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Cyngor
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County Council

To: Members of the Performance Scrutiny Committee

Date: 10 April 2015

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **9.30 am** on **THURSDAY, 16 APRIL 2015** in **CONFERENCE ROOM 1A, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN**.

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

## AGENDA

**1    APOLOGIES**

**2    DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

**3    URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**4    MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**  (Pages 5 - 14)

To receive the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on the 26th February, 2015 (copy attached).

**5**    **SUCCESSFUL FUTURES - THE DONALDSON REPORT**  (Pages 15 - 150)

To consider a report by the Head of Education (copy enclosed) on the Independent Review of curriculum and assessment Arrangements in Wales by Professor Graham Donaldson.

**9.35 a.m. – 10.10 a.m.**

**6**    **CORPORATE RISK REGISTER REVIEW - APRIL 2015**  (Pages 151 - 174)

To consider a report by the Strategic Planning Manager (copy enclosed) which details the April 2015 formal revision to the Corporate Risk Register.

**10.10 a.m. – 10.45 a.m.**

**Comfort Break**

**7**    **LOCAL AUTHORITY SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14**
(Pages 175 - 266)

To consider a report by the Strategic Planning Officer (copy enclosed) which detailed the Local Authority Service Performance Report 2013/2014.

**10.55 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.**

**8**    **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**  (Pages 267 - 290)

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (copy enclosed) seeking a review of the committee's forward work programme and updating members on relevant issues.

**11.30 a.m. – 11.40 a.m.**

**9**    **FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

To receive any updates from Committee representatives on various Council Boards and Groups

**11.40 a.m. – 11.50 a.m.**

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Councillors**

Councillor David Simmons (Chair)          Councillor Arwel Roberts (Vice-Chair)

Meirick Davies                                        Peter Owen
Richard Davies                                       Dewi Owens
Colin Hughes                                          Gareth Sandilands
Geraint Lloyd-Williams

**Voting Co-opted Members for Education (Agenda Item No. 5 only)**

Gill Greenland                          Dr. D. Marjoram
Debra Houghton                          Gareth Williams


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**PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 26 February 2015 at 9.30 am.

**PRESENT**

Councillors Meirick Davies, Richard Davies, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Peter Owen, Dewi Owens and Gareth Sandilands.

Co-opted Members: - G. Greenland, D. Houghton and Dr D. Marjoram.

Lead Member attendance requested by the Committee:- Councillors J. Thompson-Hill and E.W. Williams.

Observers: Councillor H. Ll. Jones.

**ALSO PRESENT**

Corporate Director: Economic and Community Ambition (RM), Director of Social Services (NS), Head of Internal Audit (IB), Head of Customers and Education Support (JW), Head of Education (KE), Strategic Planning Team Manager (LG), Lead Officer: Libraries, Arts and Young People (RE), Property Manager (DL), Valuation and Estates Surveyor (MJ), Scrutiny Co-ordinator (RE) and Administrative Officer (CIW).

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the Committee elected Councillor R.J. Davies as Chair for the meeting.

**1      APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colin Hughes, Hugh Irving, Arwel Roberts, David Simmons and Gareth Williams.

**2      DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No Members declared any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at the meeting.

**3      URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

No items were raised which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

**4      MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 15th January, 2015 were submitted.

**Matters arising**:-

4. Minutes of Last Meeting – In response to a question from Councillor G. Sandilands, it was confirmed that the Task and Finish Group would present a report on the exit strategy/alternative provision for the CCTV and Out of Hours Service to the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee in early summer, 2015.

5. Verified External Examinations and Teacher Assessments – Dr D Marjoram asked that the concerns raised by the education co-opted members on the availability of opportunities for co-opted members to effectively scrutinise Denbighshire's Service Level Agreement with GwE, which they had raised at the previous meeting be reflected in the Minutes.

The Head of Education (HE) offered to convene a meeting with Co-opted Members to discuss education related matters in the near future. She also advised that the proposed letter referred to in point (ii) of the resolution had not as yet been sent to the Head of Education at Welsh Government due to other developments on the education front, including the recent publication of Professor Donaldson's report, Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales. It may be more appropriate to incorporate the points on reporting the achievements and educational attainment of pupils in special schools into the Council and GwE's joint response to the WG consultation on the Professor Donaldson report.

The Lead Member for Education suggested that it may be worthwhile for a letter to be sent to all LEA governors to seek their views on the effectiveness of GwE support to their schools and asking them to let Education Department officers know if there were any shortcomings with the support being delivered.

The WG was currently consulting on changes to the teacher assessment system with a view to improving the quality and reliability of the data produced.

It was also agreed that GwE should be invited to attend the Committee's September, 2015 and January, 2016 meetings to discuss the impact of their work with schools in Denbighshire, the sustainability of further continual improvement, the teacher assessment and the provisional and verified examination results.

*RESOLVED* – *that, subject to the above, the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.*

## 5    ESTYN ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATION 2

A copy of a report by the Head of Education (HE), which provided an update on the progress made in response to the recommendations made by Estyn following the 2012 inspection, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The main findings of the Estyn Report showed that the Local Authority achieved 'Good' for the three key questions, with the exception of 'Leadership', which had been judged to be 'Excellent'. In order to improve further Estyn had made recommendations and details had been encompassed in the report.

Officers advised that there was now a framework and structure in place to try and address recommendation 2.  An extensive piece of work had been undertaken in an attempt to map the groups and activities available to children and young people in the County.  Work would continue until at least the end of the current calendar year to populate the database with information on all groups known to the Council, estimated to be around 1000 groups.  It was emphasised that the exercise was more complex and robust than just listing known groups, it also included meeting up with the groups to better understand their needs and ensure they were aware of matters such as their safeguarding responsibilities.

It was emphasised that work was still underway with respect to ensuring a consistent database of clubs for all areas e.g. sports clubs etc.  However, clubs or organisations were not under any obligation to engage with the process.  An on-line or telephone survey of the groups would not be appropriate for this exercise, as it was a two-way contributory process which benefitted both parties.  With respect to the inclusion of organisations for children and young people with disabilities in the exercise, officers advised that these were covered either as groups specially designated for disabled people or as groups which welcomed disabled and able-bodied members.  Denbighshire's Well-being Plan 'Supporting Independence and Resilience' underpinned the County's vision for ensuring services and activities were available and accessible to everyone across the county.  Whilst other organisations held quite extensive databases on services available in the community they were reluctant to share the information with the Council on Data Protection Grounds.

In response to a suggestion from members, officers undertook to discuss with the youth workers whether it would be feasible to offer publicity to clubs and societies in exchange for their co-operation with the process for mapping the services available in the community.

The Lead Member for Education suggested that it may be worthwhile to take a report similar to the one presented to the Committee to the Member Area Groups (MAGs) as they, in their capacity as the eyes and ears of the communities, would know of any other groups not yet listed on the database or contacted by officers.

Members and the Head of Education agreed that the vagueness of the Estyn recommendation had made it very difficult for the Council to know exactly what was required of it in order to satisfy itself that the recommendation had been fully complied with.  Nevertheless, officers were satisfied that they had an effective, well articulated process in place to establish the majority of services available to children and young people in the County.  They were satisfied that when Estyn next inspected the Authority they could effectively demonstrate to them that Recommendation 2 had now been met.  Measuring the impact of these services to the Authority and its partners and determining their value for money in delivering improved outcomes for children and young people over a long period of time would be far more difficult.  It was therefore suggested that the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) should discuss the most appropriate way to scrutinise this aspect.  Following a detailed discussion it was:-

*RESOLVED* – that:-

*(a) based on the information provided and the above observations, the Committee concludes that the Local Education Authority has met Estyn's recommendations; and*

*(b) the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group determines the most appropriate way to monitor the impact and value for money of services available to children and young people within their communities in delivering improved outcomes for them, for the Authority and its partners.*

## 6    LONG TERM STRATEGY FOR THE AGRICULTURAL ESTATE

A copy of a report by the Valuation and Estates Manager (VEM), which provided information on the proposed strategy for the Agricultural Estate (AE) from 2015 onwards, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Lead Member for Finance and Assets introduced the report and draft long term strategy for County's Agricultural Estate. He advised that the Agricultural Estate Working Group, on which each Member Area Group (MAG) was represented, had drawn up a future strategy for the estate which would remove onerous maintenance and management liabilities and ensure greater efficiency of Council resources whilst mitigating the impact of cuts in corporate areas. He explained that, if the strategy was approved and adopted, there would be a managed disposal of agricultural holdings, with sitting tenants being given the first option to purchase their entire holding or part of it (where appropriate). If they opted initially to buy part of it, the remainder of it would be rented to them for a set period of time under a short-term tenancy agreement on the understanding that they would be expected to buy the remainder of the land at the end of the short-term tenancy, or otherwise relinquish it. Any holdings or land relinquished would be sold on the open market to realise a capital receipt. All disposals would be as agricultural holdings, with appropriate covenants and overage agreements being applied to the sales.

In response to Members' questions officers confirmed that overage agreements could legally be applied to the sale of agricultural holdings and land for specific periods of time. Any holdings which became vacant would be disposed of on the open market under powers delegated to officers/Lead Member/Cabinet dependent upon the estimated value of the holding. The Lead Member for Finance and Assets referred to discussions underway with a local college with respect to facilitating a process to enable interested new entrants to the industry to gain experience of a practical nature through assistance provided by the Council. These discussions were currently at the negotiation stage, no agreement had yet been reached. The Lead Member for Education suggested that it would be worthwhile to approach other organisations where new entrants into the industry were given an opportunity to run a farm for a year to gain valuable practical and managerial experience.

In response to members' questions the Lead Member and officers confirmed that:
• covenant and overage agreements could be applied for a specific period of time;
• for 'market rents' to be charged the dwellings, farm buildings, boundaries and land etc. had to be in 'market condition';

- the majority of the Council owned holdings were outside any designated LDP sites and therefore could not benefit from LDP land value;
- a lot of the recent investment on the Estate had been financed either via Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) grant funding or by the tenants themselves;
- the last new fresh re- letting on the estate took place approximately 10 years ago;
- private estates could benefit from tax advantages for re-investment, these were not available to public estates;
- the Council had written to tenants outlining the contents of the proposed strategy and to date 13 tenants had expressed an interest in purchasing their holdings or part of their holdings;
- it was anticipated that the Strategy would be a long-term one due to the terms of current tenancies, some tenancies were due to expire next year, but it would probably take another 10 to 15 years to deliver the entire strategy as some tenants had longer term tenancies;
- the length of tenancies could not be renegotiated without valid legal reasons;
- all undertakings made under the 2010 Agricultural Estate Strategy would be honoured

Councillor Eryl Williams referred to a Council owned holding which had been bequeathed to the Council under a covenant that it be let to a new entrant into the farming industry.  The local Community Council had long held concerns that the County Council would attempt to dispose of this holding as part of a future strategy. He requested that it be placed on record that if the County Council decided to dispose of this holding the Community Council had indicated that it would instigate a legal challenge to that decision on the basis of the covenant in the original bequest.

Following an in-depth discussion the Committee by a majority vote:

***Resolved*** *- to recommend to Cabinet that:-*

*(a)  that it approves and adopts the future strategy for the Agricultural Estate; and*
*(b) the Committee noted that covenants(s) relating to the above mentioned holding, and any other Estate holdings  would be researched and clarified prior to the disposal of the holding(s).*

7    **YOUR VOICE COMPLAINTS REPORT - QUARTER 3 2014/15**

A copy of a report by the Head of Customers and Education Support (HCES), which provided an overview of the feedback received via Denbighshire County Council's customer feedback policy 'Your Voice' and via the statutory social services procedure during Q4 2013/14, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The report provided an overview of compliments, suggestions and complaints received by Denbighshire County Council under the Council's customer feedback policy 'Your Voice' during Q3 2014/15, Appendix 1.  The report contained specific reference to the eleven stage 1 complaints which had exceeded the timescales during Q2, Appendix 2.  Headlines for Q3 had been incorporated in Appendix 1.

Members acknowledged that whilst performance in dealing with complaints had slipped slightly and was below target, this was mainly because of the small number of complaints received. Compared to the number of service-users using the services the number of complaints received were low, however all had to be dealt with in accordance with the complaints policy and within the set timescale.

The Head of Service drew Members' attention to the number of compliments received. Looking forward to the next reporting year it would be important to remember that budget cuts should not be used as an excuse for complaints against services. The approved cuts were managed. Therefore they should not generate additional complaints if the impact of the cuts, including the public's expectations, was appropriately managed. At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee:-

*RESOLVED – that the Committee receives the report and emphasises the need to work across the Authority to ensure that the corporate target of 95% was met at all times.*

8      **COUNCILLOR ENQUIRIES**

A copy of a report by the Head of Customers and Education Support (HCES), which provided information on requests for service made by individual Members via the CRM system, specifically focusing on the action and response of the service involved, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The HCES introduced the report and advised Members that following detailed analysis of the performance of services in dealing with service requests made by three County Councillors over a 10 month period the data suggested that there did not seem to be an extensive problem relating to late responses. Nevertheless there were a number of requests which had not been responded to within the expected timescale.

The HCES explained the difference between a response within the timescale and a satisfactory resolution to the problem. In some cases, particularly a problem which required a large amount of capital investment to resolve it, the enquiry could be classed as closed once the message had been relayed, but the problem itself would not have been resolved. Members were concerned that officers often telephoned them responding to a query, but rarely followed up the call with a detailed written explanation. At times the verbal response received may be incomplete or incorrect. This created problems for councillors when they then conveyed the response to a third party i.e. a resident or town/community council.

Members were advised by the HCES that, if they felt that the response received was incomplete or inaccurate, they should contact either the Head of Service or her to follow it up to ensure that they received a full response in the format of their choice e.g. telephone call, letter or e-mail.

The HCES advised that the Council was in the process of procuring a new fully automated CRM system. The new system would initially be rolled out to Highways, followed by the Education Department. As Head of Service she was keen to get

Members involved with the system's development to ensure that the information it provided met their needs and assisted them with their work.

*RESOLVED - subject to the above observations to receive the report and that officers should respond to individual members as per their preferred method of communication.*

9    **UPDATE ON CHALLENGES HIGHLIGHTED IN THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013-14**

A copy of a report by the Principal Manager:  Business Support, which provided an update on the challenges identified in the Director of Social Services Annual Performance Report for 2013/14 had been circulated prior to the meeting.  The report was presented to Members by the Director of Social Services and detailed the progress made to date in addressing areas highlighted in the 2013/14 Annual Report which required focussed attention to improve performance, or to address new pressures which had been identified during the course of the current year. Whilst performance was improving in the majority of the areas earmarked in last year's report, there was still room for improvement.

The reasons for below target performance in areas such as the number of statutory visits to looked after children and the percentage of looked after children who had experienced one or more changes of schools were well documented.  Bare statistics did not present the full picture, which was far more positive as it better met the children's needs than the need for the Authority to achieve targets.  Social care was a very complex area, as individuals' needs and their human rights had to be respected.  For example, it would not be possible to achieve a 100% assessment rate for all carers as not everyone classed themselves as a 'carer' despite undertaking the role of a 'carer' e.g. spouse or partner, parent or child.  In such cases individual choice or preferences had to be respected.  The Social Services Department was working closely with the Education Department and schools to support children identified as undertaking a 'carer' role at home.  It was also important to understand that the Council did not only support carers as individuals but also the whole community aspect of the carer's role.

It was emphasised that whilst the WG was extremely keen to promote the use of Direct Payments and Individual Service Funds they were very time consuming, complex and bureaucratic to administer.  Some authorities in England had opted out of providing these options, there was no indication that opting out would become a choice in Wales.  Officers were continually working with families and individuals to promote them, however it was important to understand that direct payments or individual service funds did not suit every individual.

The Supreme Court's Judgement of March, 2014 with respect to deprivation of liberty was causing immense pressure on the Social Services Department and its budget, with staff having to be trained to deal with the large increase in the number of deprivation of liberty applications.  To mitigate any risk, which had been escalated to a level of high risk for the Authority and consequently included on the Corporate Risk Register, an exercise had been undertaken to assess the potential number of applications which may be received.  The findings of this exercise had

resulted in 10 extra practitioners being trained to carry out assessments. This of course placed added pressures on constrained budgets and resources. WG guidance on deprivation of liberty assessments was still awaited, in the meantime the Council was working to the letter of the law when undertaking the assessments.

The Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru (ADSS) and the regulators Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) were working with the WG to try and plug this gap as soon as possible. However, the matter had been further complicated recently through a legal challenge being been issued to the Supreme Court's ruling in England. It was therefore unlikely that any guidance would be published prior to the legal challenge being determined. In response to members' concerns about the risks faced by the Authority as a consequence of the ruling, the Head of Internal Audit advised that as internal auditors his team was looking at this risk as part of the overall risk relating to Corporate Safeguarding. Members were also advised that a further progress report on all the areas highlighted in the current report would be included as part of the Director of Social Services Annual Performance Report for 2014/15, which was scheduled for presentation to the Committee at its June 2015 meeting.

Following a detailed discussion it was:-

**RESOLVED** – *subject to the above observations, to receive the report and note the progress made to date in addressing the challenges highlighted in the Director of Social Services Annual Performance Report 2013/14.*

## 10   SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

A copy of a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (SC), which requested the Committee to review and agree its Forward Work Programme and provided an update on relevant issues, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

A copy of the 'Member's proposal form' had been included in Appendix 2. It was confirmed that in future no items would be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by the Committee or the SCVCG. The SC explained that assistance in completing forms would be available if required. The Cabinet Forward Work Programme had been included as Appendix 3, and a table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising on progress with their implementation, had been attached at Appendix 4.

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme for future meetings, Appendix 1, and the following amendments and additions were agreed:-

16th April, 2015:-

-        It was explained by the SC that confirmation was awaited on whether the report on the Corporate Risk Register would need to be rescheduled for a future date.

- The SC referred to the importance of the link circulated to Members in relation to Welsh Government's Local Authority Services Performance Report 2013/14. Members agreed that this report be included in the Committee's Forward Work Programme for consideration on the 16th April, 2015.

24th September, 2015:-

- The SC explained that the SCVCG had concurred with the views of the Committee that the three education items referred to the SCVCG for consideration be included in the Committee's Forward Work Programme for its meeting on the 24th September, 2015. The SC confirmed that GwE would be invited to that meeting and the meeting in January 2016.

The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) had met on the on the 19th February, 2015. The SC explained that one of the items considered at the meeting had been the Welsh Government's recent White Paper Devolution, Democracy and Delivery – Reforming Local Government: Power: Power to Local People. Chapter 8 of the White Paper, 'Strengthening the Role of Review', set out the WG's proposals for scrutiny. A brief summary of the proceedings was provided by the SC.

The SCVCG had also discussed the future frequency of reports to Performance Scrutiny Committee on the Corporate Plan, and decided that they would remain as twice yearly reports to the Committee, supplemented by the other quarters' reports as information reports.

The Annual Report on the Scrutiny Committees' activities during the year would be presented to the Annual Council meeting in May. It had been agreed to undertake an evaluation exercise of Scrutiny and a questionnaire had been drafted for circulation to scrutiny members, and to a wider group including all Councillors and members of SLT.

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the above amendments and agreements, the Work Programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.*

## 11    FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Councillor R.J. Davies provided details of the following main issues considered at the Human Resources Department's Service Challenge:-

- HR current displayed a projected underspend of £14.5k from January, 2015, and had taken a lead in achieving a number of corporate savings.
- The Service compared well against the family group of local authorities from England and Wales.
- 2013/14 benchmarking had indicated Denbighshire as having relatively high costs running costs categories.
- Internal audit had completed a significant amount of assurance work relating to the completion of the People's Strategy HR Improvement Plan.

- The recent Internal Audit Report had suggested improvement in a number of areas.
- Denbighshire's employee age profile indicated that the Authority had fewer than average employees under the age of 40. It also had similar proportion of employees from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities.
- The number of disciplinary actions being similar to other Local Authorities.

Councillor G.Ll. Williams informed the Committee that the Communication, Marketing and Leisure Service would be relocating to Caledfryn, Denbigh. He also explained that KPMG would be visiting Communication, Marketing and Leisure Service to ascertain and view how the service model operated without reducing services in the current economic climate.

Councillor D. Owens had attended a meeting of the Schools Standard Monitoring Group (SSMG) on the 24th February, 2015. Councillor Owens acknowledged that there were problems in some schools, which he felt were being addressed by Denbighshire, but expressed concern regarding the approach adopted by officers from GwE with regard to the way in which they viewed the performance of schools which differed from that of officers of the Authority. In response to a request from Councillor Owens, the Scrutiny Coordinator confirmed that representatives from GwE would be attending meetings in September or October, 2015 and January, 2016.

*RESOLVED* – *that the reports be received and the contents noted.*

Meeting ended at 12.50 p.m.

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|---|---|
| **Report to:** | **Performance Scrutiny Committee** |
| **Date of Meeting:** | **16th April 2015** |
| **Lead Member / Officer:** | **Lead Member for Education/Head of Education** |
| **Report Author:** | **Head of Education** |
| **Title:** | **Successful Futures:  Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales (the Prof Donaldson Report)** |

## 1.     What is the report about?

The Independent Review of curriculum and assessment Arrangements in Wales by Professor Graham Donaldson.

## 2.     What is the reason for making this report?

To consider the report's implications for education and education related services in Denbighshire.

## 3.     What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee:

3.1.    considers the information provided regarding the recommendations of the report by Professor Donaldson

3.2     determines whether further monitoring of the progress of the Donaldson review and implementation of recommendations is required

and

3.3     considers whether representations to the Welsh Government in response to the report is required to influence the future education agenda for Wales

## 4.     Report details.

4.1     In March 2014, The Minister for Education commissioned Professor Graham Donaldson to conduct a review of Curriculum and Assessment arrangements in Wales from foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. (Please refer to Appendix 1 – Successful Futures, Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales).

4.2 Professor Donaldson's report identifies the shortcomings of current curriculum arrangements and makes a series of recommendations to address these and improve how children in are taught and assessed. The proposals are 'radical and wide-ranging'. They are also 'interrelated and should be seen as an integrated set and not separately'. The main areas of focus are:

- Curriculum.
- Assessment/Reporting.
- Welsh Language.
- Leadership and Professional Learning.
- Accountability.
- Legislation.

The recommendations are listed in Appendix 2.

4.3 If the recommendations of the report are fully implemented the curriculum offer to children and young people, methods of assessment, reporting and recording would be significantly different. The most significant difference is that the curriculum offer would be organised into six "areas of learning and experience": expressive arts; health and wellbeing; humanities; languages, literacy and communication; maths and numeracy; and science and technology. In addition, the introduction of three "cross-curriculum responsibilities" – literacy, numeracy and digital competence – would be expected of all teachers. This would be inclusive of all settings.

4.4 The implementation of outcomes of this review would take place over a longer period of time. There would be implications for teacher training and for maintaining the learning offer during a period of transition.

## 5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

This report contributes to the Corporate Priority of improving performance in education and the quality of our school buildings.

## 6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

*N/A*

## 7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

The requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment would be reassessed at the point when the recommendations from this review were at the stage of implementation.

## 8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

*N/A*

9.      **Chief Finance Officer Statement**

*N/A*

10.     **What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

*N/A*

11.     **Power to make the Decision**

Articles 6.3.2(b) and (c) of the Council's Constitution


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# Successful Futures

Independent Review of Curriculum
and Assessment Arrangements in Wales

Professor Graham Donaldson CB
February 2015

# Letter to the Minister for Education and Skills

## 13 January 2015

**Dear Minister**

In March 2014 you asked me to conduct a fundamental Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. I am pleased to present the report arising from that Review for your consideration.

I must again express my appreciation for the very positive and constructive response there has been to the Review from across Wales. The Review Team has visited schools across the country and seen at first hand many examples of excellent work. We have heard the views of headteachers, teachers, children and young people and parents and carers, and have engaged more widely with a very broad spectrum of Welsh experience and opinion. The excellent response to my call for evidence, including over 300 responses from children and young people, has made an important contribution to my thinking. I have also drawn on leading international experience and research in determining recommendations for Wales. Taken as a whole, this very strong body of evidence provides a secure foundation for my conclusions and recommendations.

My proposals are radical and wide-ranging. They are interrelated and should be seen as an integrated set and not separately. They build on the many existing strengths of Welsh education and aim to provide both a vision for the future and a means of realising that vision that is coherent and manageable. I have, in line with my remit, offered proposals for implementation that build from experience of major curriculum reforms in Wales and internationally. Securing the sustained and active participation of educational practitioners and the wider community will be central to that process.

The title of the report, *Successful Futures*, signals the vital importance of schools to the future success and well-being of every child and young person in Wales and to the country as a whole. I am confident that the proposals in this report will provide you and the wider education community with the means to further strengthen that contribution.

Yours sincerely

**Professor Graham Donaldson CB**

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# Acknowledgements

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# Chapter 1: Overview

In commissioning this Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements, the Welsh Government recognised how important it is that each child and young person in Wales should be able to benefit from curriculum and assessment arrangements that will best meet their present needs and equip them for their future lives. Our children and young people only have a relatively short time at school. We must use that time judiciously and productively to help each one of them to grow as a capable, healthy, well-rounded individual who can thrive in the face of unknown future challenges.

Wales is not unusual in its desire to ensure that all its children and young people benefit from relevant education of the highest quality. Internationally, there has been an increasing trend for countries to see a two-way relationship between the quality of their education systems and the wider health of their society and economy. As part of this trend, the nature of the school curriculum has, in many countries, become a strongly contested area of national policy. What our children and young people learn during their time at school has never been more important yet, at the same time, the task of determining what that learning should be has never been more challenging.

This Review has provided the opportunity to revisit and reassert the fundamental purposes of education for the children and young people of Wales and to recommend curriculum and assessment arrangements that can best fulfil those purposes.

## What do we mean by the 'curriculum'?

The curriculum has often taken the form of a framework of subjects to be taught over a defined period such as particular stages of primary or secondary education. That framework might be very general or more specific and might include, for example, time allocations for each subject together with descriptions of what content should be covered at different stages. Essentially, this approach to the curriculum involves defining the inputs that all children, or particular groups of children, should experience and is reflected in the approach adopted in many countries, including Wales, in the latter part of the last century. It is also generally based on a belief that subject knowledge has stood the test of time and remains the best path to a sound and relevant education.

An alternative approach, increasingly common internationally, focuses more directly on the expected outcomes of learning. Its proponents argue that learning is shaped by much more than individual subjects and syllabuses, and that fulfillment of the purposes of the curriculum requires approaches which are more directly relevant to emerging personal, social and economic needs. In this approach, the curriculum is often framed in terms of the key skills, capacities or competences that will be developed in children and young people.

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A 'subject against skill/competence' debate creates unhelpful polarisation. The curriculum, learning and teaching need to enthuse children and young people about learning in ways that include both the vital contribution of discipline-based learning and the knowledge, skills and dispositions that will help them to meet the needs of today and the challenges of tomorrow.

In addition, learning is crucially affected by how progress and outcomes are assessed and how the results of such assessments are used. Assessment is a vital and integral part of learning and teaching and so needs to be fundamentally linked to the curriculum. Where assessment becomes dominated by accountability processes, as can happen, the consequences for children and young people's learning can be damaging.

The definition of curriculum used in this Review takes account of all of these factors.

>>> **Recommendation**

1. **The school curriculum in Wales should be defined as including all of the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of agreed purposes of education.**

## What are the main influences on the curriculum?

The content of the school curriculum in any country is subject to many competing influences. On the one hand, assumptions and practices about what the fundamentals of good education should be can become so established over time that they form an almost unchallengeable bedrock of belief. Society – and especially parents and carers – often expects to recognise what children are doing at school in terms of their own past experiences. They may worry that any differences represent experiments that may risk children's futures. The structure of the teaching profession (with generalist primary teachers and specialist subject teachers in secondary schools, for example) also influences how the curriculum, and the school system itself, is organised. The infrastructures that emerge to support education are inevitably geared towards ensuring that current expectations are met, and so may perpetuate those expectations. A number of powerful tendencies can therefore inhibit curriculum renewal. Such tendencies not only influence the curriculum but can also shape what people see as possible and desirable in curriculum reform.

On the other hand, the curriculum is continuously subject to pressures to change, and the specific form that the curriculum takes will change over time in response to circumstances. Some changes may occur in light of developments in educational theory, psychology and, more recently, neuroscience. More often, they are a response to developing social, political and economic circumstances and are given added impetus by international measures of performance. Such pressures can drive the curriculum in different directions, for example by adding

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fresh content and dimensions such as key skills as a response to the perceived needs of the moment. They can also lead to an unproductive concentration on those aspects where performance is measured and reported comparatively and publicly. These changes can then be carried forward, whether or not they remain relevant, as additions to the more 'fundamental' aspects of the curriculum.

External forces have become more acute in recent years, reflecting the impact on countries, societies and individuals of globalisation, technological innovation and long-term social trends. The demand for young people with improved levels of literacy, numeracy and wider skills, including critical thinking, creativity and problem solving, has fuelled an international trend towards curricula that give greater emphasis to the development of skills, alongside, or embedded in, a traditional subject or 'area of learning' approach. Changes in response to such pressures can even challenge hitherto accepted purposes of schooling itself as, for example, where economic pressures narrow what is taught to the reduction or even exclusion of the humanities or the arts. There is a constant tension between preserving and building on the foundations of the past and responding to the perceived needs and economic pressures of the moment.

The needs of employers and the workplace are also seen as vital if young people are to move smoothly and successfully into employment. In particular, concerns about the scientific, technological, engineering and mathematical (STEM) competences of the future workforce have influenced the relative priority given to these subjects. The pervasive impact of developments in technology vividly illustrates the way in which the context for the work of our schools is constantly evolving. Our children and young people already inhabit a digital



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world and their personal, social and educational lives are increasingly intertwined with technology in various, rapidly changing forms. Full participation in modern society and the workplace already demands increasingly high levels of digital competence and that process can only continue into a future that we cannot imagine. As Tyler Cowen puts it in his book *Average is Over*, 'It might be called the age of genius machines, and it will be the people that work with them that will rise…we (will have) produced two nations, a fantastically successful nation, working in the technologically dynamic sectors, and everyone else. Average is over'[1]. Children and young people need to learn how to be more than consumers of technology and to develop the knowledge and skills required to use that technology creatively as learners and future members of a technologically competent workforce.

A reluctance to let go of aspects in the curriculum that are of limited relevance while at the same time adding fresh expectations can place schools and teachers under increasing pressure. To try to help teachers and schools to cope, there can be a tendency to construct increasingly complicated design and planning tools that in turn can divert attention away from the needs of children and young people and the importance of high-quality teaching and learning in the classroom.

## How has the school curriculum in Wales developed?

The curriculum in Welsh schools, in common with other parts of the United Kingdom, has reflected the prevailing orthodoxy of the time, from the professionally driven, child-centred philosophy of 'Plowden' in 1967[2] to the centrally led, subject-centred rationale of the national curriculum in 1988. The decision in 1988 to define the school curriculum in statute represented a radical departure from previous practice in the United Kingdom and reflected concern about the educational experience of children and young people across the country at that time. The absence of a clear and common understanding of an acceptable curriculum was seen as having led to unacceptable inconsistency. There were also worries about the potential impact of 'fashionable' educational theories on children's learning.

The national curriculum sought to establish an entitlement for all children and young people in state schools to an education that would include exposure to nationally specified knowledge and skills. It would: establish common educational aims across Wales; facilitate mobility between stages and schools; deliver an entitlement to a broad and balanced education for all children and young people; secure efficiency in resource development, including teacher training; and allow the performance of schools to be assessed and compared. Although not all of these potential benefits were realised in practice, they

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[1]  Cowen, T (2013) *Average is Over: Powering America Beyond the Age of the Great Stagnation* Penguin Group

[2]  Central Advisory Council for England (1967) *Children and their Primary Schools* HMSO

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still represent valuable aims which need to be taken into account in any new curriculum and assessment arrangements.

The period since 1988 has been particularly pressurised as governments have responded to concerns about standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Expectations about what schools should be doing have grown inexorably while evidence about how to bring about improvement has remained elusive. There are important lessons to be learned from this experience.

The Welsh Government has consistently sought to respond to these pressures, as seen in curriculum changes in 2008, major reports and initiatives on school improvement, and the reform of qualifications that is currently under way. It also commissioned a series of 'Task and Finish' reports covering such issues as the place of the arts and culture, physical activity and sport, and ICT and computing in children and young people's learning, and the place of Welsh language and culture in the secondary curriculum. Most recently the publication of its improvement plan[3] and its commissioning of both this Review and Professor John Furlong's review into teacher education are further indications of the Welsh Government's determination to bring about improvement.

The principle of a common entitlement has been sustained in successive developments in education policy. These developments have included: the development of *Routes for Learning* (Welsh Government, 2006); the introduction of a Foundation Phase to replace the former Key Stage 1; the development of an inclusive statutory National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) in response to growing evidence of problems in these vital aspects of education; the development of a Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) at Key Stage 4 and beyond; and an increased emphasis on skills across the curriculum.

## The case for change

The case for change rests partly on concerns about perceived shortcomings in the present curriculum and assessment arrangements. Despite the series of reforms and initiatives introduced by the Welsh Government, there are a number of issues, both practical and fundamental, with the current curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales. Evidence from Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) surveys, the relative performance of children and young people in Wales in national qualifications, and evaluations in Estyn reports all demonstrate that levels of achievement are not as high as they could and should be. An Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report published in 2014[4] highlighted the continuing high proportion of young people in Welsh schools whose performance was low and concluded that current assessment and evaluation arrangements are unsatisfactory. Concerns

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[3]  Welsh Government (2014) *Qualified for life: An education improvement plan for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* Welsh Government

[4]  OECD (2014) *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective* OECD Paris

have been expressed about continuity in primary education and at points of transfer between stages. There is also a strong perception that personal, social and health education and the educational experience of young people at Key Stage 3 require radical improvement.

International surveys such as the OECD's PISA highlight differences in performance between countries leading to worries in some countries about loss of global competitiveness if their education systems are seen to be weak. The disappointing performance of Wales in successive PISA surveys has been and remains a significant driver for change.



A further significant challenge is that disadvantage in its many forms too often has a pernicious effect on the educational achievement and personal well-being of children and young people. It is essential that the curriculum is designed in ways that will engage the interest of all children and young people and enable them to achieve. A curriculum that promotes high expectations for all can help schools to defeat the circumstances that condemn so many to educational underachievement.

The high degree of prescription and detail in the national curriculum, allied to increasingly powerful accountability mechanisms, has tended to create a culture within which the creative role of the school has become diminished and the professional contribution of the workforce underdeveloped. The extent of legislative control and associated accountability mechanisms, seen as necessary at the time, have inhibited professionalism, agility and responsiveness in dealing with emerging issues, and have forced too-frequent political intervention in non-strategic matters. For many teachers and schools the key task has become to implement external expectations faithfully, with a consequent diminution of local creativity and responsiveness to the needs of children and young people. Partly as a consequence, much of the curriculum as experienced by children and young people has become detached from its avowed aims and too focused on the short-term. At its most extreme, the mission of primary schools can almost be reduced to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and of secondary schools to preparation for qualifications.

Existing shortcomings point to the need for improvements to current arrangements but the case for change is much more fundamental. The essential features of a curriculum devised in 1988 reflect a world that was yet to see the World Wide Web and the advances in technology and globalisation that have transformed the way we live and work. These changes have profound implications for what, and how, children and young people need to learn during the period of their statutory education.

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The curriculum, then, has become overloaded, complicated and, in parts, outdated. Assessment arrangements are not making the contribution they should to improving learning. The ability of schools and teachers to respond to rapidly changing needs is constrained. As the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) said in its recent proposals for education, 'Systemic change is needed to align the curriculum, examinations and accountability framework with the outcomes we are looking for'[5]. Together, the current national curriculum and assessment arrangements no longer meet the needs of the children and young people of Wales. The case for fundamental change is powerful.

## The task of the Review

The current Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements took place against this backdrop. In recognition of the potential pitfalls of overload, complexity, and redundancy in the curriculum described above, the Review was asked to stand back and to take a fundamental look at the ways in which today's schools can prepare young people for an exciting but uncertain future. The Review's terms of reference are available at www.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculuminwales/curriculum-for-wales/terms-of-reference/?lang=en.

To carry out its responsibilities, the Review has sought to identify clearly:

> the aspirations of the people of Wales for their schools

> the principles which should govern the design of the curriculum

> the purposes of the curriculum

> the way the curriculum can best be organised and described to meet those purposes and principles

> the implications for teaching and learning of proposals for change

> the role of assessment in both helping to achieve the purposes of the curriculum and in determining how far the purposes are being met

> the implications for teacher capacity, systems of accountability and other drivers of educational quality

> the ways in which the proposals arising from the Review might best be implemented, including the balance to be struck between national and local decision making.

The conclusions and recommendations of the Review are designed to provide a compelling case for a successful future for school education in Wales. The next chapter outlines how the Review formulated these recommendations through an extensive programme of engagement and evidence gathering and subsequent testing and refining of emerging proposals.

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[5]  CBI (2014) *Step Change – A New Approach for Schools in Wales* CBI

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# **Chapter 2:** The Review – Processes and Evidence

In undertaking this Review, our commitment from the outset was to involve as many people in Wales in the process as possible. Between March and December 2014, members of the Review Team undertook to meet a very broad range of stakeholders, visiting around 60 schools, including Welsh- and English-medium nursery, primary and secondary schools, special schools, pupil referral units, a young offenders' institution and work-based learning settings. We met not only with headteachers, managers and their staff but also with children and young people, and where possible their parents and carers. We met representatives of the further education sector and universities. Groups of practitioners from a range of schools across Wales also attended a number of seminars where we tested and developed thinking. These meetings provided a rich source of evidence that has had a profound effect on the thinking of the Review.

