

External Audit Reports 2014

1. Annual Improvement Report of the Audit Office

In May 2014 the Council's Annual Improvement Report was submitted by the Wales Audit Office to Cabinet Members, Heads of Department and Scrutiny Members.

The report was fair and positive. It did not include a new proposal or recommend any improvement.

2. Annual Performance Appraisal of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales 2013 - 2014

A review of Gwynedd Social Services' performance is undertaken annually by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales. The review report results from the inspection work and notes the fields that have improved and for fields for improvement in the Social Services Department of Gwynedd Council for the year in question.

The report has been circulated to relevant Officers and relevant Members. The report was submitted to the Services Scrutiny Committee on 11 December 2014 by Mark Robert and Vicky Poole, Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales.

It is intended that the report be submitted to the formal Cabinet in February 2015.

3. Report: Local Authorities Safeguarding Children Arrangements – Gwynedd Council

Gwynedd Council's Local Authorities Safeguarding Children Arrangements were inspected by the Wales Audit Office and a report was published in October 2014.

The report will be presented to the Services Scrutiny Committee with an action plan in order to respond to the following proposals.

C1 - Review the requirements under the Children Act 2004 for the Local Authorities' Designated Child Protection Officer in order to ensure that the Council complies in full with the legislation.

C2 - Ensure that safeguarding risks, and the steps to mitigate them, have been updated in the Corporate Risks Register.

C3 - Improve scrutiny on key elements of the Council's safeguarding arrangements e.g. regular reporting on performance regarding safe recruitment; attendance at

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safeguarding and its impact training; and the result of the annual school inspection programme.

C4 - Agree on a regular internal audit work programme to review the Council's safeguarding arrangements.

C5 - Provide training to all staff on the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.

4. ESTYN Inspection 11-15 March 2013

Following the ESTYN inspection of education services for children and young people on 11 – 15 March 2013, deeming that the authority's progress needed to be monitored by Estyn.

Estyn's Post Inspection Implementation Plan was received and confirmed by the Cabinet on 17 September 2013.

A programme of monitoring visits was agreed through our contact inspectors, and the first of these visits was held on 12 and 13 March 2014. A team of two inspectors evaluated the progress made by the authority against one recommendation stemming from the inspection in order to consider the authority's current performance and to identify any further improvement needs. The letter received following this visit (May 2014) did not include further recommendations for improvement.

Another inspection was held on 23 – 25 June 2014 with a team of two inspectors who evaluated the progress against three recommendations stemming from the inspection. The following letter did not include further recommendations for improvement.

There was another visit by Estyn between 2 - 5 December and a letter is expected.

Estyn's Post Inspection Implementation Plan was considered by the Services Scrutiny Committee on 3 October 2013. Estyn Inspectors have also requested to attend the Services Scrutiny Committee meeting on 12 February 2015 in order to report back on the findings of their visit in December.