

## Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>REPORT TO:</b>                            | <b>Governance and Audit Committee</b>   |
| <b>DATE:</b>                                 | <b>10 March 2022</b>  |
| <b>LOCATION:</b>                             | Remotely by Video Conference  |
| <b>TITLE:</b>                                | Regulator & Inspectorate Reports & Updates  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF REPORT:</b>                    | To provide the Governance and Audit Committee with updates on the progress with studies Audit Wales have undertaken or are undertaking                |
| <b>For</b>                                   | Decision  |
| <b>Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:</b> | <b>Cllr Ray Quant MBE, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Legal and Governance, People and Organisation, and Democratic Services</b> |

### Introduction

This Report sets out Regulator and Inspectorate Reports and updates and has 3 parts:

- a) Audit Wales quarterly update to Governance and Audit Committee;*
- b) Any local risk work issued/published since the last Governance and Audit Committee meeting*
- c) Audit Wales National Reports*

### Current Position

#### **a) Audit Wales quarterly update to Governance and Audit Committee**

- Quarter 3 Work Programme Timetable 2021-2022 – Ceredigion (**Appendix 1**)

#### **b) Any local risk work issued/published since the last Governance and Audit Committee meeting**

- Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection Report on Hafan Deg Residential Care Home (**Appendix 2**)
- Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection Report on Yr Hafod Residential Care Home (**Appendix 3**)
- Audit Wales – Ceredigion County Council Annual Audit Summary 2021 (**Appendix 4**)

#### **c) Audit Wales National Reports**

- Joint working between Emergency Services  
(<https://www.audit.wales/publication/joint-working-between-emergency-services>)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** To consider the Regulator and Inspectorate reports and updates

**Reasons for Recommendation** To keep the Governance and Committee informed of reports, proposals and work being undertaken

**Appendices:** **Appendix 1** - Quarter 3 Work Programme Timetable 2021-2022 – Ceredigion

**Appendix 2** – Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection Report on Hafan Deg Residential Care Home

**Appendix 3** – Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection Report on Yr Hafod Residential Care Home

**Appendix 4** – Audit Wales – Ceredigion County Council Annual Audit Summary 2021

**Contact Name:** Elin Prysor  
**Designation:** Corporate Lead Officer: Legal & Governance & Monitoring Officer  
**Date of Report** 1/03/2022

## Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – Ceredigion County Council

Quarterly Update: 31 December 2021

### Annual Audit Summary

| Description   | Timetable     | Status                |
|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>A report summarising completed audit work since the last Annual Audit Summary, which was issued in January 2021.</b> | February 2022 | Finalising currently. |

### Financial Audit work

| Description   | Scope   | Timetable   | Status   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Audit of the Council's 2020-21 statement of accounts</b> | To confirm whether the statement of accounts provides a true and fair view. | Audit Opinion by 30 November 2021                           | Audit work complete. Audit Opinion by 30 November 2021.  |
| <b>Audit of the 2020-21 Return for Ceredigion Harbour</b>   | To confirm that the returns have been completed correctly.                  | Audit Opinion by 30 November 2021                           | Audit work complete. Audit Opinion by 30 November 2021.  |
| <b>Audit of the Council's 2020-21 Grants and Returns</b>    | Audit of claims as required by the terms and conditions of the grants.      | In line with the individual deadlines for each grant claim. | Audit work to be performed October 2021 to February 2022 |

| Description   | Scope   | Timetable   | Status   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Audit of the Council's 2021-22 statement of accounts</b> | To confirm whether the statement of accounts provides a true and fair view. | Audit Opinion by 30 November 2022                           | Audit work to be performed February to November 2022.    |
| <b>Audit of the 2021-22 Return for Ceredigion Harbour</b>   | To confirm that the returns have been completed correctly.                  | Audit Opinion by 30 November 2022                           | Audit work to be performed February to November 2022.    |
| <b>Audit of the Council's 2021-22 Grants and Returns</b>    | Audit of claims as required by the terms and conditions of the grants.      | In line with the individual deadlines for each grant claim. | Audit work to be performed October 2022 to February 2023 |

