the intranet. The Corporate Procurement Unit (CPU) continues to assist lead officers to develop performance measures from a set of typical KPIs for their specification documents during the tender process. Following contract award, CPU have no further involvement in the management of KPIs, although Principal Procurement Officers will provide advice and guidance occasionally when contractual issues arise.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190012	Failure to adhere to an effective Corporate Governance Framework	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190012/001	Corporate Governance Group	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance	Significant 16	Medium 8	
CRR190012/003	Annual Governance Statement	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance		Substantial Unlikely	
Action Items					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>Corporate Governance Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis and minutes of the Corporate Governance Group are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee. The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Corporate Governance. The Annual Governance Statement actions are now included in the Annual Report for 2022.23.</p>					

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To	Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190063	Failure in Determination of Major Planning Applications (Failure to determine major planning applications within timescale is adversely impacting on our ability as an Authority to achieve our regeneration ambitions)	Head of Place & Sustainability				
Control Measures						
CRR190063/001	A dedicated officer and support staff have commenced work on 'Major Projects' that support the county's economic recovery plan outputs and aspirations	Head of Place & Sustainability		Significant 20	Medium 6	
CRR190063/003	Protocol to be developed covering applications for major development projects (schemes above 10 residential units or 1,000 m ² of commercial development) – setting out how we will engage with applicants / developers, with clarity and commitment on the process(es) we will adopt to provide a quality and efficient planning process. Protocol will include, and clearly articulate, the programme activities, timescales and responsibilities that will support CCC's protocol and commitment to determine major applications.	Head of Place & Sustainability			Moderate Possible	
CRR190063/004	Consideration to be given to whether a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) should be entered into with applicants for major development projects. PPA would set out set out the scope and timetable for pre-application engagement and subsequent submission and determination of the planning application. Possible useful project management tool that would be bespoke to each development, requiring commitment from both parties – applicant and LPA.	Head of Place & Sustainability				
Action Items						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT January 2024 Update (Rhodri Griffiths/ Hugh Towns) <p>The Authority is actively seeking Planning Performance Agreements to ensure major development is delivered in a timely manner. We currently have 30 major applications under consideration (20 for major housing schemes and 10 for major non housing projects). 3 are awaiting S106 Agreements being completed. 17 have been received 2023 and 1 in 2024. In 2023 we determined 23 applications.</p> <p>All control measures are in place.</p> <p>This risk arose from the Audit Wales Review of Planning Services (July 2021) and the recommendation that the Council should align its planning service to its corporate ambitions to ensure it can respond effectively to deal with its regeneration ambitions and can deliver them at pace.</p> <p>The follow-up Review (October 2022) found that the Council's planning service is now focussed on helping the Council to deliver on its corporate agenda. It has a clearer strategic approach to major projects and a clearer focus on prioritising projects that deliver jobs and growth to support the Council's economic recovery plan.</p>						

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To			
CRR190043	Loss of income and increased costs – Financial Implications	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services/Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance			
Control Measures		Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 14/11/2023
CRR190043/001	Recovery of Council Tax & NNDR	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services/Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance	Significant 25	Medium 6	
CRR190043/002	Recovery of Housing Rent	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services/Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance		Moderate Possible	
CRR190043/004	CRR190043/003 Regular and robust budget monitoring to assess ongoing income loss/additional costs, unidentified correct action	Director of Corporate Services/Head of Financial Services/Head of Revenues &			
Action Items					
Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update 2024 25 budget includes funding to cover income gap on car parks. The Leisure issue is gone, the car park issue is ongoing but we have provided for through a growth pressure so it is mitigated on a permanent basis. Situation to be closely monitored and consideration given to de-escalation from the Corporate Risk Register to the Departmental Risk Register moving forward.					

Carmarthenshire Corporate Risk Register

Manager

Corporate Management Team

Risk Ref	Risk Title	Assigned To				
CRR190080	Corporate Safeguarding Failure to ensure that adequate Corporate Safeguarding arrangements are in place	Director of Communities				
Control Measures			Control Owner	Uncontrolled Risk Rating	Current Risk Rating	Previous Rating since 02/12/2023
CRR190080/001	Full implementation of Audit Wales Action Plan	Director of Communities		Significant 25	High 10	
CRR190080/002	Corporate Safeguarding Policy	Director of Communities			Catastrophic	
CRR190080/003	Corporate Safeguarding Group	Director of Communities			Unlikely	
CRR190080/004	DBS Guidance Document	Director of Communities				
CRR190080/005	Safer Recruitment Policy	Director of Communities				
CRR190080/006	Ex Offenders Policy	Director of Communities				
CRR190080/007	Volunteering Policy	Director of Communities				
CRR190080/008	Safeguarding Training	Director of Communities				
CRR190080/009	Annual Internal Audit Reviews	Director of Communities				
Action Items						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental Review for CMT February 2024 Update <p>New Risk for inclusion on the Corporate Risk Register.</p>						

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CORPORATE RISK REGISTER IMPACT GRID

Risk classes / Impact	Minor 1	Moderate 2	Significant 3	Substantial 4	Catastrophic 5
Reputation Adverse / critical comment Ombudsman Investigation	<i>Ward / village</i>	<i>Local media</i>	<i>Welsh media</i>	<i>National media</i>	<i>Welsh Government Intervention</i>
Service Delivery Health / Education / Leisure Facility Support / Admin Facility	<i>Internal disruption only – no loss of service</i>	<i>Short Term disruption to service</i>	<i>Action required to overcome short-term difficulties</i>	Key targets missed Some services compromised	<i>Prolonged interruption to core services</i>
Environmental impairment Recovery / remediation time People / Casualty Employee accidents	No lasting detrimental effect on the environment or the community Minor injuries	Short-term, local environmental or social impact Ill health	Medium-term environmental or social impact Multiple ill health Disabling injury	Major public health / environmental incident or loss of significant community facility Serious disabling injuries	Recovery impossible or extremely long term Fatalities
Financial Implication	<i>Less than £5k</i>	<i>£5k - £50k</i>	<i>£50k - £500k</i>	<i>£500k - £2m</i>	<i>More than £2m</i>