The Review also engaged on an individual basis with a wide range of representative organisations from across Wales who made very important contributions to our evidence from their different perspectives, including those of employers. These organisations are listed on the Review's website.

The Review undertook a national call for evidence, encouraging stakeholders from across Wales to submit their views and help shape the outcome of the Review. In order to generate debate and discussion, the questions included in the call for evidence were deliberately very broad and open-ended and included questions such as 'What are the three best things about education in Wales?'. We were delighted that we received over 700 responses to the call, of which over 300 were from children and young people themselves. In order to do justice to the diverse nature of the responses, we appointed WISERD to analyse the responses[6].

As well as undertaking its own research, the Review also had recourse to a wealth of other evidence within Wales, including Estyn reports, Welsh Government policy documents (in some cases with associated evaluation reports) and, importantly, the reports of a number of independent reviews commissioned by the Welsh Government including:

> the ICT Steering Group's report to the Welsh Government

> the Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4

> the final report of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, history and the story of Wales review group

> the report of the Schools and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group

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[6]   Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) (2015) *Successful Futures: Analysis of questionnaire responses – Final Report* Welsh Government

> the report on Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales

> the report *Culture and Poverty: Harnessing the power of the arts, culture and heritage to promote social justice in Wales*

> the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales.

## Principles of curriculum design

In moving from the evidence-gathering stage of the Review to the formulation of proposals for the curriculum and assessment, we developed a set of principles for curriculum design as follows.

**Principles of curriculum design – the curriculum should be:**

> **authentic**: rooted in Welsh values and culture and aligned with an agreed set of stated purposes

> **evidence-based**: drawing on the best of existing practice within Wales and from elsewhere, and on sound research

> **responsive**: relevant to the needs of today (individual, local and national) but also equipping all young people with the knowledge, skills and dispositions for future challenges as lifelong learners

> **inclusive**: easily understood by all, encompassing an entitlement to high-quality education for every child and young person and taking account of their views in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and those of parents, carers and wider society

> **ambitious**: embodying high expectations and setting no artificial limits on achievement and challenge for each individual child and young person

> **empowering**: developing competences which will allow young people to engage confidently with the challenges of their future lives

> **unified**: enabling continuity and flow with components which combine and build progressively

> **engaging**: encouraging enjoyment from learning and satisfaction in mastering challenging subject matter

> **based on subsidiarity**: commanding the confidence of all, while encouraging appropriate ownership and decision making by those closest to the teaching and learning process

> **manageable**: recognising the implications for and supported by appropriate assessment and accountability arrangements.

These principles have been used both to evaluate current practice and to guide and test the proposals for the future.

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## What does the evidence from Wales tell us?

A number of recurring themes emerge from all the evidence gathered from across Wales. It has been important to take these themes into account while developing the proposals.

The evidence from our discussions with stakeholders would suggest continuing support for the Foundation Phase, the LNF, *Routes for Learning*, the new WBQ at Key Stage 4 and beyond, and the introduction of wider skills across the curriculum. There is also a firm commitment to the Welsh language and bilingualism, to the principle of comprehensive, inclusive education, and to the inclusion of a Welsh dimension in the education of all children and young people. These positive views are reinforced by the responses to the call for evidence in which the most frequently mentioned 'best things' about education in Wales are reported as being 'the Foundation Phase, the Welsh language and bilingualism [particularly among younger respondents] and the focus on Welsh identity and the Curriculum Cymreig'[7].

Discussions with stakeholders suggest strongly that there is a real desire among the profession for schools and teachers to have more (but not complete) autonomy to make their own decisions within a national curriculum framework. Interestingly, in their responses to the call for evidence, the overwhelming majority of children and young people indicated that they 'do not think it matters if you study different things from your friends at school'[8].

For many teachers and schools, the key task has become to implement the prescribed external expectations for the curriculum and accountability faithfully, with a consequent diminution of both local creativity and responsiveness to the individual needs of children and young people. Perhaps unsurprisingly in the light of this, there would also appear to be significant support for a change in the way the curriculum is organised, with many favouring a shift away from a subject-based curriculum to an areas of learning approach or to the organising of learning around skills and/or themes. It was felt that this would help introduce a degree of continuity in primary education and at points of transfer between stages of education that was currently lacking.

A recurring concern of the children and young people who spoke to the Review Team was their perception that the current school curriculum was out of date in relation to digital technology. They talked about laboured teaching of software packages that they saw as being either simple to use intuitively or already out of date. Representatives of business were similarly extremely concerned that schools were out of touch with the emerging digital workplace. They saw the ability to use technology creatively for researching and problem solving as key competences that they wanted to see in prospective employees.

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[7] Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) (2015) *Successful Futures: Analysis of questionnaire responses – Final Report* Welsh Government

[8] ibid. WISERD (2015)

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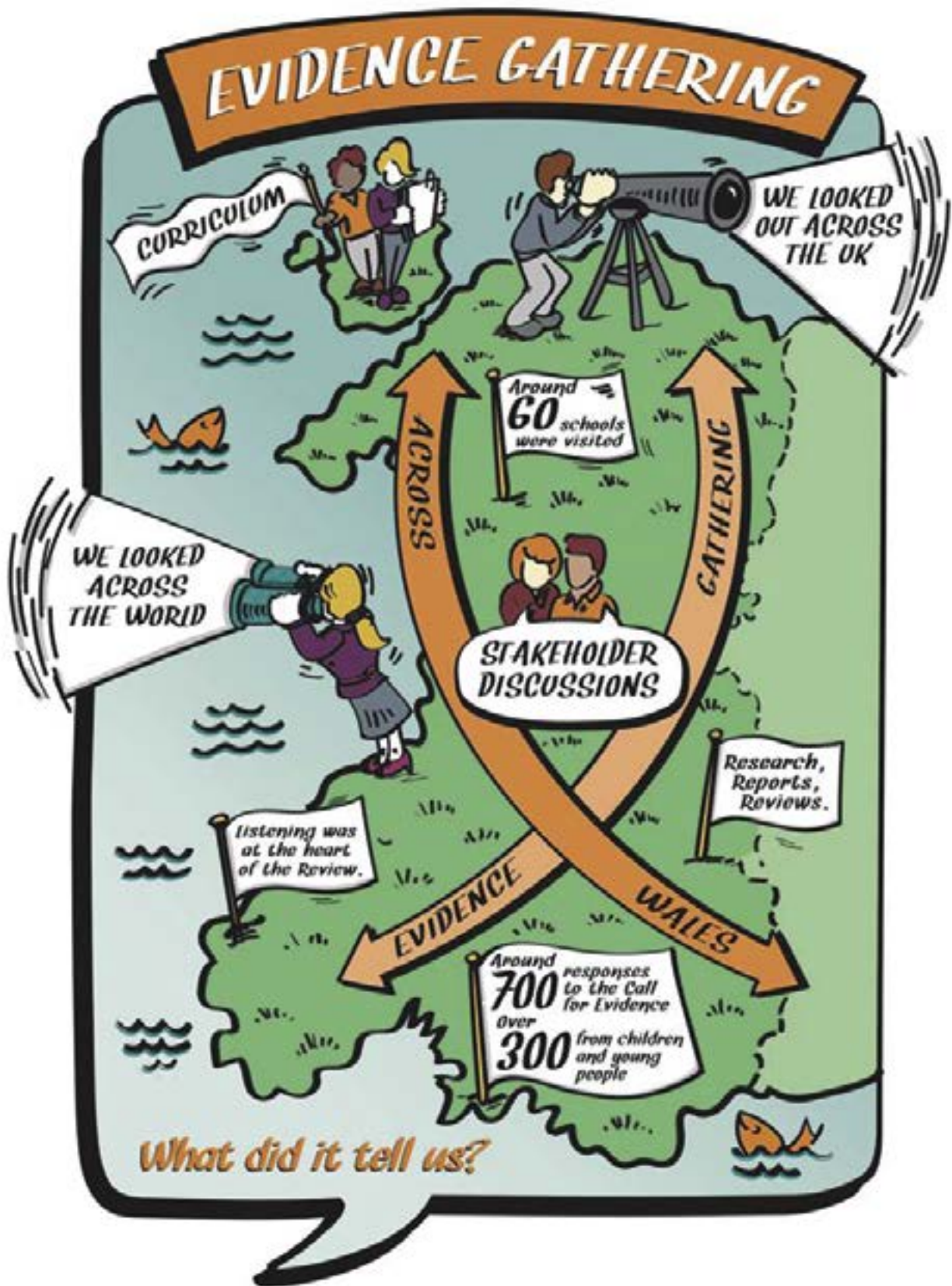
In addition children and young people in particular, but not exclusively, would like to see a greater focus on general social competences (life skills and personal confidence, personal and social education (PSE)), basic skills (i.e. literacy and numeracy), more vocational education and careers guidance. The WISERD report suggests that these views were also reflected in responses to the call for evidence. As their analysis states, stakeholders felt that '...schools should be doing more than simply imparting knowledge. While successful learning was a highly valued outcome of education by all stakeholders (including children and young people), so too were a range of other outcomes. General social competences, life skills and personal confidence were seen by all as important things to be gained from school'[9]. Children and young people want lessons to be more relevant and engaging, with more practical lessons, more fun, more interactivity, and more out-of-classroom activities. There is a sense that a more general enthusiasm for learning has been sacrificed in the race for qualifications.

The other key message which it is worth highlighting here is an overwhelming sense that the current approach to assessment, qualification and performance management needs to change. This was mentioned in almost one-third of responses to the call for evidence and was a recurring theme throughout our meetings with stakeholders.

Many of these findings are reflected in the recent OECD report, *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective* (2014). The report identifies four priority areas for Welsh Government to address, all of which are relevant, to a greater or lesser degree, to this Review.

❯ Ensuring that schools meet the learning needs of all their students.

❯ Building professional capital and collective responsibility throughout the system.

❯ Developing a coherent assessment and evaluation framework to promote improvement.

❯ Defining a long-term education strategy that builds on a select number of core priorities, is adequately designed and resourced and has appropriate governance and support structures.

## What does the wider evidence tell us?

The Review also drew on a range of wider United Kingdom and international evidence in the form of discussions, visits, research papers and policy documents, among other things. It is clear that there is no single, universal template for a 'good' curriculum – much depends on local and national conditions, values and culture. In other words a successful curriculum must be 'authentic'. While the international evidence cannot therefore provide us with a curriculum model, it does offer useful insights into the international landscape.

❯ International policy development is often heavily influenced by PISA and other international surveys.

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[9]    Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) (2015) *Successful Futures: Analysis of questionnaire responses – Final Report* Welsh Government

> A statutory national curriculum is commonly used to promote consistency and entitlement but the extent to which the detail is defined in statute varies widely.

> The principle of subsidiarity is common but not universal. There would appear to be a trend towards the specification of national goals and encouragement of greater local decision making, in recognition of the limitations of compliance-based approaches.

> Literacy and numeracy are universally acknowledged to be the essential foundations of education.

> While breadth and balance are widely valued, there is a trend towards developing a curriculum that is more than a specified range of subjects or courses.

> There are significant moves away from 'learning about' to 'learning to', with a growing skills focus and an emphasis on application and development of higher-order skills, particularly creativity (entrepreneurship) and digital literacy.

> Assessment is a recurring challenge, with issues around specification, validity, reliability and teacher competence.

> Mixed-mode assessment is another common feature, including the appropriate use of testing.

> There is increasing focus on the purpose and use of assessment, and in particular its critical role in relation to teaching and learning.

> There is evidence of a recognition of the need for system alignment, bringing improved synergies between curriculum, assessment and accountability arrangements.

> There is increasing recognition of the importance of building system and teacher capacity as integral to curriculum reform.



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## Key issues and challenges for the Review

Taken together, all of this evidence indicates that the existing curriculum arrangements in Wales have some very real strengths upon which we can build – not least the pedagogy underpinning the Foundation Phase and the commitment to Welsh language and culture. However, the need for change is also very clear if we are to develop a curriculum which supports and enables world-class teaching and learning in the twenty-first century. The evidence suggests that in developing the new curriculum a number of key issues and challenges must be addressed in relation to aims and purposes, structure, pedagogy and assessment. A futher recurrent theme is the need to establish an effective change strategy to take forward any recommendations arising from the Review. These themes are addressed in turn in the chapters which follow, together with the related evidence.

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# **Chapter 3:** Purposes of the Curriculum

This chapter explains why the Review proposes that there should be a straightforward, enduring statement of curriculum purposes for Wales. It analyses and discusses relevant findings, policies and priorities that should inform the development of those purposes and finally sets out the Review's four proposed purposes.

Statements of aims or purposes are the starting point for curriculum specifications in many countries. They typically relate to implications for the individual, for society and for the economy and set broad directions to guide subsequent decisions about structure and content.

In its recent review of school education in Wales[10], the OECD found that Wales lacked a convincing overall set of aims and purposes and recommended that the Welsh Government should 'develop a shared vision of the Welsh learner, reflecting the government's commitment to quality and equity'.

## **Why are clear and agreed statements of purposes important?**

Such statements would:

> mobilise the education community around a common mission

> promote broad ownership of education and make the curriculum open to wide debate beyond the professional community

> provide clarity about aspirations for the children and young people of Wales

> emphasise the importance of longer-term outcomes for children and young people beyond specified knowledge, skills and understanding that a school is expected to deliver

> provide a consistent point of reference for curriculum development, promoting coherence, progression and flow in learning intentions

> establish a firm basis for determining priorities as pressures on the curriculum continue to build

> guard against narrowing of the curriculum in response to short-term pressures

> act as a consistent guide for the discriminating selection of content, experiences and pedagogy

> provide the basis of necessary agreement among national and local government, schools and teachers about the desired overall direction, while allowing freedom to determine how the intentions will be achieved

> promote the basis for focus and consistency in teacher professional development

> provide a broad focus for accountability and improvement.

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[10]   OECD (2014) *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective* OECD Paris

It is worth noting that there can be pitfalls which can mean that broad aims or purposes may have a limited relationship to the curriculum framework itself. The Cambridge Primary Review cautions that '...attempts to define official aims for the education system as a whole have a poor track record...and, more often than not, have been added to policy to give it a cloak of consensus...'[11]. Aims can also be superseded by successive pragmatic decisions driven by political or logistical imperatives. In practice, then, the taught curriculum can become very different from the espoused curriculum. To avoid these pitfalls, statements of curriculum purpose need to be formulated carefully so that they have integrity, are clear and direct and become central to subsequent engagement and development; in that way they can shape the curriculum and suffuse practice. Common understanding of **why** we are doing what we are doing is a powerful starting point from which to determine **what** it is we need to do and **how** we are going to do it.

## What are the current aims of the curriculum?

The Education Act 2002 expresses aims in the form of general requirements as follows.

'The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly based curriculum which —

(a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and

(b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.'

Although such requirements provide a very worthwhile but general guide to the aims of the curriculum, they are not expressed in a form that is likely to have a direct impact on teaching and learning.

## How are curriculum purposes expressed elsewhere?

The NFER and Arad Research *A Rapid Evidence Assessment on the Impact of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements within High Performing Countries*[12] notes that 'Although expressed differently in the policy documents of each of the high performing countries, there is a common, general aim to develop in their learners the necessary attitudes, values, skills and knowledge they need in order to achieve success and fulfilment as engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit'.

There is a discernable shift from curriculum specifications based upon traditional subject disciplines towards the framing of purposes in terms of key competences, key skills, life skills, capabilities or capacities, for example in guidance from the European Union (EU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and OECD. The agreement of the EU member states to endorse eight key competences encompassing citizenship, society, employment and personal effectiveness[13] has influenced changes to curriculum specifications in countries across Europe.

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[11] Cambridge Primary Review (2010) *Children, their World, their Education: Final Report and Recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review* Routledge

[12] NFER and Arad Research (2013) *A Rapid Evidence Assessment on the Impact of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements within High Performing Countries* Welsh Government

[13] European Commission (2011) *Assessment of Key Competences: Policy Handbook* European Commission Brussels

❯ The United States and Australia have developed curriculum frameworks that are based on key skills/key competences.

❯ In New Zealand, children and young people develop competency in thinking, using language, symbols and text, managing self, relating to others and participating and contributing.

❯ In Scotland, the curriculum aims to develop four capacities in young Scots: to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

❯ Curriculum statements generally take account of different aspects of a young person's development: as a well-rounded, personally effective individual and team member; as an ethical citizen and a member of an increasingly diverse society; as a member of the workforce and a creative contributor to the nation's economy; as a recipient of and contributor to national and international culture; and as a flexible, lifelong learner.

❯ There is a trend towards emphasising the ability to apply learning across subjects and a disposition to do so effectively.

The proposals in this Review take account of these trends and are designed to establish a firm and continuing relationship between defined purposes and learning and teaching processes.

## ❯❯❯ Recommendation

2. **The school curriculum should be designed to help all children and young people to develop in relation to clear and agreed purposes. The purposes should be constructed so that they can directly influence decisions about curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.**



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## Developing distinctive purposes of the curriculum for Wales

The views gathered during the Review's extensive discussions with school leaders, teachers and other stakeholders help to begin to shape purposes for the curriculum in Wales. For example, responses to the question in the call for evidence 'What are the three best things about education in Wales?'[14] highlighted support for:

> the principles enshrined in the UNCRC

> an inclusive approach to education, including the commitment to the comprehensive school system

> the Welsh language and culture

> the community and civic role of schools in Wales' society

> the health and well-being of our children and young people.

The conclusions of the important set of reports of 'Task and Finish' groups commissioned by the Welsh Government also provide clear messages about their desired curriculum purposes. In particular:

> the recommendation in the ICT Steering Group's report to the Welsh Government that digital literacy, or digital competence, is as important in the twenty-first century as literacy and numeracy

> the independent Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4 which argues that 'The future of Welsh and Welsh culture is wholly dependent on transmitting the language to our young people'

> the final report of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, history and the story of Wales review group which states that 'The next national curriculum for Wales should take as its starting point the ideas and ideals embodied in the current Cwricwlwm Cymreig and build upon these as the foundation of the next National Curriculum for Wales rather than as an addition to it. It should have a Welsh dimension and an international perspective'

> the report of the Schools and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group which includes the recommendation that the Welsh Government should give PE the status of a 'core' subject in order to address '...the pivotal and deep-seated concerns around levels of physical activity and the health of our young people in Wales'

> the Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales Review's recommendations which made the case that the Welsh Government should 'enhance the current curriculum to include creativity, alongside numeracy and literacy as a core theme across all the subject disciplines and in both primary and secondary education; further, the Welsh Government should consider an arts rich education to be core to the whole school experience of all pupils'

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[14]   Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) (2015) *Successful Futures: Analysis of questionnaire responses – Final Report* Welsh Government

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> the recognition in the independent report *Culture and Poverty: Harnessing the power of the arts, culture and heritage to promote social justice in Wales* (Welsh Government, 2014) on the impact the arts and culture can have in promoting social justice in Wales.

Contributors to the call for evidence also offered a range of views in relation to the purposes of the curriculum. The researchers decided to group these under five headings, as follows.

> Successful learners: responses referring to the cognitive outcomes of education and attitudes towards learning and knowledge.

> Confident individuals: responses referring to aspects of personal efficacy and self-assurance.

> Responsible citizens: responses relating to the need for education to instil a sense of social responsibility.

> Competent adults: responses covering 'life-skills'.

> Healthy minds and bodies: responses relating to the need for schools to foster mental and physical well-being.

Children and young people's responses emphasised the social significance of going to school. The single words mentioned most frequently were 'knowledge' and 'friendship'. There was also frequent reference to various skills, including working with others, communication and independence, as well as some reference to specific subjects including Welsh, ICT, mathematics and physical education (PE).



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Many of these themes are reflected in key Welsh Government policy documents and statements, which provide an important foundation for the identification of purposes of the curriculum in Wales. The Welsh Government's education improvement plan, *Qualified for life*[15], was published while the Review was underway. The plan includes a section entitled 'Improving education the Welsh way'. It provides six principles and values intended to be a guide for building on Wales' 'long history and tradition of valuing education'.

1.  Confidence and pride in Wales as a bilingual nation with the strength and assurance to nurture both languages.

2.  Learners are at the heart of all we do.

3.  Every child and young person benefits from personalised learning.

4.  The success of our education system depends upon the success of all children. Collective responsibility, supported by cooperative values of partnership, trust, mutual respect and support underpin how we work together.

5.  Developing the capacity for a self-improving system.

6.  Celebrate success, recognise excellence, and share both.

Indications about desired purposes are reflected in other Welsh Government policy statements. These include:

❯ the *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* (Welsh Government, 2010)[16], which sets out Welsh Government's ambition for 'a country where Welsh-medium education and training are integral parts of the education infrastructure. We want to ensure that our education system makes it possible for more learners of all ages to acquire a wider range of language skills in Welsh. This will enable them to use the language in their personal lives, socially and in the workplace. We want to see a system which is responsive to public demand for an increase in Welsh-medium provision'

❯ the Welsh Language Strategy, *A living language: a language for living* (2012)[17]. The strategy sets out a plan for increasing the number of people who both speak and use the language

❯ the Welsh Government's commitment to the UNCRC in 2004, adopted as the basis of all Welsh Government policy making for children and young people, articulated through the seven core aims. These state that all children and young people:

1.  have a flying start in life

2.  have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities

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[15] Welsh Government (2014) *Qualified for life: An education improvement plan for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* Welsh Government

[16] Welsh Government (2010) *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* Welsh Government

[17] Welsh Government (2012) *A living language: a language for living – Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17* Welsh Government

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3.  enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation

4.  have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities

5.  are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised

6.  have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being

7.  are not disadvantaged by poverty.

The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure (2011) places a duty on all Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the substantive rights and obligations within the UNCRC. This came into force in May 2012.

Other relevant Welsh Government strategies include:

›   its economic development strategy, which recognises the key role education has to play in a system that 'gives people the knowledge, skills and confidence they need by the time they reach the statutory school leaving-age, and provides high-quality education and training for employment'[18]

›   its inaugural All Wales Healthy Child Programme (WHCP), currently under development, which will set out an intention to support families to enable their children to attain their full health and developmental potential

›   its commitment to ensuring that the school setting is a healthy setting, where children and young people's education can be supported by a holistic approach to health and well-being.

In addition, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, which is at Stage 1 of the legislative process at the time of drafting this report, identifies a set of goals which express a shared vision of the long-term economic, environmental and social well-being of Wales. The goals are for a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, and more equal, with cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and a thriving Welsh language.

Our principles of curriculum design also require that the proposals are authentic and reflect Wales' own particular values and culture.

There is a degree of complexity to be resolved here, and part of the job of the Review was to try to render that complexity manageable. The following summary of the issues to be addressed in the purposes therefore takes account of Wales' economic, environmental and social values and aspirations as well as key policies and strategies and the views gathered during the Review.

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[18]  Welsh Government (2010) *Economic Renewal: a new direction* Welsh Government

## Summary of the themes to be addressed in the purposes

The evidence considered by the Review reinforces the need for common purposes that apply to all children and young people and promote high aspirations and a determination to achieve. Young people should all leave school having experienced a broad education that equips them to thrive in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world.

Our children and young people need to be rooted in their own cultures and to have a strong sense of identity as citizens of Wales, the United Kingdom, Europe and the wider world. Engaged citizenship requires the kind of understanding of democracy, human rights, interdependence, sustainability and social justice that should inform their personal views and sense of commitment. Children and young people need an ability to deal with difficult and contested ethical issues such as those that can arise from developments in science and digital technologies. Active citizenship requires the confidence and resilience that underpin the ability to exert influence and participate in vigorous debate. That confidence should be built on a strong base of knowledge and respect for evidence.

The evidence also highlights the need for our young people to be ready to learn throughout their lives, leaving school with a sound command of literacy and numeracy skills, and both competent and confident in their use of technology. They should have confidence in engaging with intellectual challenge and be ready to build on what they have learned. Creativity and enterprise are central features of modern life that should be developed and extended throughout a school career. Young people's experience at school should have stimulated their imaginations in ways that engender excitement, are personally fulfilling and foster creative thinking. In addition, they need to be ready to enter the adult world with the 'softer' skills, dispositions and attitudes that will be essential in their future lives, including the desire and the capacity to contribute, individually or as a member of a team.

A continuing theme in the evidence was the importance of well-being, and in particular mental health. Schools need to care both for children and young people's physical and emotional needs and help them to take responsibility for their own lives, understanding the importance of, for example, diet and fitness and being confident in managing their own affairs. Independence, self-reliance and respect for others should be fostered throughout the teaching and learning process.

Against this backdrop, we have sought to develop a vision of a well-educated young person completing their statutory education in Wales. As a result, the Review proposes the following four purposes of the curriculum. These are expressed in terms of what all children and young people should become and achieve through their school education.

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**〉〉〉 Recommendation**

3.  The purposes of the curriculum in Wales should be that children and young people develop as:

    〉 ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives

    〉 enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work

    〉 ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world

    〉 healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

## The four purposes of the curriculum and the key characteristics

On the basis of the evidence and analysis of the Review, we further propose that the four purposes of the curriculum be elaborated in terms of their key characteristics that demonstrate the purpose through practice and should be developed through the curriculum.

### All our children and young people will be:

〉 **ambitious, capable learners who:**

  – set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge
  – are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts
  – are questioning and enjoy solving problems
  – can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English
  – can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about
  – can use number effectively in different contexts
  – understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts
  – use digital technologies creatively to communicate, find and analyse information
  – undertake research and evaluate critically what they find

  and **are ready to learn throughout their lives**

〉 **enterprising, creative contributors who:**

  – connect and apply their knowledge and skills to create ideas and products
  – think creatively to reframe and solve problems
  – identify and grasp opportunities
  – take measured risks
  – lead and play different roles in teams effectively and responsibly
  – express ideas and emotions through different media
  – give of their energy and skills so that other people will benefit

  and **are ready to play a full part in life and work**

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> **ethical, informed citizens who:**

  – find, evaluate and use evidence in forming views
  – engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values
  – understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights
  – understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting
  – are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past
  – respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society
  – show their commitment to the sustainability of the planet

and **are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world**

> **healthy, confident individuals who:**

  – have secure values and are establishing their spiritual and ethical beliefs
  – are building their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy
  – apply knowledge about the impact of diet and exercise on physical and mental health in their daily lives
  – know how to find the information and support to keep safe and well
  – take part in physical activity
  – take measured decisions about lifestyle and manage risk
  – have the confidence to participate in performance
  – form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect
  – face and overcome challenge
  – have the skills and knowledge to manage everyday life as independently as they can

and **are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.**

If these purposes secure general support from across Wales, they should guide all future decisions about national and local educational priorities and underpin all teaching and learning in Wales.

The next chapter considers how the curriculum might be structured in order to enable these purposes to be realised for each child and young person in every school.

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**ambitious, capable learners who:**
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> are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts
> are questioning and enjoy solving problems
> can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English
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> understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts
> use digital technologies creatively to communicate, find and analyse information
> undertake research and evaluate critically what they find

and **are ready to learn throughout their lives**.

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**All our children and young people will be...**

**enterprising, creative contributors who:**
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> identify and grasp opportunities
> take measured risks
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> express ideas and emotions through different media
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and **are ready to play a full part in life and work**.

**ethical, informed citizens who:**
> find, evaluate and use evidence in forming views
> engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values
> understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights
> understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting
> are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past
> respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society
> show their commitment to the sustainability of the planet
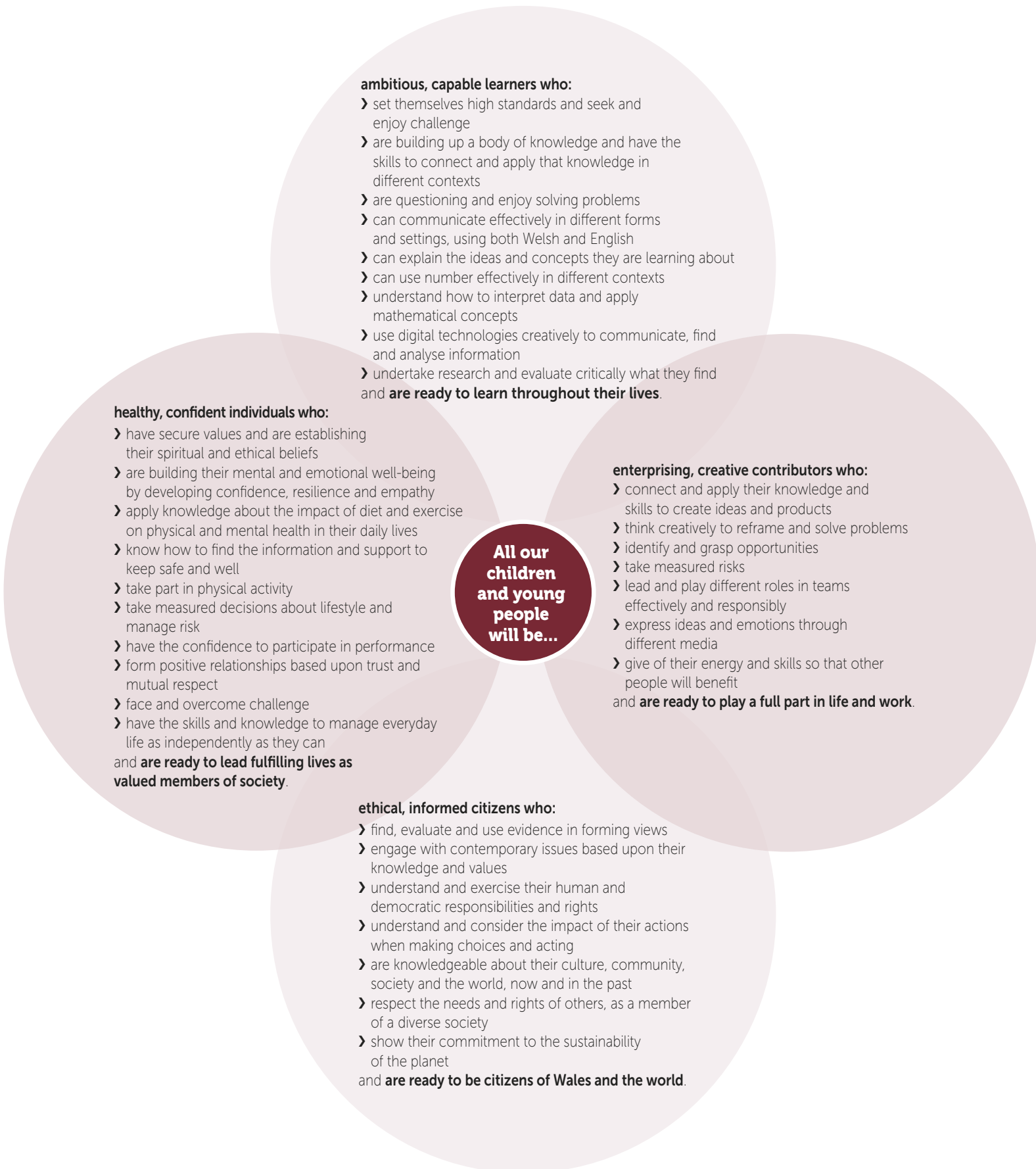
and **are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world**.

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# **Chapter 4:** Structure

We expect children and young people to learn a vast amount during their period of statutory education and they will be working across a very wide range of fronts at any one time. This chapter explores the important question of how future national expectations for what children and young people will learn should be structured so as to make it most likely that the identified curriculum purposes will be achieved.

The Review provides an opportunity to design a curriculum structure which supports the achievement of the four curriculum purposes, addresses the current complexity and other structural matters which currently hinder good teaching and learning, and builds on the best aspects of current structures. This chapter considers the history and form of the current structure and then sets out a proposed new structure for organising national expectations, firstly in terms of breadth and balance (for example across different subjects) and secondly in terms of the progress that we expect children and young people to make during the period of statutory education.

## **The national curriculum since 1988**

Wales has arrived at its current curriculum and assessment arrangements through a series of reviews following the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) introduced by the then Government in Westminster. The ERA introduced the basic curriculum (which at the time consisted of the national curriculum and religious education (RE)) and focused on providing a legislative framework designed to ensure the quality of teaching and learning and consistency of opportunity and standards.

Since the Education Reform Act 1988 there have been three further curriculum reviews in Wales (not including the current review). The most recent review (2008) included a stronger emphasis on skills, cross-cutting themes, flexibility and future-proofing the curriculum to make it relevant to the twenty-first century.

The following table sets out current requirements with respect to curriculum provision in schools in Wales.

| National Curriculum requirements for Wales: September 2014 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Foundation Phase** | | |
| National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) | Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory) | Seven Areas of Learning:<br>– Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity<br>– Language, Literacy and Communication Skills<br>– Mathematical Development<br>– Welsh Language Development (English-medium schools)<br>– Knowledge and Understanding of the World<br>– Physical Development<br>– Creative Development<br>and a framework for the basic curriculum (in maintained schools) for RE. |
| **Key Stage 2** | | |
| National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) | Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory) | Programmes of study for:<br>– English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects)<br>– Welsh second language (English-medium schools), design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music and PE (foundation subjects)<br>and frameworks for the basic curriculum – PSE, RE, and sex education. |
| **Key Stage 3** | | |
| National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) | Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory) | Programmes of study for:<br>– English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects)<br>– Welsh second language (English-medium schools), design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music, PE and modern foreign languages (foundation subjects)<br>and frameworks for the basic curriculum – PSE, RE, sex education and careers and the world of work. |
| **14–19** | | |
| | Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory) other skills including WBQ | Programmes of study for:<br>– English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects)<br>– PE and Welsh second language (English-medium schools) (foundation subjects)<br>and the basic curriculum – PSE, RE, sex education, and careers and the world of work. |

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In October 2014, following an open consultation, the Welsh Government published revised Areas of Learning for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development, and programmes of study for Key Stages 2 to 4 for English, Welsh (first language) and mathematics. The programmes of study also align with the GCSE specification content for the new qualifications which will be delivered for the first time in September 2015.

The evidence collected during the course of the Review strongly suggests that, despite successive modifications, the philosophy, form and content of the current national curriculum require significant change. There was a recurring view that the curriculum had become unwieldy, overcrowded and atomistic, and that it was inhibiting opportunities to apply learning more holistically in 'real life' situations, or to use that learning creatively to address issues that cross subject boundaries. A curriculum defined largely in terms of discrete subjects can become directly translated into a timetable within which important cross-curricular learning can be marginalised. In addition, separate subject planning, combined with a narrow interpretation of how best to develop literacy and numeracy skills, was sometimes inadvertently resulting in a narrow and repetitive set of experiences.

## Criteria for a curriculum structure for the future

Evidence gathered during the Review, together with our principles of curriculum design (see page 14), suggests that any proposed structure should satisfy a number of criteria.

The structure of the curriculum should:

›  reflect directly and promote the curriculum purposes

›  embody the entitlement of all children and young people, including those with severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties, to a high-quality, broad and appropriately balanced education throughout the period of statutory education

›  promote progression in children and young people's learning

›  encourage depth of learning and provide appropriate challenge in ways that will raise overall standards of achievement

›  promote coherence and encourage children and young people to make connections across different aspects of their learning

›  enable children and young people to apply in unfamiliar contexts what they have learned

›  promote sustained attention to the development and application of knowledge and skills in literacy, numeracy and digital competence

›  ensure appropriate emphasis on the Welsh language and culture

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> encourage stimulating and engaging teaching and learning

> be as simple and straightforward as possible

> be understood by and have the confidence of parents, carers and teachers.

## Structuring learning (1): the breadth of the curriculum

The first dimension we consider is breadth. What is needed is some way of making sense of the span of knowledge, skills, dispositions and experiences that collectively comprise the breadth of the curriculum by using a coherent and manageable number of organisers.

Some argue that subjects embody our cultural and educational inheritance as well as our accumulated wisdom and should therefore be used as the organisers. Others advocate an approach founded on the skills and competences that are thought to reflect more directly the requirements of modern life.

The 'subject against skill/competence' debate represents an unhelpful polarisation, since both make important contributions to fulfilling the purposes of the curriculum. The structure of the curriculum should therefore ensure that the vital contribution of disciplinary learning is preserved but is supplemented by other aspects that relate directly to the needs of today and provide sound preparation for the challenges of tomorrow. This is in line with findings of a report commissioned by Welsh Government in 2013 which concluded there 'is evidence, internationally, of a move towards more skills-based curricula that are focused on identifying and defining essential overarching competences alongside the more traditional subject-based curriculum content'[19].

There has been an international trend in recent years towards using 'areas of learning' as curriculum organisers, sometimes combining disciplinary learning and wider capabilities or capacities.

> Within the broad umbrella of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young People in 2008, the Australian national curriculum attempts to marry disciplinary learning with a 'global orientation' expressed in general capabilities and cross-curricular priorities. The structure reflects goals associated with well-being, culture, basic skills, ICT, employability and personal effectiveness and also makes direct reference to the importance of disciplinary knowledge with eight learning areas: English; mathematics; sciences; humanities and social sciences; arts; languages; health and physical education; ICT and design and technology.