## Performance Audit work

| 2020-21 Performance Audit Work     | Scope  | Timetable | Status   |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------|--|
| <b>Financial Sustainability</b>    | A project common to all local councils that will assess financial sustainability in light of current and anticipated future challenges building on work undertaken during 2019-20.   | Complete  | <a href="#"><u>Published September 2021</u></a><br><br><a href="#"><u>National Summary Report published September 2021</u></a> |
| <b>Review of Planning Services</b> | The review will provide assurance and insight as to whether the Planning Service is effectively and sustainably meeting its objectives and contributing towards the achievement of the priorities in the Council's Corporate Strategy. | Complete  | <a href="#"><u>Published November 2021</u></a>   |

| 2021-22 Performance audit work  | Scope   | Timetable                         | Status      |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WFG Act) examinations</b>   | We will seek to integrate the delivery of our WFG examinations of steps to deliver wellbeing objectives with our other audit work. We will discuss this with the Council as we scope and deliver the audit projects listed in this plan   | Ongoing                           | Ongoing     |
| <b>Improvement reporting audit</b>  | Audit of discharge of duty to publish an assessment of performance.   | November 2021                     | Complete    |
| <b>Assurance and Risk Assessment</b>  | <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.</p> <p>At Ceredigion Council the project is likely to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial position</li> <li>• Self-assessment arrangements</li> <li>• Recovery planning</li> <li>• Implications of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act</li> <li>• Carbon reduction plans</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> </ul> | Ongoing                           | Ongoing     |
| <b>Springing Forward – Examining the building blocks for a sustainable future</b> | As the world moves forward, learning from the global pandemic, this review looks at how effectively councils are strengthening their ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services, including those delivered in partnership with key stakeholders and communities.   | Autumn 2021 onwards – April 2022. | In Progress |

## Local government national studies planned/in progress

| Study                                     | Scope   | Timetable                  | Status   | Fieldwork planned at Ceredigion Council  |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Direct Payments</b>                    | Review of how local authorities manage and promote the use of Direct payments   | Publication Winter 2021-22 | Drawing conclusions mid-October, drafting and publication early 2022 | No – work being delivered via Direct Payment Forum and a selection of follow-up interviews |
| <b>Emergency Services</b>                 | Review of how well emergency services (blue light) collaborate  | Publication winter 2021-22 | Clearance with publication end of January 2022                       | N/A  |
| <b>Follow-up on People Sleeping Rough</b> | Review of how local authorities responded to the needs of people sleeping rough during the pandemic following up on the AGW's report of July 2020 | N/A                        | N/A  | This work is not progressing in 2021-22  |
| <b>Poverty</b>                            | Understanding how local authorities ensure they deliver their services to minimise or reduce poverty  | Autumn 2021 – Autumn 2022  | Fieldwork  | Yes – interview with nominated officer at the Council                                      |

| Study                       | Scope   | Timetable                 | Status    | Fieldwork planned at Ceredigion Council               |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| <b>Social Enterprises</b>   | Review of how local authorities are supporting and utilising social enterprises to deliver services | Autumn 2021 – Autumn 2022 | Fieldwork | Yes – interview with nominated officer at the Council |
| <b>Community Resilience</b> | Review of how local authorities can build greater resilience in communities                         | Autumn 2021 – Autumn 2022 | Fieldwork | Yes – interview with nominated officer at the Council |

## Estyn

| Estyn planned work 2021-22                             | Scope  | Timetable  | Status |
|--|--|--|--------|
| <b>Local Government Education Services Inspections</b> | Estyn have worked closely with Directors of Education to review their inspection guidance for local government education services to reflect the experiences of the pandemic. The updated guidance (published on 1 July) will be piloted on the first inspection and feedback will be sought on whether any further refinements need to be made. | LGES inspections to resume from late Autumn term                     | N/A    |
| <b>Curriculum Reform thematic review</b>               | Regional consortia and local authority support for curriculum reform.  | Evidence collecting in September/October – publish in early February | N/A    |

## Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

| CIW planned work 2021-22                | Scope   | Timetable               | Status  |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>National Assurance Check 2020-21</b> | CIW has now published all assurance check letters.<br>CIW has published its national assurance check report highlighting key findings and recommendations.                        | Published               | Complete  |
| <b>Programme 2022-23</b>                | CIW will run an annual programme of assurance checks, performance evaluation inspections and risk-based inspections.  | April 2022 – March 2023 | Planning  |
| <b>National review</b>                  | Support for disabled children and their families.   | Published               | Complete  |
| <b>Follow-up</b>                        | CIW will be following up on areas for improvement identified in the Assurance Checks or through risk-based inspection activity with individual local authorities where necessary. | Ongoing                 | One follow-up risk-based inspection has occurred and is due to be published.<br><br>Two further follow-up assurance checks have occurred and are due to be published in due course. |
| <b>Inspection</b>                       | Risk-based inspection activity will continue where required.  | As required             | No inspections are scheduled at this time (up until April 2022)   |
| <b>Development</b>                      | CIW will continue to develop its approach to inspection and review of local authorities.  | April 2022              | In progress   |

| CIW planned work 2021-22   | Scope   | Timetable                      | Status      |
|--|---|--------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Annual Monitoring Report for Health and Social Care 2020-21</b> | Annual monitoring report in draft format currently – this is a joint report with Health Inspectorate Wales. | December 2021                  | In progress |
| <b>Annual meeting with Statutory Directors of Social Services</b>                                    | CIW will meet with all Directors of Social Services.  | December 2021 and January 2022 | In progress |

## Audit Wales national reports and other outputs published since 1 April 2021

| Report title  | Publication date and link to report |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Care Home Commissioning for Older People</b>   | <a href="#">December 2021</a>       |
| <b>The Welsh Government's Warm Homes Programme</b>  | <a href="#">November 2021</a>       |
| <b>Taking Care of the Carers?<br/>How NHS bodies supported staff wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic</b> | <a href="#">October 2021</a>        |
| <b>Financial Sustainability of Local Government</b>   | <a href="#">September 2021</a>      |
| <b>NHS summarised accounts infographic</b>  | <a href="#">September 2021</a>      |
| <b>Picture of Public Services<sup>1</sup></b>   | <a href="#">September 2021</a>      |

<sup>1</sup> Main report published 15 September. Over the following six weeks we published five short sector commentaries: [A picture of local government](#), [A picture of healthcare](#), [A picture of social care](#), [A picture of schools](#), [A picture of higher and further education](#).

| Report title  | Publication date and link to report |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Town Centre Regeneration  | <a href="#">September 2021</a>      |
| Student finances  | <a href="#">August 2021</a>         |
| NHS finances data-tool 2020-21                                      | <a href="#">June 2021</a>           |
| Rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Wales              | <a href="#">June 2021</a>           |
| Quality governance arrangements at Cwm Taf UHB – follow-up          | <a href="#">May 2021</a>            |
| Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee governance arrangements | <a href="#">May 2021</a>            |
| At your Discretion – Local Government Discretionary Services        | <a href="#">April 2021</a>          |
| Procuring and Supplying PPE for the COVID-19 Pandemic               | <a href="#">April 2021</a>          |

## Audit Wales national reports and other outputs due to be published during 2021-22 (and other work in progress/planned)<sup>2</sup>

| Title   | Anticipated publication date |
|---|------------------------------|
| Welsh Government accounts commentary              | February 2022                |
| Welsh Government setting of well-being objectives | February 2022                |

<sup>2</sup> 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. This includes maintaining some flexibility so that we can respond to developments in Welsh Government policy and areas of possible interest for the new Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee.