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER PROBABILITY GRID

Improbable Lowest Probability 1	Unlikely 2	Possible Median Probability 3	Likely 4	Probable Highest Probability 5
<i>Circumstances rarely encountered / Unlikely to occur</i>	⇒	<i>Circumstances occasionally encountered / medium likelihood of occurrence</i>	⇒	<i>Very likely to occur</i>

Probability - Impact Grid for Project, Strategic, & Service Risks

Probability	Probable (5)	Low (5)	High (10)	High (15)	Significant (20)	Catastrophic (25)
	Likely (4)	Low (4)	Medium (8)	High (12)	Significant (16)	Significant (20)
	Possible (3)	Very Low (3)	Medium (6)	Medium (9)	High (12)	High (15)
	Unlikely (2)	Very Low (2)	Low (4)	Medium (6)	Medium (8)	High (10)
	Improbable (1)	Negligible (1)	Very Low (2)	Very Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
		Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Significant (3)	Substantial (4)	Catastrophic (5)
Impact						

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2024

HOUSING RENT ARREARS

Purpose:

The report sets out the context and detail on Carmarthenshire County Council Social Housing current tenant arrears.

It identifies the magnitude of the service in terms of collecting rent, how we have fared year on year in managing rent arrears, the support that we put in place and the impact that this has on the overall HRA Business Plan.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

Governance & Audit Committee to comment on report contents.

Reasons:

The Governance & Audit Committee had requested the report on the level of current tenant arrears in a previous meeting.

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-
Cllr. Linda Evans (Housing & Deputy Leader Portfolio Holder)

Directorate:	Designations:	Email addresses:
Communities		
Name of Head of Service: Jonathan Morgan	Head of Housing & Public Protection	jmorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Report Author: Steven Jones	Housing Management Lead	stjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Gareth Williams	Housing Services Manager	gajwilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOUSING RENT ARREARS

Context

The Housing Management Service is responsible for:

- **9,333** Dwellings spread amongst **767** Housing Estates;
- **387** Blocks of flats and **21** Sheltered Schemes;
- Over **1400** garage plots and bases; and
- Collecting over **£49m** (23/24) in annual rent.

The effective management and collection of rent income from the Council's Housing stock is a vital factor in maintaining and delivering the HRA Business Plan.

The level of Current Tenant Arrears should also be considered in the wider economic and social context. There have been several country wide factors that have influenced the collection of rent and the level of arrears. These are:

- Covid 19 Pandemic which resulted in an embargo on any enforcement activity that would result in homelessness;
- Cost of Living Crisis and other economic pressures;
- Welfare reform and the continuation of the roll out of Universal Credit; and
- Welsh Government Action Plan to reduce homelessness.

All the above has had an impact not just for Carmarthenshire but all Local Authorities in Wales.

Rent Increase

Each year as part of the HRA Business Plan we consider increasing the rent in line with WG recommendations if the Consumer Price Index at September sits outside the prescribed limit. WG have set the maximum rent increase for 24/25 at 6.7% because the Consumer Price Index(CPI) sat outside the 3% threshold (6.7% September 2023).

We have limited the rental increase to **6.5%** overall with a maximum £1 progression for those tenancies below target rent. Most tenants will receive a **6.39%** average rent increase which is below the level set by WG and current inflation values.

Table 1

Year on Year Rent Increase (since 2020)			
Year	Average % Increase (with progression)	Weekly Rental charge Increase (£)	Rent Envelope Increase (£),000
2020-2021	2.43	2.63	406
2021-2022	1.27	1.79	856
2022-2023	2.74	2.47	1,578
2023- 24	5.36	5.00	2,781
2024-2025	6.39	6.42	3,125

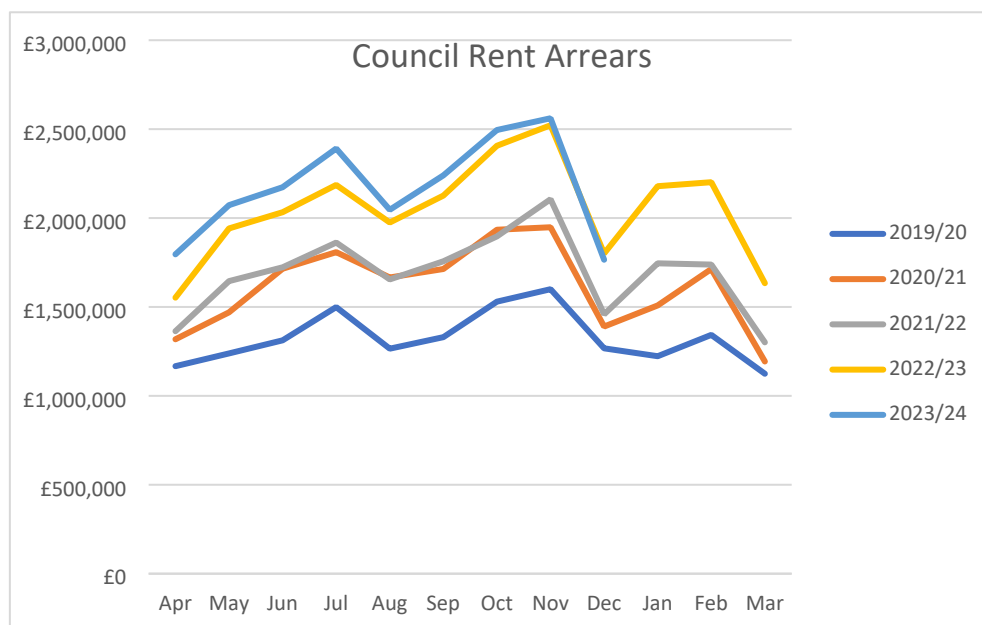
Table 2

HOUSING RENTS 2023/24		
BEDS	Houses / Bungalows	Flats / Maisonettes
Bedsit	£77.77	
1	£96.71	£87.47
2	£107.45	£97.23
3	£118.18	£106.93
4	£128.92	£116.67
5	£139.69	-