> New Zealand also has eight areas: English; the arts; health and physical education; learning languages; mathematics and statistics; science; social sciences; and technology. In addition, it has specified key competencies in: thinking; using language, symbols and texts; managing self; relating to others; and participating and contributing.

> The Netherlands employs six broad areas: Dutch; English (at the top of primary school); arithmetic and mathematics; social and environmental

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[19]   NFER and Arad Research (2013) *A Rapid Evidence Assessment on the Impact of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements within High Performing Countries* Welsh Government

❯ studies (geography, history, science, citizenship, social and life skills, healthy living, social structures, religious and ideological movements); creative expression (music, drawing and handicrafts); and sports and movement.

❯ Northern Ireland has six areas: the arts (art and design, music, drama); languages and literacy (talking, listening, reading, writing, drama); mathematics and numeracy; personal development (emotional development, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexual education) and mutual understanding (in the local and global community); physical development and movement; and the world around us (geography, history, science and technology). The strands within each area share curriculum objectives and teachers are expected to integrate learning across the areas. In addition to the learning areas, RE remains a compulsory subject. There are cross-curricular skills in communication, using mathematics and using ICT. There are also thinking skills and personal capabilities, which comprise a similar range of skills to the personal, learning and thinking skills in England's new secondary curriculum.

❯ Scotland has eight curriculum areas: expressive arts; health and well-being; languages; mathematics; religious and moral education; sciences; social studies; technologies. In addition literacy, numeracy and particular aspects of health and well-being and ICT are to be developed and reinforced across the curriculum.

❯ England retains subjects as the main curriculum building blocks. The national curriculum remains structured around 12 subjects, split into core and foundation, with associated programmes of study. Recommendations from independent reviews to move to a structure based on capacities[20] and areas of learning have been rejected by the government.

❯ The Foundation Phase in Wales includes seven Areas of Learning.



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[20] QCA (2007) *Secondary curriculum review consultation: Draft summary of findings* QCA
Rose, J (2009) *Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum: Final Report* Department for Children, Schools and Families

## Areas of Learning and Experience

Taking account of the evidence gathered in the course of the Review and the criteria identified earlier, the Review recommends that a single organising structure for the curriculum should apply for the entire age range from 3 to 16.

We propose that this structure should comprise 'Areas of Learning and Experience'. Each of the Areas of Learning and Experience should make distinct and strong contributions to developing the four purposes of the curriculum. Taken together, they should define the breadth of the curriculum. We have chosen the term 'Area of Learning and Experience' (originally used in a 1985 HMI Report[21] and subsequently by ACCAC[22]) rather than the narrower 'Area of Learning' currently used in the Foundation Phase. The intention is to signal the importance of educational experiences as an integral part of the curriculum, to broaden children and young people's horizons, stimulate their imaginations and promote enjoyment in learning. The education of children and young people should include rich experiences that are valuable in their own right.

The Review affirms that subjects and disciplines should remain important but that these should be grouped within six Areas of Learning and Experience. Each of these Areas of Learning and Experience should include, where appropriate, both a Welsh dimension and an international perspective in line with the recommendations of the independent review of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, history and the story of Wales.

The Cambridge Primary Review[23] identifies characteristics that help to define such areas. These characteristics include their internal logic or integrity, the knowledge that should form the core and their relationship to educational aims. Similarly, each of the Areas of Learning and Experience advocated by this Review should:

› provide a rich context for achieving the purposes of the curriculum

› be internally coherent

› employ distinctive ways of thinking and have an identifiable core of disciplinary and instrumental knowledge.

> #### 》》》 Recommendation
>
> 4.  **The curriculum 3–16 should be organised into Areas of Learning and Experience that establish the breadth of the curriculum. These areas should provide rich contexts for developing the four curriculum purposes, be internally coherent, employ distinctive ways of thinking, and have an identifiable core of disciplinary or instrumental knowledge.**

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[21] HMI (1985) *The Curriculum from 5–16* HMSO

[22] Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) (1996) *Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning before Compulsory School Age* ACCAC

[23] Cambridge Primary Review (2010) *Children, their World, their Education: Final Report and Recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review* Routledge

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The Review proposes six Areas of Learning and Experience, as follows:

› **Expressive arts**

› **Health and well-being**

› **Humanities**

› **Languages, literacy and communication**

› **Mathematics and numeracy**

› **Science and technology.**

>>> **Recommendation**

5.  **The new national curriculum in Wales should have six Areas of Learning and Experience: Expressive arts; Health and well-being; Humanities; Languages, literacy and communication; Mathematics and numeracy; and Science and technology.**

The Areas of Learning and Experience should not be seen as watertight compartments but rather a means of organising the intentions for each child and young person's learning, with decisions and plans for how these should translate into day-to-day activities taking place creatively at school level. They are therefore not timetabling devices.

Having common Areas of Learning and Experience from 3 to 16 should promote and underpin continuity and progression and help to make the structure easier to understand. The approach should help to ensure breadth and encourage appropriate decisions about 'balance' across a child or young person's learning at any time, for example by removing distinctions between 'core' and 'foundation' subjects.

Individual teachers, including specialist teachers in secondary schools, will draw upon the different Areas of Learning and Experience in their planning. This should help to address concerns about compartmentalisation by encouraging teachers to work creatively, and collaboratively, across subject boundaries in the context of the four curriculum purposes. Teachers should be able to help children and young people to make links across learning, bringing together different aspects to address important issues relating, for example, to citizenship, enterprise, financial capability and sustainability.

## Cross-curriculum Responsibilities: literacy, numeracy and digital competence

There is a range of competences and skills which are foundations for almost all learning and are essential to being able to participate successfully and confidently in the modern world. Priority has already been given to literacy and numeracy

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within the Welsh curriculum through the LNF, including Routes to literacy and Routes to numeracy. In addition, the recommendations in the ICT Steering Group's report to the Welsh Government[24] and the findings of the Review point clearly to the conclusion that digital competence is increasingly fundamental to learning and life and that it should have similar status within the curriculum to that of literacy and numeracy.

The Review therefore recommends that literacy, numeracy and digital competence should be Cross-curriculum Responsibilities for all teachers and people who work with children and young people. The curriculum structure needs to ensure that children and young people develop high levels of competence in these aspects and have frequent opportunities to develop, extend and apply them across the curriculum.

Competence in literacy, including competence in the spoken word, syntax and spelling, is essential for learning across the curriculum, not least because of the fundamental role of language in thinking. The key to developing command of these skills lies not in repetition and drill for significant periods of time during the school day but in a sound understanding of their essential components supported by developmentally appropriate teaching and learning and rich contexts within which they can be reinforced, extended and applied. Without this, as one contributor remarked, 'There is a real danger that we are teaching the mechanics of writing but giving the children nothing to write about'. Children and young people also need every opportunity to explain thinking, explore and discuss ideas and use language skills at an appropriate level. The literacy component of the LNF provides guidance about a common approach to the reinforcement of such skills at different developmental stages.

Similarly, numeracy, including arithmetical and data-handling skills, is deployed widely across the curriculum, and competence in numeracy is essential for independent living and work. Children and young people need regular opportunities to deepen their understanding of number and, as with literacy, to reinforce and use their numeracy skills in different contexts. It is important that all teachers and other staff who work with children and young people have an understanding of how best to reinforce these skills and take opportunities to consolidate learning appropriately. The numeracy component of the LNF provides guidance about a common approach to the reinforcement of such skills at different developmental stages.

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[24] Arthur, S, Crick, T, Hayward, J (2013) *The ICT Steering Group's Report to the Welsh Government*

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Digital competence plays an increasingly powerful role in the lives of children and young people, for communication, networking, information, leisure and entertainment as well as for an increasing range of transactions and educational applications. The ability to use digital technology skills creatively is an increasingly common feature of the modern workplace, for example for developing simulated models that test out ideas safely and inexpensively or when using complex medical equipment that needs to be reprogrammed to match the patient's individual needs. As recommended by the ICT Steering Group, the competences 'should not primarily be predicated on rapidly changing technologies, but should focus on pedagogy, deeper skill development, transferability, and understanding, as well as potential application of these competencies'. All teachers and other staff should have responsibility to support the development of digital competences, and the skills and knowledge to do this.

For the future, the expectations for progression from 3 to 16 in literacy and numeracy would build on the work that has been done in Wales to embed these skills at the heart of, and importantly across, the Welsh education system. In terms of the structure of the curriculum, the expectations for literacy and numeracy would form part of, and be highlighted mainly within, the Languages, literacy and communication, and Mathematics and numeracy Areas of Learning and Experience respectively. Expectations about progression in these aspects would be based upon the existing LNF and the recently developed Areas of Learning for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and for Mathematical Development, as well as the programmes of study for English, Welsh (first language) and mathematics. There would be references within the other Areas of Learning and Experience to particularly fruitful opportunities for the development of literacy and numeracy.

As part of the development flowing from the Review a digital competence progression framework and an accompanying 'Routes to Learning Digital Competence' would need to be developed, taking account of the recommendations of the ICT report. Different aspects would be included and highlighted within the most relevant Areas of Learning and Experience, for example within Languages, literacy and communication for aspects relating to language and communication, and Science and technology for scientific interfacing, data handling and process design.

Schools should identify a member of staff who would lead and support each of the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities.

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> **>>> Recommendations**
>
> 6. Children and young people should have their learning developed across the curriculum through three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities that should be the responsibility of all teachers: literacy; numeracy; and digital competence.
>
> 7. A digital competence framework and an accompanying 'Routes to Learning Digital Competence' should be developed and be included as a Cross-curriculum Responsibility.

## Wider skills

The Welsh Government, in common with other countries across the world, has recognised the importance of ensuring that children and young people develop a range of 'wider skills' thought necessary for modern life and work. It has taken steps to ensure that children and young people develop these wider skills and become more resilient and better able to deal with the changing challenges that face individuals now and in the future. A NFER/Arad report cites Parsons and Beauchamps (2012)[25] who conclude that most high-performing countries highlight problem solving, creative and critical thinking, selecting information, applying knowledge and drawing conclusions as the most prevalent skills identified.

The 2008 curriculum review in Wales led to the introduction of a non-statutory *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*, whereas in Phase 1 of the curriculum and assessment arrangements review it was suggested that 'wider skills should be developed across all four phases/stages of education, including Key Stage 4, providing clear routes for skills progression from Foundation Phase through to the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ)'[26].

The 'wider skills' in Wales comprise[27]:

> critical thinking and problem solving – marshalling critical and logical processes to analyse and understand situations and develop responses and solutions

> planning and organising – implementing solutions and executing ideas and monitoring and reflecting on results

> creativity and innovation – generating ideas, openness and courage to explore ideas and express opinions

> personal effectiveness – reflecting on and understanding oneself and others, behaving in effective and appropriate ways; being an effective learner.

The new Welsh Baccalaureate model recognises the key roles which these skills have to play, particularly from an employment perspective, but there is a strong

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[25] NFER and Arad Research (2013) *A Rapid Evidence Assessment on the Impact of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements within High Performing Countries* Welsh Government

[26] Welsh Government (2013) *Curriculum for Wales – Consultation on proposals for revised curriculum and assessment arrangements for Wales Phase 1: Literacy, numeracy and wider skills* Welsh Government

[27] The list of wider skills also includes 'digital literacy', but this is now included in the proposed digital competence Cross-curriculum Responsibility.

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argument that they should be introduced at the beginning of a child's education and developed throughout their time in school, rather than appearing when a young person is in Year 10. The Review proposes that wider skills should be addressed from the start of schooling in ways that recognise how children learn and develop.

As indicated in the previous section, the Review proposes that digital competence should be one of the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities. The Review proposes that the other four wider skills should be embedded within each Area of Learning and Experience. Separate frameworks for these wider skills would introduce further complexity into the design of the curriculum, and that would replicate some of the concerns about the current situation. Schools and teachers will be able to focus on devising suitable learning, teaching and assessment activities that reflect these wider skills.

> ### 〉〉〉 Recommendation
>
> 8.   **The expectations for the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills should be embedded within the Areas of Learning and Experience.**

## The six Areas of Learning and Experience

The following section considers in more detail each of the six proposed Areas of Learning and Experience and the way in which they might be constructed. They are listed alphabetically to signal that they are of equal importance in a broad and balanced curriculum. In each case, we provide a rationale for the Area of Learning and Experience, outline its scope and offer a small number of illustrations of how the Area relates to the four curriculum purposes.



### Rationale

Through the Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience, schools and teachers can encourage children and young people to develop their creative appreciation and talent and their artistic and performance skills. The expressive arts provide opportunities to explore thinking, refine, and communicate ideas, engaging thinking, imagination and senses creatively. They also promote exploration of issues of personal and cultural identity. Engagement with the expressive arts requires application, perseverance and close attention to detail, capacities that have benefits across learning more widely. In the Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales review commissioned by the Welsh Government[28], Professor Dai Smith said powerfully 'It is clear...that countries across the world

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28   Smith, D (2013) *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales* Arts Council of Wales

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recognise the significance and potential of the arts in enabling improved educational, social and economic outcomes'[29].

The expressive arts provide inspiration and motivation as they bring children and young people into contact with the creative processes, performances and products of others and stimulate their own experimentation and creativity. They provide many opportunities for experiences such as visits to theatres and galleries and for bringing the specialist expertise of, for example, artists and musicians into the classroom. Achievement in the expressive arts also provides a basis for lifelong participation and can ultimately contribute to a thriving economy and cultural life for Wales.

### Scope and connections with other Areas of Learning and Experience

The Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience will span art, drama, music, dance, film and digital media, encompassing wider creative aspects such as improvisation. The Review has taken account of the report of the review of Arts in Education in the Schools in Wales[30], which described 'the arts' as including the making, performance, expression or appreciation of one or more of: music; drama; dance; film and digital media; visual arts and design; literature and creative writing. All of these art forms will be addressed within the curriculum, mainly through the Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience, but outcomes for literature and creative writing will form part of the Languages, literacy and communication Area of Learning and Experience. There will also be connections between the Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience and the technologies components of the Science and technology and Humanities Areas of Learning and Experience in interpreting and expressing meaning.

**Illustrative examples** of how children and young people's experiences in the Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience can contribute to all four purposes of the curriculum include:

> ❯ (ambitious, capable learners) encouraging them to explore new and challenging areas of experience and to strive to improve their performance

> ❯ (enterprising, creative contributors) developing their creativity in a range of forms of expression; providing rich contexts and challenges within which they can work collaboratively, learning from critical appraisal of their work

> ❯ (ethical, informed citizens) enabling them to understand their own cultural identity and those of societies in other places and at other times, and to explore complex and difficult issues

> ❯ (healthy, confident individuals) helping them to develop resilience and feel more confident as they gain enjoyment and personal satisfaction from creative expression; contributing directly to enriching the quality of their lives.

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[29] Smith, D (2013) *An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales* Arts Council of Wales

[30] ibid. Smith, D (2013)

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### Rationale

Children and young people need to experience social, emotional and physical well-being to thrive and engage successfully with their education. The Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience will help them to build the knowledge, understanding and skills that will enable them to develop positive and appropriate relationships, deal with the difficult issues and decisions they will face and learn to live independently. In discussions for the Review, many children and young people felt that these were some of the most important issues that they needed to learn about in school.

Improving the health and well-being of the nation has been an important feature of Welsh Government policy and support to schools for many years. These concerns are highlighted by the report of the Schools and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group[31]. The Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience aims to help to address concerns about physical activity and diet, for example, as children and young people engage in different kinds of physical activity and gain knowledge and practical skills for healthy eating. As children and young people develop habits that will promote their own and others' well-being this will make a contribution to reducing health inequalities and improving well-being more widely.

### Scope and connections with other Areas of Learning and Experience

This Area of Learning and Experience draws on subjects and themes from PE, mental, physical and emotional well-being, sex and relationships, parenting, healthy eating and cooking, substance misuse, work-related learning and experience, and learning for life. It is also concerned with how the school environment supports children and young people's social, emotional, spiritual and physical health and well-being through, for example, its climate and relationships, the food it provides, its joint working with other relevant services such as health and social work, and the access it provides to physical activity.

Teachers will be able to make strong connections between the Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience and the Expressive arts and Languages, literacy and communication (for example the exploration of relationships through drama and literature), Humanities (for example ethical matters, informed by RE), and Science and technology (for example nutrition, reproduction) Areas of Learning and Experience.

**Illustrative examples** of how children and young people's experiences in the Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience can contribute to all four purposes of the curriculum include:

> (ambitious, capable learners) putting into practice their knowledge and understanding of social, physical and emotional health in their own lives

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[31] School and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group (2013) *Physical Literacy – an all-Wales approach to increasing levels of physical activity for children and young people* Welsh Government

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> ❯ (enterprising, creative contributors) developing the skills and attributes for successful participation in work; taking part in team endeavours; mentoring and supporting others

> ❯ (ethical, informed citizens) understanding the consequences of actions that affect others and themselves and taking these into account in actions and decisions; understanding health, legal, political and ethical issues associated with drug and alcohol policy

> ❯ (healthy, confident individuals) knowing how to keep safe in a range of different circumstances and where to go for help; undertaking regular physical activity; developing and maintaining positive relationships.



### Rationale

The Humanities Area of Learning and Experience provides fascinating contexts for children and young people to learn about people, place, time and belief. It will give them an understanding of historical, geographical, political, economic and societal factors and provide opportunities to engage in informed discussions about ethics, beliefs, religion and spirituality. Children and young people will learn to consider how these different factors interrelate, and develop an understanding of themselves and other people, their own locality, Wales and the world in a range of times, places and circumstances.

The Humanities Area of Learning and Experience provides rich opportunities for learning beyond the school walls, for example through exploring the local environment and learning from the experience of people and organisations and businesses in the community. Children and young people will also gain the knowledge and skills to understand and contribute to the communities in which they live and engage with societal issues.

The proposal for the new curriculum is that RE sits within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, encouraging links to the other aspects of this Area. RE can and should provide valuable experiences for children and young people that contribute to each of the purposes of education. Despite the positive ways in which RE can contribute to the education of learners in the twenty-first century its position on the curriculum has been fragile[32]. Its role can be misunderstood as being about the promotion of a particular faith or belief system rather than developing respect and understanding of different forms of religion over time and in different societies. In order to maintain the entitlement for all learners from

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[32] For this reason RE has been protected by law as a statutory subject within the basic curriculum since 1944. The breadth and balance of statutory RE in maintained schools is protected by local committees represented by a range of interested parties (SACREs) who ensure that (among other statutory duties) a range of religions is studied, and that the RE provided in schools is objective, balanced and does not indoctrinate learners. They also ensure that parents'/carers' right of withdrawal is safeguarded.

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four/five years old, it is proposed that RE, and the national expectations for RE, should remain a statutory curriculum requirement[33].

**Scope and connections with other Areas of Learning and Experience**

The Humanities Area of Learning and Experience draws on history, geography, RE, business and social studies. It provides a wide range of opportunities for connections with all of the other Areas of Learning and Experience, for example in Expressive arts (historical, geographical, geopolitical and religious influences on culture), Mathematics and numeracy (interpreting data), Languages, literacy and communication (through research, discussion and writing about complex issues in the humanities; exploring links between culture and language through a modern foreign language), Science and technology (climate change, environmental issues), Health and well-being (ethical issues, diversity and equality).

**Illustrative examples** of how children and young people's experiences in the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience can contribute to all four purposes of the curriculum include:

> (ambitious, capable learners) gaining a solid base of knowledge and understanding of different times, places and beliefs; recognising and applying appropriate tests of the validity and reliability of evidence used to support arguments

> (enterprising, creative contributors) engaging in activities that develop enterprising skills and dispositions; understanding how to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities

> (ethical, informed citizens) using a variety of historical, geographical, social, political and religious perspectives to address contemporary issues; understanding different beliefs and respecting those who hold them

> (healthy, confident individuals) developing personal stances on matters of faith and spirituality; having the confidence arising from authoritative research to adopt personal stances on issues such as sustainability and social inclusion.

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**〉〉〉 Recommendation**

9.  **Religious education should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, and should remain a statutory curriculum requirement from reception.**

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[33] It should be noted that in schools with a religious character the breadth and balance of statutory RE is protected by the appropriate denominational body ensuring that RE reflects the teaching and beliefs of the particular religious tradition. In schools with a religious character RE 'aims to deepen learners' understanding of their faith, not in a way that indoctrinates, but rather to promote knowledge and understanding of the particular faith upon which it focuses' – Welsh Government (2011) *Faith in Education*.

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## Rationale

Language is the essence of thinking and is integral, not just to effective communication, but to learning, reflection and creativity. This Area of Learning and Experience provides the fundamental building blocks for different forms of communication, literacy and learning about language, and also opportunities to develop competence in different languages.

Being able to listen attentively and speak lucidly and understandably or to use non-verbal communication effectively are crucial attributes in learning and life more generally. Developing oracy – the capacity to develop and express ideas through speech – is of central importance to both thinking and learning.

Exposure to literature extends children and young people's understanding of the power of language. It can stimulate imagination, challenge thinking and introduce new ideas. This Area of Learning and Experience can generate a love of reading that will enrich lives and contribute to present and future well-being.

The pervasive influence of digital technologies on children and young people's lives poses new challenges and opens up fresh possibilities for language learning. Issues of register, audience, ethics and meaning can all be explored in this evolving context.

The role of multiple language learning is particularly important in Wales. Learning other languages introduces children and young people to other cultures. There is also evidence that successful learning of another language can influence the capacity to learn subsequent languages and may have wider cognitive benefits. The teaching and learning of Welsh is a priority for the Welsh Government. It forms a key element of this Area of Learning and Experience, with the intention that Welsh language will be compulsory to age 16. (Further issues relating to the Welsh language within the curriculum are discussed later in this chapter.)

Multiple language learning presents particular challenges for curriculum design, particularly in primary schools. The creation of sufficient time and the investment in necessary resources will inevitably pose difficult questions about priorities. However, this Area of Learning and Experience provides a means of exploiting the links between English, Welsh and modern foreign language learning, encouraging children and young people to transfer what they have learned, for example, in English about how language works to Welsh or modern foreign languages. They can thus gain a secure understanding of the structure of languages. This, along with an appreciation of words and their origins, can help children and young people to become excited about and interested in language.

The Review believes that the acquisition of modern foreign languages will benefit from the earlier development of the Welsh language, and recommends that this third and/or fourth language should therefore be introduced in the first year of secondary schooling, or earlier where time, circumstances and expertise allow.

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**Scope and connections with other Areas of Learning and Experience**

This Area of Learning and Experience encompasses the progressive development of skills in listening and speaking (oracy), reading and writing in English and Welsh; modern foreign languages; digital communication; and literature. It has obvious connections with all of the other Areas of Learning and Experience.

**Illustrative examples** of how children and young people's experiences in the Languages, literacy and communication Area of Learning and Experience can contribute to all four purposes of the curriculum include:

> (ambitious, capable learners) having a high level of competence in literacy in English and Welsh; using and understanding increasingly abstract language to explore and develop ideas; learning to use additional languages

> (enterprising, creative contributors) using oral and written language skills in different settings with an appropriate sense of audience and using different media; communicating effectively in the Welsh language in different settings, including for work settings

> (ethical, informed citizens) sensitively questioning and critically appraising different points of view; detecting bias in the use of language

> (healthy, confident individuals) communicating their thoughts, views and feelings sensitively and participating confidently in different social contexts.



**Rationale**

The Mathematics and numeracy Area of Learning and Experience is concerned with developing a good, lasting understanding of mathematical concepts and the confidence to use and apply numerical skills in everyday life. It includes experiences that enable children and young people to develop their broader numeracy and financial skills by exploring relationships in quantities, space and data, and to apply them to real-life situations.

Mathematics helps children and young people to make sense of the world around them and to manage their lives. It gives them skills they need to interpret and analyse information, solve problems and make informed decisions. Taught well through relevant contexts, mathematics can engage and fascinate children and young people of all interests and abilities. It provides strong support for the development of wider skills, particularly critical thinking and problem solving, planning and organisation, and creativity and innovation. It enables people to communicate ideas in a concise, unambiguous and rigorous way, using numbers and symbols. A high level of numeracy and mathematical competence is important for the prosperity of the country.

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**Scope and connections with other Areas of Learning and Experience**

This Area centres on the discipline of mathematics, including the traditional components of arithmetic, mathematics and statistics together with logic. It provides prerequisite knowledge and skills for much of the learning in science, including computer science, and technology, but also underpins learning across the curriculum, particularly in Health and well-being and Humanities Areas of Learning and Experience.

**Illustrative examples** of how children and young people's experiences in the Mathematics and numeracy Area of Learning and Experience can contribute to all four purposes of the curriculum include:

> (ambitious, capable learners) having the knowledge and competence to apply numeracy skills and mathematical understanding confidently in a wide range of contexts, notably in science, computer science and technologies; gaining a sense of achievement by solving tricky mathematical puzzles and problems

> (enterprising, creative contributors) solving numerical and mathematical problems; applying numerical, mathematical and digital skills to creative and design challenges, working individually and in groups

> (ethical, informed citizens) critically analysing data to form informed views on social, political, economic and environmental matters

> (healthy, confident individuals) gaining the knowledge and skills to manage personal finance now and in the future; interpreting information and data to assess risk.



**Rationale**

Science and technology are closely linked, each depending upon the other. Science involves acquiring knowledge through observation and experimentation, and technology applies scientific knowledge in practical ways. This Area of Learning and Experience capitalises on children and young people's curiosity about our natural, physical world and universe though investigating, understanding, and explaining. They learn to generate and test ideas, gather evidence, make observations, carry out practical investigations, and communicate with others. They also learn how through computer science, the horizons of what is possible can be extended beyond our current imagination.

Children and young people will also have opportunities to learn how technology is used to design products that improve the quality of human life and to apply their scientific and other knowledge to practical purposes and challenges. For schools, this means providing children and young people with rich opportunities to develop technological skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes through designing and developing products and systems. They will be able to explore the impact of technology on society and the environment. Learning in the Science

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and technology Area of Learning and Experience will enable many young people to prepare for careers in science, digital industries and technologies.

The Review proposes the introduction of computer science – spanning, for example, the kinds of thinking skills used in computation (including analysis, use of algorithms and problem solving), design and modelling, and developing, implementing and testing digital solutions – as a specific component within the Science and technology Area of Learning and Experience. The ICT Steering Group's report to the Welsh Government[34] in 2013 outlines its vision that Wales should become 'an Agile-Digital Nation, renowned for producing talented technology innovators, leading software engineers, successful entrepreneurs and other related roles capable of becoming world leaders and contributing to the success of a thriving digital industry in Wales'. It argues that introducing computing into the curriculum would help to create economic and social advantages for all children educated in Wales and enable Wales to become a world leader in computing and digital skills.

### Scope and connections with other Areas of Learning and Experience

The Science and technology Area of Learning and Experience will draw on physics, chemistry and biology, engineering, design technology (food, textiles, resistant materials), craft, design, graphics and, importantly, computer science, learning from the 14–19 Learning Pathways domain of mathematics, science and all aspects of technology. There are links between this Area of Learning and Experience and, for example, the Humanities (business and industry), Mathematics and numeracy (considering costs and benefits) and Health and well-being (medical uses of technology) Areas of Learning and Experience.

**Illustrative examples** of how children and young people's experiences in the Science and technology Area of Learning and Experience can contribute to the four purposes of the curriculum include:

> (ambitious, capable learners) gaining a solid base of knowledge and understanding of key concepts in science; developing skills in observation, research and critical thinking; becoming skilled in the creative use of technologies

> (enterprising, creative contributors) designing processes and creating digital products and objects; working with others to develop novel solutions and to create products for the marketplace

> (ethical, informed citizens) evaluating the impact of scientific and technological developments; taking informed personal stances on ethical issues associated with scientific and technological innovation

> (healthy, confident individuals) learning to make use of scientific data to assess risk and take informed decisions; using digital technologies safely and with respect for others.

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[34] Arthur, S, Crick, T, Hayward, J (2013) *The ICT Steering Group's Report to the Welsh Government*

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## Structuring learning (2): Progression Steps

The second dimension of the curriculum structure is progression: how children and young people will make progress in their learning, and at what pace. Characteristics of progression include:

› a capacity to engage with ideas and issues in greater depth

› success in tackling more complex problems and being able to grasp more abstract concepts

› becoming more accomplished in performance

› building a solid foundation of basic grammar and spelling and gaining a secure grasp of number bonds.

Schools, teachers, parents and carers need reference points for determining whether children and young people are making appropriate progress in their learning. At the national level, the Welsh Government also needs to be satisfied that the system as a whole is meeting expectations of progress and attainment.

As shown on the table on page 34, the current national curriculum is based upon the Foundation Phase and key stages, with outcomes or level descriptions at the different stages. That approach has much to commend it but practice since 1988 and evidence presented to the Review suggest a number of issues of concern about its continuing utility.

› Division into the separate stages, which tend to have distinctive philosophies and approaches, has had the effect of creating additional transition points. Negative effects are evident in the transitions between the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, Key Stages 2 and 3, and Key Stages 3 and 4. In each case, shifts in philosophy or approach at transition points can hinder progression and there was evidence that this could contribute to disengagement as young people progress through school.

› Successive stages can influence each other in unintended ways, for example by placing ceilings on expectations or causing teachers to distort teaching to avoid addressing things that may follow in the next stage. This can create a confused context for smooth progression.

› National curriculum levels are very broad and have often come to be used to make judgements about a generalised ability rather than being seen as staging posts in all important aspects of learning that could be used to inform the kinds of support or additional challenge that might assist the child or young person's progress.

› The wider accountability context has contributed to an environment within which speed in jumping the level hurdles has become the goal, overriding the need for consolidation and depth in learning as a sound foundation for further progress.

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**The Review proposes the following.**

To address these points, and support the achievement of the four purposes of the curriculum, the Review proposes a revised approach to progression, spanning ages 3–16, within the proposed Areas of Learning and Experience and including Cross-curriculum Responsibilities.

The approach recognises that children and young people will progress at different rates and that there should be an emphasis on ensuring sound foundations in learning as the best basis for progression.
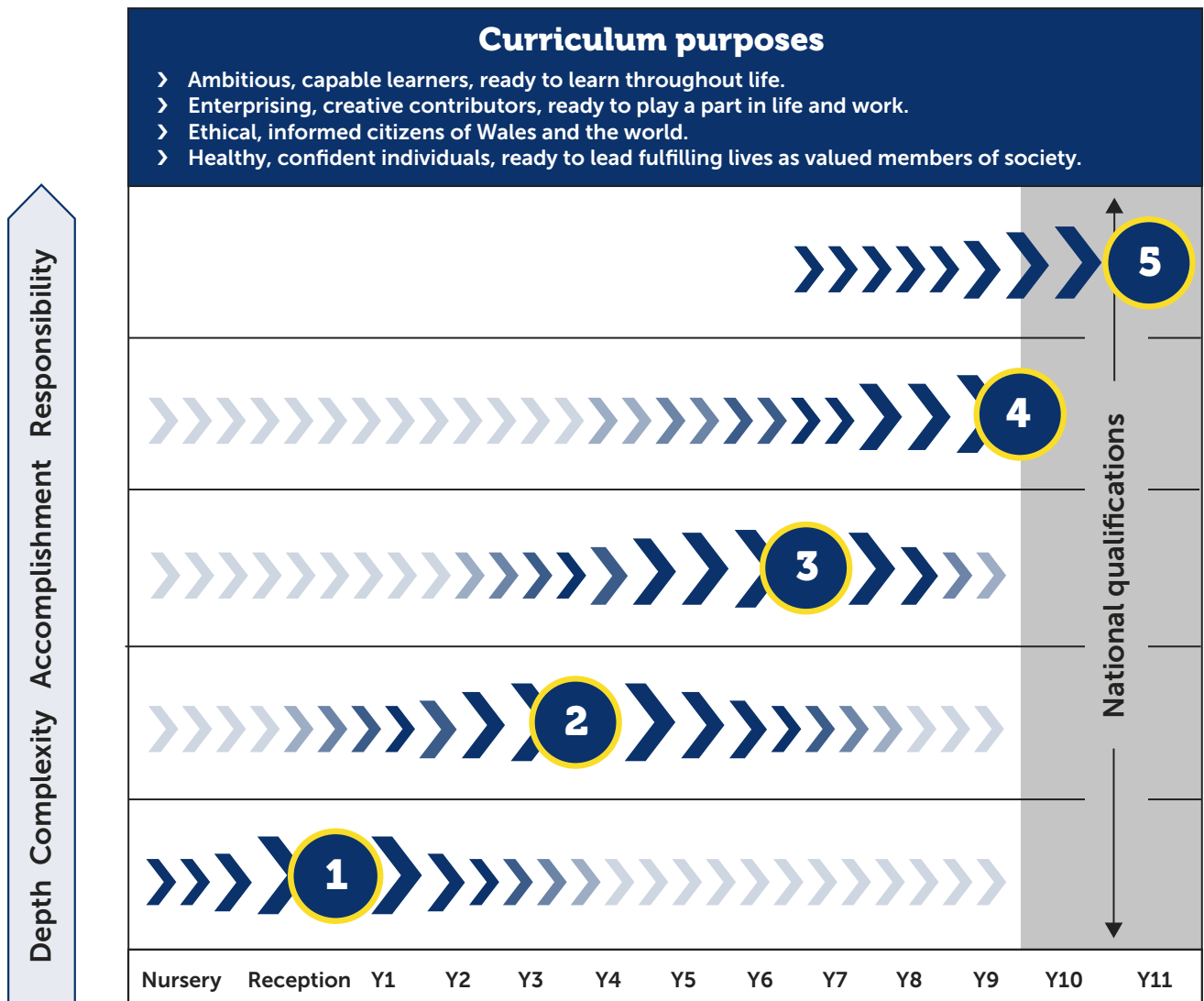
> Phases and key stages should be removed in order to improve progression, and therefore increase potential for higher attainment by minimising transitions and shifts in purposes and approach at intervals in school careers.

> Progression in each Area of Learning and Experience or Cross-curriculum Responsibility should be based on a well-grounded, nationally described continuum of learning that flows from when a child enters education through to the end of statutory schooling at 16 and beyond. Learning will be less fragmented because all teachers will understand how their input contributes ultimately to the end point in the continuum of learning.

> Learning should be seen as akin to an expedition, with stops, detours and spurts. Progression should be signalled through Progression Steps, rather than levels. Progression Steps at regular intervals will provide a 'road map' for each individual child and young person's progress in their learning.

> Progression Steps will be described at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.

> Progression Step 5 will be available for young people who securely reach Progression Step 4 earlier than the end of Year 9, enabling them to extend and deepen their learning before they embark on qualifications. In due course, qualifications should be amended to articulate with Progression Steps 4 and 5.

> Initial Progression Steps should take full account of guidance on *Routes for Learning*, which should be reviewed in the new curriculum context.



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› The current system of levels is based on a best-fit judgement of overall attainment in a subject at a specific point in time. However, such best-fit judgements can mask wide variations in progress in different aspects of learning and amount to a view of general ability. Each Progression Step, in contrast, should be viewed as a staging post for the educational development of every child, not a judgement.

› Progression Steps will therefore be reference points and not universal expectations of the performance of all children and young people at fixed points.

› Some children and young people will demonstrate the necessary depth and security in their learning earlier and some later.

› Progression Steps will take the form of a range of Achievement Outcomes for each Area of Learning and Experience, spanning the components within the Area of Learning and Experience and Cross-curriculum Responsibility.

› The Achievement Outcomes will contribute to the four curriculum purposes. By signalling an emphasis on achievement in a broad sense, rather than only narrower measures of attainment, these outcomes broaden the scope of what we value in children and young people's learning.

› Achievement Outcomes may also include references to experiences that are relevant to the purposes and to which children and young people should be entitled although they may not necessarily be easily measured in conventional ways.

› Achievement Outcomes within each Area of Learning and Experience will include embedded literacy, numeracy, digital competences and wider skills as appropriate, as well as elements of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig.

› Drawing on experience in Scotland, Achievement Outcomes will be described from the learner's point of view, using terms like 'I have...' for experiences and 'I can...' for outcomes.

› The structure will be inclusive, with all children and young people making progress along the same continuum, regardless of any additional learning needs they may have, although they may move between Progression Steps more slowly or quickly than others. Because of the particular barriers that they face to their learning, some may take considerably longer to reach the first Progression Step or move between Steps. The significance of all such achievements should be recognised.

› There would be a duty on schools to provide a curriculum that enables most children and young people to reach, or go beyond, each Progression Step within the relevant three-year window.

› Progression Steps will also form the basis of assessment for learning, which is developed in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

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## Progression Steps



**Curriculum purposes**

> Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout life.
> Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a part in life and work.
> Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world.
> Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Depth  Complexity  Accomplishment  Responsibility

National qualifications

Nursery  Reception  Y1  Y2  Y3  Y4  Y5  Y6  Y7  Y8  Y9  Y10  Y11

Achievement Outcomes in all Areas of Learning and Experience

= Progression Steps 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are indicative of the likely progress of most children.

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## Progression recommendations

10. The new national curriculum should be organised as a continuum of learning from 3 to 16 without phases and key stages.

11. Progression should be described in relation to a continuum of learning in each Area of Learning and Experience from when a child enters education to the end of statutory schooling.

12. Progression should be signalled through Progression Steps at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.

13. The initial Progression Steps should take full account of guidance on *Routes for Learning*, which should be reviewed in the new curriculum context.

14. Progression Steps should be reference points, providing a 'road map' for each individual child and young person's progress in their learning and not universal expectations of the performance of all children and young people at fixed points.