| <b>Title</b>   | <b>Anticipated publication date</b> |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Unscheduled care – data tool and commentary</b>   | February/March 2022                 |
| <b>Collaborative arrangements for managing local public health resources</b>                 | February 2022                       |
| <b>COVID response and recovery/Welsh Government grants management – third sector support</b> | February 2022                       |
| <b>NHS waiting times data-tool and planned care commentary</b>                               | March 2022                          |
| <b>Welsh Government workforce</b>  | February/March 2022                 |
| <b>Orthopaedic services</b>  | March 2022                          |
| <b>Curriculum reform</b>   | Spring 2022                         |
| <b>Equality impact assessment</b>  | Spring 2022                         |
| <b>Climate change – baseline review</b>  | Spring/summer 2022                  |
| <b>COVID response and recovery/Welsh Government grants management – other</b>                | To be confirmed                     |
| <b>Affordable housing</b>  | To be confirmed                     |
| <b>Broadband infrastructure</b>  | To be confirmed                     |
| <b>Flood risk management</b>   | To be confirmed                     |

## Forthcoming Good Practice Exchange events and publications

| Title   | Anticipated publication/event date |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Post-event resources including session recordings for the Springing Forward event on organisational resilience held on 9 December 2021</b> | Late January 2022                  |
| <b>Direct Payments Event (title to be confirmed)</b>  | 30 March 2022                      |



# Inspection Report on

**Hafan Deg Residential Care Home**

**Hafan Deg Old Peoples Home  
Temple Terrace  
Lampeter  
SA48 7BJ**

**Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg**

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## **Date Inspection Completed**

2 November 2021

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## About Hafan Deg Residential Care Home

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Type of care provided                                      | Care Home Service<br>Adults Without Nursing   |
| Registered Provider  | Ceredigion County Council Adults and Children's Services  |
| Registered places  | 20  |
| Language of the service                                    | Both  |
| Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection                |   |
| Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer? | The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service |

### Summary

This focused inspection is to review the two open Priority Action Notices (PAN) around the provider's oversight and the environment.

The provider has made steps towards improving the environment but the PAN will remain open. People who live and work at the home are looking forward to the completion of the work and the positive impact it will have.

The provider has improved the oversight of the service. The Responsible Individual (RI) has visited the home and involves people, their representatives and care workers in their visit and subsequent Quality of Care report.

## Well-being

People receive person centered support and are able to do things they enjoy. An individual told us how much they appreciate having an outside area to access to chat with staff. Personal circumstances are considered and workers support people to maintain contact with loved ones. Individuals are respected a person spoke with pride about being able to do a reading on remembrance Sunday. They said *"it's so important for us to remember the fallen and I am proud to be able to read for us here in the home"*.

People are involved in decisions and express their views about the service. People are involved in decisions around the refurbishment of the service including colour schemes and are looking forward to the completion of the refurbishment and the benefits these will bring. When finished the environment aims to enhance well-being, helping people orientate around the home and to make the most of technology.

People are also able to express their views about the service because the Responsible Individual (RI) involves them and/or their representatives in quality assurance audits. Staff contribute with ideas and suggestions to improve the quality of service during RI quarterly visits. Information from internal audits and surveys enables the RI to monitor and assess the quality of the service. Clear actions and time frames enables the provider to enhance the overall service it offers to people.

## Care and Support

Care and support was not a focus of this inspection, however our discussions with people who live and work at the home again show that the service is meeting people's health and well-being.

People spoke positively about the support offered and the working relationships with the whole staff team. Interactions were friendly and encouraging. We observed positive and effective support from care workers to reassure individuals with memory challenges. Everyone is looking forward to the completion of the refurbishment works and the positive impact it will have for people.

Good hygiene practices continue throughout the service. Staff wear the correct PPE and following Public Health Wales guidance.

## Environment

People live in an environment that supports their safety. The provider has started a refurbishment programme that will improve individual's health and well-being.

The carpet replacement schedule has commenced, with the most urgent areas completed. Systematic refurbishment of communal spaces has started with inviting colour schemes and corresponding furniture. Updating of Individual rooms has commenced, those already decorated are now bright and fresh and robust wall coverings will improve infection control. Additional electrical sockets and fittings in bedrooms aim to better support the use of technology. People who live at the home are enthusiastic about the work already completed, one said *"the workmen are busy and I'm looking forward to the improvements"*. Staff are positive about the plan and the impact on the people in the service, a care worker told us *"the new brighter décor is going to be great for the residents"*.