Current Rent Arrears

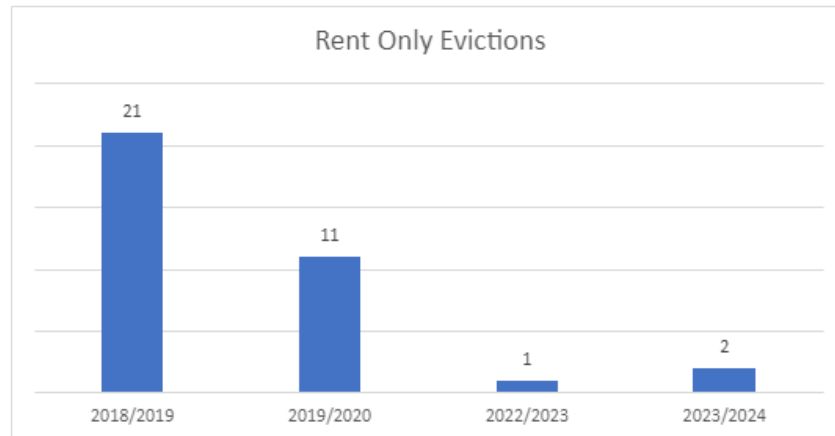
The graph below shows the current tenant debt year on year. This is a cumulative debt from the time each tenancy started and not an in-year debt.

Graph 1



- 4,500 (circa) tenants have the equivalent to one months' worth of debt because they pay their rent in arrears and 3,500 (circa) tenants pay in advance either in full or part;
- Arrears levels at the end of quarter 3 2023/2024 were £35,000 less than at the equivalent period for 2022/2023;
- At the end of week 46 of this year the total arrears were £98,000 less than at the equivalent period for 2023/2024; and
- We are currently predicting (assuming trends remain comparative to previous years) an end of year figure of between £1.5m and 1.6m which is a reduction from the previous year.

Enforcement Action & Evictions



- The level of evictions for rent arrears only has considerably decreased since 2019/20 and there have been no evictions due to financial hardship since 2020;
- Currently there are 419 under notice for rent arrears (where affordability is not the primary cause), 14 due to progress to court and 1 case where possession has been granted.
- The decision to evict is not taken lightly and consideration has to be given to the impact it has on Homelessness as legislation may require us to place into temporary accommodation.

Support

Providing support and assistance is considered the most effective way to maximise income, sustain tenancies and manage the overall debt. Rent accounts are managed weekly and intervention is put in place quickly where accounts begin to suffer or tenants fall behind with their rent. The table below shows the level of pre tenancy support that has been put in place to help maximise income.

Table 3 Category	Total Value (£)	Cases
Pre-Tenancy Benefits: AA, CTAX, Help U, Pension Credit etc.	326,841	502
Pre-Tenancy DHP: Bedroom Tax, Dual HB, Removals, Arrears etc.	18,309	59
Pre-Tenancy Grants: DAF, Hardship & cost of living grants etc.	197,669	327
Pre-Tenancy: Prevention fund (HRA and WG Grant)	52,441	147
Total	595,260	1035

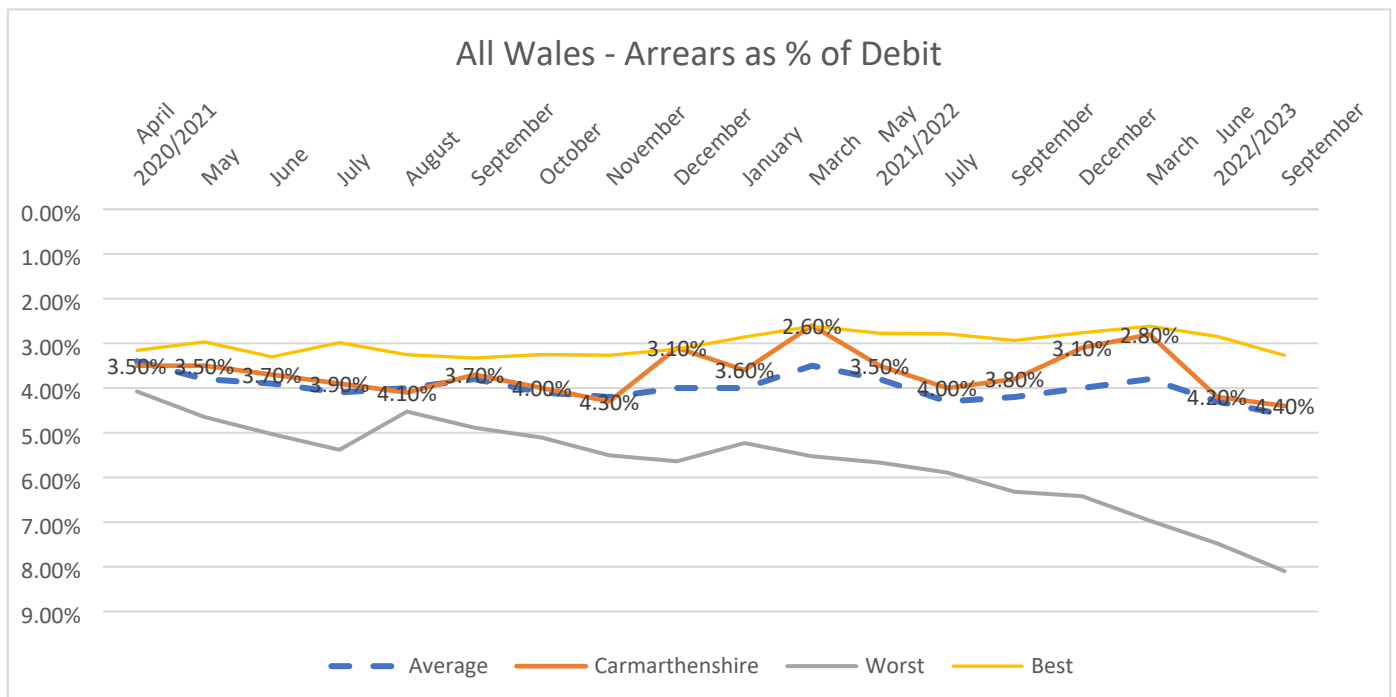
- To date this financial year (01/04/23 -14/02/24), we can show that through assistance we have increased over 1000 household incomes by £595,260 at the start of tenancy;
- This support is carried out throughout the tenancy by the Housing Officers based on an individual basis and tenants' current circumstances; and
- We are currently working on a recording database to accurately show amount of support and financial savings to our tenants, the Housing Officers activity is creating.

