

Committee: **Governance and Audit Committee**

Date of meeting: **8th March 2023**

Report Subject: **Audit Wales: 'Together we can' Community Resilience and Self-Reliance**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Steve Thomas, Leader / Cabinet Member Corporate Overview and Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Bernadette Elias, Chief Officer Commercial and Customer**
Sarah King, Head of Governance, Partnerships and Democratic Services

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance and Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
	23.02.23		08.03.23					

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Governance and Audit Committee with the Audit Wales Report, '*Together we can' Community resilience and self-reliance* (Appendix 1).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Audit Wales published their report, '*Together we can' Community resilience and self-reliance*' in January 2023.
- 2.2 This study is the final report of three under a themed programme of work undertaken by Audit Wales to look at how local government is alleviating and tackling poverty.
- 2.3 This final review focusses on understanding how local authorities are creating the conditions needed to transform ways of working and empower communities to thrive as independently as possible. Specifically Audit Wales looked at the priority placed on community resilience and self-reliance in local authority plans, and how local authorities are equipping people to be less reliant on often over stretched local authority services.
- 2.4 Overall Audit Wales concluded that local authorities face a challenging and uncertain financial future but find it difficult to empower people and communities to be more self-reliant and less dependent on services.
- 2.5 Audit Wales identified 2 recommendations which are detailed below:
- R1 - To strengthen community resilience and support people to be more self-reliant, local authorities need to ensure they have the right arrangements and systems in place. We recommend that local authorities use the evaluation tool in Appendix 2 to:

- self-evaluate current engagement, management, performance and practice;
- identify where improvement is needed; and
- draft and implement an action plan with timeframes and responsibilities clearly set out to address the gaps and weaknesses identified in completing the evaluation tool.

R2 - To help local authorities address the gaps they identify following their self-evaluation, we recommend that they:

- formally approve the completed Action Plan arising from the evaluation exercise;
- regularly report, monitor and evaluate performance at relevant scrutiny committees; and
- revise actions and targets in light of the authority's evaluation and assessment of its performance.

2.6 Full details of the report can be found in Appendix 1.

3. **Next Steps**

3.1 The recommendations will be included within the relevant business plan for monitoring and reporting, this will be the Tier 3 Chief Officer Commercial and Customer and Tier 2 Head of Governance, Partnerships and Democratic Services.

4. **Options for Recommendation**

4.1 Prior to the final report being provided to the Council, CLT and relevant Officers provided comment back to Audit Wales on their findings.

4.1.1 **Option 1**

Governance and Audit Committee is assured that the Next Steps, identified in paragraph 2.5 will appropriately respond to the Audit Wales recommendations.

Option 2

4.1.2 Provide comment on the Audit Wales review and Next Steps, identified in paragraph 2.5 to address the recommendations for Officers to implement in order to provide continuous improvement.

5. **Monitoring Arrangements**

5.1 The recommendations from Audit Wales will be included within the business plan and updated on a quarterly basis.

5.2 The information will be reported within the Joint Finance and Performance Report to Corporate Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

5.3 Regular meetings are held with Audit Wales to assess progress of reports.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Audit Wales Report ‘*Together we can’ Community resilience and self-reliance*’