



HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY – 31ST OCTOBER 2023

SUBJECT: WASTE MANAGEMENT REVIEW REPORT FROM AUDIT WALES

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Audit Wales Waste Management Review Report which was issued in July 2023 for noting and review by the Scrutiny Committee. The report will be presented by Audit Wales.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Audit Wales carried out a review of the Council's approach to recycling waste including its performance against key indicators and its plans to drive improvement in its performance. The audit did not examine in detail all of the waste management services provided by the Council
- 2.2 Audit Wales notes that the Council waste management performance had deteriorated in recent years with the percentage of waste reused, recycled and composted lower when compared to other councils in Wales. The Audit Wales review focused on the extent to which the Council understood the reasons for the decline in its recycling performance and its plans to address this.
- 2.3 The high-level summary from the review was that "Overall we found that the Council understands why its performance has declined but has been slow to address this; and whilst the Council is developing a draft strategy there remains significant risks to its successful implementation". The Report is attached as appendix A
- 2.4 Audit Wales made 2 recommendations for improvement as noted in section 5.3 below

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny review and note the report as presented by Audit Wales.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Scrutiny are updated on an external view of the recycling performance and have context for the developing Waste Strategy.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Audit Wales provided a project brief in October 2022 and the work included provision of a range of documents and a series of interviews with relevant officers.

- 5.2 A draft outcome report was provided to the Council in April 2023 and management comments on its content were returned to Audit Wales.

- 5.2 The final Report was then issued in July 2023 and concluded ***“Overall, we found that the Council understands why its performance has declined but has been slow to address this; and whilst the Council is developing a draft strategy there remain significant risks to its successful implementation. It will also be important for the Council to act quickly to make the changes it considers necessary if it is to meet its statutory recycling targets and avoid the risk of financial penalties”.***

- 5.3 As such, Audit Wales made 2 recommendations for improvement which were:

R1 Value for Money and Well-being measures - The Council should set out how it will monitor and evaluate the value for money of its waste strategy once finalised and the strategy's contribution to the Council's Well-being Objectives.

R2 Longer-term strategy - The Council should develop and agree a fully costed and resourced longer term waste strategy capable of meeting both current statutory targets and in readiness for the potential increase in statutory targets in the future.

- 5.4 Considerable work has been undertaken to address the recommendations already, and this work is ongoing with further decision making milestones planned as follows:

- CMT 18/09/23 – to discuss progress with the waste strategy
- CMT 19/10/23 – to discuss progress with the waste strategy
- PDM 08/11/23 – to update cabinet members informally on progress with the consultation draft of the strategy
- Joint Scrutiny 14th December 2023 – to update all members on the draft strategy in advance of cabinet approval of the draft strategy to be consulted on.
- Cabinet 10/01/24 – to seek approval of the consultation on the draft of the strategy and to seek authorisation to commence public consultation

- 5.5 Once the strategy and implementation timeline is finally agreed (summer 2024) a performance management framework will be developed and included in the Corporate and Directorate Performance Assessments. This will include reporting against key national performance indicators as well as cost benchmarking with other Welsh Local Authorities using the benchmarking scheme employed by the County Surveyors Society, WLGA and Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP). In addition, compliance with Welsh Government recycling targets is featured as one of the key measures within the Caerphilly County Borough Corporate Plan 2023-2028, Well being objective 5 (Enabling Our Environment to be Greener) and will be the subject of annual progress reporting in accordance with the plan.

5.6 In addition the recommendations and actions to address them as noted in 5.3 and 5.4 will be monitored by Governance and Audit committee twice a year.

5.7 **Conclusion**

Audit Wales will present their Waste Management Review to the Scrutiny Committee and provide fuller details of their findings as noted in Appendix A. The recommendations made have been accepted and considerable action is underway to address the recommendations. In addition to monitoring of the progress at different organisational levels, there will also be monitoring as part of our standard tracking process which is reported to Governance and Audit twice a year.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions have been made in this covering report.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 This report is for information and has no decision-making requests, so the Council full Integrated Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied. An integrated impact assessment would be part of the overall Waste Strategy.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications within this report, though there will be financial implications associated with our developing Waste Strategy.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no personnel implications within this report.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 The report includes the views of the listed consultees.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Report was undertaken to help discharge the Auditor General's duties under section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act), and section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

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Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director, Economy and Environment

Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director, Education and Corporate Services
Councillor Chris Morgan, Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green
Spaces
Councillor Andrew Whitcombe, Chair of Environment and Housing Scrutiny
Committee
Councillor Shayne Williams, Vice Chair of Environment and Housing Scrutiny
Committee
Councillor Tudor Davies, Chair of Cross party member working group on
waste
Councillor Adrian Hussey, Vice Chair of Cross party member working group
on waste
Marcus Lloyd, Head of Infrastructure
Hayley Jones, Waste Strategy and Operations Manager
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Background:

Appendices:

Appendix - A Waste Management Review July 2023