National (Wales) Comparison

The graph below shows how we compare to other stock retaining authorities in Wales on the current arrears as a percentage of the overall debit i.e. rent envelope.

The data is only available up to September 2022/23 when WG stopped collecting the information and provided as public information.

Graph.2



As can be seen from the table Carmarthenshire perform under the Welsh average and are amongst the best stock retaining authorities in terms of their collection rates. By the end of 2023/24 we anticipate our collection rate to be higher than previous year and the % of arrears against the debit to be close to 3%.

A reason for the fluctuation in ours compared to other LAs may be because we collect rent over a 48 week period and have four non collection weeks and some months would have 5 weeks and we only collect for four of those weeks. Also our figures are taken after the 28th of every month, this may differ in other stock retaining authorities for reporting purposes.

Impact on HRA

There has been no significant impact on the HRA year on year as a result of rent arrears and our ability to deliver against our revenue and capital commitments.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Head of Housing & Public Protection

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets	Bio-diversity & Climate Change
NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE

1. Finance

Managing income and current tenant debt is critical in maintaining a healthy, balanced and sustainable HRA budget. It has a significant impact on the 30-year business plan and how we investment in front line services and our capital housing programmes.

Our ability to help manage individual contract holders debt helps them maintain their tenancies, support their wellbeing and comfort as well as reduce pressures on front line homelessness services where tenancies fail and subsequently Council Fund budgets.

6. Physical Assets

Failure to collect rent means that we have less scope to invest in current tenant homes, improve the condition of our housing stock, expand our housing development programme and invest in front line housing services that'll prevent deterioration of our asset.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Head of Housing & Public Protection

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	N/A
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered:-	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-	

2. Local Member(s) - N/A

3. Community / Town Council – N/A

4. Relevant Partners - N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - None

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED YES	Include any observations here
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Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTION LOG

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To receive the report.

Reasons:

Action Log to inform Members of the actions to be progressed following previous meetings.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A

Cabinet Decision Required: N/A

Council Decision Required: N/A

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr A Lenny

Directorate:

Corporate Services

Name of Head of Service:

Helen Pugh

Report Author:

Caroline Powell

Designation:

Head of Revenues and
Financial Compliance

Principal Auditor

Tel No.: 01267 246223

E Mail Address:

HPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

CaPowell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTION LOG

Action Log to inform Members of the actions to be progressed following previous meetings.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

1. Scrutiny Committee: Not Applicable
2. Local Member(s): Not Applicable
3. Community / Town Council: Not Applicable
4. Relevant Partners: Not Applicable
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations: Not Applicable

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)
AWARE/CONSULTED: No

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

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Governance & Audit Committee - Action Log

Reference	Meeting Date	ACTION	PROGRESS	Responsible Officer(s)	Status
GAC - 2023/06	29/09/2023	Internal Audit Report - Safeguarding: the Committee requested that a follow up review be undertaken as part of the 2024/25 Internal Audit plan.	Review to be included on the 2024/25 Internal Audit plan; Final Report to be brought back to the Committee when complete (target: September 2024)	Principal Auditor	Due September 2024
GAC - 2023/07	29/09/2023	Internal Audit Report - Welfare Cards: the Committee requested that a follow up review be undertaken as part of the 2024/25 Internal Audit plan.	Review to be included on the 2024/25 Internal Audit plan; Final Report to be brought back to the Committee when complete (target: September 2024)	Principal Auditor	Due September 2024
GAC - 2023/09	27/10/2023	Tenant Housing Arrears: a report be brought to a future meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee setting out the Authority's management of tenant housing arrears.	Report to be brought by the Head of Housing & Public Protection to the Committee meeting on 8 March 2024.	Head of Housing & Public Protection	Complete 08.03.2024
GAC - 2023/10	27/10/2023	Information be circulated to the Committee pertaining to the risk rating applicable for premises within the Authority's responsibility for listed buildings or ancient monuments.	Information to be provided to the Committee members.	Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance	Update due to be provided

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME		
Recommendations / key decisions required: To receive the report.		
Reasons: Annual Forward Work Programme to inform Members of the expected Agenda Items for the year ahead.		
Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A		
Cabinet Decision Required: N/A		
Council Decision Required: N/A		
CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr A Lenny		
Directorate: Corporate Services	Designation: Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance	Tel No.: 01267 246223 E Mail Address: HPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Name of Head of Service: Helen Pugh		
Report Author: Helen Pugh		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

To provide Members with a Forward Work Programme for the Governance & Audit Committee cycle for the year ahead, to ensure that all appropriate Committees have a published up to date programme owned by the Committee Members.