Although the Priority Action Notice remains open we acknowledge that the provider has taken steps to address the environmental issues. We expect this action to continue and the refurbishment to be complete by February 2022.

We have also be advised that there are plans to transform an area of the home to improve the service it offers to people who live with dementia. This includes five bedrooms, communal spaces and the garden, the provider expects to complete this by March 2022.

## **Leadership and Management**

The provider has improved its arrangements to monitor, review and improve the quality of the service. The latest Regulation 73 report is comprehensive and details many discussions with people and their representatives. Workers are positive about the opportunity to talk with the RI and have open conversations about improving the service. Workers speak positively about the RI's focus on their health and well-being during a recent team meeting.

The six month Quality of Care Review is detailed and contains feedback from people and their representatives. Information from internal audits and surveys enables the RI to monitor the service with clear actions on how to improve quality. The refurbishment programme is a key focus of the report along with future plans for the building.

We can conclude that the oversight of the service by the RI has improved and is positively focusing on the well-being of people who live and work in the service. We expect this level of oversight to continue and this will be tested in future inspections.



### Summary of Non-Compliance

| Status              | What each means   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>New</b>          | This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.  |
| <b>Reviewed</b>     | Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection. |
| <b>Not Achieved</b> | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.  |
| <b>Achieved</b>     | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.  |

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

### Priority Action Notice(s)

| Regulation | Summary  | Status       |
|------------|--|--------------|
| 44         | Premises   | Not Achieved |
| 6          | Requirements in relation to the provision of the service | Achieved     |

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

### Area(s) for Improvement

| Regulation | Summary | Status |
|------------|---------|--------|
|------------|---------|--------|

|     |  |     |
|-----|--|-----|
| N/A | No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection | N/A |
|-----|--|-----|

**Date Published** 14/02/2022



## Inspection Report on

**Yr Hafod Residential Care Home**

**Yr Hafod Old Peoples Home  
Rhos Y Dre  
Cardigan  
SA43 1NT**

**Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg**

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## **Date Inspection Completed**

30 November 2021

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*You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.*

## About Yr Hafod Residential Care Home

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Type of care provided                                      | Care Home Service<br>Adults Without Nursing   |
| Registered Provider  | Ceredigion County Council Adults and Children's Services  |
| Registered places  | 28  |
| Language of the service                                    | Both  |
| Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection                |   |
| Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer? | Yes. The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service. |

### Summary

This focused inspection is to review the three open Priority Action Notices (PANs) around the provider's oversight and the internal and external environment.

The PAN for the external areas has been closed and provider has made steps towards improving the internal environment but the PAN will remain open. People who live and work at the home are looking forward to the completion of the work and the positive impact it will have.

The provider has improved the oversight of the service. The Responsible Individual (RI) has visited the home and involves people, their representatives and care workers in their visit and subsequent Quality of Care report. This PAN is now closed

## Well-being

People receive person centered support and are able to do things they enjoy. An individual told us “[manager] and the staff are superb and in particular [care worker], she is fantastic”. Care workers encourage interactions within the communal areas of the home and arrange stimulating activities.

People are involved in decisions and express their views about the service. People are involved in decisions around the refurbishment of the service including colour schemes and wall art. When finished the environment aims to enhance well-being, helping people orientate around the home and to make the most of technology.

People are also able to express their views about the service because the Responsible Individual (RI) involves them and/or their representatives in quality assurance audits. Staff contribute with ideas and suggestions to improve the quality of service during RI quarterly visits. Information from internal audits and surveys enables the RI to monitor and assess the quality of the service. Clear actions and time frames enables the provider to enhance the overall service it offers to people.

## Care and Support

Care and support was not a focus of this inspection, however our discussions with people who live and work at the home again show that the service is meeting people's health and well-being.