15. There should be a duty on schools to provide a curriculum that enables most children and young people to reach, or go beyond, each Progression Step within the broad three-year window.

## Achievement Outcome recommendations

16. Achievement Outcomes should be developed for each Progression Step in each Area of Learning and Experience, spanning the components within the Area of Learning and Experience and addressing the Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills.

17. Achievement Outcomes should contribute clearly to the four curriculum purposes and should have an emphasis on achievement in a broad sense, rather than only narrower measures of attainment. They should include references to relevant experiences which contribute to the curriculum purposes and to which children and young people should be entitled.

18. Achievement Outcomes should be described from the learner's point of view, using terms like 'I have...' for experiences and 'I can...' for outcomes.

19. All children and young people should make progress along the same continuum, regardless of any additional learning needs they may have, although they may reach and move between Progression Steps more slowly or more quickly than others.

20. There should be a clear brief for the development of the Achievement Outcomes, as indicated in this report.

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# Progression within the Areas of Learning and Experience

Whatever reference points are used, it is essential that these are based upon sound understanding of how children progress in different kinds of learning and what they need to know and be able to do in order to move to the next stage securely. The Achievement Outcomes at each Progression Step will need to encapsulate the most important aspects of learning, take account of the ways in which children progress in different kinds of learning, and recognise what they need to be able to know and do in order to move securely to the next stage. The following are some illustrations of how Achievement Outcomes might indicate progression in each Area of Learning and Achievement.

In the **Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience** children and young people may demonstrate progression in their learning by, for example, displaying increasing skills and confidence in performance and extending their capacity to use digital media in creative ways.

In the **Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience** they may demonstrate progression through increasing competence in, and taking greater responsibility for, organising themselves, and through greater depth of knowledge and understanding about factors affecting their well-being and that of others.

In the **Humanities Area of Learning and Experience** they may demonstrate growing skill in analysing evidence and in understanding and explaining issues. They may broaden and deepen their understanding of different beliefs and their impact on believers.

In the **Languages, literacy and communication Area of Learning and Experience** they may develop increasing mastery of techniques that will enable them to communicate. They may demonstrate progression through the length, complexity and accuracy of written and spoken language, and show increasing confidence and capacity to converse about a widening range of topics in the Welsh language. They will be able to engage critically with increasingly challenging literary work.

In the **Mathematics and numeracy Area of Learning and Experience** they will gain an understanding of quantity and number and, for example, be able to explain increasingly abstract ideas in algebra, use increasingly sophisticated methods to analyse and present numerical information, draw on skills they have already learned when faced with new challenges, complete increasingly demanding calculations in relation to personal finance, and interpret the results.

In the **Science and technology Area of Learning and Experience** they will initially explore the world around them. They may demonstrate progression by being able to explain increasingly complex scientific contexts and concepts; analysing, presenting, interpreting and making deductions from increasingly complex evidence; increasing in independence and confidence when tackling challenging design tasks; developing increased dexterity and precision in practical skills; and engaging with increasingly complex aspects of computing.

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## The place of the Welsh language in the curriculum

Following the Education Reform Act 1988, Welsh became compulsory for every pupil at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 in 1990. From September 1999, compulsion was extended to Key Stage 4. The Welsh Language Development Area of Learning in the Foundation Phase for 3 to 7-year-olds has also meant that children in English-medium settings and schools start to learn the Welsh language from the age of three. More recently, the Welsh Government has shown its commitment to developing Wales as a bilingual nation through its Welsh Language Strategy[35].

The cultural, cognitive and practical benefits of learning Welsh as a living language provide a strong case for its inclusion as a compulsory element in the school curriculum. The factors that influence the formation and preservation of cultural identity are open to wide and heated debate but the central importance of language in that process would be generally accepted. In her foreword to *One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4* (2013), Professor Sioned Davies offers the view that 'The future of Welsh and Welsh culture is wholly dependent on transmitting the language to our young people'[36]. This report is not the place to rehearse the cultural arguments for preserving the Welsh language but the Review is happy to accept both the case for, and the national commitment to, that case and to recommend that the Welsh language be retained as a compulsory part of the school curriculum 3–16.



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[35]  Welsh Government (2012) *A living language: a language for living – Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17* Welsh Government

[36]  Welsh Government (2013) *One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4 – Report and recommendations* Welsh Government

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The possible cognitive benefits from being bilingual are referred to in the rationale for the Languages, literacy and communication Area of Learning and Experience. There are also increasingly strong pragmatic reasons for acquiring fluency in the language. The Welsh Language Commissioner reports a significant shortage of people in the workforce who can work effectively in both English and Welsh, particularly in health, social care and tourism. She emphasises that the greatest need in these particular areas is not for employees who have advanced qualifications in Welsh, but for people who can hold everyday conversations in Welsh with the patients and clients with whom they come into contact.

Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG) believes firmly that bilingualism is a real benefit and that it supports the learning of further languages and opens doors to children and young people as they move into the workplace. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 sets out a framework to introduce a duty on specified organisations to comply with standards to do with the Welsh language. In future, organisations in the public and private sector will, increasingly, require staff that can use Welsh confidently for a range of purposes in their jobs. All of these developments have implications for the curriculum.

Welsh Government policy is for the Welsh language to have a firm place in the curriculum in all schools for children and young people from 3 to 16. In our call for evidence, Welsh and bilingualism were frequently mentioned as strengths of the education system in Wales. However, evidence gathered during the Review suggests that provision and therefore standards in Welsh second language, are patchy. In the main, school leaders and teachers, particularly in primary schools, are committed to improving provision for and standards in Welsh. However, they acknowledge significant shortcomings in the Welsh language skills of the workforce and limited knowledge of second language teaching methodology.

Evidence seen by the Review suggests that standards in the Welsh language are generally strong in Welsh-medium schools. Estyn also found that, in the majority of English-medium schools, most children make suitable progress in speaking and listening to Welsh in the Foundation Phase, and that children have a positive attitude towards learning Welsh[37]. However, it is rare that this encouraging start continues into Key Stage 2 and beyond. Estyn also reports that there is less good practice in the learning of Welsh as a second language than in other subjects. The HMCI annual report shows that levels of children and young people's attainment in Welsh second language at GCSE are lower than in any other subject.

Professor Davies states that learning the language is '...a very tedious experience' for large numbers of young people and that '...they do not regard the subject as being relevant or of any value to them'[38]. Most children and young people do not feel that the current provision for learning Welsh at Key Stages 3 and 4 enables them to be confident to use Welsh outside Welsh lessons and certainly not outside school.

The Review has accepted the case to retain the Welsh language as a compulsory part of the school curriculum 3–16, but there are clearly quality issues to be addressed if it is to be fully accepted by children and young people, their parents

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[37] Estyn (2013) *Welsh language development in the Foundation Phase* Estyn

[38] Welsh Government (2013) *One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4 – Report and recommendations* Welsh Government

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and carers and many of their teachers. In particular, there is a need to build children and young people's confidence to use the language not only in lessons but also in activities and real-life situations outside the classroom and outside school.

Having considered all of the evidence presented to the Review, and in particular the wide-ranging recommendations in Professor Davies' report, the Review makes the following recommendations.

## 》》》 Recommendations

21. **The Welsh language should remain compulsory up to the age of 16.**

22. **There should be a renewed focus in schools on learning Welsh primarily as a means of communication, particularly oral communication and understanding.**

23. **Progression in the Welsh language towards transactional competence at age 16 should be appropriately reflected in the related Progression Steps and Achievement Outcomes.**

24. **The value attached to the Welsh language by children and young people, teachers, parents, carers and the public should be enhanced by strengthening the focus on its commercial value for the jobs market, the suggested cognitive benefits of bilingualism and its importance in enabling children and young people to achieve a good understanding of the cultural life of Wales in the past and present.**

25. **Investment in and improvements to provision and the raising of standards should focus on strengthening the language in primary schools in order to create solid foundations for learning in Welsh and other languages in secondary school. There will also be a need for support for secondary schools to enable them to improve and adjust their provision.**

26. **Welsh-medium schools should act as hubs for the Welsh language, to support teachers and practitioners in English-medium schools.**

27. **Systematic links should be established between schools and outside agencies that can support teaching, learning and the provision of resources in Welsh and modern foreign languages, including further and higher education providers and Mentrau Iaith.**

28. **Significantly better and more creative use should be made of technology in the teaching and learning of Welsh and also modern foreign languages.**

29. **The Welsh Government should realign Welsh language qualifications at 16 with the proposed focus on speaking and listening and application in the workplace.**

30. **Implications for enhancing competence in the Welsh language in the education workforce should be taken forward through the New Deal for the Education Workforce and Professor Furlong's review of teacher education.**

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# Choice

Choice is important in helping to engage children and young people in their learning. The curriculum purposes can be met in a wide variety of ways and allow for wide variations in the experiences of individual children and young people. Up to the age of 14, the presumption in the Review is that they will all be working towards successive Progression Steps within and across all the Areas of Learning and Experience. However, the spacing of the steps at three-yearly intervals allows for a measure of choice, for example in topics for research, within these intervals if the school sees that as appropriate. Similarly, teaching and learning methods can and should offer opportunities for children and young people to choose particular activities and experiences, again in line with the school's overall approach.

From about the age of 14 onwards, young people begin to specialise and make choices. Implicit in these recommendations is the notion that, irrespective of their choices, all young people between the ages of 14 to 16 should continue to have experiences and opportunities to study that promote the four purposes of education, as well as continue to develop their literacy skills, numeracy skills, digital competence and wider skills, in line with the requirements of the new Welsh Baccalaureate. Young people should have an entitlement to select courses and undertake activities from all the Areas of Learning and Experience based upon Achievement Outcomes at the relevant Progression Step, in ways that reflect the requirements of 14–19 Learning Pathways and the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. As far as possible, schools should provide each young person with experiences that reflect all of the Areas of Learning and Experience. Some of these programmes will lead to recognised qualifications but other planned activities may lead to other forms of achievement which may be recognised in different ways.

Although young people will choose some of their courses for the period from 14 to 16, there are some aspects of the curriculum that all young people should continue to study regardless of those choices. These aspects include those that reflect national priorities, such as the Welsh language, and health and well-being, those that are crucial to the future of the Welsh economy, such as science, and those such as RE that are important to achieving some of the characteristics of the four purposes that would not be achieved otherwise, and literacy, numeracy and digital competence.

> ### 〉〉〉 Recommendation
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> 31. **Between the ages of 14 and 16, all young people should select courses or undertake activities from each of the Areas of Learning and Experience, hence maintaining breadth and meeting national priorities, including science and health.**

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# **Chapter 5:** Pedagogy

Successful embedding of the Review's proposals on the purposes and structure of the curriculum will depend ultimately on what happens in classrooms. There is an increasingly powerful body of evidence about the central importance of good teaching to effective learning[39 40 41 42 43 44]. Taking full account of the implications for pedagogy, therefore, will be vital if the recommendations of this Review are to have the intended positive impact on learning and achievement. This chapter therefore addresses the fundamental interdependency between the purposes of the curriculum and pedagogy.

Pedagogy is about more than 'teaching' in the narrow sense of methods used in the classroom. It represents the considered selection of those methods in light of the purposes of the curriculum and the needs and developmental stage of the children and young people. It combines theoretical and practical knowledge and skills with fine judgement about what is required to promote effective learning in particular contexts. It lies at the heart of what it means to be an excellent teacher.

## **What are the implications for pedagogy of the Review's proposals?**

The elements of good teaching include in various ways: subject and methodological expertise; sound classroom craft skills; an understanding of the social and psychological factors that influence learning; and the ability to excite and inspire children to want to learn and to be able to learn independently. There is a risk that changes to curriculum structures can be interpreted as implying particular pedagogical approaches. To be clear, the recommendations of this Review do not imply an emphasis on any particular teaching approaches: decisions about teaching and learning are very context and purpose specific, and are best taken by teachers themselves. It would, therefore, not be appropriate for this Review to offer detailed prescriptions on teaching methods.

However, a number of pedagogical principles relate directly to the purposes outlined in Chapter 3 and the suggested curriculum and assessment arrangements[45].

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[39]   Donaldson, G (2011) *Teaching Scotland's Future: Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland* Scottish Government

[40]   Elmore, R F (2004) *School Reform from the Inside Out: Policy, Practice And Performance* Harvard Education Press

[41]   Hargreaves, A and Fullan, M (2012) *Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School* Teachers' College Columbia University

[42]   Hattie, J (2009) *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-analyses Relating to Achievement* Routledge

[43]   Payne, C M (2008) *So Much Reform So Little Change: The Persistence of Failure in Urban Schools* Harvard Educational Press

[44]   OECD (2005) *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* OECD

[45]   While the nature and content of the principles outlined here are different, the overall approach is similar to that of the Teaching and Learning Research Project's *Principles into practice: A teacher's guide to research evidence on teaching and learning* that was provided to schools by the Welsh Government in 2007.

## 1. Good teaching and learning maintains a consistent focus on the overall purposes of the curriculum

A central theme in the Review has been the need to be clear about the overall purposes that the curriculum is seeking to serve. That principle should apply equally to the selection of teaching and learning approaches. While it is difficult to maintain such a long-term focus on a day-to-day basis, it is important that the balance of experiences offered to children and young people is regularly reviewed in relation to the curriculum purposes.

The four curriculum purposes proposed by the Review will inevitably require a wide repertoire of teaching and learning approaches. By embedding the Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills in each Area of Learning and Experience the new structure gives clear signals about related teaching approaches. The intention is to release the creativity and energy of teachers to provide rich learning for children and young people.

## 2. Good teaching and learning challenges all learners by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting expectations that are high but achievable for them

The proposed Progression Steps should set expectations that challenge children and young people to have high personal aspirations and achievement. Teaching should proceed on optimistic assumptions about its ability to make a difference in ways that will encourage such high aspirations in all learners: 'Notions such as talent, ability and intelligence…are not sufficient to explain learning or achievement'[46]. Self-limiting beliefs about fixed 'potential' are difficult to alter and can have a profoundly negative effect on learning. The consistent message should be that sustained effort is integral to good learning and can lead to high achievement.

Praise and support are essential but the opportunity to make and learn from errors in the pursuit of challenging goals builds confidence and resilience. Teaching approaches that engage learners' interest in relation to goals that they see as worthwhile can release additional discretionary effort and a 'can do' attitude. Tests or examinations are often used to prompt such motivation but the skill of the good teacher lies in establishing in children and young people the more intrinsic satisfaction that comes from making the effort to address and succeed with challenging tasks. In that way, lifelong learning can become a matter of personal fulfilment as opposed to one-off responses to external demands.

All children and young people will encounter difficulties with learning of one kind or another at different points in their school careers. Such difficulties need to be

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[46] Hattie, J and Yates, G (2013) *Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn* Routledge

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identified early and addressed before they become entrenched. Early intervention is therefore an integral part of good teaching and learning.

## 3.   Good teaching and learning means employing a blend of approaches including direct teaching

Changes to the curriculum are often associated with moves to encourage particular approaches to teaching and learning. On the one hand, they can be seen as a reassertion of 'traditional' methods, sometimes described as 'direct teaching', while on the other hand they may be seen as favouring discovery learning or constructivism. Such polarisation fails to reflect the complexity of decisions about appropriate teaching and learning approaches. This Review, therefore, should not be regarded as falling into a particular 'camp'; rather, it implies the need for a broad repertoire of teaching and learning experiences that reflect the curriculum purposes.

A particular risk lies in direct teaching being caricatured as didactic, whole-class instruction. However, Hattie powerfully defines direct teaching as follows: 'The teacher decides the learning intentions and success criteria, makes them transparent to the students, demonstrates them by modelling, evaluates if they (the students) understand what they have been told by checking for understanding, and re-telling them what they have been told by tying it all together with closure'[47]. Its essence lies in clear purposes and success criteria, modelling and practice, and regular and insightful feedback. In this way, direct teaching involves the active engagement of the teacher in 'scaffolding' learning. Creating contexts within which learners can demonstrate the ability to apply learning independently in unfamiliar settings is an important part of that scaffolding.

## 4.   Good teaching and learning means employing a blend of approaches including those that promote problem solving, creative and critical thinking

The curriculum purposes give prominence to developing the ability of children and young people to critically evaluate information, make connections, develop deep conceptual understanding and transfer knowledge and skills to new situations to solve complex problems in a creative way[48]. Pedagogy that makes full use of wider skills within and across each Area of Learning and Experience, particularly problem solving, creative and critical thinking, is likely to activate such powerful learning for children and young people.

OECD suggests that the problem-solving process involves 'exploring and understanding' the problem and its context; 'representing and formulating'

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[47]   Hattie, J (2009) *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-analyses Relating to Achievement* Routledge

[48]   OECD (2008) *Innovating to Learn, Learning to Innovate* OECD

information gathered to create hypotheses; 'planning and executing' investigations, identifying success criteria; and 'monitoring and reflecting' on progress and outcomes[49]. Creative and critical thinking are an essential part of problem solving[50], providing processes for analysis, synthesis and evaluation of ideas and products, and making unique connections between or among them. Such creativity relies heavily on access to high-quality authentic information from a range of subject disciplines that act as a catalyst for innovation.

In order to fully engage with learning, children and young people require rich, stimulating environments where they can explore and experiment with ideas and resources, collaborate actively with their peers and make dynamic connections with a clear sense of purpose to construct meaning.

Good teaching in the context of the Review's curriculum proposals will reinforce and extend the application of wider skills and be able to identify activities and strategies that can promote problem solving, critical and creative thinking and ensure that these processes can be monitored and assessed to ensure positive learning outcomes.



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[49] Explanations for each of these can be found in OECD (2013), *Pisa 2012 Assessment and Analytical Framework Mathematics, Reading, Science, Problem Solving and Financial Literacy* OECD

[50] ibid. OECD (2013)

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## 5. Good teaching and learning sets tasks and selects resources that build on previous knowledge and experience and engage interest

The strong emphasis on progression advocated by the Review means that teachers will need to set tasks and select resources that build on previous knowledge and experience and engage interest. Children and young people arrive at school with different aspirations, interests and experiences and so will approach learning in their own particular way. A one-size-fits-all approach to learning will not meet this wide range of needs. At the same time, however, we must be careful not to assume too much about our ability to identify such needs and wants and be alive to the danger of separating children into potentially superficial groupings.

The Progression Steps proposed by the Review will provide a context within which teachers can select teaching and learning approaches that build from one step to the next but that still provide significant freedom to offer engaging experiences that match their children and young people's needs.

## 6. Good teaching and learning creates authentic contexts for learning

The curriculum purposes and Progression Steps will reinforce the need to make learning meaningful and authentic. Mick Waters describes good teaching as bringing 'the world into range'[51]. It is important that children and young people see the relevance in their learning to the world beyond the school gates and that opportunities are taken to forge links to that world. Many schools already recognise the need to go beyond their own expertise and have forged strong links with outside bodies and individuals. The Welsh Government has encouraged outside agencies to work with schools. Visits and visitors can help to bring abstract learning to life. Similarly, the internet opens up immense possibilities to access resources, explore sources and engage with real-life issues.

Performance in its widest sense is also part of creating authenticity. Leadership skills can be fostered in classroom roles as well as through more formal participation in clubs and societies. The application of learning can and should be demonstrated in talks, debates, plays, choirs and so on – whatever form can best bring out the application of what has been learned in ways that are appropriate and not contrived.

## 7. Good teaching and learning means employing assessment for learning principles

Assessment for learning is explored in greater depth in Chapter 6 but it is as relevant to good teaching and learning as it is to assessment. An assessment for learning approach provides practitioners with insight into the effectiveness of

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[51]  Waters, M (2013) *Thinking Allowed on Schooling* Independent Thinking Press

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learning and involves providing regular and meaningful feedback and adapting teaching and materials to meet the needs of individuals. It also helps learners raise standards and nurture ambition: learning can be particularly powerful when learners are given feedback that helps them to think through the issues and provides them with guidance on next steps. Similarly, peer collaboration and feedback can provide a safe environment to articulate and test ideas.

Dylan Wiliam has suggested that effective teacher assessment can 'double' the rate of learning – that is, if implemented appropriately it could result in learners making what had previously been one year's progress within six months[52]. According to Wiliam, implementation of assessment for learning strategies is relatively straightforward; the challenge is to change practitioner behaviour to embed assessment for learning practices consistently into classroom practice.

## 8. Good teaching and learning ranges within and across Areas of Learning and Experience

One of the defining features of twenty-first century education will be the capacity to make connections and transfer knowledge and understanding across different contexts in order to address unfamiliar problems[53]. As indicated earlier, the Areas of Learning and Experience in the proposed curriculum should not be seen as distinct entities or timetabled subject areas, nor should the Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills be developed in isolation. Instead they should all be seen as promoting connections and unity within and between the Areas of Learning and Experience. Artificial connections would render the exercise meaningless, but if powerful connections within and between Areas of Learning and Experience can be found they are likely to improve and reinforce learning in the constituent disciplines. Pedagogical approaches that allow connections to be made via common questions, concepts or skills should be explored within and across Areas of Learning and Experience.

## 9. Good teaching and learning regularly reinforces Cross-curriculum Responsibilities, including literacy, numeracy and digital competence, and provides opportunities to practise them

The Review proposals will see the Cross-curriculum Responsibilities of Literacy, numeracy and digital competence, together with the wider skills, embedded in the Areas of Learning and Experience. Following consultation, the Welsh Government has embedded literacy and numeracy in existing subjects and Areas of Learning. In due course, this work will require revision to take account of the revised curriculum structure. However, the principle of embedding will remain. The proposed digital competence framework and the wider skills will similarly

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[52] www.journeytoexcellence.org.uk/videos/expertspeakers/assessmentforlearningdylanwiliam.asp

[53] OECD (2013) *Innovative Learning Environments* Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing

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be embedded in the Achievement Outcomes, identifying opportunities for application as part of the teaching and learning process.

The challenge for teaching posed by the Cross-curriculum Responsibilities will be to maintain the focus on these responsibilities within teaching and learning so that their application becomes natural and authentic rather than an add-on.

## 10. Good teaching and learning encourages children and young people to take increasing responsibility for their own learning

The curriculum purposes stress the need to develop the confidence and capacity to learn throughout life. The development of such capacities will be strongly influenced by how children and young people are taught. Learners need to become involved in planning their own learning through discussions about where they have reached and how they can best be supported to achieve future aspirations.

Metacognition, or 'learning to learn', can help learners to take greater control of their own learning[54]. Metacognition involves the knowledge that an individual has about the way they and other people think, and knowing when and how to apply skills/strategies to support learning in different situations. It also involves the ability to think strategically and use a structure (for example planning, monitoring and evaluating) to achieve a goal or solve a problem. In order to become capable learners, children and young people need to be able to stand back and observe their own process of learning, and identify how it can be improved. Working with practitioners and peers can help learners to hone their metacognitive skills because collaboration provides them with an opportunity to talk about their thinking processes, compare them with others and refine their learning skills as a result. This makes children and young people active participants in the learning process with an understanding of how to learn and how to create the best conditions for their own learning.

Some learners may require more support, more examples, more practice and so on, but it remains important that, wherever possible, they take responsibility for their own learning and set themselves ambitious goals. The essence of personalised learning lies in interactions between teachers and children and young people and among the children and young people themselves. Such interactions should be characterised by flexibility in approach and responsiveness to emerging needs.

## 11. Good teaching and learning supports social and emotional development and positive relationships

A 2013 OECD report suggests that '... learning cannot – and should not – be understood as a purely cognitive activity: practitioners need to be aware of and responsive to students' emotions and motivations in order for successful learning

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[54]  Sutton Trust, Education Endowment Foundation website at
     http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/meta-cognitive-and-self-regulation-strategies/

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to happen... They need to feel competent to do what is expected of them and learn better when they experience positive emotions'[55].

Pedagogy that supports social and emotional aspects of learning is important across every aspect of the curriculum and is integral to pursuing the curriculum purposes. It is also an important aspect of the definition of the curriculum adopted by the Review: the climate for learning is part of the learning experience. Approaches that support learners' social and emotional well-being provide opportunities for the development of emotional intelligence and metacognition. Learners can thus reflect on their own learning and understand the positive impact that they might have on the learning of others.

## 12. Good teaching and learning encourages collaboration

The ability to function effectively as a member of a team is one of the key skills regularly cited by employers as essential in the modern workplace and is an important feature of the Review's proposals. Cooperative learning is also important in its own right. Hattie's research is unequivocal in concluding that, '...cooperative learning is effective'[56]. He cites a range of research evidence that highlights the positive effects of peer learning on motivation, problem solving and achievement. In this context, feedback from peers is particularly powerful and good planning and teaching will create structured contexts for that to take place constructively.



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55  OECD (2013) *Innovative Learning Environments* Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing

56  Hattie, J (2009) *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-analyses Relating to Achievement* Routledge

> **》》》 Recommendations**
>
> 32. All teaching and learning should be directed to achieving the four curriculum purposes.
>
> 33. Teachers should apply the pedagogical principles identified in this report when planning their teaching and learning, to ensure that the activities relate directly to the curriculum purposes.
>
> 34. Children and young people should have opportunities to learn from expertise and experience from outside the school.

Sound pedagogy will be an integral part of the successful implementation of the Review's proposals on curriculum and assessment. It means much more than the implementation of a pre-determined repertoire of methods and requires high-quality teachers with a sound understanding of the 'why' and 'how' of teaching as well as the 'what'. The implications for the formation and subsequent growth of teachers as reflective practitioners are considerable. The implementation of the Review's proposals, therefore, will be intimately associated with the Welsh Government's New Deal for the Education Workforce and wider questions of teacher education being taken forward by Professor John Furlong.

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# **Chapter 6:** Assessment

The Review was asked to address both the curriculum and the assessment arrangements in Wales, in recognition both of the vital role of assessment in children and young people's learning and of weaknesses in the current assessment arrangements. This chapter considers the evidence about the efficacy of current arrangements and what needs to happen to improve assessment. It also considers the implications for assessment of the proposed purposes and structure of the curriculum, taking account of the pedagogical principles for pedagogy outlined in the previous chapter.

## **Current arrangements**

Developments in education policy in Wales have seen major changes to both assessment and accountability arrangements in recent years. The Welsh Government has shown consistent support for the kind of assessment for learning approach referred to in the previous chapter[57]. Following the publication of *Learning Pathways through statutory assessment: Key Stages 2 and 3*[58], Wales gave teachers the main responsibility for pupil assessment up to the end of Key Stage 3. Judgements are made on a 'best-fit' basis in relation to defined levels. Guidance has been provided to support teachers in making such judgements. Results are published and are also gathered centrally by the Welsh Government which then uses them for a variety of monitoring and informational purposes. More recently, children and young people's progress in reading and numeracy has been tested annually from Years 2 to 9 and teachers also assess children and young people's progress in meeting expectations in the LNF. The Welsh Government does not publish league tables of school performance.

The Welsh Government has acknowledged weaknesses in its assessment framework and that assessment for learning approaches are not well understood and embedded[59]. Its educational improvement plan recognises that there is a need to provide the kind of high-quality feedback that comes from good formative assessment – assessment for the purpose of informing the next steps in teaching and learning by identifying whether children and young people are progressing as intended – if the achievements of children and young people in Wales are to improve.

Concern about the assessment of children and young people's learning was reflected in the recent OECD[60] report on Welsh education that identified the

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[57] Welsh Government (2010) *Making the Most of Assessment 7–14* Welsh Government

[58] Daugherty et al. (2004) *Learning Pathways through statutory assessment: Key Stages 2 and 3* Crown Copyright

[59] Welsh Government (2014) *Qualified for life: An education improvement plan for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* Welsh Government

[60] OECD (2014) *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective* OECD Paris

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need to '...Ensure that student assessments support learning for all and align to national objectives'. The HMCI annual report for 2012–2013 indicates that the most common recommendation in inspection reports is about the need to improve teacher assessment, with nearly 40 per cent of schools inspected having this as a significant area for improvement. Even in schools with good inspection outcomes overall, assessment is frequently identified as a shortcoming. Similarly, the *Curriculum for Wales: Consultation on proposals for revised curriculum and assessment arrangements for Wales – Phase 1: Literacy, numeracy and wider skills* (2013) suggested strongly that assessment arrangements were confusing and no longer fit for purpose.

The evidence gathered for this Review supports these conclusions. Dissatisfaction with current assessment arrangements was one of the strongest messages we received. For example, the report on our call for evidence highlighted in relation to one aspect of assessment that the National Reading and Numeracy Tests express results as standardised scores, Foundation Phase uses outcomes, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 use levels, and Key Stage 4 measures attainment using grades. Some of the statutory assessment requirements take place at the end of a phase or key stage, while others are annual. At Key Stage 4 there are no statutory assessment arrangements, but schools are still required to report progress to parents and carers. There is a need to establish a coherent and consistent approach to assessment in Wales[61].

The Welsh Government is currently undertaking a consultation on proposals for improving teacher assessment which, taken with the recommendations in this report, should make an important contribution to improving the validity and reliability of teacher assessment in Wales.

## What needs to happen?

Evidence gathered in the course of the Review points to a number of requirements for change in order to improve assessment in Welsh education, to address current weaknesses and to ensure that the assessment arrangements support the purposes of education.

Assessment arrangements should:

❯ align assessment with the purposes of learning: assess what matters

❯ be clear about the reasons for assessment and plan in advance for the intended uses of assessment results

❯ promote the use of a wide range of techniques that are appropriate to their purpose

❯ engage students in their own assessment

❯ ensure that reports to parents and carers focus on progress

❯ be as light-touch as possible and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy

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[61] Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) (2015) *Successful Futures: Analysis of questionnaire responses – Final Report* Welsh Government

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> ❯ use assessment evidence systematically and in combination with other evidence to inform school self-evaluation

> ❯ address the implications of good assessment practice for teacher capacity

> ❯ form a coherent, agreed assessment and evaluation framework with a clear vision and strategy based on all of the above.

Each of these elements is explored in turn in the following.

## 1. Align assessment with the purposes of learning: assess what matters

The validity of any assessment rests on its relationship to the purposes and intended outcomes of the teaching and learning process. The challenge is to establish a clear line of sight from the overall purposes of the curriculum as a whole through to learning intentions in the classroom on a day-to-day basis.

The existing national curriculum has no explicit overall guiding purposes and its organisation into subjects and levels (beyond the Foundation Phase) has tended to compromise the validity of assessment. Learning in each subject is described differently and a best-fit approach to the assessment of levels opens up wide disparities in the weightings given to different aspects of children and young people's achievement. Best-fit provides only limited information about actual achievement as a strong performance in one aspect of a subject may mask a weaker performance elsewhere.

The Review proposals are designed to strengthen the relationship between overall purpose, curriculum and lesson planning, and assessment, and to encourage a focus on progression. A fundamental Review principle is that the curriculum structure and associated assessment arrangements should give expression to the four overall curriculum purposes. This is achieved using the six Areas of Learning and Experience as vehicles for organising relevant knowledge, skills and dispositions. The Achievement Outcomes at each of the five proposed Progression Steps are similarly defined with reference to the four curriculum purposes. The clear purposes, smaller set of curriculum organisers and defined Progression Steps will provide a more coherent basis for learning, teaching and also assessment.

Many of the most worthwhile intentions for children and young people's learning will be difficult to assess. Assessment must provide relevant and proportionate information about progress and success in relation to all the intended outcomes. Overemphasis on a small range of outcomes (especially when they are linked to high-stakes assessment) risks narrowing the curriculum and there is evidence that this is the case in significant numbers of schools in Wales. The validity of assessment derives from what it says about learning in relation to the purposes of the learning. It is important to stress, however, that the extent of the assessment should always be proportionate to its benefits.

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>>> **Recommendations**

35. Assessment arrangements should ensure that all important learning intentions and progression in relation to the four curriculum purposes are covered by relevant and proportionate assessment.

36. Assessment arrangements should be based upon the intentions set out in the Achievement Outcomes at each Progression Step within each Area of Learning and Experience.

## 2. Be clear about the reasons for assessment and plan in advance for the intended uses of assessment results

Assessment requires careful advance planning. Such a statement may appear obvious at first sight, but in practice assessment is often informal and may only be considered formally towards the end of a sequence of teaching, often in the form of a test or assignment for reporting purposes.

Dylan Wiliam describes assessment as the bridge between teaching and learning[62]. There is no automatic relationship between what is taught and what is learned and we can only find out what actual learning has taken place through sound assessment. The evidence from those assessments can be used formatively to determine what the next steps should be or summatively to give an account of what has been learned. The same assessment evidence can be used for either purpose – it is not the means of assessment but the use made of assessment data that distinguishes one from the other. It is important to be clear about those uses from the outset and to build assessment into the teaching and learning process.

Formative assessment should be an essential and natural part of the teaching process and not an additional 'bolt-on'. The characteristics of effective formative assessment are outlined in the work of Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam[63] and are also clearly set out in documents such as The Assessment Reform Group's principles of assessment for learning[64] or, more recently, the Welsh Government's *How to develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom* (2010)[65]. They include: planning effectively; having clear purposes; understanding the factors influencing learning; making flexible use of different techniques; seeing assessment as an ongoing and constructive part of classroom practice; sharing assessment criteria; early identification of difficulties in learning; giving effective and timely feedback and support to students that focuses on improving learning; and promoting self- and peer assessment.

The characteristics of good-quality summative assessment are similar but with a stronger focus on assessing the cumulative nature of what has been learned at appropriate points in a course or series of lessons. Summative assessment

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[62]  Wiliam, D (2011) *Embedded Formative Assessment* Solution Tree Press

[63]  Black, PJ and Wiliam, D (1998) *Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards through classroom assessment* Granada Learning

[64]  Assessment Reform Group (2002) *Assessment for Learning: 10 principles* Assessment Reform Group

[65]  Welsh Government (2010) *How to develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom* Welsh Government

may require children and young people to draw together different aspects of what they have learned over a period of time. There is likely to be a greater emphasis on recording procedures that enable teachers to keep track of each child and young person's learning, without feeling obliged to record everything. It may be more important in summative assessment to minimise the variations in the standards applied by different teachers and also the possibility of biased judgements. It is also important that schools act in a planned, considered way on the summative assessments received from teachers and communicate information about progress to parents and carers appropriately[66].

The OECD report points out that 'In all student assessment systems, there is a need for clear external reference points in terms of expected levels of student performance at different levels of education'[67]. The Achievement Outcomes for each Progression Step will provide the context for planning and assessment to which the OECD refers and are intended as long-term reference points. They have been set deliberately at three-yearly intervals so as to allow teachers to plan and assess learning without constant reference to externally determined criteria.

A further use of assessment information, beyond formative and summative purposes, is for accountability and external monitoring of progress. A major OECD report on evaluation and assessment cautions that '…high-stakes uses of evaluation and assessment results might lead to distortions in the education process…', and that '…it is important to design the accountability uses of evaluation and assessment results in such a way these undesirable effects are minimised'[68].

The Review supports the analysis and conclusions of the OECD report. The implications for accountability will be discussed in Chapter 7 but it is important to confirm here that the prime purpose for assessment should be to provide information that can guide decisions about how best to progress children and young people's learning and to report to their parents and carers on that progress. By so doing, assessment should improve children and young people's learning, teachers' teaching and parents' and carers' understanding.

>>> **Recommendation**

**37. Assessment arrangements should give priority to their formative role in teaching and learning.**

## 3. Promote the use of a wide range of techniques that are appropriate to their purpose

If assessment is to be applied to all the curriculum purposes, across a very wide range of skills, knowledge and disposition, it follows that teachers will need to use a wide repertoire of assessment techniques matched to the different outcomes. Any learning activity can and should be observed to determine whether or not the desired learning has taken place.

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[66] Teaching and Learning Research Programme and the Assessment Reform Group (2009) *Assessment in schools: Fit for purpose? A Commentary by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme* TLRP

[67] OECD (2013) *Synergies for Better Learning: An International Perspective on Evaluation and Assessment* OECD

[68] ibid. OECD (2013)

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The *Making the most of assessment 7–14*[69] document sets out some useful principles for effective assessment. In particular, assessment information needs to be valid (that is, is it actually assessing what it purports to assess?), reliable (it would produce the same results when applied with similar groups of children and young people), manageable and meaningful for all – that is for children and young people, teachers, parents, carers and other audiences. It goes on to say that school assessment systems should incorporate and use information in different forms, and that the system should recognise that different audiences have different information needs. Effective systems use qualitative information, such as commentaries from teachers and children and young people, and quantitative information, such as outcomes, grades, levels and that derived from tests. It also notes that the information from assessment activities helps to provide a shared language for discussing progress and improvement.

Much of what is required for assessment can be gathered using familiar techniques and approaches: probing, open oral and written questioning that is designed to test understanding and to guide the next steps in learning; well-judged individual and group tasks; assignments; quizzes; tests; essays; projects, etc. More imaginative approaches include performance-related assessments involving, for example, role play, practical experiments, presentations, portfolios, etc. The scope to use digital recording more widely, for example drawing on current practice in special schools to show successful completion of learning targets, should be explored.

Teacher assessment has the potential to have high validity because it can cover the full breadth of the intended learning, can relate to and be embedded in coursework and can take place on a regular or even continuous basis. However, that validity is highly dependent on the teacher's capacity to design assessments that reflect the learning goals and that can be a complex and time-consuming task. As a result teacher assessments can fall short in reflecting the breadth and purposes of learning, particularly in doing justice to more complex knowledge and skills. Teachers are therefore likely to need support, through both professional development and exemplars, if the full contribution of assessment is to be realised.