The following Report is attached:
Forward Work Programme

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

1. Scrutiny Committee: Not Applicable
2. Local Member(s): Not Applicable
3. Community / Town Council: Not Applicable
4. Relevant Partners: Not Applicable
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations: Not Applicable

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED:	Yes
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Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

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Forward Work Programme: Governance & Audit Committee Cycle March 2024 - February 2025

Area	March 2024	July 2024	September 2024	December 2024	As and When Required
Governance and Assurance	Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair				
	Progress Report - Delivery of External Recommendations				
	Annual Governance Statement for CCC* to be received		Annual Governance Statement for CCC to be approved		
	Receive minutes of relevant Groups, for noting	Receive minutes of relevant Groups, for noting	Receive minutes of relevant Groups, for noting	Receive minutes of relevant Groups, for noting	
					Single Tender Actions
Internal Audit	Annual Internal Audit Report				
	Internal Audit indicative 3-year plan				
	Internal Audit Plan - Progress Update	Internal Audit Plan - Progress Update	Internal Audit Plan - Progress Update	Internal Audit Plan - Progress Update	
	Progress Report - Delivery of Internal Audit Recommendations				
External Audit	Audit Plan for CCC and DPF**				
	AW Reports: Use of Performance Information and Follow-up Review of Corporate Arrangements for Safeguarding				
	Audit Plan Update	Audit Plan Update	Audit Plan Update	Audit Plan Update	
	Financial Statements – ISA260 Report for CCC				
	Financial Statements – ISA260 Report for DPF				
	Annual Return - Burry Port Harbour				
	Letter of Representation - CCC				
	Letter of Representation - DPF				
	Finance	Statement of Accounts for CCC to be received		Statement of Accounts for CCC to be approved	
Statement of accounts for DPF to be received		Statement of accounts for DPF to be approved			
Burry Port Harbour Accounting Statement to be received		Burry Port Harbour Accounting Statement to be approved			

		Audit Enquiries to those charged with governance for CCC and DPF	
Counter Fraud		Annual Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Report	Approval of Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Strategy
Risk Management	Receive the Corporate Risk Register	Receive the Corporate Risk Register	
	Opportunity for Members to discuss Risks	Opportunity for Members to discuss Risks	
Performance		Annual Complaints Report (2023/24)	
		Ombudsman Letter	
		Carmarthenshire County Council Annual Report	
Strategies and Policies			Approval of Internal Audit Charter (Every 2 years; due July 2025)
			Approval of Financial Procedure Rules
			Approval of Contract Procedure Rules
Progress updates requested by the Committee	Tenant Housing Arrears Report		

	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Autumn 2024	Winter 2024
Training				
			Statement of Accounts & Annual Governance Statement	
			Meeting with the Auditors	

* CCC = Carmarthenshire County Council
** DPF = Dyfed Pension Fund

GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE 8 MARCH 2024

MINUTES OF RELEVANT GROUPS TO THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE		
Recommendations / key decisions required:		
Minutes to be received.		
Reasons:		
Terms of Reference for the Governance & Audit Committee stipulate that minutes of the Grants Panel, Corporate Governance Group and Risk Management Steering Group be received by the Governance & Audit Committee.		
Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A		
Cabinet Decision Required: N/A		
Council Decision Required: N/A		
CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr A Lenny		
Directorate: Corporate Services Name of Head of Service: Helen Pugh Report Author: Helen Pugh	Designation: Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance	Tel No.: 01267 246223 E Mail Address: HLPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MINUTES OF RELEVANT GROUPS TO THE GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

To provide Members with minutes from supporting Governance Groups for information.

The following Minutes are attached:

- Grants Panel

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: H L Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance

1. Scrutiny Committee: Not Applicable
2. Local Member(s): Not Applicable
3. Community / Town Council: Not Applicable
4. Relevant Partners: Not Applicable
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations: Not Applicable

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED? No

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

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MINUTES OF THE GRANTS PANEL MEETING HELD ON 2nd OCTOBER 2023 VIA TEAMS		
PRESENT:	Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services Caroline Powell, Principal Auditor, Internal Audit (IA) Nia Thomas, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Revenue) Les James, Chair of PWG, Communities Adrian Harries, Chair of PWG, Environment Rhian Phillips, Economic Development Area Manager Eleanor Ansell, Audit Lead, Audit Wales Delyth Thomas, Grants Compliance Officer (GCO)	
APOLOGIES:	Stuart Walters, Chair of PWG, Chief Executive Simon Davies, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Capital)	
	SUBJECT	ACTION
1.0	<u>Minutes of the last meeting</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes were agreed. 	
2.0	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Corporate Services has confirmed that there are ongoing discussions regarding the role of SASG in the allocation of funding to projects via the capital programme. • Welsh Government (WG) is currently looking at standardising the formula for the allocation of funding to schools for the Education Improvement grant (EIG) for 2024/25 which is part of the Regional Consortia Schools Improvement grant (RCSIG). The impact of the change is uncertain. • Audit Wales to confirm if the Audit Wales Central Team will be issuing a grant index for the 2022/2023 audits. If not, then confirmation of the audit submission dates and audit deadlines will be sent to GCO via email. • A meeting has been arranged to establish which grants will be included in the IA audit plan for 2024/25. • Guidance has been received from WG on the implications of the delay in settling the Soulbury pay award and the impact on grant funded projects. The Authority can claim the back pay relating to the 2 outstanding years in the one financial year grant claim, however this could result in an overspend against the approved budget which may deem the excess ineligible. Should this be the case the 	EA RH/CP/DT