People speak positively about the whole staff team and the support they receive. Everyone we spoke with is looking forward to the completion of the refurbishment works and the positive impact it will have for people.

Good hygiene practices continue throughout the service. Staff wear the correct PPE and following Public Health Wales guidance.

## Environment

People live in an environment that supports their safety. The provider has addressed all of the external issues identified in the last inspection and has started a refurbishment programme in communal areas.

The provider has replaced the temporary fence around the grounds with a permanent wooden one and maintenance of the gardens has improved. People can now access the grounds via the conservatory and a person who lives at the service told us *“I’m looking forward to getting back out there when the weather improves”*. We can conclude that the provider has taken action to address the issues with the external environment and the Priority Action Notice (PAN) is closed. Bedrooms affected by a water leak have been painted and look bright and fresh. The communal lounge/sunroom is being fully upgraded and the two smaller lounges are next on the re-decoration plan. People who live at the home are excited about the work, one said *“I’m really looking forward to the lounge being decorated”*. Staff are positive about the plan and the impact on the people in the service, a care worker told us *“work started in main lounge, ‘It’s nice and it will be nice for the residents”*.

Although the Priority Action Notice remains open we acknowledge that the provider has taken steps to address the environmental issues. We expect this action to continue and the refurbishment to be complete by April 2022.

## Leadership and Management

The provider has improved its arrangements to monitor, review and improve the quality of the service. The latest Regulation 73 report is comprehensive and details many discussions with people and their representatives. A person who lives at the home confirmed they spoke with the RI and staff confirm the RI takes time to talk to people. When discussing the input people have a care worker told us *“They have taken on board what the residents would like, pictures of local beaches on the walls”*. Workers are positive about the discussions with the RI around improving the service. A care worker told us *“[RI], she’s really nice and very approachable and she will spend time speaking to residents”*.

The six month Quality of Care Review is detailed and contains feedback from people and their representatives. Information from internal audits and surveys enables the RI to monitor the service with clear actions on how to improve quality.

We can conclude that the oversight of the service by the RI has improved and is positively focusing on the well-being of people who live and work in the service. We have closed this PAN and expect this level of oversight to continue; this will be tested in future inspections.



### Summary of Non-Compliance

| Status              | What each means   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>New</b>          | This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.  |
| <b>Reviewed</b>     | Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection. |
| <b>Not Achieved</b> | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.  |
| <b>Achieved</b>     | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.  |

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

### Priority Action Notice(s)

| Regulation | Summary  | Status       |
|------------|--|--------------|
| 44         | Premises   | Not Achieved |
| 44         | Premesis   | Achieved     |
| 6          | Requirements in relation to the provision of the service | Achieved     |

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

### Area(s) for Improvement

| Regulation | Summary  | Status |
|------------|--|--------|
| N/A        | No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection | N/A    |

**Date Published** 27/01/2022

## Ceredigion County Council

### Annual Audit Summary 2021

This is our audit summary for Ceredigion County Council. It shows the work completed since the last Annual Audit Summary, which was issued in January 2021. Our audit summary forms part of the Auditor General for Wales' duties.



More information about these duties can be found on our [website](#).

## About the Council

### Some of the services the Council provides



#### Key facts

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The Council is made up of 42 councillors who represent the following political parties:

- Plaid Cymru: 20
- Independent: 11
- Welsh Liberal Democrats: 7
- Independent Voice: 3
- Ungrouped: 1

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The Council spent £149.9 million on providing services<sup>1</sup> during 2020-21, the 19th highest spending of the 22 unitary councils in Wales.

<sup>1</sup> We define spending on services as the cost of services charged to the general fund from the Expenditure Funding Analysis, less any Housing Revenue Account cost of services, plus precepts, levies and debt interest.

## Key facts

As at 31 March 2021, the Council had £44.6 million of useable financial reserves<sup>2</sup>. This is equivalent to 29.7% of the Council's annual spending on services, the 9th highest percentage of the 22 unitary councils in Wales<sup>3</sup>.