In some aspects of assessment – notably when the results from different classes or schools are brought together or compared, for example for school improvement purposes – reliability assumes greater importance. Teachers may apply different marking standards, and there may be variations in performance conditions and unconscious bias, and so there can be an issue with the reliability of such assessments. Where necessary, this can be addressed though teachers working

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[69]  Welsh Government (2010) *Making the Most of Assessment 7–14* Welsh Government

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together to agree standards and moderate the results. However, where assessment is for learning rather than reporting, issues of reliability are of less importance.

Testing, both multiple-choice and open-response, is an important element in the repertoire of assessment techniques. Regular classroom testing is a long-established feature of teaching and learning. The construction of tests that do more than focus on recall and simple application is, however, both complex and time-consuming. Care must be taken to ensure that, where it is appropriate, tests cover the breadth of intended learning and that they are seen as only one of a number of ways of informing the teaching and learning process. Too often tests are invested with an authority that does not reflect their limited contribution to assessing what matters.

External, standardised testing has the merit of high reliability but may have only limited validity in its relationship to the breadth of intended learning. As indicated earlier, every child and young person currently undertakes National Reading and Numeracy Tests every year from Year 2 to Year 9. Many of those who engaged with the Review saw the tests as a useful complement to teacher assessment that could provide benchmarks to support teaching and learning. However, teachers of younger children in particular felt that their usefulness was limited and did not necessarily merit the disruption to teaching and learning, and in some cases the levels of anxiety, which they generated. In addition, the OECD report[70] raised the issue that Wales is the only country that conducts national tests of this nature on an annual basis. As discussed later in this report, there is scope to revise the current arrangements to reduce the negative impact of these tests while retaining their useful functions.

Internationally, there are interesting developments in testing. Adaptive testing adjusts the difficulty in a sequence of questions to take account of the pattern of responses. Thus a sequence of correct answers would lead to a more complex track while those having difficulty would be directed down a less complex route. The start-up costs of such an approach can be considerable and they pose technical challenges in determining relative levels of question difficulty with any precision, but it would be important to explore the potential to use this approach. Advances in digital technology, drawing partly on computer gaming techniques, are opening up fresh possibilities for more interactive assessment. Simulations, for example, can allow quite sophisticated assessment of complex learning. Denmark has been using adaptive testing for a number of years and the Netherlands and Northern Ireland are also exploring its possibilities.

The Review's recommended focus, through curriculum purposes, on a wide range of skills, competences, knowledge and dispositions will inevitably pose challenges for assessment. Developments in a range of countries are important indicators of how such broader competences might be assessed[71]. Australia's online diagnostic tool, New Zealand's National Educational Monitoring Project, Finland's 'learning to learn' programme, France's Personal Competency Booklet and the Flemish Community of Belgium's non-cognitive learning tools are a few of such examples. In different ways, they are all seeking to create assessment tools and techniques that extend the range of competences that can be validly and reliably assessed.

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[70] OECD (2014) *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective* OECD Paris
[71] ibid. OECD (2014)

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Recent developments in Singapore are particularly relevant to the Review's proposals. Singapore, a high performer on PISA tests, wants to strengthen the focus of its curriculum and assessment arrangements on creativity and problem solving. The focus is on integrative tasks requiring knowledge and skills from different subject domains. Students must work collaboratively and make written reports and oral presentations. Assessment relates to both process and product and is carried out by classroom teachers against centrally specified criteria. Evaluations of the success of this work are mixed, however, with strong messages about the importance of effective and sustained professional development[72].

## Recommendations

38. **A wide range of assessment techniques, selected on 'fit-for-purpose' criteria, should be used to reflect the breadth of the curriculum purposes.**

39. **Teacher assessment, which allows a wide range of learning to be covered, should remain as the main vehicle for assessment before qualifications.**

40. **Where the results of assessment are to be used for purposes of comparison, issues of reliability in teacher assessment should be addressed through effective moderation; where the prime purpose of assessment is assessment for learning there is less of a need for reliability between schools.**

41. **Teachers should use tests as an important part of overall assessment arrangements but the limitations of such tests in covering the full range of desired learning should be recognised.**

42. **External, standardised testing provides important benchmarking information and should be used in combination with school tests and teacher assessment. Its frequency should be kept to a minimum in view of its impact on the curriculum and teaching and learning.**

43. **Innovative approaches to assessment, including interactive approaches, should be developed drawing on the increasing potential contribution of digital technology.**

## 4. Engage students in the assessment process through both self-assessment and peer assessment

If children and young people are to develop the capacity to learn throughout life, they need to be able to reflect and diagnose their own progress and further learning needs. That means developing the skills of self-assessment and the disposition to deploy and act on those skills. Self-assessment is therefore an important way of helping children and young people to take more responsibility for their own learning. By reflecting on their understanding and performance in relation to clear criteria, they can identify areas of difficulty that might not be easily seen by an external observer. Children and young people can also introduce additional evidence of performance in relation to the four broad curriculum purposes that can provide a more rounded picture of progress.

[72] OECD (2014) *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective* OECD Paris

Peer assessment involves children and young people assessing one another's work in pairs or in groups. Thinking about the performance of others can be an important learning experience for the person undertaking the assessment as it requires a depth of understanding of the nature of the learning itself in order to make such evaluations. The approach may also elicit different kinds of response, reflecting the more relaxed nature of the context and the likely greater familiarity with the language used for questioning.

The proposed form of the Achievement Outcomes that are written in 'I can...' and 'I have...' format lends itself to being adapted to a language that children and young people can understand and could, for example, be extended to include their own 'I now need to...' contributions. They should also provide longer-term learning objectives that can be shared with children and young people, and success criteria to guide self-assessment and peer assessment.

There is also significant scope for exploring the role that children and young people might play in the process of reporting to their parents or carers: with that intended audience, children and young people can outline their achievements and difficulties and identify what they intend to do next.

>>> **Recommendations**

44. **Both self-assessment and peer assessment should be developed as ways of encouraging children and young people to take greater responsibility for their own learning.**

45. **Reporting to parents and carers on progress in learning should include contributions from their children in relation to their own achievements and aspirations.**



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## 5. Ensure that records of achievement and reporting focus on progress against important learning goals, including the four broad curriculum purposes

In addition to the ongoing assessment which takes place as part of the normal classroom routine, children and young people and parents and carers need to be given more summative views of their progress, achievements and next steps when appropriate.

Parents and carers need regular information to find out how well their children are doing and show how they can support them in improving their learning. The Achievement Outcomes and Progression Steps will provide the context for this reporting, and reports should include an evaluation of children's achievements and progress for each Area of Learning and Experience and Cross-curriculum Responsibility, as well as what they need to do next to progress further. Reports should also include more holistic evidence of how children are developing towards the purposes, drawing on relevant achievements not directly arising from classroom learning. Increasingly, the use of digital media can allow more frequent feedback and also has the benefit of encouraging parents and carers to become more directly engaged with their children's learning.

Cumulative records of each child or young person's achievements can encourage a continuing focus on progress in learning and also allow wider achievements relating to the curriculum purposes to be captured and highlighted. Personal e-portfolios and 'e-badges' that mark notable achievements can be built up as they move through the system and can provide such a record. Such portfolios can be developed and 'owned' by the children and young people themselves, and can contribute to developing their digital competence. They could contain information about any test outcomes, progression in relation to each Area of Learning and Experience and Cross-curriculum Responsibility, statements about progress towards the four purposes, extra-curricular achievements and so on.

Teachers need to have straightforward ways of tracking individual children and young people's progress in ways that show progress over time and across the curriculum, including information from assessments that draw together different aspects of what children and young people have learned over a period of time and where they are asked to apply what they have learned to new contexts.

At major transitions, for example between infant and junior schools and primary and secondary schools, there needs to be more face-to-face discussion between teachers and with individuals about their strengths and weaknesses, and less reliance on simply transferring data. The progress of all children and young people needs to be considered at these transition points, not only those who need additional support. The proposed portfolio could play a key role in underpinning and facilitating these discussions.

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> **Recommendations**

46. Summative reporting to parents and carers should include holistic assessments of achievement in relation to the curriculum purposes, drawing on experience from beyond the formal classroom.

47. Children and young people should develop their own e-portfolio, possibly including 'e-badges', to record key achievements and experiences.

48. Summative reporting at key transition points should be supported by portfolio evidence and face-to-face discussions involving the relevant teaching staff.

49. Increased use of digital media should be explored to help to improve the immediacy of feedback to parents and carers and engage them more directly in supporting learning.

## 6. Be as light-touch as possible and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy

Much teacher assessment does not take additional time, because it consists of observation and the ongoing dialogue within the classroom. Other aspects do require careful planning, time for children to undertake the assessments, marking, feedback and recording. In arriving at plans for assessment a balance needs to be struck between the more informal, ongoing forms of assessment and more formal assessment activities. Over-elaborate arrangements for assessment eat into teachers' and children and young people's time. Judgement about what aspects of learning should be formally assessed and to what extent, what needs to be recorded and in what level of detail, and how much assessment information is sufficient to be able to gauge progress in learning, will therefore be very important.

> **Recommendation**

50. Local and national policies and practices for assessment should be carefully designed to be as light-touch as possible, while giving sufficient information to assess progress, and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

## 7. Use assessment evidence systematically and in combination with other evidence to inform school self-evaluation

School self-evaluation should make a vital contribution to raising the quality of education and standards of achievement. Teachers and leaders at all levels need regular information from the assessment recording system to track the progress of individuals and groups of children and young people. This should have as its prime purpose the identification of any particular successes and challenges within the school as a whole, but it will also be a valuable source of evidence for

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evaluating the impact of teaching, the curriculum, leadership and management. Leaders and governors need this information to inform their evaluations of the progress of the school and to set future priorities for improvement.

Together with other sources of evidence such as observations of classroom activities and performance data, Progression Steps and their Achievement Outcomes can be used to develop a picture about the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

In addition, there is a requirement for assessment information that can inform monitoring of national performance. This aspect is addressed in Chapter 7.

>>> **Recommendation**

**51. Schools should use teacher assessment of progression systematically, together with other sources of evidence, to inform their self-evaluation for school improvement purposes.**

## 8. Take full account of the implications of good assessment practice for teacher capacity

The ability to assess learning, particularly the application of complex learning, places heavy demands on teachers' professional skills. Yet assessment is rarely the focus of sustained professional development, either in initial teacher education or in subsequent career-long learning. Effective teaching and learning requires a deep and secure understanding of the curriculum and of the roles of both formative and summative assessment together with the skills associated with designing and interpreting the wide range of techniques that good assessment demands.

The review of teacher education currently being undertaken by Professor John Furlong provides an important opportunity to address the significant implications of assessment practice for teachers' professional skills.

>>> **Recommendation**

**52. Initial and career-long professional learning programmes should include elements that build teachers' capacity to assess the full range of curriculum purposes and Achievement Outcomes.**

## 9. Form a coherent, agreed assessment and evaluation framework with a clear vision and strategy

The need for a nationally agreed assessment and evaluation framework is one of the key policy recommendations of the major international review of assessment and evaluation undertaken by the OECD[73]. The absence of such a framework in Wales has contributed to the confusion surrounding existing approaches.

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[73]  OECD (2013) *Synergies for Better Learning: An International Perspective on Evaluation and Assessment* OECD

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In line with the wider Review proposals, the framework should '...aim to align curriculum, teaching and assessment around key learning goals and include a range of different assessment approaches and formats...'[74]. It should be clear about the formative and summative roles of assessment and distinguish between those activities whose place lies in learning and teaching and those that will contribute to self-evaluation, external accountability and national monitoring. In particular, it should explain how the components of the assessment framework address issues of validity and reliability in the methods used.

>>> **Recommendation**

**53. The Welsh Government should establish a comprehensive assessment and evaluation framework in line with the recommendations of this report.**

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[74]  OECD (2013) *Synergies for Better Learning: An International Perspective on Evaluation and Assessment* OECD

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# Chapter 7: Implications

This chapter considers in more detail some of the implications of the Review's recommendations for subsequent implementation.

## Implications for nursery, primary and secondary schools

The recommended changes to curriculum and assessment made by the Review provide a new way of thinking about the education of children and young people throughout the period of schooling. They present primary and secondary schools jointly with greater scope to plan and provide a curriculum and an approach to assessment that builds progressively from ages 3–16. They offer teachers fresh opportunities to provide interesting and challenging learning experiences for their children and young people. Additionally, if embedded effectively, they will provide children and young people with a deeper, more satisfying and relevant educational experience and wider recognition of their achievements.

Some of the possibilities offered by the new arrangements are illustrated below.

### Nursery and primary

Nursery and primary school leaders identified the ethos, principles and pedagogy of the current Foundation Phase as a significant strength of current educational practice in Wales. A curriculum based on Areas of Learning and Experience instead of subjects will enable schools to build on successful 'Foundation' practice into the middle and later years of primary education and beyond. A few schools have already extended the 'Foundation' philosophy and pedagogy into the 7–11 age range in this way. Often they have found it successful in increasing children and young people's engagement and removing the subject barriers that are often seen as inhibitors to creativity and flexibility in the curriculum.

In schools and settings where 'Foundation' practice is good or excellent and teachers and practitioners think and plan creatively to enable all children to experience all aspects of the current Foundation Phase Areas of Learning over time, the new curriculum may not feel significantly different. Naturally, planning will need to take into account the new Areas of Learning and Experience in place of the current Areas of Learning, but in successful settings and schools there should not be a need for a huge shift in thinking or practice. However, evidence from recent evaluations suggests that there is still some way to go to establish high-quality 'Foundation' philosophy and practice and necessary improvements in children's learning in all schools.

There are likely to be more changes for teachers in the 7–11 age range (currently called Key Stage 2). Instead of feeling pressured to cover all subjects of the curriculum every week and doing so inadequately, as many teachers say they do, they will be able to think more flexibly and creatively about planning learning experiences for their children and young people. With less specific content,

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children and young people will be entitled to encounter a range of learning and experiences in each area that builds up to a broad, balanced curriculum over time. Schools and teachers can choose to organise learning in whichever way is likely to result in the best outcomes and standards for their children and young people. This may include learning through topics, projects, thematic or research weeks, special events, considering and researching big questions.

Changes to assessment and accountability should reinforce this new sense of direction. Teachers can confidently use assessment to promote progression in each child's learning, diagnosing difficulties and indicating what the next steps should be. Testing should be the servant and not the master in this process. Peer moderation will help improve reliability but, equally importantly, will provide opportunities for professional discussion about expectations and about how to assess the most important aspects of learning.

Importantly, teachers should never feel constrained to work only within individual Areas of Learning and Experience. Rather, they should feel more able to make genuine connections between Areas, using the Progression Steps and Achievement Outcomes as a compass that will allow them to maintain continuity and secure progression in each child's learning.

For children and young people, the new arrangements will help to ensure that they experience the full benefits of primary education. The curriculum purposes will help ensure that they are developing as well-rounded individuals with strong literacy and numeracy skills and the ability to acquire and deploy digital competences in creative settings. Their Welsh language skills will develop progressively as they move through primary. They will feel confident about themselves and know how to stay healthy and safe. They will be encouraged to engage directly in shaping their own learning, providing examples of achievements that they feel proud of.

The study of a local river, for example, may be rooted in the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience. However, it opens up wide-ranging opportunities across other areas. It might connect with the Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience through listening to music, such as Smetana's *Vltava*, and composing music or creating visual interpretations or dance or dramatic performances to express the river's journey from its source to the sea. It offers opportunities to use factual and creative language purposefully to create brochures or poems and to apply mathematical and scientific skills to observe and investigate natural phenomena and measure depth and speed. It enables children and young people to improve their health and well-being by appreciating the joy of fresh air and walking safely in the hills to seek the source of their local stream and using map skills to follow all or part of its journey.

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None of this is new. It is what the most successful schools and practitioners in Wales have been doing effectively for many years. Such good practice, however, often seemed to take place despite and not because of curriculum and assessment requirements. A new focus and a different way of organising and thinking about the curriculum through Areas of Learning and Experience and Progression Steps is intended to reinvigorate education and make learning exciting and relevant for children and young people and teachers.

## Secondary

For school leaders, the new arrangements will provide greater freedom to plan and provide a more relevant curriculum that will raise standards and meet their young people's needs within a reduced, more coherent and consistent framework of national expectations. The new arrangements do not represent a recommended timetable structure and schools can work imaginatively to organise the school day, week and year in ways that will ensure breadth and progression in each young person's learning while avoiding the fragmentation that can arise from an exclusively subject-based timetable. The expectation to raise standards will remain but performance measures will be tailored to the new arrangements and reinforce the need to plan a curriculum that meets the four curriculum purposes.

The curriculum in the early years of secondary should be designed in ways that fulfil the expectations of the very many young people who are excited by the move up from primary only to become disillusioned with a curriculum that often lacks conviction and integrity. These years should be a stimulating

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culmination of progression in learning that began in 'Foundation', now reinforced and extended by exposure to specialist subject teaching. These years should be used to build the knowledge and skills that will underpin future qualifications but that does not mean that these years should be seen as a 'waiting room' for these qualifications or that courses should be designed based on anticipated examination requirements. The new Welsh Baccalaureate, with its focus on skills and 'challenges', already has implications for the secondary curriculum more generally. The new curriculum structure encourages development of these elements of the 'Bac' across the Areas of Learning and Experience and throughout secondary education. In that way the Review proposals should provide a better platform for performance in qualifications.

For teachers, much of the existing complexity will be reduced. Guidance will now be all in one place and expectations relating to literacy, numeracy, digital competence and wider skills will be embedded and not require to be planned for separately. The curriculum purposes will provide consistent points of reference for decisions about how learning might best be organised and assessed. Together with the proposals on structure and assessment, they signal the importance of sustaining challenge and depth in learning and of applying what is being learned across the curriculum. Teaching and learning approaches will be less constrained by detailed prescription and narrow performance measures.

The Review proposals will allow teachers much greater scope to use assessment as a constructive and integral part of teaching and learning. They reaffirm the importance of teacher assessment but suggest ways in which the distorting effects of making such assessments too 'high-stakes' can be avoided. One of the challenges for secondary teachers will lie in developing the skills needed to assess the kind of deep and applied learning that the Review recommends. The importance of working together both within and across schools will be an important part of developing such expertise.

The proposed Areas of Learning and Experience include both subject and instrumental learning. The Progression Steps provide clear milestones in learning without constraining day-to-day decisions about teaching and learning. The best planning is likely to take place in collaboration, with teachers working together to address the requirements of the Achievement Outcomes, to plan team-teaching opportunities and to identify and develop resources.

For young people, the new arrangements will provide an education that is directed towards curriculum purposes that are designed to equip them for future life and work. They will experience a broad and challenging curriculum within which their skills in literacy, numeracy and digital competence will be developed consistently. They will engage with Welsh culture across the curriculum and develop their Welsh language skills to at least a functional standard. They will be encouraged to be creative and to have high aspirations. They will be supported to help them meet those aspirations with no artificial ceilings placed on their progress. That progress will be recognised in different ways, including through portfolios that contain examples of achievements relating to the curriculum purposes from beyond the formal curriculum.

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For example, a school could provide a Year 7 programme for a significant part of the school week that develops a wide range of skills through a themed approach, thereby aiding continuity with primary practice. This approach could involve a series of projects to cover the year, and use the thinking skills methodology of 'plan, develop and reflect' as the organising structure. Projects would cover all subjects, although specialist teaching could be provided for literacy, numeracy and areas such as modern foreign languages and PE. The projects could be based on a range of interesting topics that develop different skills and subject areas, for example on topics such as 'sustainability' and 'innovation'. Teams of staff drawn from all subjects would design and deliver the curriculum, while timetabling based on multiple lessons would allow both the flexibility to create larger or smaller teaching groups as well as team teaching.

All of this will ultimately depend on what happens in classrooms day by day. The problem of sustaining the motivation of young people, particularly in the early years of secondary, is a feature of schools across the United Kingdom and beyond. The proposed changes to curriculum and assessment cannot solve this problem but they are intended to provide schools and teachers with greater freedom to create approaches to teaching and learning that will better meet the needs and aspirations of their children and young people.

## Implications for children and young people with additional learning needs

This Review presents a curriculum and assessment framework for all children and young people in Wales wherever they receive their education. Special schools provide education for a wide range of learning needs and much of their existing good practice, including in assessment, is already in harmony with the Review's proposals. The four identified purposes of the curriculum apply to all children and young people. Similarly, the Progression Steps and Achievement Outcomes should also be relevant to all children and young people and will provide opportunities for a rich range of experiences.

The programmes of learning currently on offer in special schools should be relatively easy to adapt to deliver a curriculum that comprises the six Areas of Learning and Experience, the three cross-cutting responsibilities and wider skills. As at present, they will need to design pedagogical approaches to match the specific learning needs of their individual children and young people. The curriculum will provide scope for creativity and innovation and it will be vitally important that teachers and learning support workers (classroom support staff) use this scope to develop and deliver programmes of learning that are relevant and meaningful to the children and young people in their schools.

Schools will be able to decide the most appropriate implementation strategies, taking account of their own circumstances. Parents, carers and children and young people will have key roles to play in the development of learning programmes, as is highlighted in the principles of the Review. Additionally,

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multi-agency support will need to be integrated into all planning for children and young people who have the most complex learning needs.

All of these developments will require bespoke training to ensure that teachers and learning support workers have the skills and confidence to deliver the new curriculum. This should be seen as an important part of the New Deal for the Education Workforce.

## The reform process

Throughout the course of this Review, one of the recurring issues was whether the mechanisms for implementing previous decisions about the curriculum had taken sufficient account of the capacity of schools and teachers to deliver well what was expected of them. The general feeling was that while the policy aspirations had been generally accepted as appropriate, insufficient account had often been taken of the complexities of implementation.

There is no single, best approach to effective educational reform. Research evidence paints a fairly unpromising picture of experiences of educational reform in different settings[75] [76] [77].

Change strategies are highly culture and context specific and there is a danger that a highly complex matter like the reform of education becomes reduced to oversimplified solutions that do not take sufficient account of the nature and complexity of education. What works in one country may well be inappropriate when applied elsewhere. The implementation of the Review's recommendations needs to learn the lessons from the limitations of past reform and adopt a change strategy that best meets the nature of the Welsh context and its educational culture.

Experience of major curriculum reform over many decades provides some positive as well as negative examples, and suggests that an effective change strategy should:

❯ have a governance structure that can maintain strategic oversight of implementation, is inclusive, has reliable evaluation and feedback mechanisms and allows clear and timely decision making

❯ ensure that the purposes and intended benefits of the proposed reform programme are communicated clearly and effectively

❯ establish engagement mechanisms designed to secure the active involvement of the teaching profession

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[75] Hoyle, E, and Wallace, M (2005) *Educational Leadership: Ambiguity, Professionals and Managerialism* Sage Publications

[76] Hattie, J (2009) *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-analyses Relating to Achievement* Routledge

[77] Elmore, R F (2004) *School Reform from the Inside Out: Policy, Practice And Performance* Harvard Education Press

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> secure the understanding and support of key stakeholder groups, particularly parents and carers

> set expectations about the pace of change that takes full account of the need to build the confidence and capacity of teachers and other practitioners, who will determine the ultimate success of the reform programme

> be agile and creative, using evidence to shape and adjust the programme as it develops

> be responsive – using evidence to balance those features that must be in place in all schools against the benefits of local ownership and responsiveness to particular needs and circumstances

> be supported by a strategic approach to developing capacity, including appropriate initial teacher education and continuing professional development

> establish necessary 'scaffolding', for example in the form of guidance, exemplar materials and other resources, to support implementation including the targeted development of resources for use during preparation and implementation

> establish accountability mechanisms that reinforce the purposes of reform and can evaluate and report on its impact

> establish independent evaluation mechanisms that can inform development and report on outcomes.

The proposals flowing from this Review are radical and fundamental, and imply deep and enduring change. The scale of the changes will take time to implement and this suggests that the changes should be carefully phased in as part of a comprehensive implementation plan.

Experience from elsewhere suggests a long-term plan – both Northern Ireland and Scotland have been engaged in their reform programmes for a decade. Building a robust basis of support across all stakeholders and political parties is key if Wales is to achieve the sort of sustained and sustainable approach to change necessary to underpin these proposals. The plan will need to take account of priorities for early implementation as, for example, in the case of the development of a digital competence framework and related developments in computer science. Even though there may be a process of staged implementation over a number of years, it is vital that the children and young people currently in schools are not forgotten and there is a need to make sure that their interests and needs are protected at all times.

There will need to be substantial training programmes and the provision of adequate time for teachers to prepare. Some of the proposals also have implications for how schools are organised and in particular how they structure

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the curriculum, and again these will take time to plan and embed. One of the first tasks will be to elaborate the Areas of Learning and Experience, and that task is described below.

> ### 〉〉〉 Recommendations
>
> 54. **The revised curriculum and assessment arrangements should be introduced through an agile change strategy that establishes understanding and support, sets a measured pace, builds capacity and manages dependencies, particularly accountability arrangements.**
>
> 55. **Separate and independent evaluation arrangements should be established to monitor the effectiveness of the change structure and the new curriculum arrangements in relation to improvements in the quality of learning and performance.**

## Leadership and steering

Since 2006, when the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority (ACCAC) was merged with the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, responsibility for national curriculum development has been an entirely governmental responsibility. The advantages of streamlined decision making arising from such a merger are clear. However, the nature of the change in culture and approach implied by the Review's recommendations and the evidence about how best to embed reform point to the need for a broader and more inclusive approach.

The Review therefore proposes that, while Ministers should continue to have responsibility for setting the national direction, there is a case for securing greater, arms-length involvement in advising on that direction and in overseeing the implementation process itself. The precise mechanism for such an approach is not a matter for this Review.

> ### 〉〉〉 Recommendation
>
> 56. **The Welsh Government should establish an arms-length structure for day-to-day leadership and steering of curriculum and assessment arrangements.**

## Elaboration and development of Areas of Learning and Experience

Following agreement on the way ahead, one of the first priorities for development work will be to flesh out the basic curriculum structure outlined in this report, including the Areas of Learning and Experience.

The task of central development teams will be to create, for each Area of Learning and Experience, Outcome Statements for each Progression Step. These statements will express the desired learning, taking account of how children and young people will need to develop and progress in each Area of Learning and Experience and addressing appropriate aspects of the four purposes, Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills. The aim is to reduce the requirement for schools and teachers to engage in the complex task of balancing these various elements within the curriculum, and to allow them to focus on selecting relevant content and creating stimulating teaching and learning contexts and activities for their children and young people.

Among the elements to be taken forward by the central development teams for each Area of Learning and Experience there should be:

> a clear statement of how the Area of Learning and Experience promotes the four purposes of the curriculum

> a description of the scope and boundaries of the Area of Learning and Experience, including its central concerns, how it is distinct from other areas and why it is important for the education of each child and young person

> a decision about how best to present the various component subjects and/or strands within the Area of Learning and Experience

> advice on the incorporation of relevant elements of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig within the Area of Learning and Experience

> a description of development and progression within the Area of Learning and Experience, including reference to how *Routes for Learning* can be incorporated

> an outline of the desired Achievement Outcomes at each Progression Step in terms of knowledge, skills and experiences

> identification of ways in which key elements in the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities of literacy, numeracy and digital competence, and the wider skills, can be promoted and taken forward

> an explanation of progression and the definition of achievement at the specified progression steps

> advice on teaching and learning strategies that are particular to the Area of Learning and Experience

> a description of how assessment should contribute to learning in that Area of Learning and Experience and advice, where appropriate, on how evidence might be gathered.

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In some areas, notably literacy and numeracy and *Routes for Learning*, the team will need to revisit existing frameworks in the light of the new structure of Areas of Learning and Experience and Progression Steps.

> ###### »»» Recommendation
>
> 57. **Each Area of Learning and Experience should be elaborated in line with the brief provided in this report in order to provide practitioners with easily accessible guidance to help with their planning.**

The complexity of the national development task should not be underestimated and marshalling and supporting central teams with the necessary experience and expertise will be essential.

## Teaching and leadership capacity

The new curriculum and assessment arrangements will have significant implications for teaching and learning and therefore for the ways in which teachers' skills, and those of the wider workforce, are developed. In particular the cross-cutting digital competence responsibility, the enhanced focus on the Welsh language in pre-school/primary, and the greater emphasis on the use of the Welsh language in secondary will have wide implications for teaching. Other areas which are likely to have implications for professional development are the Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience, computer science (in the Science and technology Area of Learning and Experience) and assessment.

If the proposals are to be successful, there needs to be an extensive, well-coordinated and sustained professional learning programme that involves all leaders, teachers and other practitioners. The programme should be scheduled carefully to coincide with the timescales for the introduction of new arrangements and should be matched to the particular needs of individual practitioners.

The New Deal for the Education Workforce and the associated National Model of Professional Learning currently being developed by the Welsh Government should make an important contribution to building necessary capacity. Similarly, the recommendations from Professor John Furlong on ways in which the system of teacher development can be improved further will form an important complement to the work of the Review.

> ###### »»» Recommendations
>
> 58. **An extensive and sustained programme of professional learning should be developed to ensure that the implications of the Review recommendations for the skills and knowledge of teachers and other practitioners are fully met.**
>
> 59. **The longer-term implications of the Review for building teacher capacity should be taken forward in the context of the Welsh Government's New Deal for the Education Workforce and Professor John Furlong's recommendations on teacher education.**

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The reforms will also pose challenges for leadership at all levels. Greater freedom will offer opportunities for creative decision making about the kind of curriculum that will best meet the needs of the children and young people in the school. Improving the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring consistent high quality will continue to be important. Inspiring, coaching and supporting staff in realising the new possibilities will be a critical task of leadership. Tests of success will be different, with new accountability measures and greater expectations of self-evaluation.

The likelihood of success will be enhanced by an increase of collaboration within and between schools, joint planning, sharing good practice and rigorous moderation of assessment. Skills associated with the ability to lead in a partnership arrangement, share resources and negotiate will be essential. And, critically, leaders will have to make sure that parents and carers understand, are convinced by and supportive of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements, and that their children will not be disadvantaged by the process of implementation.

>>> **Recommendation**

60. **Priority should be given to developing the leadership commitment, understanding and skills necessary for the proposed reforms to succeed.**

## System capacity

In addition to teachers and leaders, the implementation of the proposals will have implications for capacity in other players in the education system. These players include the Department for Education and Skills, Estyn, regional consortia and local authorities. All will have to learn about and fully understand the proposals, and the implications for schools, especially in terms of the impact it will have on schools as they adjust to the new arrangements. They will also have to appreciate fully the implications of the proposed new arrangements for local decision making and for accountability. At the heart of this is the need for all these agents to work together.

The Department for Education and Skills will not only have to develop the systems to evaluate the success of the country as a whole but it will also have to manage the implementation plan. It will also have to take through any necessary changes to legislation and to develop guidance for those aspects that are non-statutory. Regional consortia and local authorities will need to develop strategies to support their schools through the engagement and implementation and to introduce the accountability arrangements for individual schools that are proposed here. Estyn will need to adjust its inspection programme and possibly its approach to recognise and fit into the implementation phase. This may mean taking on more of a supportive role with schools in the early stages, while at the same time ensuring that schools are performing as well as they should. The development of new accountability arrangements will also have implications for the way Estyn works.

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The proposals here will also generate a great deal of activity in developing enhanced and sometimes new approaches to research and evaluation. The Review has referred to the implications for capacity building, especially in improving formative assessment and devising new arrangements for accountability. Other high-performing countries have established specific research and support systems to help to coordinate and promote these types of developments in assessment practices and a similar mechanism should be considered in Wales.

> ### 》》》 Recommendation
>
> 61. **The significant implications of the Review proposals for national and local educational infrastructure should be fully recognised. The Department for Education and Skills, regional consortia, Estyn, Qualifications Wales and universities will need to establish mechanisms for coordination and joint working that recognise the responsibilities and respective strengths of each.**

## National and local ownership

A recurring theme in the evidence presented to the Review was whether the current curriculum arrangements in Wales had achieved the right balance between what is required of schools at a national level through legislation, and the extent to which schools and teachers could shape the curriculum at a local level in light of the particular needs of their communities and their children and young people.



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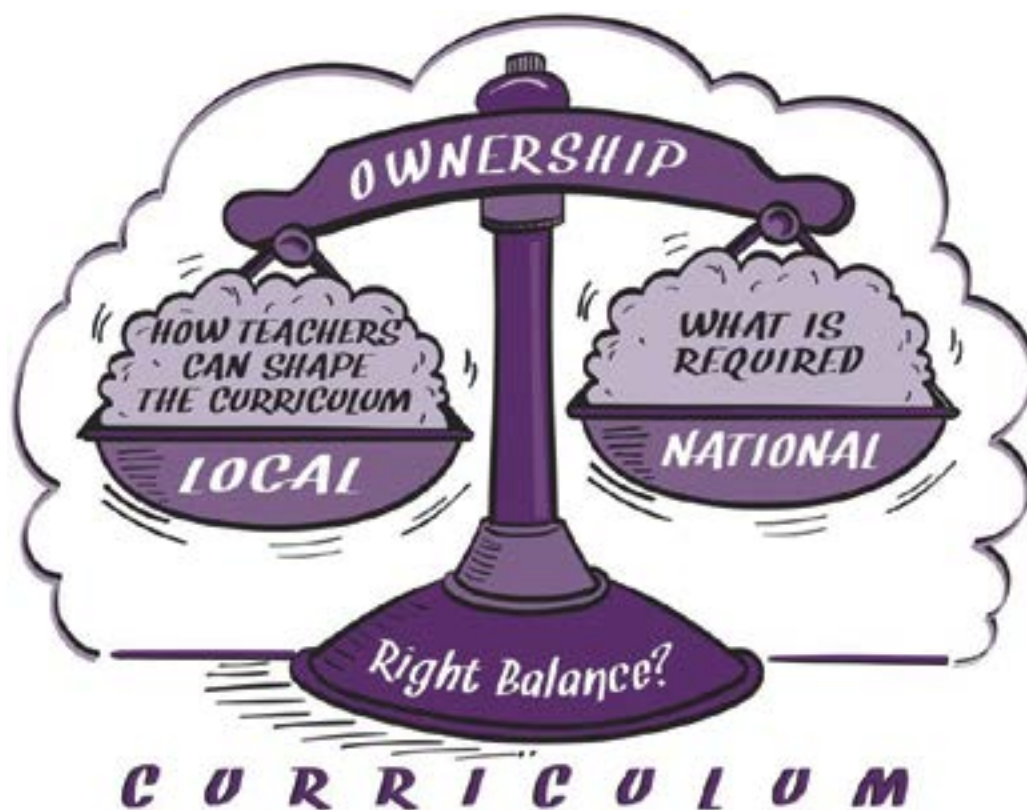
A key challenge for educational reform is to strike the right balance between central direction and local flexibility. A report by McKinsey and Company[78] that drew on an analysis of 20 education systems suggests that there are clusters of approaches that seem to be appropriate to different stages of educational development. Strong central direction, support and accountability mechanisms can be appropriate in raising the quality of relatively underdeveloped systems with limited professional capacity. However, if the aim is to create a high-performing system, approaches should focus less on central direction and more on the need to develop local responsibility and decision making, build capacity and engage teachers and schools more creatively in the improvement process.

The McKinsey analysis is helpful up to a point, but education systems inevitably include schools and teachers with varying experience, confidence and capacity; some will be ready to take full advantage of greater freedom while others will require a more extended period of continuing support. The challenge when arriving at the appropriate balance of central and local ownership is to create an approach that covers both ends of the spectrum of schools and teachers.

Charles Handy describes subsidiarity as '...the idea of reverse delegation – the delegation by the parts to the centre'. Subsidiarity means that power stays as close as possible to the action. Rather than relying on a set of rules, which suggest a lack of confidence and can breed corruption, subsidiarity is dependent on mutual trust and confidence which supports positive disagreement and argument. Subsidiarity is about ensuring that power is where it belongs – rather than about empowerment which involves someone in power giving something away[79].

In moving to a higher-performing education system, the message for Wales is for the Welsh government to set the direction and place trust in the vast majority of schools and teachers to follow that lead in ways that will serve their children and young people well. The CBI has called for greater freedom to innovate at school level, '...allowing teachers and headteachers to utilise their professional skills to drive improved outcomes'[80]. At the same time, however, there will remain a need to buttress this approach with appropriate legislation, inclusive leadership, support for capacity building, and constructive systems of accountability.

> ### 》》》 Recommendation
>
> **62. The change strategy associated with the Review should apply the principle of subsidiarity, encouraging local ownership and responsibility within a clear national framework of expectation and support.**

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[78] Mourshed, M, Chijioke, C and Barber, M (2010) *How the world's most improved systems keep getting better* McKinsey and Company

[79] Handy, C (1995) *The Age of Paradox* Harvard Business School Press

[80] CBI (2014) *Step Change – A New Approach for Schools in Wales* CBI

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## Legislation

If the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements are to secure the direct involvement of schools and teachers in taking key decisions about both what and how to teach, then we need to be very clear about the level of detail to be included in legislation. In formulating its recommendations the Review has sought to strike a balance between enabling teachers to use their professionalism and creativity to respond to the needs of their own children and young people, and ensuring that those aspects of the curriculum deemed to be essential are given legislative force.

The case for the central role of aims and purposes in driving decisions about form content and assessment has been made in Chapter 3 of this report. There is therefore a strong argument that the four recommended curriculum purposes should be reflected in primary legislation – reinforcing the need for them to underpin all teaching and learning in schools. It is therefore proposed that a general duty be placed on schools to organise and deliver a curriculum for all children and young people that is designed to meet the four purposes of education. In line with national policy, specific duties may also be placed on schools in relation to the Welsh language and RE.