	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p>Authority may need to fund the balance. It is noted the Soulbury pay award has yet to be settled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update was provided in the last meeting on European funded projects that were due to end from July 2023 onwards. Since the meeting the Celtic Routes project had been given a month's extension to 30/9/2023. • The Director of Corporate Services has raised via CMT that the impact on other departments needs to be considered along with the cost benefit of small grants when applying for funding. 	
3.0	<p><u>Audit Wales - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the 2022/23 audit programme NDR3 (LA01) and Teachers Pension (PEN05) – audits are underway and on target to be completed by the audit deadline date. The audit of the remainder of the grants will be programmed later in the year as and when resources are available. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing Benefits (BEN01) - return submitted ○ Pooled Budgets (HLG01) - return submitted ○ WANLESS Money Transfers (HLG03) – to be submitted as soon as possible 	
4.0	<p><u>Internal Audit (IA) - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update was provided on the audits of the 2022/23 grant funded projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pupil Development grant and Education Improvement grant (under RCSIG) have been completed ○ There are a few outstanding queries to be resolved on Housing Support Grant. An extension to the audit deadline date has been agreed ○ The audit of Children & Communities grant has been completed and the audit of the Local Education grant is underway 	

	SUBJECT	ACTION
5.0	<p><u>Grants Register 2023/24</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft grants register for 2023/24 was presented to the meeting. A request was made to the Chairs of the PWGs to review to assure that all grants received in their respective departments are listed. 	Chairs PWGs
6.0	<p><u>Project Working Groups</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of PWG meetings were received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education & Children (capital): 25/7/2023 Communities: 26/7/2023 Chief Executive: 24/1/2023, 21/3/2023, 25/7/2023 Clarification was sought on the use Docusign on internal documents. The Head of Financial Services confirmed that there is no requirement to use Docusign on internal documents. It was also confirmed that Docusign needs to be utilised for grant agreements with third parties. The number of children receiving free school meals has an impact on grant funding for schools. This has been publicised and requests have been made to parents in receipt of the School Essential grant to complete applications for free school meals to maximise the grant available. Concerns have been raised on the governance arrangements in place for schools who apply and accept capital grants. Discussions need to be undertaken with the relevant officers within Education and Property Services to agree the deliverability of the project and the impact on other works to be undertaken at the school. Whether it changes the school capacity also needs to be considered. 	
7.0	<p><u>European Grants Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current programme of European funded projects is due to end in December 2023. The projects ending in October 2023 are: 	

	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communities for Work P1 & P3 ○ Regional Engagement Team ERDF & ESF ● A full list of projects including total project spend and grant received to be presented in the next Grants Panel meeting. 	DT
8.0	<p><u>Successor Schemes Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It has been confirmed that following Cabinet approvals 99% of the grant allocated through Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) has now been committed. There is a tight turnaround to deliver all projects as most will end in December 2024 with the whole program ending March 2025. ● There are 5 anchors funded via SPF which are mainly delivering third party grants. There are also some projects that the Authority will be delivering internally. ● Approval has been awarded for 18 strategic projects through SPF. There are 6 projects to be delivered internally by the Authority with 12 projects being delivered externally. For one of the 12 projects Carmarthenshire will be delivering in partnership with the lead organisation. ● Ongoing monitoring is being undertaken of all the projects funded via SPF with a review at the end of the financial year to assess project spend. Where projects are not forecast to spend then there is a risk that the grant will be decommitted. ● Confirmation to be sought on what audit requirements are in place for SPF. ● The Towy Valley Path project funded via the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) has been awarded a year's extension due to delays in acquiring the land to build the path. ● The construction costs for the Carmarthenshire Hwb, which is funded by LUF, has significantly increased. The costs associated with the NHS element of the project has also increased and is also looking for 	RP

	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p>additional grant funding to meet the shortfall. Consideration also must be given to the future operational cost of running the Hwb.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UK Government are currently undertaking a deep dive audit on both the Towy Valley Path and Carmarthenshire Hwb projects. The audit looks at various strategies and policies of the Authority e.g. procurement, risk. These will be reviewed ahead of carrying out more detailed checks. 	
9.0	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants Management training to be rolled out for new project officers. The impact of the Public Subsidy requirements for grant funded schemes to be considered on a corporate basis. This to be included on the agenda at the next Grants Panel meeting. An officer from Legal Services to be invited. There is a possibility that some of the current WG funded grants could be incorporated into the Revenue Support Grant from 2024/25. 	RP
10.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of next meeting – 19th February 2024 at 2pm via Teams 	

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GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2023

PRESENT: D. MacGregor (Chair)

Councillors (In Person):

A.G. Morgan

Councillors (Virtually):

K.V. Broom

K. Davies

A. Evans

P.T. Warlow

D.E. Williams

J. Williams

Lay Members (In Person):

J. James

K. Jones

M. McDonald

Also in attendance (In Person):

E. Ansell – Audit Wales Representative

D. Owen – Audit Wales Representative

Also in attendance (Virtually):

A. Lewis – Audit Wales Representative

G. Lewis – Audit Wales Representative

Also Present (In Person):

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services

C. Powell, Principal Auditor

A. Bracey, Head of Adult Social Care

G. Ayers, Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager

G. Jones, Digital Programme Manager (City Deal)

R. Morris, Members Support Officer

J. Owens, Democratic Services Officer

Also Present (Virtually):

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator

K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 11.46 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence had been received from Helen Pugh – Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance and R. Hemingway – Head of Finance.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.

