

Meeting of:	GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	30 JANUARY 2025
Report Title:	AUDIT WALES GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORTS
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	DEBORAH EXTON DEPUTY HEAD OF FINANCE
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s external auditors, Audit Wales, undertake a range of financial and performance audit work during the financial year. • They publish a number of reports in respect of the audit work undertaken. Some of the reports are national across all local authorities and others are local and specific to Bridgend. • Audit Wales also present a quarterly work programme and timetable to the Governance and Audit Committee to outline work completed, audits in progress and those still due to be undertaken. • This report provides details of Audit Wales’ report ‘Financial Sustainability of Local Government’.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to submit to the Committee one report from Audit Wales.

2. Background

- 2.1 Audit Wales undertakes a programme of work during the year to help the Auditor General discharge his duties under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. The Auditor General’s functions include auditing accounts and undertaking local performance audit work at a broad range of public bodies, alongside conducting a programme of national value for money examinations and studies. The Auditor General also assesses the extent to which public bodies are complying with the sustainable development principle when setting and taking steps to meet their well-being objectives.

2.2 Part 2 of the 2004 Act sets out the powers and duties of the Auditor General to undertake studies in relation to local government bodies in Wales. The most widely used of these provisions is section 41, which requires the Auditor General to undertake studies designed to enable him to make recommendations for, among other things, improving the value for money in the provision of services.

2.3 In accordance with Section 89 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 the Authority is required to keep under review the extent to which it is exercising its functions effectively, using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively and ensuring its governance is effective for securing these performance requirements.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 Audit Wales has produced one report for the Governance and Audit Committee to consider:-

- **Financial Sustainability of Local Government - (Appendix A)** – Over the spring and summer of 2024 Audit Wales looked at the financial sustainability of each of the 22 local authorities in Wales. Bridgend’s report was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in September 2024. The report at **Appendix A** provides some context on the financial challenges faced by Councils and summarises Audit Wales’ key findings from this work.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 That the Committee notes the Audit Wales Governance and Audit Committee Report at **Appendix A**.

Background documents

None