In order to ensure breadth, the primary legislative duty should encapsulate the notion of entitlement to receive education across all of the six Areas of Learning and Experience throughout the period of statutory education. It is further recommended that the duty should encapsulate the need to ensure that educational provision is designed to help all children and young people to move through the Progression Steps as specified in related national guidance.

To be clear, the Review is not recommending that the content of the Areas of Learning and Experience or the related Progression Steps be specified in primary legislation but that they should be set out in guidance. Such an arrangement will allow greater flexibility in adapting the curriculum over time and in light of evidence about its implementation.

It is the Review's intention that, by adopting a lighter touch in respect to legislation, schools and teachers would be encouraged to take significant responsibility for developing a curriculum which is consistent with national expectations, but which is also able to reflect the needs of the children and young people in their school.

Some schools and individual teachers will be better placed than others to adopt this approach. The Review therefore recommends that further detail of content, assessment arrangements and pedagogy should be set out in guidance and other forms of 'scaffolding' that could be used to support practice, particularly in the initial stages of implementation.

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> **》》》 Recommendations**
>
> 63. **The principle of a national curriculum for Wales should be reaffirmed and legislation should define a broad set of duties rather than detailed prescription of content.**
>
> 64. **Where necessary, specific requirements in relation to curriculum and assessment should be described in regulation and guidance, and subject to regular review.**

## Accountability

In common with all areas of public service, education should be subject to and benefit from constructive and robust systems and methods of evaluation and accountability. Inevitably, the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements proposed in this Review will have implications for current approaches. In an environment where key decisions are taken at the local level, it is vital to strengthen and enhance accountability arrangements in ways that help to embed the new arrangements and drive improvement while avoiding the distorting effects that can arise from external performance and reporting requirements. It may be necessary to establish transitional accountability arrangements during the early stages of the implementation programme.

The OECD[81] sees a number of apparent strengths in the current accountability arrangements in Wales (called 'evaluation' in the report), for example through the existence of a national system at all levels, the focus on the achievements of children and young people, and the availability of comprehensive performance data. An additional strength of the system is that the performance data is set in context in that it compares performance with similar schools. The Review's proposals aim to build on these strengths.

The OECD report also identifies a number of weaknesses in current approaches to accountability. It concludes that the current arrangements lack coherence and that Wales has struggled to strike a balance between accountability and improvement, with scope for a greater emphasis on improvement in future. In creating a coherent framework, the OECD report recommends that assessment should support learning for all and that it should be aligned to national objectives. It also recommends that the school accountability process supports school improvement. The Review evidence strongly supports these conclusions of the OECD.

In addition to ensuring that schools and the nation as a whole are performing as well as they should, systems of national and local accountability should have a key aim of supporting the effective introduction of the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements and evaluating how well its intentions are being realised. These accountability systems should address the question 'How far is

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[81] OECD (2014) *Improving Schools in Wales: An OECD Perspective* OECD Paris

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the school developing all of its children and young people as: ambitious, capable learners; enterprising, creative individuals; ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world; and healthy, confident individuals?' They should be designed to encourage schools to be creative in their planning of the revised curriculum and to minimise the risk of superficial change solely for reasons of compliance.

The new National School Categorisation System, which applies to all schools, provides a potentially helpful basis for helping to promote effective introduction of new curriculum and assessment arrangements. It should have a strong focus on the extent to which schools are establishing the revised curriculum arrangements in a way that is well designed and effectively implemented in relation to the agreed purposes of education. Clarity is needed about the use of assessment data for learning and its use for accountability. In particular, when teacher assessments are used explicitly for accountability, as at the end of the current Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, the reliability of the teacher assessments may be in doubt and there can also be serious perverse effects on the curriculum. The Review therefore proposes that teacher assessments should not be reported to the Welsh Government. Assessment data must, of course, inform broader evaluations of how well a school is serving its children and young people. However, assessment data should inform such judgements in ways that minimise known distorting tendencies. It should also not be the sole source of evidence for evaluation but should contribute to a broader evidence base, reducing its prominence and minimising possible distorting effects.

The Review proposals also have implications for local authorities, regional consortia and Estyn. For the foreseeable future, the regional consortia will have a vital role in monitoring the performance of individual schools and in identifying those schools that need additional support. The relationship should be more of a professional dialogue, expecting schools themselves to become better at self-evaluation and improvement planning. Even so, the process will still need to be robust as consortia discharge their responsibility to ensure children and young people in their area have a high-quality educational experience.

As well as information on the progress of their children, parents and carers need to have information about how well their child's school is performing. Information is currently available through the governors' annual report, school prospectus, the My Local School website, Estyn inspection reports and the new school categorisation system. As the Review proposes that teacher assessments are not to be reported to the Welsh Government, the nature of the performance information available to parents and carers will need to change. For secondary schools it will still be possible to provide performance information on external examinations at 16 and beyond, but for the earlier years in secondary schools or in primary schools there will need to be changes in how information is provided for parents and carers.

Although it is proposed that the Welsh Government should no longer gather school-level data about the performance of all children and young people, national monitoring of the performance of the system as a whole remains

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important if policy is to be able to respond appropriately. The Review therefore proposes that national monitoring of achievement by the Welsh Government should be informed by a rolling programme of sample testing in, for example, literacy (English and Welsh), numeracy, digital competence and science and by reports from Estyn. Such sample assessments, which would only involve some children and young people, would not need to take place every year, and there could be a timetable of such assessments over a period of years with a single topic being assessed each year. Assessments of progress towards meeting the four purposes should be part of school inspections and also reported on by Estyn on a regular basis.

>>> **Recommendations**

65. Accountability arrangements should be strengthened and enhanced in ways that help to embed the new arrangements and drive improvement.

66. Accountability arrangements, particularly inspection, should evaluate and encourage the successful embedding of the curriculum purposes in the day-to-day work of schools and ultimately the outcomes being achieved by children and young people.

67. The school categorisation system should, in due course, be adjusted to reflect the recommendations of this Review.

68. The Welsh Government should no longer gather information about children and young people's performance on a school-by-school basis but should monitor performance in key aspects of the curriculum through annual testing on a sampling basis.

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# **Chapter 8:** Conclusions and Recommendations

**This report is called *Successful Futures* because of the critical and enduring importance of education for the long-term success and well-being of each and every child and young person in Wales, and ultimately for the social, cultural and economic health of the country itself**. The curriculum and associated assessment arrangements are the embodiment of the aspirations that Wales has for its children and young people and must therefore be designed and realised in ways that fully meet those aspirations. The school curriculum in Wales has evolved in scope and shape over the last 25 years as it has responded to both short- and long-term pressures. Assessment arrangements have similarly changed over time. The task of the Review was to examine the current arrangements, identify areas of strength that could be built upon and make proposals for necessary change.

**The Review involved as many people in Wales in its work as possible**. We were gratified by the large response to our call for evidence and the very open and constructive discussions we had in schools around the country and with individuals and representatives of organisations in Wales. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are therefore significantly influenced both by teachers in Wales and also, importantly, by children and young people themselves. In addition, the Review took account of the best of emerging trends and developments internationally.

**The evidence gathered in the Review identified important strengths in the current arrangements in Wales**, in particular, the commitment to equity and inclusion, the attention given to supporting children and young people with special educational needs through *Routes for Learning*, the Foundation Phase, the emphasis on the development of literacy, numeracy and wider skills, the importance attached to the Welsh culture and language, and the revised Welsh Baccalaureate.

**The evidence also confirmed that there is a strong case for fundamental change**. It was clear that there is a strong appetite for radical changes to the existing curriculum and assessment arrangements, for example to address the overload, redundancy and complexity which has resulted from successive modifications. There was an accumulation of evidence that the current curriculum was not enabling children and young people to achieve the standards they should be capable of. Similarly, assessment and accountability had become unhelpfully intertwined in ways that weaken the power of both to serve children's learning. Very importantly, people saw a need for a curriculum that would better prepare children and young people in Wales to thrive and be successful in a rapidly changing world.

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**It is important to have a clear definition of what we mean by 'the curriculum'.** In the past, the curriculum was often seen as the set of subjects and syllabuses to be taught to children and young people during their school years. However, this definition does not do justice to the broader outcomes that the modern world demands or to the scope of what many teachers already do to support children and young people's development. It fails to establish the overall purposes that the curriculum is intended to serve. Learning is also crucially affected by what and how progress is assessed and how the results of assessment are used. Assessment, therefore, needs to be seen as an integral part of the learning process. The Review has therefore taken the following broad view of the curriculum.

> **The curriculum includes all the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of agreed purposes of education.**

**The new curriculum should have clear purposes** (see page 31). Many countries have adopted statements of aims or purposes as the starting point for their curriculum specification, some more successfully than others. Clear and specific curriculum purposes that are firmly and directly linked to learning and teaching can help teachers to see what their specific contributions to a child or young person's learning should be. They can help children and young people, and their parents and carers, to see the point of what they are learning and how the aspects of learning fit together. They can inform the design of national expectations for the curriculum and be used to identify and plan the content and intended outcomes. They can also be used to determine priorities in the face of inevitable new pressures. If the stated purposes are to succeed, they should be clear and command general support, be consistent with shared values and reflect national priorities and culture. The evidence gathered during the Review pointed, with remarkable consistency, towards elements that should feature in a statement of curriculum purposes for Wales.

**The Review has developed curriculum purposes to encapsulate a vision of the well-educated learner completing their statutory education in Wales.** These purposes are that **all** our children and young people will be:

› ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives

› enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work

› ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world

› healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

The curriculum purposes elaborate these headlines with key characteristics, to provide a practical guide for the planning of the curriculum and teaching and learning.

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**The curriculum is a curriculum for all children and young people in Wales**. The new arrangements are intended to include all of the children and young people of Wales and to enable each of them to progress successfully in their learning. In particular, the curriculum purposes apply to all children. Much of what is proposed in terms of continuity and progression is already a feature of teaching and learning in schools serving children and young people with special educational needs.

**The Review proposes a simpler, more coherent structure for the curriculum**. The current national curriculum comprises a framework of phases and key stages, core, foundation and basic subjects (statutory and non-statutory), programmes of study, a literacy and numeracy framework and a wider skills framework. Pressures to add to this list are also growing and a number of important 'Task and Finish' reports are also waiting to be incorporated in this already overcrowded landscape. The strong view emerging from the evidence to the Review was that this structure was too complicated and too prescriptive, and has inhibited flow and progression in children and young people's learning and responsiveness to local needs. There was support for a more consistent approach encompassing both the primary and secondary stages, at least to the current Key Stage 3.

The evidence therefore points to the need for a simpler, more connected curriculum that would provide breadth, enable greater depth of learning, ensure better progression and give scope for more imaginative use of time. The weight of the evidence would also support a greater emphasis on skills and an extension of the approach adopted in the Foundation Phase, where Areas of Learning rather than discrete subjects are used as building blocks. Such an approach is increasingly common in curriculum specifications across the world.

**In terms of the breadth of the curriculum, the Review proposes using six Areas of Learning and Experience as organisers for the entire age range from 3 to 16**. The Areas of Learning and Experience are:

› Expressive arts Area of Learning and Experience

› Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience

› Humanities Area of Learning and Experience

› Languages, literacy and communication Area of Learning and Experience

› Mathematics and numeracy Area of Learning and Experience

› Science and technology Area of Learning and Experience.

The case for the importance and integrity of each of the Areas of Learning and Experience is made in Chapter 4 of this report. Each has been conceived such that it can encompass significant disciplinary and functional knowledge and skills and have direct relevance to children and young people from 3 to 16. They also provide distinctive contexts within which the four curriculum purposes, including

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elements of Cwricwlwm Cymreig, can be pursued. The Areas of Learning and Experience should not be seen as constraining the ways in which schools organise the school day, week or year. They do not lead directly to a timetable based on the Areas of Learning and Experience headings. Their purpose is to organise, in a relatively straightforward way, the national expectations about what children and young people are expected to learn and experience, enabling synergies and connectedness as well as rigour in disciplinary studies. They also signal that the education of children and young people should include rich experiences that are valuable in their own right.

**The Review proposes that literacy, numeracy and digital competence should be the responsibility of all teachers**. These are so fundamental to thinking, learning and life that they should be developed and reinforced across the curriculum as a whole.

The case for treating literacy and numeracy in this way is now widely accepted and they should both be represented in the curriculum in ways that ensure their progressive development for all children and young people. Literacy and numeracy must mean more than basic competence and must acknowledge their central role in thinking and the ability to use language and number confidently and creatively. The LNF has been widely welcomed, at least in principle, and should be represented in the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements in ways that ensure both the establishment of firm foundations and their further development and reinforcement across all Areas of Learning and Experience.

The argument for treating 'digital competence' in a similar way to literacy and numeracy has become increasingly compelling. Our children and young people already inhabit a digital world and their personal, social and educational lives are increasingly intertwined with technology in various, rapidly changing forms. Full participation in modern society and the workplace already demands increasingly high levels of digital competence and that process can only continue into a future that we cannot imagine. The Review, therefore, takes the view that a digital competence framework should be developed to establish progression in children and young people's learning.

**The place of the Welsh language in the curriculum needs to be strengthened**. The importance attached to the Welsh language is reflected in the proposals of the Review that all children and young people should continue to learn the Welsh language to the age of 16. Evidence points to confidence in the work of Welsh-medium schools in successfully developing language skills. There remains, however, a need to improve the quality and relevance of teaching and learning of the Welsh language in English-medium schools, particularly for older children. We therefore propose greater focus on children and young people's ability to communicate confidently in everyday settings in the Welsh language, with an emphasis on its increasing role in workplace settings. Welsh-medium schools employ specialists and have a wide range of available Welsh language resources. They are well placed to act as hubs for the Welsh language and to provide support for teachers and other practitioners in English-medium schools.

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**The Review proposes that the current separation of the curriculum into phases and key stages should be removed**. Transition points, whether between sectors or phases, give rise to inevitable questions about continuity and progression. If stages are intended to be distinct from each other, how persuasive are the arguments for separation and what are the consequences? If stages are not distinct, then why do they require a separate label? In exploring these questions, the Review reached the firm conclusion that the period of statutory schooling, at least, should be seen as a coherent and progressive whole, including the move between the primary and secondary sectors.

**The Review proposes that depth and progression in learning should be described through Progression Steps, which each encompass a range of Achievement Outcomes**. The Review evidence suggested that while the current system of levels within subjects provided elements of depth, the approach had become centred on making general, best-fit judgements about performance at defined points with insufficient attention to progression based on secure learning. The Review is therefore recommending that Progression Steps should be identified within each Area of Learning and Experience at three-yearly intervals over the period of statutory education. Achievement Outcomes should be developed for each Progression Step to reflect the curriculum purposes and embody both disciplinary and instrumental learning as appropriate. The descriptions of expected achievement should be accessible and challenging for all children and young people and draw upon research into children's progress in learning and international norms. They should be expressed in ways that offer headroom for those who master skills and knowledge earlier and support and intervention for those whose progress is slower.

**Wherever possible, the various expectations about learning should be embedded in the Progression Steps**. Schools and teachers are currently faced with the complex and time-consuming task of accommodating all of the various curriculum expectations in their planning, teaching and assessment. Their task would, therefore, be simplified greatly if such expectations were captured and incorporated at a single point. The Progression Steps provide the vehicle for so doing. The expectations for progression in the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities should be highlighted and embedded, as appropriate, in the Progression Steps in each of the six Areas of Learning and Experience. The wider skills of critical thinking and problem solving, planning and organising, creativity and innovation, and personal effectiveness together with the elements of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and *Routes for Learning* should be similarly embedded within the Areas of Learning and Experience. In addition, all teachers should seek opportunities to reinforce and extend these elements wherever that can be done naturally within their normal teaching and learning approaches.

**The Review's ambitions can only be translated into reality for children and young people through teachers' and other education practitioners' professional skill and judgement in selecting appropriate teaching methods**. The impact of the recommended changes to the curriculum on children and young people's learning will depend ultimately on the quality of the teaching

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and learning they experience. The Review proposals will require approaches to teaching and learning that capitalise on the greater professional freedom that they offer to teachers. The high expectations embedded in the Progression Steps will only be realised through effective teaching that engages children and young people's curiosity and enthusiasm through a blend of teaching and learning approaches. Teaching needs to be directly related to pursuing the curriculum purposes, exploiting opportunities to apply and make connections in learning in authentic contexts. Learning should be a pleasurable activity pursued for its own sake and not simply as a means to passing a test or gaining a qualification. Children and young people should learn how to work collaboratively and creatively, taking greater responsibility for their own learning and seeing the relevance of what they are doing to their present and future needs.

**The Review proposes a simplification of assessment procedures as well as a stronger role for assessment to support learning**. Assessment is integral to effective learning and to informative reporting on achievement. Current assessment arrangements were widely criticised in the Review as being confused, over-elaborate and heavily influenced by the demands of accountability. The Review is recommending a simplified approach to assessment that seeks to strengthen teacher assessment as part of arrangements that reassert its prime role in supporting progression in learning.

Assessment should be driven by a clear understanding of its various potential contributions both to learning and to summative reporting. The key questions about assessment are: who needs what evidence about progress and/or outcomes in achievement, for what purposes and against what deadlines? The answers to these questions determine which assessment approaches are fit for purpose. In particular, our proposals distinguish between purposes that relate to helping children and young people to progress in their learning and those that are required for accountability. Both are important but both can be compromised if they become confused.

Sound assessment evidence is essential in promoting both consolidation and flow in learning. To be effective, assessment requires a clear understanding about what is to be learned and effective and efficient means of gathering evidence about achievement, including through the use of digital technology. It is the prime means of establishing the extent to which the teaching process is bringing about the desired progress in each young person's learning. More direct engagement of children and young people in the assessment process will encourage them to take greater responsibility for their own learning and help develop their capacity to continue to learn effectively after they leave school.

**The Review proposes that the Welsh Government should develop an overall assessment and evaluation framework** as recommended by the OECD[82]. That framework should define the various roles of pupil assessment and school

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[82]  OECD (2013) *Synergies for Better Learning: An International Perspective on Evaluation and Assessment* OECD

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evaluation and establish clearly the respective contributions of teacher assessment and external testing, stressing their complementary roles. We advise against an over-reliance on external or internal tests, which limits the scope of what can be assessed and fails to reflect necessary breadth in the curriculum. The potential of teacher assessment to cover the full range of learning intentions will require a wider range of appropriate techniques than has traditionally been the case. The recommended depth and connected nature of learning can best be assessed by teachers but that will not happen automatically and will require resources and support. There will be a need to ensure that, taken together, the arrangements for assessment are proportionate and as light-touch as possible and not over-bureaucratic.

**A major, sustained change programme will be required to convert the recommendations of the Review into practice**. Successful implementation will require a sophisticated change strategy that establishes clear milestones and takes full account of the implications for system and teacher capacity. In conducting the Review we developed a set of principles for curriculum design which have acted as both a guide and a test. These are that the curriculum should be authentic; evidence-based; responsive; inclusive; ambitious; empowering; unified; engaging; based on subsidiarity; and manageable. As we move to implementation it will be important to ensure that the integrity of these principles is not compromised.

**One of the keys to successful implementation will be wide engagement in shaping and owning the new curriculum**. The process of development needs to build on our initial engagement and ensure ongoing and direct involvement involving not just the teaching profession but also the wider set of interested individuals and organisations that have contributed to our work. All of this will take time for full consideration of the very wide-ranging recommendations of the Review and sustained effort in translating them into practice.

**The various aspects of the Review proposals should be consolidated in national guidance for schools**. In order to promote consistency in the way in which Areas of Learning and Experience are elaborated, expert groups should be formed and charged with taking this forward using the criteria which we have developed in this report as a guide. These criteria include consideration of the relationship of proposed content to the purposes of the curriculum; an explanation of its boundaries and scope; an outline of necessary experiences and outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and dispositions; identification of ways in which key elements in the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and the wider skills can be taken forward; an explanation of progression and the definition of Achievement Outcomes at specified Progression Steps; advice on teaching and learning strategies; and a description of how assessment should contribute to learning in that area.

**The Review recommends that Wales should apply the principle of subsidiarity to curriculum development**. One of the tenets of the Review has been the desirability of engaging schools and teachers more directly in shaping the

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curriculum in ways that meet the needs of their children and young people. For the future, it will be important to nurture and encourage local ownership and responsibility within a clear framework of expectation and support that provides necessary direction and a sense of national purpose. Legislation should therefore be used sparingly while making clear the duties associated with providing an effective curriculum and appropriate assessment.

**The recommendations of the Review have major implications for the professional development of teachers and other practitioners**. These include the need to extend teachers' capacity in Welsh language, health and well-being, digital competence and computer science, as well as broader matters such as curriculum planning and assessment. The Welsh Government's New Deal for the Education Workforce and the review being undertaken by Professor John Furlong are well timed to address many of these issues but there will also be a need for more immediate action to build the confidence and capacity of teachers and school leaders in taking forward the Review's recommendations.

**The Review recommends fundamental changes to accountability systems**. Accountability systems can be the Achilles heel of curriculum reform. The unintended effects of over-exuberant accountability can unintentionally compromise good intentions. The Review proposals will have implications for accountability in Wales, including the need to avoid the detrimental effects of high-stakes performance measures on the curriculum and on teachers' professionalism. The aim must be to establish accountability mechanisms that make a constructive contribution to children and young people's learning and that promote a focus on the curriculum purposes as the agreed goals of that learning.

**Taken together, the Review recommendations aim to provide curriculum and assessment arrangements that will meet the needs and aspirations of all those with an interest in Welsh education**. For teachers and school leaders they will provide a more straightforward and coherent basis for the exercise of their professional skills. For children and young people they aim to create a more stimulating and challenging educational experience that will help them to thrive and succeed in an increasingly demanding but exciting world. For employers it will help to provide well-educated employees with both the 'hard' and 'soft' skills that are integral to the modern workplace. Parents and carers can engage more directly in their children's learning, receiving clear information about how they are progressing in relation to easily understood curriculum purposes.

**Finally, the proposals will require excellent and committed leadership at all levels in the education system**. The Welsh Government has signalled its commitment to establishing the kind of collaborative culture that characterises education systems that aspire to excellence. **The recommendations of this Review are intended to support that commitment and to shape a successful and exciting future for the young people of Wales**.

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# Recommendations

## Curriculum definition

1.  The school curriculum in Wales should be defined as including all of the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of agreed purposes of education.

## Purposes of the curriculum

2.  The school curriculum should be designed to help all children and young people to develop in relation to clear and agreed purposes. The purposes should be constructed so that they can directly influence decisions about curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

3.  The purposes of the curriculum in Wales should be that children and young people develop as:

    > ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives

    > enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work

    > ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world

    > healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

## Curriculum structure – breadth

4.  The curriculum 3–16 should be organised into Areas of Learning and Experience that establish the breadth of the curriculum. These areas should provide rich contexts for developing the four curriculum purposes, be internally coherent, employ distinctive ways of thinking, and have an identifiable core of disciplinary or instrumental knowledge.

5.  The new national curriculum in Wales should have six Areas of Learning and Experience: Expressive arts; Health and well-being; Humanities; Languages, literacy and communication; Mathematics and numeracy; and Science and technology.

6.  Children and young people should have their learning developed across the curriculum through three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities that should be the responsibility of all teachers: literacy; numeracy; and digital competence.

7.  A digital competence framework and an accompanying 'Routes to Learning Digital Competence' should be developed and be included as a Cross-curriculum Responsibility.

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8. The expectations for the three Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills should be embedded within the Areas of Learning and Experience.

9. Religious education should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, and should remain a statutory curriculum requirement from reception.

## Curriculum structure – progression

### Progression Steps

10. The new national curriculum should be organised as a continuum of learning from 3 to 16 without phases and key stages.

11. Progression should be described in relation to a continuum of learning in each Area of Learning and Experience from when a child enters education to the end of statutory schooling.

12. Progression should be signalled through Progression Steps at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.

13. The initial Progression Steps should take full account of guidance on *Routes for Learning*, which should be reviewed in the new curriculum context.

14. Progression Steps should be reference points, providing a 'road map' for each individual child and young person's progress in their learning and not universal expectations of the performance of all children and young people at fixed points.

15. There should be a duty on schools to provide a curriculum that enables most children and young people to reach, or go beyond, each Progression Step within the broad three-year window.

### Achievement Outcomes

16. Achievement Outcomes should be developed for each Progression Step in each Area of Learning and Experience, spanning the components within the Area of Learning and Experience and addressing the Cross-curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills.

17. Achievement Outcomes should contribute clearly to the four curriculum purposes and should have an emphasis on achievement in a broad sense, rather than only narrower measures of attainment. They should include references to relevant experiences which contribute to the curriculum purposes and to which children and young people should be entitled.

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18. Achievement Outcomes should be described from the learner's point of view, using terms like 'I have…' for experiences and 'I can…' for outcomes.

19. All children and young people should make progress along the same continuum, regardless of any additional learning needs they may have, although they may reach and move between Progression Steps more slowly or more quickly than others.

20. There should be a clear brief for the development of the Achievement Outcomes, as indicated in this report.

## The Welsh language

21. The Welsh language should remain compulsory up to the age of 16.

22. There should be a renewed focus in schools on learning Welsh primarily as a means of communication, particularly oral communication and understanding.

23. Progression in the Welsh language towards transactional competence at age 16 should be appropriately reflected in the related Progression Steps and Achievement Outcomes.

24. The value attached to the Welsh language by children and young people, teachers, parents and carers and the public should be enhanced by strengthening the focus on its commercial value for the jobs market, the suggested cognitive benefits of bilingualism and its importance in enabling children and young people to achieve a good understanding of the cultural life of Wales in the past and present.

25. Investment in and improvements to provision and the raising of standards should focus on strengthening the language in primary schools in order to create solid foundations for learning in Welsh and other languages in secondary school. There will also be a need for support for secondary schools to enable them to improve and adjust their provision

26. Welsh-medium schools should act as hubs for the Welsh language, to support teachers and practitioners in English-medium schools.

27. Systematic links should be established between schools and outside agencies that can support teaching, learning and the provision of resources in Welsh and modern foreign languages, including further and higher education providers and Mentrau Iaith.

28. Significantly better and more creative use should be made of technology in the teaching and learning of Welsh and also modern foreign languages.

29. The Welsh Government should realign Welsh language qualifications at 16 with the proposed focus on speaking and listening and application in the workplace.

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30. Implications for enhancing competence in the Welsh language in the education workforce should be taken forward through the New Deal for the Education Workforce and Professor Furlong's review of teacher education.

## Choice

31. Between the ages of 14 and 16, all young people should select courses or undertake activities from each of the Areas of Learning and Experience, hence maintaining breadth and meeting national priorities, including science and health.

## Pedagogy

32. All teaching and learning should be directed to achieving the four curriculum purposes.

33. Teachers should apply the pedagogical principles identified in this report when planning their teaching and learning, to ensure that the activities relate directly to the curriculum purposes.

34. Children and young people should have opportunities to learn from expertise and experience from outside the school.

## Assessment

35. Assessment arrangements should ensure that all important learning intentions and progression in relation to the four curriculum purposes are covered by relevant and proportionate assessment.

36. Assessment arrangements should be based upon the intentions set out in the Achievement Outcomes at each Progression Step within each Area of Learning and Experience.

37. Assessment arrangements should give priority to their formative role in teaching and learning.

38. A wide range of assessment techniques, selected on 'fit-for-purpose' criteria, should be used to reflect the breadth of the curriculum purposes.

39. Teacher assessment, which allows a wide range of learning to be covered, should remain as the main vehicle for assessment before qualifications.

40. Where the results of assessment are to be used for purposes of comparison, issues of reliability in teacher assessment should be addressed through effective moderation; where the prime purpose of assessment is assessment for learning there is less of a need for reliability between schools.

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41. Teachers should use tests as an important part of overall assessment arrangements but the limitations of such tests in covering the full range of desired learning should be recognised.

42. External, standardised testing provides important benchmarking information and should be used in combination with school tests and teacher assessment. Its frequency should be kept to a minimum in view of its impact on the curriculum and teaching and learning.

43. Innovative approaches to assessment, including interactive approaches, should be developed drawing on the increasing potential contribution of digital technology.

44. Both self-assessment and peer assessment should be developed as ways of encouraging children and young people to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

45. Reporting to parents and carers on progress in learning should include contributions from their children in relation to their own achievements and aspirations.

46. Summative reporting to parents and carers should include holistic assessments of achievement in relation to the curriculum purposes, drawing on experience from beyond the formal classroom.

47. Children and young people should develop their own e-portfolio, possibly including 'e-badges', to record key achievements and experiences.

48. Summative reporting at key transition points should be supported by portfolio evidence and face-to-face discussions involving the relevant teaching staff.

49. Increased use of digital media should be explored to help to improve the immediacy of feedback to parents and carers and engage them more directly in supporting learning.

50. Local and national policies and practices for assessment should be carefully designed to be as light-touch as possible, while giving sufficient information to assess progress, and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

51. Schools should use teacher assessment of progression systematically, together with other sources of evidence, to inform their self-evaluation for school improvement purposes.

52. Initial and career-long professional learning programmes should include elements that build teachers' capacity to assess the full range of curriculum purposes and Achievement Outcomes.

53. The Welsh Government should establish a comprehensive assessment and evaluation framework in line with the recommendations of this report.

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## The reform process

54. The revised curriculum and assessment arrangements should be introduced through an agile change strategy that establishes understanding and support, sets a measured pace, builds capacity and manages dependencies, particularly accountability arrangements.

55. Separate and independent evaluation arrangements should be established to monitor the effectiveness of the change structure and the new curriculum arrangements in relation to improvements in the quality of learning and performance.

## Leadership and steering

56. The Welsh Government should establish an arms-length structure for day-to-day leadership and steering of curriculum and assessment arrangements.

## Elaboration and development of Areas of Learning and Experience

57. Each Area of Learning and Experience should be elaborated in line with the brief provided in this report in order to provide practitioners with easily accessible guidance to help with their planning.

## Teacher and leadership capacity

58. An extensive and sustained programme of professional learning should be developed to ensure that the implications of the Review recommendations for the skills and knowledge of teachers and other practitioners are fully met.

59. The longer-term implications of the Review for building teacher capacity should be taken forward in the context of the Welsh Government's New Deal for the Education Workforce and Professor John Furlong's recommendations on teacher education.

60. Priority should be given to developing the leadership commitment, understanding and skills necessary for the proposed reforms to succeed.

## System capacity

61. The significant implications of the Review proposals for national and local educational infrastructure should be fully recognised. The Department for Education and Skills, regional consortia, Estyn, Qualifications Wales and universities will need to establish mechanisms for coordination and joint working that recognise the responsibilities and respective strengths of each.

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## National and local ownership

62. The change strategy associated with the Review should apply the principle of subsidiarity, encouraging local ownership and responsibility within a clear national framework of expectation and support.

## Legislation

63. The principle of a national curriculum for Wales should be reaffirmed and legislation should define a broad set of duties rather than detailed prescription of content.

64. Where necessary, specific requirements in relation to curriculum and assessment should be described in regulation and guidance, and subject to regular review.

## Accountability

65. Accountability arrangements should be strengthened and enhanced in ways that help to embed the new arrangements and drive improvement.

66. Accountability arrangements, particularly inspection, should evaluate and encourage the successful embedding of the curriculum purposes in the day-to-day work of schools and ultimately the outcomes being achieved by children and young people.

67. The school categorisation system should, in due course, be adjusted to reflect the recommendations of this Review.

68. The Welsh Government should no longer gather information about children and young people's performance on a school-by-school basis but should monitor performance in key aspects of the curriculum through annual testing on a sampling basis.

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# Appendix

## Professor Graham Donaldson CB

Before joining HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in 1983, Graham Donaldson taught at various levels in secondary schools in Scotland and also worked nationally on a range of curriculum projects. He became head of the Inspectorate in 2002 and, as the chief professional adviser to Scottish Ministers on education policy, he was closely involved in the Scottish Government's curriculum reform programme, Curriculum for Excellence. Following his retirement from HMIE he was asked by the government to undertake a personal review of teacher education in Scotland and his report, *Teaching Scotland's Future* (The Scottish Government, 2011) has led to a major implementation programme. He is a member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh Education Committee and a Director of the Goodison Group in Scotland. He has established a significant international profile by lecturing extensively, working as an international expert for OECD, advising governments and non-government organisations and leading the international inspectorate organisation as President. He is currently working at Glasgow University where he is a Professor working in the Robert Owen Centre. He was appointed by Her Majesty the Queen as a Companion of the Order of the Bath in 2010.

## Review Team

As well as wide-ranging engagement activity, Professor Donaldson has been assisted by the following.

### Advisers seconded to the Review from Estyn

**Sarah Morgan** (Primary Adviser to the Review) – Sarah Morgan has worked for Estyn as an HMI since 2009, inspecting in the primary, non-maintained nursery, independent and initial teacher training sectors in English and Welsh. Prior to that, she worked as a class teacher, deputy headteacher and headteacher for twenty-two years in Rhondda Cynon Taff and the Vale of Glamorgan. During that time, she also worked closely with local authorities and an initial teacher training institute in a variety of leadership and training roles. Her subject specialisms are music and Welsh as a second language. Sarah is a Welsh speaker.

**Nigel Vaughan** (Secondary Adviser to the Review) – Nigel Vaughan taught in secondary schools in Powys and Shropshire. Following this he took on a role as a local authority senior adviser with a specific focus on humanities (history, geography, RE and anti-racism) and secondary education. Nigel became a HMI in 1991 and has inspected in early years, primary, secondary, further education, local authorities and initial teacher training. Nigel was the secondary lead inspector for a period until his retirement in 2012. From this time he has been employed by Estyn on a part-time basis.

## External advisers

**Claire Armitstead** – Headteacher, Rhyl High School, English-medium secondary school.

**Owain ap Dafydd** – Headteacher, Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Welsh-medium secondary school.

**Kevin Tansley** – Headteacher, Tŷ Gwyn School, special school.

## Civil service team

**Kerry Davies** – Diary Secretary to Professor Donaldson.

**Denize Morris** – Curriculum Adviser to the Review.

**Megan Powell** – Project Manager.

This team was led by **Jo Trott**.

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**Recommendations**

**Curriculum**

- ➢ The school curriculum in Wales should be defined as including all of the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of agreed purposes of education.

- ➢ The school curriculum should be designed to help all children and young people to develop in relation to clear and agreed purposes. The purposes should be constructed so that they can directly influence decisions about curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

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- Innovative approaches to assessment, including interactive approaches, should be developed drawing on the increasing potential contribution of digital technology.
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- Reporting to parents and carers on progress in learning should include contributions from their children in relation to their own achievements and aspirations.
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- Initial and career-long professional learning programmes should include elements that build teachers' capacity to assess the full range of curriculum purposes and Achievement Outcomes.
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**Leadership and steering**

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- Each Area of Learning and Experience should be elaborated in line with the brief provided in this report in order to provide practitioners with easily accessible guidance to help with their planning.

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- The longer-term implications of the Review for building teacher capacity should be taken forward in the context of the Welsh Government's New Deal for the Education Workforce and Professor John Furlong's recommendations on teacher education.
- Priority should be given to developing the leadership commitment, understanding and skills necessary for the proposed reforms to succeed.

**System capacity**

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**National and local ownership**

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**Legislation**

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➢ Where necessary, specific requirements in relation to curriculum and assessment should be described in regulation and guidance, and subject to regular review.

**Accountability**

➢ Accountability arrangements should be strengthened and enhanced in ways that help to embed the new arrangements and drive improvement.
➢ Accountability arrangements, particularly inspection, should evaluate and encourage the successful embedding of the curriculum purposes in the day-to-day work of schools and ultimately the outcomes being achieved by children and young people.
➢ The school categorisation system should, in due course, be adjusted to reflect the recommendations of this Review.
➢ The Welsh Government should no longer gather information about children and young people's performance on a school-by-school basis but should monitor performance in key aspects of the curriculum through annual testing on a sampling basis.

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**Report to:**            **Performance Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Meeting:**      **16th April 2015**

**Lead Member / Officer:** **Lead Member for Modernisation & Performance/**
                          **Head of Business Improvement & Modernisation**

**Report Author:**        **Strategic Planning Manager**

**Title:**                **Corporate Risk Register review, April 2015**

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## 1.    What is the report about?

1.1    The April 2015 formal revision to the Corporate Risk Register.

## 2.    What is the reason for making this report?

2.1    A formally updated version of the Corporate Risk Register was agreed at Cabinet Briefing and is presented for consideration at Performance Scrutiny.

## 3.    What are the recommendations?

3.1    That Performance Scrutiny notes the deletions, additions and amendments to the Corporate Risk Register, and has the opportunity to comment.

## 4.    Report details

4.1    The Corporate Risk Register enables the Council to manage the likelihood and impact of risks that it faces by evaluating the effect of any current mitigating actions, and recording deadlines and responsibilities for further action that should enable tighter control.

4.2    The Corporate Risk Register has been developed by, and is owned by, the Corporate Executive Team.  The process for reviewing the Corporate Risk Register is as follows:
   – Services are encouraged to review their risk registers twice per year (according to the Corporate Risk Management methodology) prior to each Corporate Risk Register review, and also prior to their Service Performance Challenge meetings.  Any issues or queries are discussed in the Service Performance Challenge meetings.
   – The Corporate Improvement Team analyses all service risk registers to identify any risks of corporate significance, or any risk themes emerging across services.
   – Updates on current corporate risks are collected from risk owners, and updates on mitigation actions are collected from action owners.
   – Individual meetings are held with the Chief Executive and each Corporate Director to discuss the risks for which they are lead. Consideration is given to whether the risk remains, whether the scores are accurate, and whether any new risks under their jurisdiction need to be included.