Member	Agenda item	Nature of Interest
Mr Malcom MacDonald	7 – Council Complaints Policy Annual Report	Mr MacDonald has an involvement with one of the cases recorded as a statistic

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

	2022-23 and	within the report. Mr MacDonald remained in the meeting and did not partake in the discussions or the voting therein.
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3. BURRY PORT HARBOUR FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2022-23

Further to Minute 4 of the meeting held on the 27th October 2023 the Committee, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, and the delegated powers enshrined within the Local Government Measure, considered the 2022-23 Audited Accountment Statement for the Burry Port Harbour Authority.

Carmarthenshire County Council had a range of statutory powers and duties for the purposes of improving, maintaining and managing the Burry Port harbour through the Burry Port Harbour Revision Order 2000.

The report referred to the Harbours Act 1964 which stipulated the requirement for Harbour Authorities to prepare an annual statement of accounts relating to harbour activities. In compliance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, the accounts were presented in the form of a separate annual income and expenditure account and statement of balances.

The Director of Corporate Services reminded the Committee that on the 1st April 2018 the Authority had granted a long-term lease to the Marine Property Group Ltd for the running and management of the Harbour and consequently the activity on the statement was much reduced. Subsequent to the granting of the lease however administrators had been appointed in June 2023 and the Council had agreed to provide short term funding to ensure the harbour remained operational. As a consequence of the company going into administration that position that had created significant doubt regarding the realisation of debtor balances and accordingly provision for that amount had been included within the accounts.

It was reported that the net cost of the harbour activities in 2022-23 amounted to £146k, (£687k for 2021-22) and all activities were fully funded by Carmarthenshire County Council. The fixed assets held at 31st March 2023 totalled £867k. The report detailed that the decrease in costs year on year of £697k was offset by a £137k bad debt provision and a £19k decrease in income.

The Director further apprised the Committee of the current position relating to the company's administration and to the authority's discussions with the administrators thereon, together with its actions in funding the Harbour's continued operation.

Reference was made to the lease arrangement between the Council and Burry Port Marine Ltd. It was confirmed the company had defaulted on the lease terms and the Council's legal division was examining the legal options on future

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

forfeiture of that lease. There was also currently 3rd party interest in the harbour which was being discussed with the administrators.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the audited Accounting Statement for the Burry Port Harbour Authority for 2022-23 be approved.

4. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS PREPARED BY AUDIT WALES:-

4.1. AUDIT WALES WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee considered Audit Wales' Programme Update and timetable as at September 2023.

The Committee was informed that following the report's preparation, the Audits had been completed in respect of the 2022-23 accounts for the Council, the Dyfed Pension Fund, Swansea Bay City Deal and the South Wales Corporate Joint Committee. The Accounts in respect of the Burry Port Harbour Authority had been completed and accepted by the Committee in Minute 3 above.

Additionally, the Performance Information report referenced on page 24 of the agenda pack had been drafted and shared with the Council and the Unscheduled Care Report on page 25 had been drafted but not shared.

The following queries/comments were raised in relation to the report:

With regard to the Assurance and Risk Assessment report, referenced on page 26, the Committee was informed the report had been finalised and was due back from the publishing department on the 19th December. Thereafter, it would be shared with the Council and published on the Audit Wales website four weeks later. Following its publication, it would be scheduled for discussion at a future meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Audit Wales Work Programme Update be noted.

4.2. DIGITAL STRATEGY REVIEW - CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Committee considered the Audit Wales' report on Carmarthenshire's Digital Strategy Review. Whilst the review had been undertaken as part of a National Review, individual reports had been prepared for each Council. For Carmarthenshire, the report examined the extent to which its strategic approach to digital services had been developed in accordance with the sustainable development principle and it was hoped that it would help to secure value for money in the use of the Council's resources with the following key findings having been made:

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

- The Council has a clearly articulated strategic approach to digital, that is informed by a good understanding of current and future trends and is understood by key elected members and officers.
- There are strong governance arrangements to monitor the progress of digital projects supported by implementation plans that include milestone and performance measures.
- The Council has also reviewed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the delivery of its digital strategy and has applied learning from this to inform its strategic approach.
- The Council's arrangements could be further strengthened through improved public engagement, clarifying how it could contribute to the national well-being goals and further exploring opportunities for partnership working.
- The Council also aims to monitor value for money via project post-implementation reviews, however, these are not always completed, and achievement of savings is not always monitored.

The report had also identified four recommendations (as detailed in the report) and the Councils' response thereto was appended to the report:

The following issues were raised on the report:

Reference was made to Appendix 1 of the report detailing the questions Audit Wales sought to obtain answers for along with the criteria used to arrive at its findings. The Committee found the inclusion of the Appendix to be most informative in providing clarity and setting out the framework in which the audit had been conducted.

Whilst it was acknowledged an evaluation of any strategy generally could not be undertaken in a one size fits all category, clarification was sought on how the Council would evaluate the Digital Strategy. It was confirmed that key to evaluation was monitoring, and the council would be discussing with Audit Wales on how that could be best achieved. Key to that would be the monitoring of satisfaction rates, both quantitative and qualitative for services provided internally to council departments and externally with the Council's residents.

With regard to a question on the monitoring of the report recommendations, it was confirmed that would form part of future progress reports to the Committee on regulatory recommendations, as detailed on item 8 of the agenda.