Ceredigion County Council has 1 out of 46 areas deemed as the most deprived 10% of areas in Wales, this is the fourth lowest of the 22 unitary councils in Wales<sup>4</sup>.

The County's population is projected to decrease by 4% between 2020 and 2040 from 71,897 to 69,009, including a predicted 14.4% decrease in the number of children, a 12.3% decrease in the number of the working-age population and a 20.9% increase in the number of people aged 65 and over<sup>5</sup>.

## The Auditor General's duties

### We completed work during 2020-21 to meet the following duties

- **Continuous improvement**

The Council had to put in place arrangements to make continuous improvements, including related plans and reports, and the Auditor General had to assess whether the Council met these requirements during 2020-21.
- **Audit of Accounts**

Each year the Auditor General audits the Council's financial statements to make sure that public money is being properly accounted for.
- **Value for money**

The Auditor General examines whether the Council has put in place arrangements to get value for money for the resources it uses, and he has to be satisfied that it has done this.
- **Sustainable development principle**

Public bodies need to comply with the sustainable development principle when setting and taking steps to meet their well-being objectives. The Auditor General must assess the extent to which they are doing this.

<sup>2</sup> We define useable financial reserves as reserves usable for revenue costs, where the purpose is not protected by law. This is the total of the general fund, earmarked reserves and schools balances. It excludes Housing Revenue Account reserves, capital receipts and capital grants unapplied.

<sup>3</sup> Source: 2020-21 Statement of Accounts

<sup>4</sup> An area in this context is defined as a 'Lower Super Output Area'. Source: Stats Wales.

<sup>5</sup> Source: Stats Wales



We continue to recognise the huge strain on public services and to work in a way that seeks to reduce the impact on public bodies' response to COVID-19, while still meeting our statutory duties.



**To meet the Auditor General's duties we complete specific projects, but we also rely on other audit work, and the work of regulators such as Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn (the education inspectorate). We take the findings of our audit work into account when assessing whether the Council has put in place arrangements to secure value for money. Our findings and conclusions are summarised below.**

## What we found

### Audit of Ceredigion County Council's 2020-21 Accounts

Each year we audit the Council's financial statements.

#### For 2020-21:

- the Auditor General gave an unqualified true and fair opinion on the Council's financial statements on 29 November 2021 in line with the statutory deadline.
- the Council's Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report were prepared in line with the CIPFA Code and relevant guidance. They were also consistent with the financial statements prepared by the Council and with our knowledge of the Council.
- the quality of the draft statements presented for audit on 3 August 2021 was good.
- a number of changes were made to the Council's financial statements arising from our audit work, which were reported to the Audit Committee in our Audit of Financial Statements Report on 25 November 2021.
- the Auditor General issued the certificate confirming that the audit of accounts for 2020-21 has been completed.
- in addition to the Auditor General's responsibilities for auditing the Council's financial statements, he also has responsibility for the certification of a number of grant claims and returns. Our work to date has not identified any significant issues.

## Our work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we changed the approach and focus of our performance audit work in local government and other bodies. Below is a summary of some of the work we have undertaken in response to the pandemic across a number of sectors, much of which is of relevance to local government.

We undertook a project to support public sector efforts by sharing learning through the pandemic. The project aims to help prompt some thinking, and practise exchange. [Further information is available on our website.](#)

In March 2021, we published a [national report](#) setting out an overview of progress to date on Test, Trace, Protect in Wales. In December 2020, we also published some [observations](#) of the Auditor General on procurement and supply of PPE during the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by a [report](#) in April 2021. In June 2021, we also published our [report](#) on the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Wales.

## Continuous improvement

The Auditor General certified that the Council had met its remaining Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 duties for the financial year 2020-21, as saved by an order made under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

## Financial sustainability

During 2020-21, we examined the financial sustainability of each council in Wales. In June 2021 Council we concluded that: **The Council remains financially stable and is focussed on future challenges.** The report can be viewed [here](#).

We also published two national summary reports: the [first report](#) in October 2020 and the [second report](#) in September 2021.