- A risk workshop is held with Cabinet and CET to review existing risks; discuss progress on agreed mitigation actions; discuss and agree new corporate risks; review and update residual risk scores; update existing controls (in light of completed actions); and agree any new actions required to mitigate risks.

4.3    The Corporate Risk Register is formally reviewed twice yearly by Cabinet and CET. However, any significant new or escalating risks are brought to the attention of CET (via the Corporate Improvement Team) as and when they are identified. CET then take a view as to whether that risk should be included in the Corporate Risk Register.

4.4    Following each formal review of the Corporate Risk Register (twice per year), the revised document is presented to Performance Scrutiny.

4.5    On this occasion, Cabinet Briefing formally reviewed the Corporate Risk Register on Monday, 13th April. Any amendments to the register made at that meeting will be verbally reported to Performance Scrutiny on Thursday 16th April.

4.6    Actions identified to address corporate risks are included in Service Plans (where appropriate), which enables Performance Scrutiny Members to monitor progress. Any performance issues in relation to the delivery of these activities should be highlighted as part of the Service Performance Challenge process.

4.7    The Council's Internal Audit function provides independent assurance on the effectiveness of the internal control procedures and mechanisms in place to mitigate risks across the council. It also offers independent challenge to ensure the principles and requirements of managing risk are consistently adopted throughout the council. Internal Audit Services also use information from our service and corporate risk registers to inform its forward work programme.

**5.    How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

5.1    The purpose of the Corporate Risk Register is to identify the potential future events that may have a detrimental impact on the council's ability to deliver its objectives, including its corporate priorities. The identified controls and actions are therefore crucial to the delivery of the corporate priorities.

**6.    What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

6.1    The cost of developing, monitoring and reviewing the Corporate Risk Register is absorbed within existing budgets.

7. **What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?  The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

7.1 This Corporate Risk Register documents identified risks, and current and proposed mitigating actions.  The process of developing and reviewing the document itself does not impact adversely on any people with protected characteristics.  However, any new process, strategy or policy arising as a result of a mitigating action should be equality impact assessed at service delivery level.

8. **What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1 Details of the consultation process to review the Corporate Risk Register are contained in paragraph 4.2.

9. **Chief Finance Officer Statement**

9.1 There are no financial implications arising from the process outlined in this report for developing, monitoring and reviewing the Corporate Risk Register.

10. **What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1 The main risk associated with the risk management process is that the registers are not regularly reviewed and do not therefore become a dynamic and meaningful management tool.  However, the new process is fully integrated into the council's performance management framework, which should mitigate against this.

11. **Power to make the Decision**

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

11.2 Article 6.3.4(b) of the Council's Constitution

**Contact Officer:**
Strategic Planning Manager
Tel:  07766 367168

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**The main changes made to the Corporate Risk Register are listed below, along with any points of note:**

i.   DCC001: *'The risk of a serious safeguarding error where the council has responsibility, resulting in serious injury or death'.* Several new control measures are in place – particularly around Schools and the establishment of a regional approach - but some need to be monitored; further actions have been identified and have been added. However, not enough progress has been made to recommend a reduction in the residual risk score.

ii.  DCC00004: *'The risk that the HR framework doesn't support the organisation's aims'.* Here the recommendation is that the risk should now be managed at service level.

iii. DCC006: *'The risk that the economic and financial environment worsens beyond current expectations, leading to additional demand on services and reduced income'.* This risk became an issue with the WG's latest budget setting which was at the bottom of our estimate; however, the controls and actions put in place protected the authority from seeing the worst impacts come to fruition. We have revised our expectations even further downwards, which prompts the recommendation that the likelihood becomes 'probable' rather than 'almost certain' and the Freedom and Flexibilities process continues into 2016-2017.

iv.  DCC007: *'The risk that critical or confidential information is lost or disclosed'.* A number of risk reduction actions have been undertaken – eg data protection e-learning has been completed by 91% of staff. A new information security policy and e-learning package will be launched later this year. Residual risk score is 'possible' likelihood and 'medium' impact.

v.   DCC011: *'The risk of an ineffective response to a severe weather, contamination, or public health event'.* Although several mitigating actions are complete the major incident handbook is yet to be finalised. Once this has been done it is hoped that the residual risk likelihood can be downgraded to 'rare', but should remain at 'possible' for now

vi.  No change to DCC012: *'The risk of a significantly negative report(s) from external regulators'.*

vii. DCC013: *'The risk of significant financial and reputational liabilities resulting from management of some Arm's Length organisations'.* The completed review of Lessons Learned from Clwyd Leisure showed that improvements have already been made; the report's recommendations

for further improvements which will be implemented as part of the new framework for governance arrangements will be complete by 1st July. The recommendation is that the residual likelihood should be revised down to 'possible' while the impact remains the same.

viii.  No change to DCC014: *'The risk of a health & safety incident resulting in serious injury or the loss of life'.*

ix.  No change to DCC016: *'The risk that the impact of welfare reforms is more significant than anticipated by the council'*. This remains an area of uncertainty and, therefore, a risk for the Council.

x.  DCC017:*'The risk that the ICT framework does not meet the organisation's needs'.* Progress with mitigating actions has increased our confidence in our ability manage this risk, which results in a recommendation that the likelihood is reduced to 'possible' rather than 'probable, and further actions are due to be delivered within the next 12 months

xi.  DCC018: *'The risk that programme and project benefits are not fully realised'. While mitigating actions have been completed, we believe that there is more work to be done on this risk. Meanwhile the recommendation is that the likelihood is reduced to 'possible' and the impact is reduced to 'medium'.*

xii.  No change to DCC019: *'The risk that the availability of the Welsh Government's match-funding contribution towards Band A of the 21st Century Schools programme is not in line with the timescales for Denbighshire's work programme'.*

xiii.  DCC021: *'The risk that effective partnerships and interfaces between BCU Health Board and Denbighshire County Council (DCC) do not develop, leading to significant misalignment between the strategic and operational direction of BCUHB and DCC'.* Several new control measures are in place now which prompts the recommendation of a reduction in residual risk to 'possible' rather than 'probable.

xiv.  DCC027: '*The risk that the decisions that are necessary to enable the delivery of a balanced budget are not taken or implemented quickly enough'.* The Freedom & Flexibilities program, and Member involvement in its operation, has been successful this year in mitigating this risk, but there is still a good deal of work to find the necessary savings, so it is recommended that the residual likelihood is 'possible' rather than 'likely', while the impact remains 'very high'.

xv.  No change to DCC028: '*The risk that the services that we scale back have a greater negative impact than we anticipated'.* We believe that it is too early to revise the residual risk, although we have added important new actions.

xvi.    No change to DCC029: '*Risk of successful challenge that we are illegally depriving people of their liberty'*. The 'Cheshire West Judgement' is continuing to put a good deal of pressure on services, although a number of control measures have been put in place.  The judgement is being challenged and we will keep a watching brief.

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## Risks

### Risks

**00001** The risk of a serious safeguarding error where the council has responsibility, resulting in serious harm or death

**Description**

This risk - concerning children and vulnerable adults - is increasing as the environment is changing, with growing expectations around our duties in relation to 3rd party provision. The cumulative impact of reducing resources across the public sector may impact agencies' ability to appropriately recognise safeguarding risks which may also create extra pressures for the Local Authority.

**Impact / Consequences**

1. Significant reputational loss.
2. Possible intervention by Welsh Government.
3. Legal/compensation costs.

**Inherent Risk**
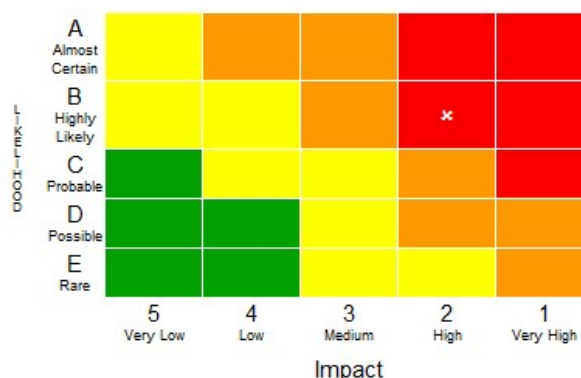


**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. Child protection & Safeguarding Procedures.
2. Regular training of staff in Children & Family Services.
3. Corporate Safeguarding Training Programme.
4. Wales Interim Policy & Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse.
5. Framework of self-assessment for schools in relation to safeguarding has been established.
6. Section 28 Audits, and annual reporting requirement for services to demonstrate how they are discharging their duties in relation to safeguarding.
7. Section 28 audit tool in place for voluntary sector to ensure safeguarding practices are in place.
8. Compliance with safeguarding practises is part of the annual HR audit of schools.
9. New regional arrangements for safeguarding a) children and b) vulnerable adults are in place. The regional safeguarding boards will set priorities and actions regionally, eg training and policies & procedures.
10. Corporate Training rolled out
11. Middle Managers Conference focussing on Safeguarding, November 2014
12. Risk assessments in place for recruiting staff who require a DBS check and/or references
13. Safeguarding policy review has taken place with Schools and new guidance has been developed

**Residual Risk**
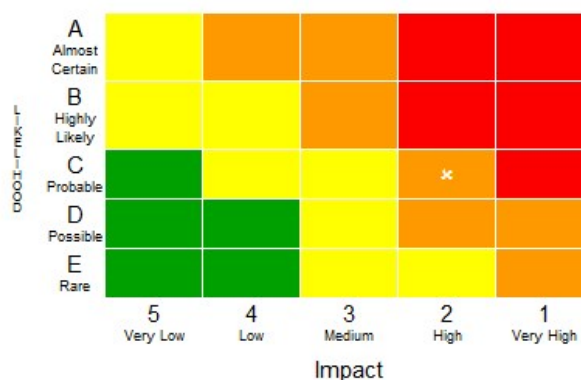


## Further Actions

### 00049  Implement Actions arising from Audit Reports

**Action Due Date**       31/03/2016

**Person Responsible**    Nicola Stubbins & Leighton Rees

**00050**  Task and Finish Group to be established to consider local risks associated with Child Sexual Exploitation, and lessons learned from Rotherham and elsewhere

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| | |
|---|---|
| Action Due Date | 30/06/2015 |
| Person Responsible | Nicola Stubbins |
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Bobby Feeley |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Nicola Stubbins |

## 00004   The risk that the HR framework doesn't support the organisation's aims.

**Description**

The policies and procedures we have in place need to reflect current organisational strategy (e.g. flexible working), and HR needs to offer support for those functions where the organisation requires it (e.g. restructures)

**Impact / Consequences**

The council is unable to deliver the associated savings incorporated into the MTFP through the Modernisation priority if our policies don't support proposed strategy. Organisational functions such as restructures might be slow to progress or even violate employment law if our managers are not effectively supported

**Inherent Risk**
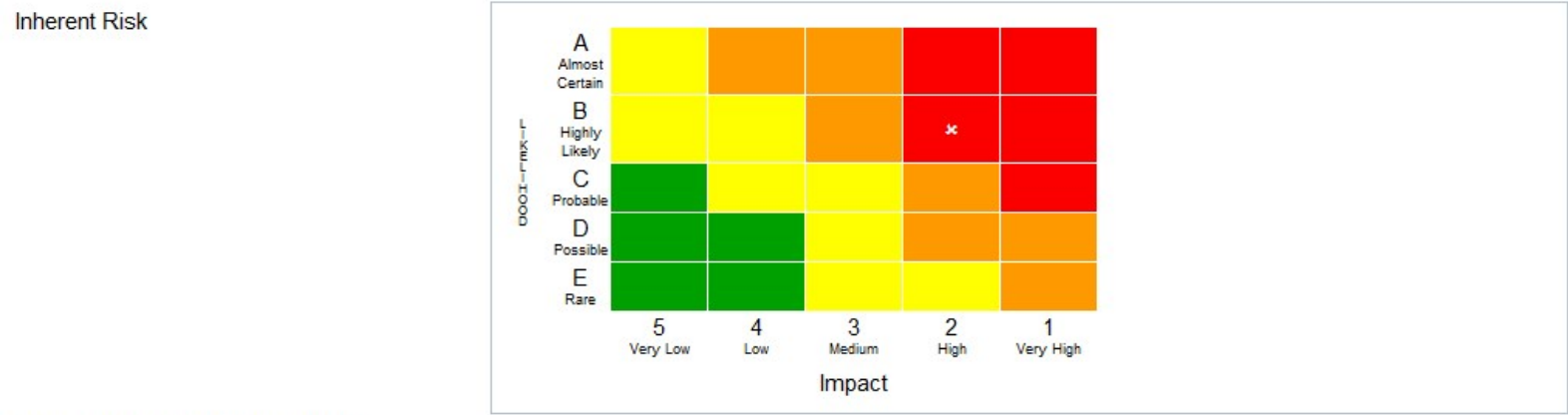


**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. A CRM in place in HR Direct has enhanced efficiency and provided improved management information to identify areas of common enquiry.
2. Middle Managers have been consulted regarding their experience of the service, and further improvements are outlined in the service's Improvement Plan.
3. Workforce Planning is now embedded and the service is happy with its development.
4. Although the transactional element of HR is being addressed with apparent success, there is still work to do to ensure that the strategic framework supports the organisation's aims.
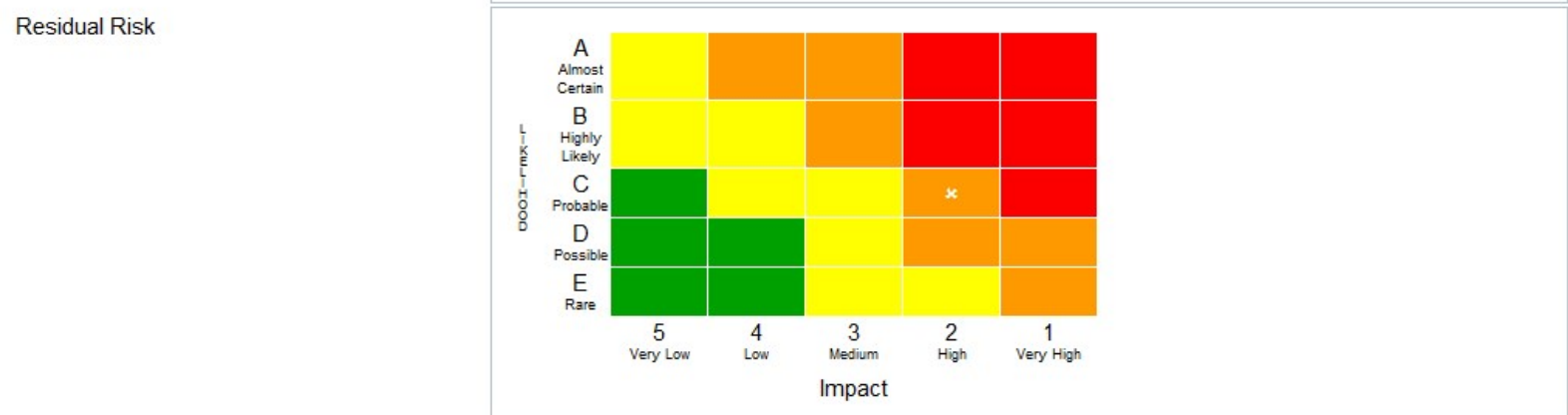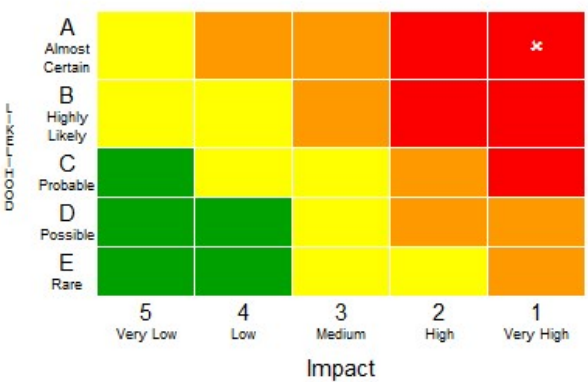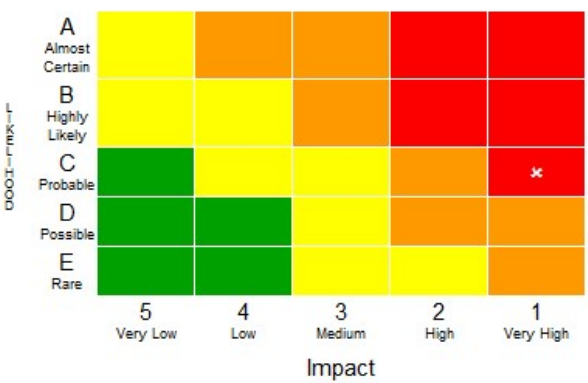
**Residual Risk**



### Further Actions

| | |
|---|---|
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Barbara Smith |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Rebecca Maxwell |

## 00006   The risk that the economic and financial environment worsens beyond current expectations, leading to additional demand on services and reduced income.

**Description**

The latest settlement was equal to the lowest anticipated, and the next one will probably also be very low, affecting our ability to effectively plan for the medium term.

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| Impact / Consequences | The council suffers from a significant reduction in income, leading to an inability to deliver current levels of service provision. |

**Inherent Risk**



**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. The council has no control over the global economy or the WG settlement. Therefore the inherent risk score likely to remain high.
2. Annual, detailed budget setting process that considers economic environment
3. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) contains different scenarios to ensure it can deal with changes in the external environment, and is considered on a quarterly basis: it has revised its expectations further downwards.
4. Communication channels opened with BCUHB.Budget-setting process and Modernistaion Board's activities raise awareness of implications of significantly reduced income due to the economic environment.
5. Quarterly financial planning meetings between services and management accountants are in place
6. Service's budgets are scrutinised by the Lead Member for Finance and the Head of Service during budget-setting talks.

**Residual Risk**



## Further Actions

### 00026   Freedom & Flexibilities

| Description | New budget process (Freedom & Flexibilities) developed for 2015/16 and beyond based around the Chief Executive's 'Sharperning our Act' strategy. Currently being piloted and will be implemented over the summer. |
| Action Due Date | 30/06/2014 |
| Person Responsible | Paul McGrady |
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Mohammed Mehmet & Julian Thompson-Hill |

### 00007   The risk that critical or confidential information is lost or disclosed.

| Impact / Consequences | 1. Reputational damage. |
| | 2. Criticism from external regulators (e.g. WAO conducting a review of information management across Welsh Authorities in 2012). |
| | 3. Fines from the Information Commissioner's Office (precedent of fines of up to £130k for single breach of Data Protection Act). |

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**Inherent Risk**

|  | 5 Very Low | 4 Low | 3 Medium | 2 High | 1 Very High |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A** Almost Certain | | | | | |
| **B** Highly Likely | | | ✕ | | |
| **C** Probable | | | | | |
| **D** Possible | | | | | |
| **E** Rare | | | | | |

LIKELIHOOD / Impact
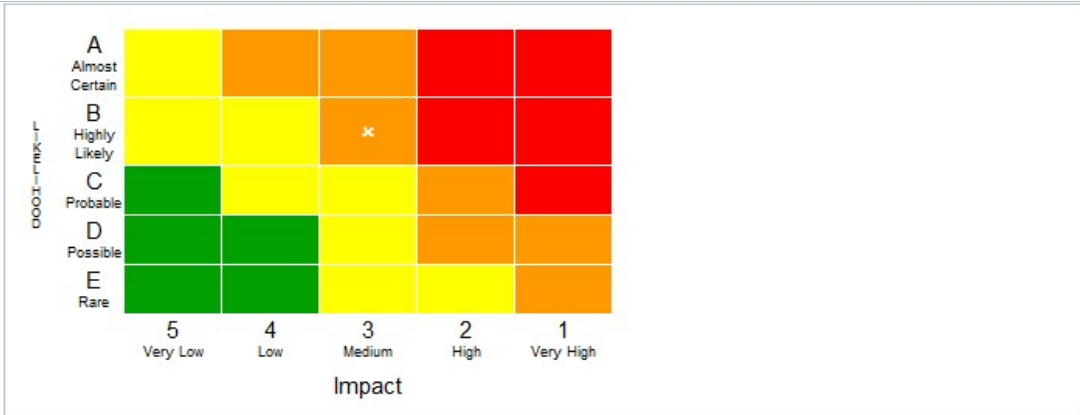
**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. The council has PSN accreditation
2. Retention schedules and file plans are incorporated into all EDRMS implementations.
3. Staff workshops delivered on good archiving practices.
4. Printer process now supports staff to collect printing when visiting the printer.
5. EDRMS project being rolled out.
6. Addresses are double-checked by a second member of staff when sending out sensitive information.
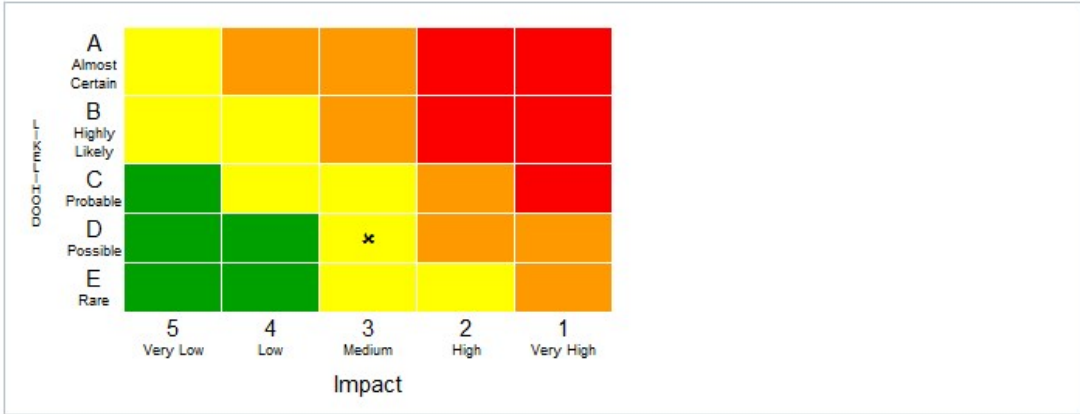7. Information strategy in place.
8. Strategic Information Risk Officer in place who investigates breaches and creates and action plan for prevention after each one.
9. Enforcing the encryption of any removal media used to download information from our network.
10. Introduction of secure e-mail: Egress
11. Data Protection elearning completed by all office-based staff across the Council (currently at 91% completion rate)
12. Refresh of intranet pages
13. Privacy Impact Assessments introduced for council projects that involve processing of personal data
14. File amnesty day introduced

**Residual Risk**

|  | 5 Very Low | 4 Low | 3 Medium | 2 High | 1 Very High |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A** Almost Certain | | | | | |
| **B** Highly Likely | | | | | |
| **C** Probable | | | | | |
| **D** Possible | | | ✕ | | |
| **E** Rare | | | | | |

LIKELIHOOD / Impact

## Further Actions

### 00027 Information security policy in place

| | |
|---|---|
| Description | New information security policy |
| Action Due Date | 31/10/2014 |
| Person Responsible | Alan Smith |

### 00052 E-learning package in place and rolled out

| | |
|---|---|
| Action Due Date | 30/09/2015 |
| Person Responsible | Alan Smith |

| | |
|---|---|
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Barbara Smith |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Hywyn Williams |

### 00011 The risk of an ineffective response to a severe weather, contamination, or public health event.

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| Description | Services plan for the impact of expected seasonal variations in weather, but severe weather events can impact on service delivery. Similary, we put plans in place to monitor food, water and air quality, but any contaminations can impact on service delivery, as would any viral pandemics. |
|---|---|

**Impact / Consequences**

1. Significant disruption to core services.
2. Serious injury or fatality due to road network closure, poisoning or infection.
3. Reputational risk to the council if unable to deal with issues.

**Inherent Risk**
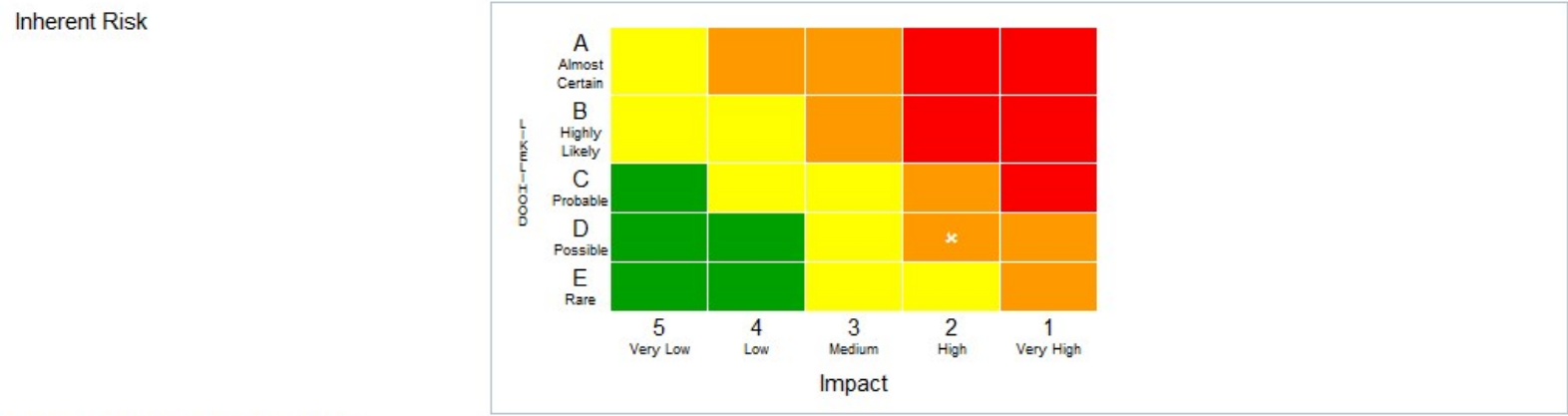


**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. The control environment in this area is the joint Emergency Planning Unit (Denbighshire & Flintshire), and local emergency management response groups have been established.
2. We also contiunally review our procedures for winter highways maintenance.  Secondary rota established and operational.
3. Service disruption is minimised through our arrangements for business continuity and emergency planning, with separate Directors responsible for Response, Recovery, and Information
4. There's an on-call rota in place for CET.

**Residual Risk**
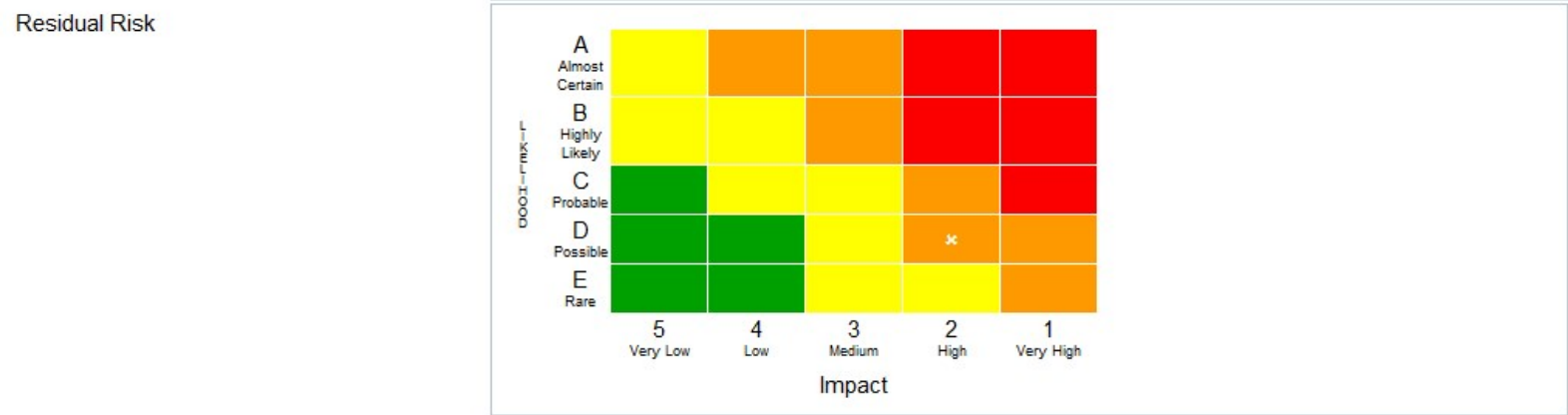


## Further Actions

### 00031  Vulnerable People mapping project

| Action Due Date | 31/03/2016 |
|---|---|
| Person Responsible | Phil Gilroy |

### 00032  Major incident handbook to be finalised

| Action Due Date | 30/06/2014 |
|---|---|
| Person Responsible | Rebecca Maxwell |

### 00053  Emergency Response Planning report to be presented to Partnerships Scrutiny

| Action Due Date | 30/06/2015 |
|---|---|
| Person Responsible | Rebecca Maxwell |
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor David Smith |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Rebecca Maxwell |

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00012   The risk of a significantly negative report(s) from external regulators.

| Impact / Consequences | |
|---|---|
| | 1. Reputational damage.<br>2. Potential intervention by the WG.<br>3. Significant resources may be required to be diverted to deliver immediate and substantial change.<br>4. Regulation we're subject to includes: CSSIW (Care and Social serices Inspectorate Wales); WAO Office; Estyn; HSE (Health & Safety Executive); ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) |

**Inherent Risk**
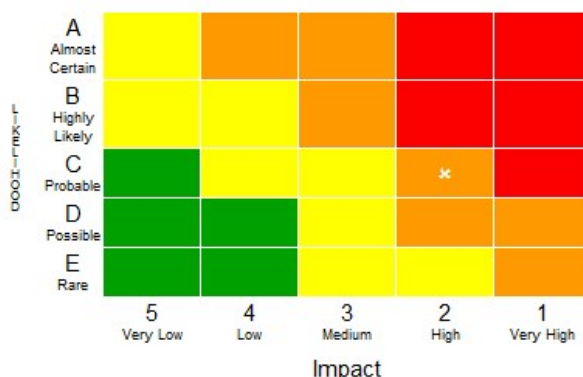


**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. The corporate performance management framework (PMF) is the main control in this area.
2. Head of Business Improvement & Modernisation, Strategic Planning Team Manager and Head of Audit meet monthly with Wales Audit Office to understand and respond to their concerns.
3. Regulators sit on Service Performance Challenges now.
4. Reserch & Intelligence team creates Needs & Demands, and Comparative reports to support service self assessment and Service Performance Challenges.
5. Annual Governance Statement and Performance Self Assessment now combined.

**Residual Risk**
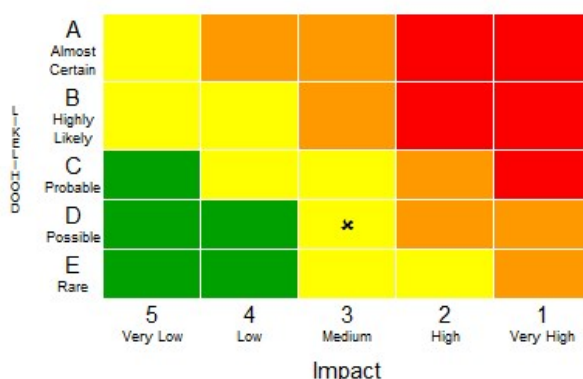


## Further Actions

| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Hugh Evans |
|---|---|
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Hywyn Williams |

00013   The risk of significant financial and reputational liabilities resulting from management of some Council-Funded Service Providers

| Description | Liabilities could arise due to financial, HR, safeguarding, or general management problems |
|---|---|
| Impact / Consequences | 1. Capital liabilities.<br>2. Property Liabilities.<br>3. Reduction in levels of service provided to the community, or increased revenue costs to continue delivery.<br>4. Reputation damage to the council |

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**Inherent Risk**
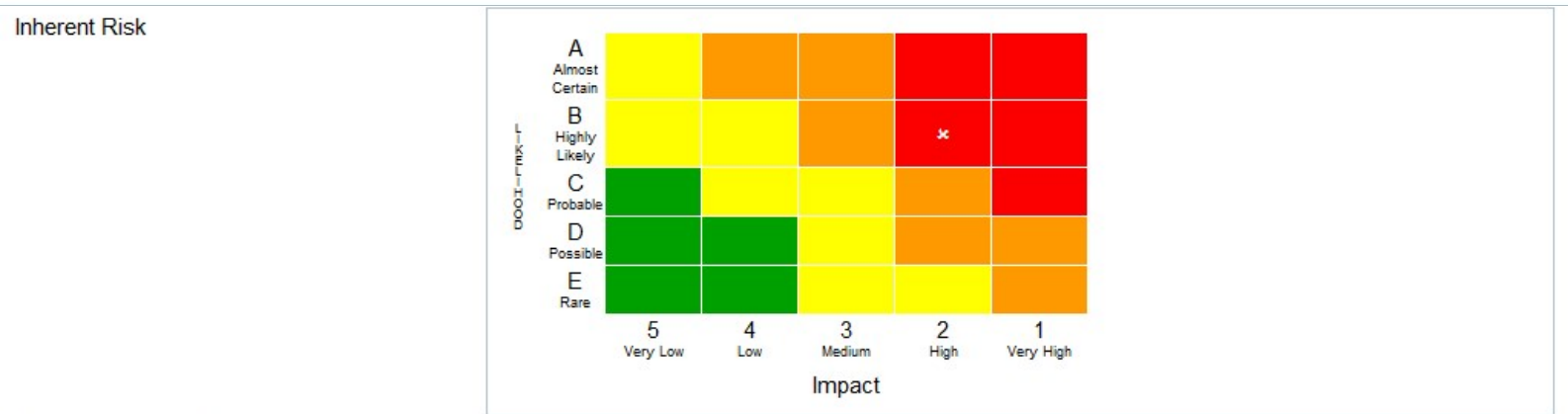


**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. Council is entitled to representation on Boards, and Heads of Service providing strategic advice to facilities.
2. Heads of Service advise DCC on any emerging issues and risks.
3. Financial support and/or subsidies being provided.
4. Processes are in place to manage relationships between DCC and Arm's Length organisations.
5. Intervention measures are excercised by DCC if relationships with Arm's Length organisations are difficult to manage.
6. Resources have been committed to improve financial monitoring of facilities.

**Residual Risk**
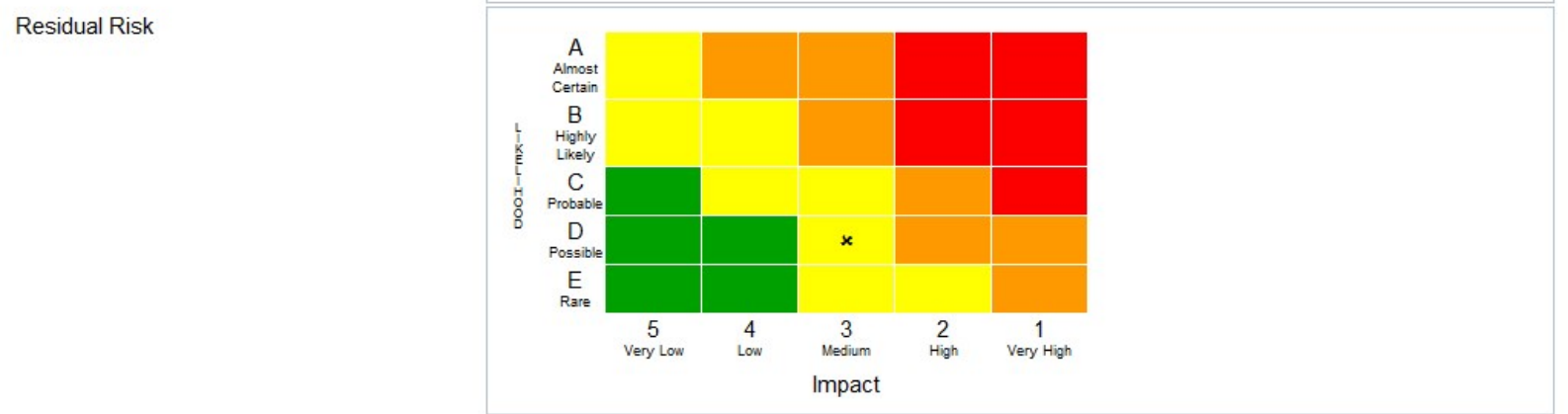


## Further Actions

### 00042   Develop a robust framework to monitor governance arrangements for Council Funded Service Providers

| | |
|---|---|
| Description | Incorporating recommendations from Clwyd Leisure Lessons Learned report |
| Action Due Date | 30/06/2015 |
| Person Responsible | Ivan Butler |
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Huw Jones |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Hywyn Williams |

### 00014   The risk of a health & safety incident resulting in serious injury or the loss of life.

| | |
|---|---|
| Description | This could be as a result of an ineffective H&S management system; inadequate fire control systems (infrastructure); or inadequate fire management planning. |

**Impact / Consequences**

1. Serious injury or death of an employee and/or member of public.
2. Significant reputational damage
3. Substantial legal/compensation costs.
4. Criminal prosecution of senior staff.

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## Inherent Risk



## Controls to Manage Risk (in place)

1. New H&S Committee established with representation from each service, plus meetings established with groups of services.
2. Strategic leadership provided by Corporate Director with responsibility for health and safety.
3. Improved efficiency through on-line & phone line incident reporting.
4. Council has existing Health and Safety Managament System(s).
5. All DCC teams to identify their activities, consider the hazards associated with the work, describe how the risks are managed and then analyse any gaps in how they are managing the risks. These self analyses are now being monitored by the CH&S team who are going out into the workplaces and providing support, guidance and feedback where it is needed.
6. The H&S training program focuses on in-house provision that is targeted at DCC activities.
7. Strong Leadership process developed and in place across the organisation.
8. Links developed with Property Services to manage property-related fire risks
9. Middle managers have developed robust fire management system controls.
10. In-house training and meetings established to embded good practise.
11. Guidance and assistance provided to managers responsible for developing fire management systems.

