

External Audit Reports 2014/15

1. Wales Audit Office's 2014-15 Annual Improvement Report

The Wales Audit Office will present the 2014-15 Annual Improvement Report to a meeting of the **Cabinet Members and members of this Committee on 30th July 2015.**

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

A review of Gwynedd Social Services' performance is undertaken annually by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales. The report results from the inspection work and notes the fields that have improved and for fields for improvement in the social services 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 together **with the Council's implementation plan. A short introductory paper was presented to the Services Scrutiny Committee's preparatory meeting on 13th January 2015 regarding the process of the complaints procedure including categories and timetable. A Social Services Complaints report is to be presented to the preparatory meeting of the Services Scrutiny Committee on 28th July and is expected to be presented formally to the Services Scrutiny Committee in September 2015.**

In addition **the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales' report was presented to the formal Cabinet on 19 February 2015** where it was agreed to give the go-ahead to the programme that responds to the recommendations and the CSSIW improvement areas.

A **draft response by the Service to the recommendations** in the Annual Review was **presented to the preparatory meeting of the Services Scrutiny Committee on 10th March 2015.** It was decided to ask the Social Services to present the implementation plan again in 6 months time in order to track the progress.

The **next Annual Report by the Inspectorate** is expected to be presented **to the Services Scrutiny Committee in November 2015.**

3. Report by the Wales Audit Office: 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 Service has an implementation plan in place to meet the Inspectorate's proposals.

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 Post-Estyn Inspection action plan was considered by the Services Scrutiny Committee on 3 October 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.**

Following **Estyn Inspectors visit on 2 – 5 December** a letter was received recording the final results of monitoring after the inspection.

" Gwynedd Council is judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to the recommendations that arose from the inspection in March 2013. As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is removing the authority from follow-up activity".

APPENDIX 1

Estyn Inspectors attended the Services Scrutiny Committee meeting on 12 February 2015 in order to report on the findings of their visit on 2 – 5 December 2014.

The Committee's decision was to accept and note the contents of ESTYN's report and to note the importance of paying close attention to **the annual report on the performance of the Education Service** which is to be **presented to the next Scrutiny Committee on 16th April**. That was addressed as part of the normal pattern of the Scrutiny Committee of receiving information about, and challenge the performance and service arrangements.

5. Gwynedd Domiciliary Care Services Review by Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales

The above report was published on 14 March 2014 following the **inspection on 5 February 2014 and 7 February 2014**. A scheduled baseline inspection is held every 3 years. It was noted, although steps have been taken to address the issues identified during the last inspection, progress is slow and effective steps must be taken to implement the new documentation in each area in particular:

- Risk assessments
- Person-centred care planning documentation

6. Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales Report – Gwynedd Fostering Service – January 2015

A scheduled inspection was held during **October and November 2014**. The report notes: **"We did not identify any areas of non-compliance with the requirements of The Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2003**; however we have identified areas where practice could be further developed to assist in improving the standard of the service provided.

- Foster carers felt more should be done to recognise what children achieve.
- Develop the initiative to better involve children in foster carer reviews.
- Consider a review of the disruption meeting format.

A note in the external audit reports register states that **any recommendations will be included in the Department's work plan**.