

Meeting of:	CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	23 OCTOBER 2025
Report Title:	ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMISSIONING SERVICES
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	CARYS LORD CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE
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. • This report provides details of Audit Wales’ report ‘Arrangements for Commissioning Services – Bridgend County Borough Council’

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to submit to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee an Audit Wales report entitled “Arrangements for Commissioning Services” and to update members with regards to the planned actions to be undertaken in response to this report.

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 As part of their work Audit Wales undertakes thematic reviews. These reviews report on issues that are common across all local authorities. The same audit is undertaken in all 22 Local Authorities over a period of time. Each Local Authority will receive a report outlining the findings in their area and a national report is also produced which reports on the key findings at a national level and highlights examples of good practice.
- 2.3 During the past 12 months Audit Wales has undertaken work to review Councils' arrangements for commissioning services. The work at this Council was completed earlier this year and the final report was published in June 2025.

3. Current situation/ proposal

- 3.1 The objectives for this piece of work were to :
- Provide assurance that the Council has proper arrangements for commissioning services to secure value for money in the use of resources ; and
 - Provide assurance that the Council is acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle in commissioning services.
- 3.2 In addition, from an All Wales perspective, the national report will seek to explain how Welsh Councils approach the commissioning of services and will also look to inspire and empower councils by identifying and sharing examples of notable practice where relevant.
- 3.3 It is important to note that the work reviewed the Council's arrangements for the commissioning of services. The audit did not cover procurement arrangements or the Council's contract management arrangements.
- 3.4 In undertaking this work, Audit Wales identified three examples to look at in more detail during their field work in Bridgend. Their findings are detailed in the Audit Wales report attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.5 In summary the recommendations made to the Council are below :

Recommendation 1 – establish commissioning arrangements

The Council should strengthen and formalise current practice, to assure itself that the decision it makes to commission services are consistently shaped

Recommendation 2 – Strengthen compliance with its commissioning arrangements

To ensure the Council's corporate approach to commissioning is consistently used across service areas, the Council should introduce arrangements to monitor compliance with its corporate approach to commissioning

Recommendation 3 – Introduce regular review of the Council’s commissioning arrangements

To ensure the Council identifies opportunities to improve value for money, it should routinely evaluate the effectiveness of its corporate commissioning arrangements across the organisation.

- 3.6 The Council has responded to the report and the completed Management Response Form is attached at **Appendix B**.
- 3.7 The Audit Wales report was considered at the Governance and Audit Committee in July 2025. It was noted at that meeting that the National Report, which will highlight examples of notable practice, would be available in the Autumn and it was proposed that any findings identified in that report could further inform the actions outlined in the Management Response Form.
- 3.8 The report has been referred to this Committee to monitor the progress of the actions identified and also to ensure that the findings in the national report are duly considered and reflected in the final action plan. Audit Wales has confirmed that the publication of the national report has been delayed therefore it has not been possible to update the action plan since Governance and Audit Committee considered it in July.
- 3.9 It is proposed therefore that Committee notes the Audit Wales report and the action plan and that a further report is brought to this Committee when the national report is available and can be reflected in the proposed actions.

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 and Nature Implications

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

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 There are no Safeguarding or corporate parent implications as a result of this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- Notes the Audit Wales Report at **Appendix A** along with the Council's Management Response Form to the report at **Appendix B**.
- Receives a further report when the Audit Wales All Wales report is published to consider any further actions required by the Council.

Background documents

None