In response to a question on connectivity issues within the county especially the more rural areas it was accepted there was an issue and that over the past three years over £15m had been invested in that area and the new Digital Strategy, to be produced for 2024, would focus on increasing connectivity for the rest of the county's residents. The Strategy would also have a focus on digital regeneration including improving digital skills and inclusion for the county's residents.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received and the Council's responses to the recommendations be noted.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

4.3. SETTING WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES - CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Committee considered the Audit Wales report on the setting of Carmarthenshire's Well Being Objectives. It was explained that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 placed a 'well-being' duty on 48 public bodies requiring them to set and publish 'well-being objectives' to maximise their contribution to achieving each of the Acts seven national well-being objectives by taking all reasonable steps in exercising their functions to meet those objectives.

The Committee noted that the report had made one key finding that 'the Council has applied the sustainable development principle in setting its new well-being objectives but could strengthen its arrangements for citizen involvement and monitoring its progress'.

The report also included one recommendation together with the Council's response thereto.

In response to a question on community engagement on the Council's public consultations, it was confirmed the Council was exploring the option of creating some form of panel of resident representatives similar to a citizens panel, and how that could be progressed, supported and resourced. For example, the previous citizens panel had operated in partnership with the Local Health Board and the Dyfed Powys Police.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received and the Council's response to its recommendation be noted.

5. AUDIT WALES REPORT: TIME FOR CHANGE - POVERTY IN WALES PROGRESS REPORT

In accordance with minute 5.5 of its meeting held on the 14th July 2023 the Committee received a progress report on the Audit Wales report titled "Time for Change – Poverty in Wales" providing an outline of the Council's response to the recommendations detailed therein relevant to local government. It was noted that, in July 2023, the Council had approved its 'Tackling Poverty Plan 2023' and the actions arising were embedded in service business plans with progress being monitored through usual performance management arrangements. Additionally, the cross-party Tackling Poverty Advisory Panel, chaired by the Cabinet Member responsible for Tackling Poverty (Cllr. Linda Evans) monitored progress on the delivery of the plan as well as advising the Cabinet Member of areas for development and progression.

The following issues arose:

Reference was made to the operation of Hwb Bach y Wlad within the ten towns. It was noted that time had been taken to establish itself within the communities with take up now increasing as people go to know the service with it providing valuable advice and assistance to residents. Its operation was funded by the

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Shared Prosperity Fund until December 2024 and would be monitored in accordance with the fund criteria.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the progress report be received.

6. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN UPDATE 2023/24

The Committee considered an update report on the implementation of the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24. Appendix B to the report provided summaries of completed financial reports on key financial systems relating to:

- Main accounting,
- Creditor Payments
- Capital Accounting

The Committee duly reviewed the progress made in respect of the delivery of the audit programme which showed a completion rate of 55% to date.

It was also noted that the assignment within the Plan on 'Supported Living' would be replaced with an assignment on 'Support Carers'.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Plan Update 2023/24 be received.

7. COUNCIL COMPLAINTS POLICY ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

(NOTE: Mr MacDonald having earlier declared an interest in this item re-declared that interest and remained in the meeting but took no part in the discussion or voting thereon)

Further to minute 6 of the meeting of the Committee held on the 29th September 2023 the Committee considered an amended Complaints Annual Report 2022-23 providing details on the corporate and social services complaints process, data on complaints / compliments received during 2022-23 together with additional information relating to:

- Compliance with the Complaints Policy Timeframe
- Compliance with the Social Services (Complaints Procedure) (Wales) Regulations 2014 for Adult and Children Services Complaints
- Feedback in terms of outcomes of complaints and service users
- Further information in terms of compliments received.

The Committee welcomed the revised report which addressed the points raised at its September meeting and extended its appreciation to officers for improving the report to reflect its observations from the previous meeting. While the revised report was welcomed, it was noted further improvements/amendments would be made in future reports, for example, the inclusion of comparative figures for the pre-ceding years.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Reference was made to the high level of complaints upheld and an assurance sought they had not arisen because of organisational issues and were likely to continue. The Committee was assured the high number of complaints received were mainly service related with the two largest by volume relating to the operation of the waste collection service following the introduction of new working practices. The other service was Housing Repairs and new processes had recently been introduced for that service.

With regard to the provision of information to the Committee on Stage 2 complaints and their turnaround times, the Committee was advised that work was on-going to finding a solution thereto and that was a priority for the Council. However, in undertaking that work, a potential solution had also been identified for the provision of information relating to recording the timeliness of responding to Stage 1 complaints.

RESOLVED that the Complaints Policy Annual report 2022-23 be received.

8. PROGRESS ON REGULATORY REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received a report outlining progress made on recommendations contained within regulatory reports both National and local (local being specific to Carmarthenshire) detailing on-going recommendations from past reports together with recommendations completed and closed during the previous year.

It was agreed that for future reports where an action had been completed, the performance status element of the report be also amended to read 'completed' and not 'on target' as presently shown.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the progress report be received.

9. GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE ACTION LOG

The Committee considered the Governance and Audit Committee Action Log detailing the actions to be monitored/progressed from previous meetings.

The Director of Corporate Services referred to action GAC – 2023/O5 relating to the Payroll Staff Certification process and advised that following the Committee's concern expressed at the September meeting, further action had been taken and the return rate for Council Departments was now 99%. For schools, however, 49 had yet to provide the relevant information despite a reminder having been sent in August and the matter being raised within the School Heads Forum. The next step would be a letter being sent by the Director of Education direct to the respective school heads and their chair of governors requiring the information to be provided.

The Committee noted that recommendation 7.2 within the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th October had not been included within the log but that would be corrected for the next meeting

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Governance and Audit Committee Action Log be received.

10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 27 OCTOBER 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee held on the 27th October 2023 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.