## Recovery planning

During 2020-21, we reviewed the arrangements that each council in Wales was putting in place to support recovery planning. In Ceredigion County Council we undertook this work on an ongoing basis, providing real-time feedback where appropriate.

## Local projects

- We published our Review of Planning Services in November 2021. The report can be viewed [here](#). Our review sought to answer the question: **Is the Planning Service effectively and sustainably meeting its objectives and contributing towards the achievement of the priorities in the Council's Corporate Strategy?** Overall, we found that: Whilst Council members and senior officers view the planning service as strategically critical, significant longstanding weaknesses in the Development Control Committee's governance arrangements are not sustainably or cohesively supporting the Council to improve performance and achieve its strategic objectives and priorities. The Council are currently working through their action plan in response to our recommendations.

## Other inspectorates

We also took into account the reports of Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Estyn as well as any subsequent actions taken by the Council in response.

Care Inspectorate Wales undertook an Assurance Check in Ceredigion County Council in May 2021. A letter was issued to the Council on its findings. The letter can be viewed [here](#).

No reports have been issued by Estyn related to Ceredigion County Council since our last Annual Audit Summary letter.

## Local government studies

As well as local work at each council, each year we also carry out studies across the local government sector to make recommendations for improving value for money. Since the last annual improvement report, we have published the following reports:

### Discretionary services (April 2021)

Financial pressures have led to councils reducing spending and cutting services, but the pandemic has shown local government services are essential to keeping people safe and healthy. We focussed on how councils define services, the systems and processes they have used to review services and how robust these are. Demand for some essential services is continuing to increase and councils are not confident that they can continue to deliver these services in the face of this rising and complex demand. Councils need to take the opportunity to refresh, reevaluate and reset what they do and to learn from the pandemic to build a better future. Our [report](#) was published in April 2021.

### Regenerating town centres in Wales (September 2021)

Between 1950 and 1980, local authorities prioritised regeneration of town centres creating new and greater retail space. However, past policy choices, changing consumer expectations and technological advances are now adversely affecting many Welsh town centres. And the pandemic has created challenges for local government and central government, with one in seven shops on Welsh high streets now empty, despite the Welsh Government investing and leveraging in £892.6 million in the last seven years. Local authorities do not have the capacity to respond to this situation and are not always using the powers they have to help regenerate towns. To deliver the best local outcomes, policies and joint working need to be aligned and integrated, and resources prioritised on town centres. Our [report](#) was published in September 2021.

## Planned work for 2021-22

We also looked at the key challenges and opportunities facing the Council. These could have an effect on the Council's ability to meet its legal obligations in relation to the sustainable development principle and the use of its resources.

The most significant risk and issue facing councils and the wider public sector during 2021-22 continues to be the COVID-19 pandemic. We have shaped our work to provide assurance and challenge in a way which helps to support the Council through this period. Our planned work for 2021-22 includes:

- Assurance and risk assessment including a focus on:
  - The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021
  - Recovery planning
  - Carbon reduction plans
  - Self-assessment arrangements
  - Financial position
  - Performance Management
- Springing Forward – as the world moves forward, learning from the pandemic, this review looks at how effectively councils are strengthening their ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services, including those delivered in partnership with key stakeholders and communities.
- Improvement reporting audit.

The Auditor General is independent of government, and is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen. The Auditor General undertakes his work using staff and other resources provided by the Wales Audit Office, which is a statutory board established for that purpose and to monitor and advise the Auditor General. The Wales Audit Office is held to account by the Senedd.

The Auditor General audits local government bodies in Wales, including unitary authorities, police, fire and rescue authorities, national parks, and community councils. He also conducts local government value for money studies, assesses compliance with the remaining requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and may undertake special inspections under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Beyond local government, the Auditor General is the external auditor of the Welsh Government and its sponsored and related public bodies, the Senedd Commission, and National Health Service bodies in Wales.

Audit Wales is the non-statutory collective name for the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office, which are separate legal entities with their own legal functions, as described above. Audit Wales is not a legal entity.

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.

This document is also available in Welsh.