## Residual Risk



## Further Actions

| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill |
| --- | --- |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Hywyn Williams |

### 00016   The risk that the impact of welfare reforms is more significant than anticipated by the council.

| Description | Welfare reform has potentially significant implications for a large proportion of residents, and also on the council in terms of increased demand for services and reduced income. The actual impact is difficult to predict. |
| --- | --- |

**Impact / Consequences**

1. Potential increase in demand for services: e.g. homelessness and homlessness prevention services; housing (especially for stock which is currently scarce); benefits support / advice, etc.
2. Reduced income from rents and council tax payments with reduced cash flow and an increase in bad debt for the authority.
3. Increased recovery action and administrative costs.
4. Increase in tenants' rents.
5. Also an impact to Social Services due to Disability Living Allowance changes.
6. This could also impact on our ability to deliver our Corporate Priorities

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**Inherent Risk**



| Controls to Manage Risk (in place) | DCC Welfare Reform Group has been meeting since April 2012. This group is cross service (including Registered Social Landlords) to ensure that information is shared and pressures identified to support our customers. |
| --- | --- |
| | Chair of Corporate Governance sits on the Welfare Reform Group |

**Residual Risk**



## Further Actions

### 00018   Establish Corp Governance reporting arrangements

| Description | Set up reporting arrangements for the group to keep Corporate Governance informed of its progress |
| --- | --- |
| Action Due Date | 30/09/2013 |
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Hugh Irving |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Paul McGrady |

### 00017   The risk that the ICT framework does not meet the organisation's needs

| Description | If we do not invest in appropriate technology at the right price, this will hinder our capability to deliver the efficiencies and savings required for the Modernisation priority. The main risk here is around the organisation taking decisions to invest in IT infrastructure that is not effective in reducing overheads. This can happen for two reasons: 1) we don't understand the current and necessary ICT requirements, and 2) we don't accurately predict the anticipated benefits. This risk might also occur as a missed opportunity to capitalise on effective technology, if we unaware of the capability that some technology can bring. |
| --- | --- |
| Impact / Consequences | If we decide to invest in technology that does not sufficiently contribute to our Modernisation agenda, not only are we likely to miss our targets, but we're also going to waste money |

**Inherent Risk**



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| Controls to Manage Risk (in place) | 1. All decisions for investment taken at Capital Investment Strategy group. |
|---|---|

1. All decisions for investment taken at Capital Investment Strategy group.
2. ICT Strategy offers a mechanism for estimating net savings that investments can make.
3. ICT now part of the Business Improvement & Modernisatin service, and structures have been realigned to provide a more customer-focussed service.
4. ICT Business Partners work with services to forecast their ICT needs.
5. Hardware rollout complete.
6. Telephony strategy developed.

**Residual Risk**
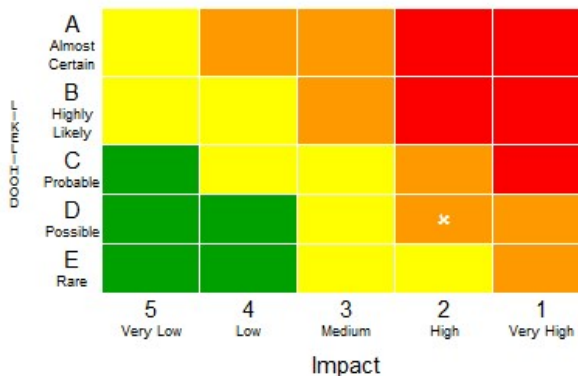


## Further Actions

### 00035 New telephony system to be rolled out

| Action Due Date | 31/12/2015 |
|---|---|
| Person Responsible | Alan Smith |

### 00036 Migration to MS Enterprise to be completed

| Action Due Date | 30/09/2015 |
|---|---|
| Person Responsible | Alan Smith |

### 00054 Business Support Review phase 1: bringing PARIS and Open Housing into ICT Structure

| Action Due Date | 31/07/2015 |
|---|---|
| Person Responsible | Alan Smith |

### 00055 Business Support Review Phase 2: Review all service-based ICT systems and maintenance agreements

| Action Due Date | 31/03/2016 |
|---|---|

### 00056 Phase 2 of the ICT Strategy to be completed

| Action Due Date | 31/07/2015 |
|---|---|
| Person Responsible | Alan Smith |
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Barbara Smith |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Mohammed Mehmet |

### 00018 The risk that programme and project benefits are not fully realised.

| Description | The council currently does not consistently deliver all benefits from projects. Some of the issues include: inconsistent management; resistance to change; staff behaviour and processes not changing as planned. Programmes to be mindful of include: Economic & Community Ambition; Modernisation; Social Services Modernisation; Modernising Education; Coastal Facilities, and Rhyl Going Forward. |
|---|---|
| Impact / Consequences | The forecast changes that were alluded to in business cases do not materialise and, hence, neither do their benefits |

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## Inherent Risk
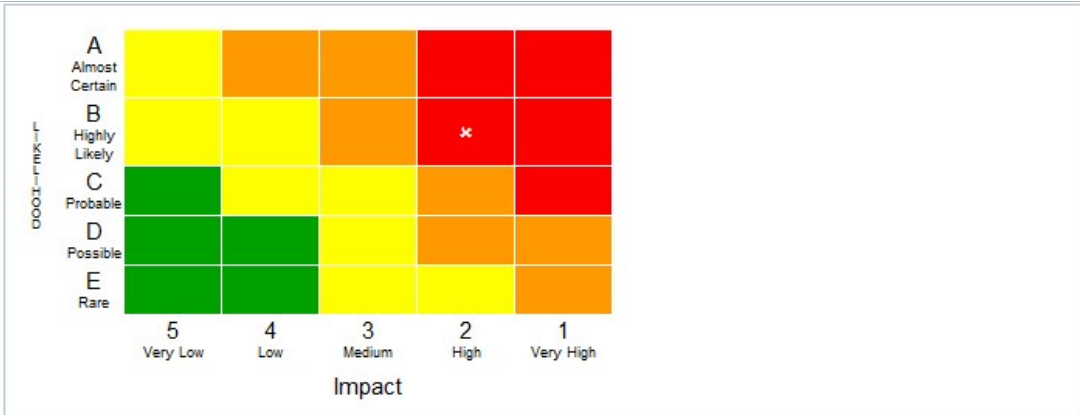


## Controls to Manage Risk (in place)

1. Corporate Programme Office established.
2. HR resource identified to support restructures.
3. Business Partners involved in workforce planning have identified a need for Change management training, and resource has been identified to support this.
4. Programme Manager in place for the Modernisation priority (to co-ordinate projects).
5. Modernisation Board can track projects and their benefits.
6. Introduction of Verto to record benefit tracking.
7. Change toolkits, together with factsheets, are on the intranet to support managers.
8. Business Partners are now allocated to every major change to ensure consistency.
9. Finance remove savings from budgets to ensure financial savings are delivered.
10. Denbighshire Way Change Management Guidance has been developed
11. CET reviews key projects every three months

## Residual Risk
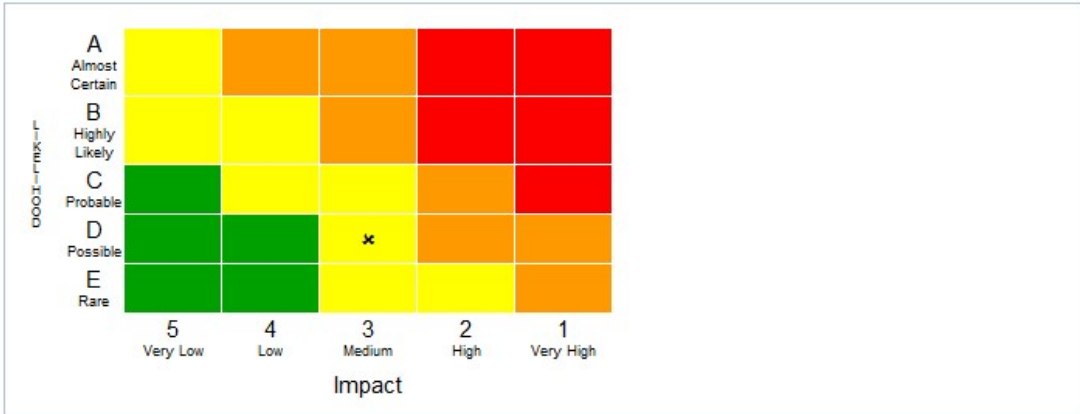


## Further Actions

| | |
|---|---|
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Barbara Smith |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Mohammed Mehmet |

**00019** The risk that the availability of the Welsh Government's match-funding contribution towards Band A of the 21st Century Schools programme is not in line with the timescales for Denbighshire's work programme.

| | |
|---|---|
| Description | Projects within the 21st Century Schools Programme are planned throughout the financial year, but rely on match-funding being available from the Welsh Government.<br>If the WG's financial contribution is not received as aniticpated, it can affect the timing of each project, which can impact on the overall programme. |
| Impact / Consequences | Delays in delivering the 21st Century Schools Programme. |

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**Inherent Risk**
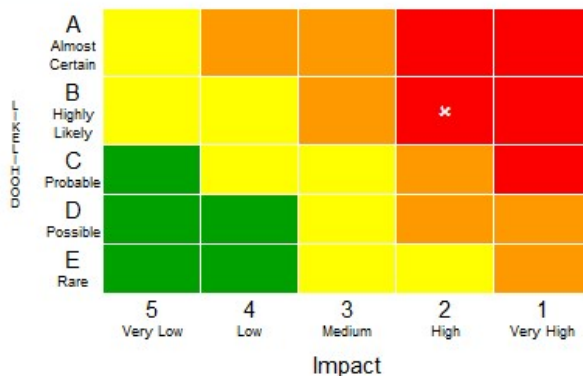


**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. Regular liaison with WG and Strategic Investment Group to review progress of individual projects and the overall financial management of the longterm programme to identify potential risks in funding profiles.
2. Establishment of a formal programme approach to manage the delivery of the 21st Century Schools programme.
3. Projects over £5m in value are scoped out according to the Welsh Government's five case business model at development stage.
4. Project at £5m or less are scoped out inline with the Welsh Government's business justification case documentation.
5. Modernising Education Programme Board established, to meet monthly in the short term.
6. SRO, Head of Service and Programme Manager have arranged for regular gateway review support from WG's Programme and Projects department (independent from WG's 21st Century Schools team)

**Residual Risk**
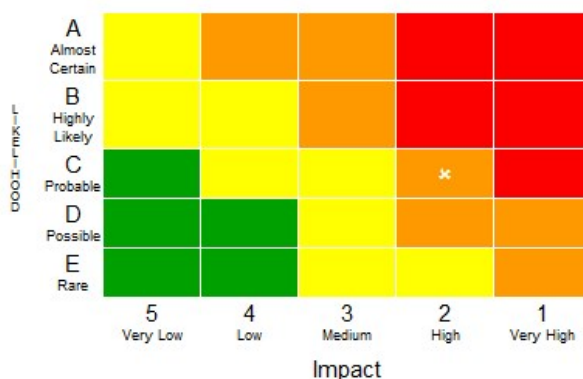


| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Eryl Williams |
|---|---|
| Active | Yes |

**00021**  The risk that effective partnerships and interfaces between BCU Health Board and Denbighshire County Council (DCC) do not develop, leading to significant misalignment between the strategic and operational direction of BCU and DCC

**Impact / Consequences**

1. Inefficient services
2. Gaps in service provision
3. Delays/failure to deliver joint projects
4. Reputational damage
5. Ability to meet new statutory duties - Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill, Social Services and Wellbeing Act

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**Inherent Risk**
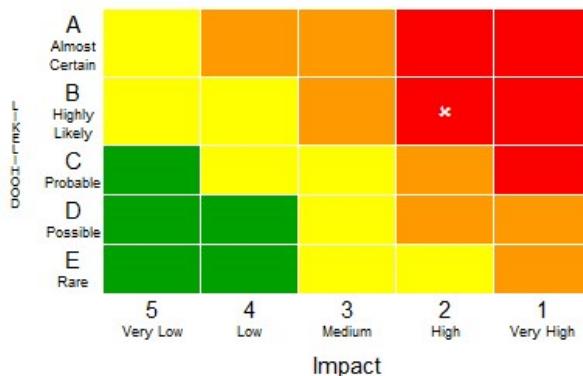


**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. Establishment of a Denbighshire Health and Social Care Board, of which BCU is a member.
2. DCC presence in Key CPG meetings and Regional Boards looking at implementing integrated new approaches.
3. New Chief Executive of BCUHB appointed.
4. Denbighshire Joint Locality Forum established.
5. Nicola Stubbins appointed Associate Member of BCUHB Board
6. Cllr Bobby Feeley appointed Independent Member (Local Authority) of BCUHB Board
7. NWWSIC has reviewed its governance arrangements in partnership with BCUHB. Establishment of a 'Leadership Forum', chaired by Wrexham LA Chief Executive, attended by senior management of BCUHB and Directors of Social Services
8. BCUHB Area Director has been appointed - will start after Easter
9. Locality Structure is bedding in, the Denbighshire Health and Social Care Board to be reviewed.

**Residual Risk**
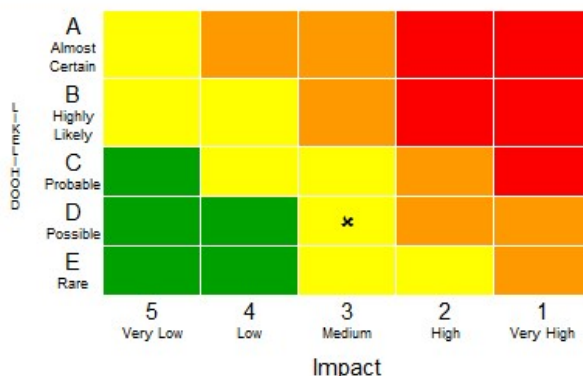


**Further Actions**

| | |
|---|---|
| Lead Member(s) | Councillor Bobby Feeley |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Nicola Stubbins |

**00027   The risk that the decisions that are necessary to enable the delivery of a balanced budget are not taken or implemented quickly enough**

| | |
|---|---|
| Description | As our settlement reduces, we need to develop and gain approval for plans as to where to stop spending in our budget. Any plans require the approval of Council, and must be implemented in a timely manner that complies with legislation.  While the Freedoms and Flexibilities process has been successful to date there is still a substantial saving to be made by the Local Authority in 2016-2017. |
| Impact / Consequences | Denbighshire overspends on its budget |

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**Inherent Risk**



**Controls to Manage Risk (in place)**

1. Freedom & Flexibilities programme involves Members, so they understand that difficult decisions are necessary, and they are involved with developing the proposals. This should make them more likely to support the recommendations made.

**Residual Risk**



**Further Actions**

| | |
|---|---|
| Lead Member(s) | Cllr Hugh Evans |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Mohammed Mehmet |

**00028   The risk that the services that we scale back have a greater negative impact than we anticipated**

**Description**

When deciding where to make budget cuts, we endeavour to ensure the quality of key services. There is a risk that we haven't identified the correct services as being 'key', and/or that the changes we make are more disruptive than we anticipated

**Impact / Consequences**

1. Services that are important for our residents are no longer available
2. Performance in important areas of our business (for our residents) deteriorates
3. Reinstatement/correction in performance is difficult and slow to achieve
4. Reputation can suffer if performance deteriorates
5. Reputation can suffer if messages are not managed

**Inherent Risk**



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| Controls to Manage Risk (in place) | 1. Impact Assessments are undertaken<br>2. Cover reports for all decisions ask for risks and benefits to be articulated |
| --- | --- |

**Residual Risk**
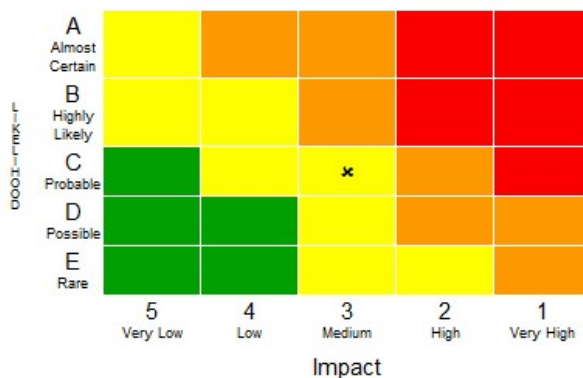


## Further Actions

### 00057   A Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to be established to monitor impacts

| Action Due Date | 30/09/2015 |
| --- | --- |
| Person Responsible | Gary Williams |
| Lead Member(s) | Cllr Hugh Evans |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Mohammed Mehmet |

### 00029   Risk of successful challenge that we are illegally depriving people of their liberty

| Description | There is the potential for future legal challenges following the recent Supreme Court ruling on deprivation of liberty. The court ruled that all people who lack the capacity to make decisions about their care and residence and, under the responsibility of the state, are subject to continuous supervision and control and lack the option to leave their care setting are deprived of their liberty. The ruling overturned previous judgements that had defined deprivation of liberty more restrictively. This means that many people are likely to have been deprived of their liberty unlawfully and without safeguards in settings including care homes and supported living placements. This is likely to result in a significant increase in DOLS case numbers regarding care home placements, and also applications to the Court of Protection to authorise deprivations of liberty in supported living. We are already beginning to see the impact of the ruling in Denbighshire. |
| --- | --- |
| Impact / Consequences | Legal challenge, reputational damage, financial costs |

**Inherent Risk**
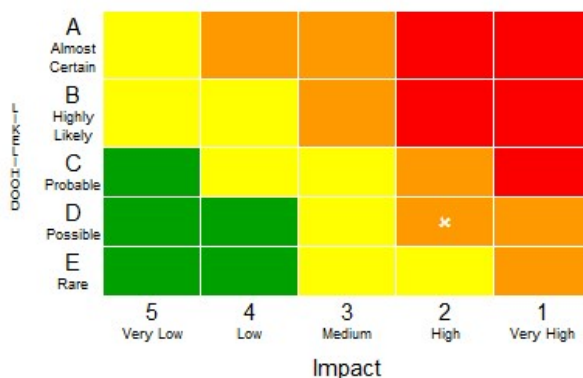


| Controls to Manage Risk (in place) | 1 Every provider has received a letter describing our pragmatic approach<br>2 Five more staff members have been trained as Best Interest Assessors<br>3 Increased signatory capacity<br>4 The 'Cheshire West ruling' is being challenged and we are keeping a watching brief<br>2 Five more staff members have been trained as Best Interest Assessors; a further group is about to start training<br>3 Increased signatory capacity |
| --- | --- |

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## Residual Risk
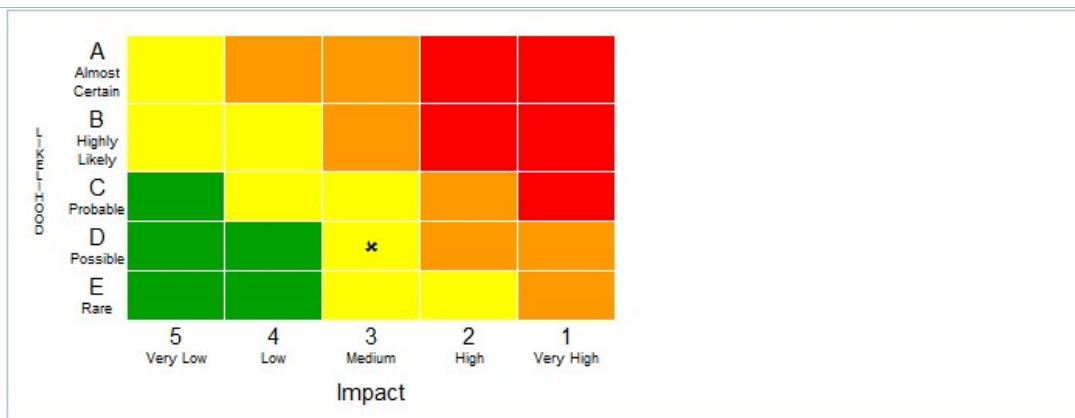


## Further Actions

### 00044   Reviewing

| | |
|---|---|
| Description | Continue to assess everyone in residential care that we need to |
| Action Due Date | 31/03/2016 |
| Person Responsible | Phil Gilroy |

### 00045   Training

| | |
|---|---|
| Description | Further Best Interest Assessor Training to be delivered. |
| Action Due Date | 31/12/2015 |
| Person Responsible | Nicola Stubbins & Phil Gilroy |
| Lead Member(s) | Bobby Feeley |
| Active | Yes |
| Risk Owner | Nicola Stubbins |

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**Report to:**          **Performance Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Meeting:**    **16th April 2015**

**Lead Member/Officer:**    **Lead Member for Modernisation**
                            **Head of Business Improvement &**
                            **Modernisation**

**Report Author:**      **Strategic Planning Officer**

**Title:**              **Local Authority Service Performance Report**
                        **2013/14**

---

## 1.    What is the report about?

1.1    The Local Authority Service Performance Report 2013/2014
       (Appendix 1, published February 2015) is an annual publication which brings
       together performance of key Local Authority services in Wales.

1.2    It draws upon existing sources of information to highlight and add context to
       performance variation throughout Wales and sets out what citizens can expect
       from key local authority services.

1.3    The service areas included in the report are Social Care, Education, Leisure
       and Culture, Housing, Environment, Transport, Community Safety and
       Wellbeing.

## 2.    What is the reason for making this report?

2.1    To consider the national report on local authorities' performance and
       Denbighshire's performance in relation to other local authorities 2013/14.

## 3.    What are the Recommendations?

3.1    It is recommended that the Committee use this report for the:

       Identification of specific service areas or areas of work which would benefit
       from detailed scrutiny to improve outcomes for citizens and the Council's
       overall performance and facilitate delivery of the Corporate Plan.

## 4.    Report details

4.1    We monitor our performance regularly, take half-yearly reports to Scrutiny and
       Cabinet meetings and produce an Annual Performance Report to evaluate
       progress.

4.2    It is realised that the published report is in relation to all Local Authority
       Service Performance and relates historically to 2013/2014. It draws upon the
       Welsh Government National Strategic Indicators and the Programme for

Government indicators and other official statistical sources as suggested by policy and statistical specialists.

4.3 Taking into account this historic position we have provided as Appendix 2 Denbighshire's comparative position regarding the National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) for 2013/14.

4.4 In 2013/14 Denbighshire maintained its position as the best performing council in Wales for a fourth year, as having the most indicators within the top quartile, according to the Welsh Government's National Strategic Indicators:

- Of the 30 National Strategic Indicators, 16 were positioned in the top quartile
- Above the median, our position has slipped slightly, now ranking second in Wales
- We have seen improvement in 19 indicators
- We performed among the best in Wales in 6 indicators, sharing the top ranking with other local authorities.
- We were Best in Wales for the percentage of children looked after who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements (8.1% in 2013/14), and; the percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled (63.21% in 2013/14).

4.5 We have also provided the Committee (where quarterly information is applicable) the current position as at the end of Quarter 3 (end December 2014) to ensure the Committee is able to consider our most current position with regard to these indicators.

4.6 This will enable the Committee to have an understanding of the current performance relating to our comparative position and also to consider any areas of weak performance for scrutiny in readiness for 2015/16.

4.7 The movement in quartiles 2012/13 – 2013/14 and current Quarter 3 data shows us that:

4.7.1 In the percentage of looked after children experiencing 3 or more placements, we slipped from the 2nd to 3rd quartile. This has been explained as child moves that were for positive reasons. Current Quarter 3 performance is at a good level as it is below the 10% service and Outcome Agreement targets.

4.7.2 In the percentage of initial assessments where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker we slipped from being in the top quartile to the 2nd quartile (52.9% to 52.6%). Quarter 3 data, however, shows our performance at 53% (an excellent position above the 50% service target).

4.7.3 In the average external qualifications score for 16yr old looked after children, we slipped from the 2nd quartile to the bottom quartile (annual indicator).

4.7.4 The percentage of pupils aged 15 in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved he Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics - we slipped from the 2nd quartile into the 3rd quartile (annual indicator).

4.7.5 The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans - we slipped from being in the top quartile to the 3rd quartile. Current Quarter 3 data shows only 66.67% have pathway plans, however, there are current data recording issues which will be rectified by the end of Quarter 4.

4.7.6 The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months - there were doubts around the consistency of Local Authority data and no all Wales comparisons were made.

4.7.7 The percentage of adults who hold a concessionary bus pass; we slipped from the 2nd to 3rd quartile (annual indicator).

4.8 In 2013/2014 we remained in the bottom quartile for:

4.8.1 The rate of older people 65+ supported in the community - this, however, is accepted performance as it does not take into account Denbighshire's ambition to meet people's needs through reablement and community services rather than managed care.

4.8.2 The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days - we remained in the bottom quartile, however, performance had improved in 2013/14 to 94.88%.

4.8.3 No. of visits to local authority sports and leisure facilities - we remained in the bottom quartile, however, performance data shows an improvement and we were no longer the worst in Wales for this indicator (annual indicator).

4.9 Overall for 2013/2014 the NSI comparative data showed:
- We improved our quartile position for 5 indicators
- We remained within the same quartile as 2012/13 for 18 indicators.
- We declined in our quartile position for 7 indicators (as depicted above).

## 5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1 The performance reports and the Corporate Risk Register relate directly to the delivery of the Corporate Plan. The Committee is able to effectively carry out its performance management function, and that the Council will be able to exercise its duty to improve under these arrangements.

## 6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 This report offers a retrospective examination of our performance for 2013/14. There are no additional costs or implications for other services.

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report**

7.1 An equality impact assessment on this published report is not required.

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1 This paper is being presented in response to the Committee's request to consider the Local Authority Service Performance Report 2013/14 report. The Committee to use the report as a tool to inform its future work.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

9.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from the report.

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1 We have a strong performance management framework, a robust Service Performance Challenge process and a strong Performance Scrutiny Committee.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

11.1 Performance management and monitoring is a key element of the Wales Programme for Improvement, which is underpinned by the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1999 and the Local Government "Wales" Measure 2009.

11.2 Articles 6.1 and 6.3.4(b) outlines scrutiny's role with respect to performance monitoring and management.

**Contact Officer:**     Strategic Planning Officer  Tel:  07795 334836

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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# Local Authority Services Performance

## 2013–14

February 2015

If you have any questions or comments about this publication please contact us at LocalGovernmentSettlement@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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Website: http://wales.gov.uk

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Twitter: www.twitter.com/WG_Publicserv

**OGL**

# Local Authority Services Performance 2013-14

Contents

## 2. Foreword by the Minister for Public Services



This is the fourth edition of the annual compendium looking at the performance of Local Authority services. This publication contains the latest performance data to support the accountability and scrutiny of public services by citizens and by elected Members acting on their behalf. Challenging financial circumstances and increasing demand for many of the key local services make more important than ever the need to focus on improving performance.

As public servants, we are accountable to citizens for the decisions we make. Ultimately, it is their money which is paying for the services provided. However, it is also vital for the challenge of variation in public service performance by citizens and their elected representatives, to be well-informed.

It is more important than ever elected Members of Local Authorities scrutinise their Authority's service performance, whether they are representing the concerns of their constituents or more formally on scrutiny committees. The abundance of performance data can be confusing. Whilst this publication provides considerable information to support robust scrutiny, it is not intended to be the only source. It includes links to other sources of information which will help those who have an interest or duty in analysing performance variation and in facilitating debate.

I realise there are some who will seek to question the particular data sources, indicators or presentation used here. In reply, I would suggest the value of performance data is in the focus and impetus it brings to the performance debate. No single set of figures tell the whole story. The indicators presented here are intended to prompt questions, not to provide simplistic answers. Improving our understanding will help us to improve performance.

**Leighton Andrews AM**
**Minister for Public Services**

## 3.  Introduction

For each of the key services that Local Authorities are responsible for delivering in Wales, this publication sets out why that service is important, what is reasonable for the citizen to expect from that service and information on the performance of each Local Authority compared with other Local Authorities.

In publishing this information we recognise that performance data alone does not provide the whole story. Other factors, such as resource implications, population density and demographics all have an impact on performance and cannot possibly be captured in a single figure summary. To understand the context of performance and to compare against other countries (where the data are comparable) you should use the data sources signposted in the 'For more information on this area' subsection at the end of each section. Further sources of contextual and performance data are also provided in the Contextual Data Sources section.

Local Authorities are, within reason, free to decide how much to spend on a particular service. Those decisions should reflect local priorities, needs and costs, and will often mean that different amounts are spent on each service across Wales. Spending more on a service may mean that it improves or becomes more accessible, but this is by no means always the case. If money is not well spent, or if extra spending is needed just to meet higher costs, then there will be no change in the quality of the service. Comparisons of spending and performance can show that higher spending does not necessarily lead to a better service.

The variation of performance over time is also an important consideration, for example, the performance of a Local Authority may have decreased in the latest year but that may follow several years of strong improvement. It is also important to bear in mind the robustness of the indicators used and for this reason volatility in the figures have been footnoted. This publication draws upon the Welsh Government National Strategic Indicators and the Programme for Government indicators and other official statistical sources as suggested by policy and statistical specialists.

The performance of Local Authorities in this publication is presented as bar charts as shown below. The Local Authorities are arranged in order of performance with the green bars showing Local Authorities whose performance is in the top quarter of the performance range and the red bars showing those whose performance is in the bottom quarter. The amber bars show Local Authorities whose performance is between these two areas. The blue bar is the all Wales performance.

3

Example chart:

**Figure 1: The number of visits to public libraries during the year, per 1,000 head of population, 2013-14**
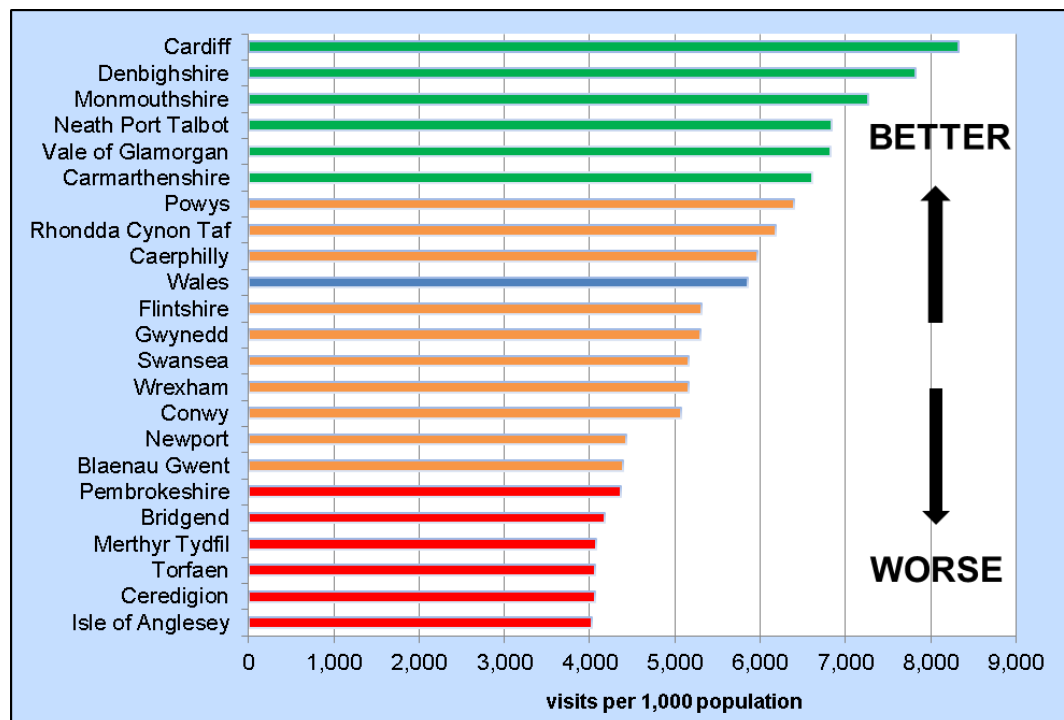


Source: National Strategic Indicator, LCL/001b

The report contains a series of charts like the one above. The convention has been adopted that the best performing Local Authorities are at the top of the chart. Sometimes this means that the longer bars are at the top, like the above example on library visits; and sometimes the shorter bars are at the top, like the chart on homeless households.

For each chart the Local Authorities have been broadly divided into quarters, with the six best performing Local Authorities at the top of the chart in green; the six worst performing Local Authorities at the bottom in red; and the ten Local Authorities in the middle two quarters shown in orange.

The division into quarters is based on the number of authorities rather than on statistical significance, occasionally the values on either side of a division are only marginally different.

4

## 4.   Summary of results

### Summary of Local Authority Performance 2013-14

| | Local Authority | Social Care | | | Education | | Leisure and Culture | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Council service | Delayed transfer of care | Looked after young people | Looked after young people | Pupils Key Stage 4 Level 2 | Attend school | Free public swims | Public library visits | Home-less children |
| FIGURE | 2 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 20 | 22 | 25 |
| Isle of Anglesey | Orange | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red | Red | Orange |
| Gwynedd | Green | Green | Orange | Green | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange |
| Conwy | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red |
| Denbighshire | Orange | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Green | Orange |
| Flintshire | Orange | Orange | Green | Green | Green | Green | Red | Orange | Green |
| Wrexham | Orange | Orange | Red | Red | Red | Orange | Red | Orange | Orange |
| Powys | Orange | Red | Green | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red |
| Ceredigion | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red | Green | Green | Red | Red | Red |
| Pembrokeshire | Orange | Green | Orange | Red | Orange | Red | Orange | Red | Orange |
| Carmarthenshire | Orange | Red | Green | Red | Orange | Red | Orange | Green | Orange |
| Swansea | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green |
| Neath Port Talbot | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red | Green | Green |
| Bridgend | Red | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Red | Orange |
| Vale of Glamorgan | Green | Red | Red | Red | Green | Green | Red | Orange | Orange |
| Cardiff | Green | Red | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Green | Red |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf | Red | Orange | Green | Green | Red | Red | Orange | Orange | Green |
| Merthyr Tydfil | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Red | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange |
| Caerphilly | Green | Red | Green | Orange | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green |
| Blaenau Gwent | Red | Orange | Red | Red | Red | Red | Green | Orange | Green |
| Torfaen | Red | Orange | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Orange | Orange |
| Monmouthshire | Green | Orange | Red | Green | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Red |
| Newport | Red | Red | Orange | Orange | Red | Red | Orange | Orange | Red |

| Housing | | | Environment | | Transport | Crime | Wellbeing | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Afford-able housing | Vacant houses | Disability grants | Recycled waste | Fly-tipping cleared | Roads in poor condition | Feeling safe after dark | Over-weight adults | Active adults | Heavy drinking adults |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 33 | 34 | 38 | 40 | 45 | 46 | 47 |
| Red | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red | Green | Orange | Green | Orange |
| Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Green | Green | Orange |
| Green | Red | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Orange | Orange |
| Red | Green | Green | Green | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange |
| Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red |
| Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Green | Red | Red | Orange | Red | Red |
| Orange | Orange | Orange | Red | Red | Red | Green | Orange | Green | Green |
| Red | Red | Orange | Green | Green | Red | Green | Green | Green | Orange |
| Orange | Red | Red | Green | Orange | Red | Green | Green | Green | Green |
| Red | Orange | Red | Orange | Green | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange | Green |
| Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red | Green | Orange | Orange | Red | Orange |
| Orange | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Green | Orange | Red | Orange | Green |
| Orange | Orange | Orange | Green | Orange | Green | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange |
| Orange | Green | Red | Orange | Red | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Red |
| Green | Orange | Green | Red | Red | Green | Red | Green | Red | Red |
| Orange | Red | Orange | Red | Green | Orange | Orange | Red | Red | Red |
| Red | Orange | Green | Red | Orange | Orange | Red | Orange | Orange | Green |
| Green | Red | Red | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Red | Red | Orange |
| Red | Red | Orange | Orange | Green | Orange | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange |
| Green | Green | Red | Red | Orange | Green | Red | Red | Red | Green |
| Green | Orange | Green | Green | Orange | Orange | Green | Green | Green | Red |
| Orange | Orange | Red | Red | Green | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange | Orange |

- 🟩 Green — a Local Authority in the best performing quarter
- 🟧 Orange — a Local Authority in the middle two quarters
- 🟥 Red — a Local Authority in the worst performing quarter

## 5.  What do people think of Local Authority services?

The National Survey for Wales is a survey of approximately 14,500 addresses across Wales involving a 25-minute face-to-face interview with people aged 16 and over. The survey covers a range of topics including health, wellbeing and public services.

The latest results are for April 2013 to March 2014 and showed that:

- there was support for more performance information with 52 per cent of respondents wanting more information on how their council is performing;

- 41 per cent of respondents felt that their council was good at letting them know how well they were performing while 40 per cent thought that the opposite was the case;

- an average of 57 per cent of respondents felt that their council provided high quality services (the proportions varied from two-thirds in Caerphilly, Cardiff, and Conwy to just under a half in Neath Port Talbot);

- 58 per cent of respondents felt that they were not able to influence decisions affecting their local area;

- 49 per cent of respondents said they would like to be more involved in the decisions which affect their local area.

**Figure 2: The percentage of respondents who felt their council provides a high quality service**
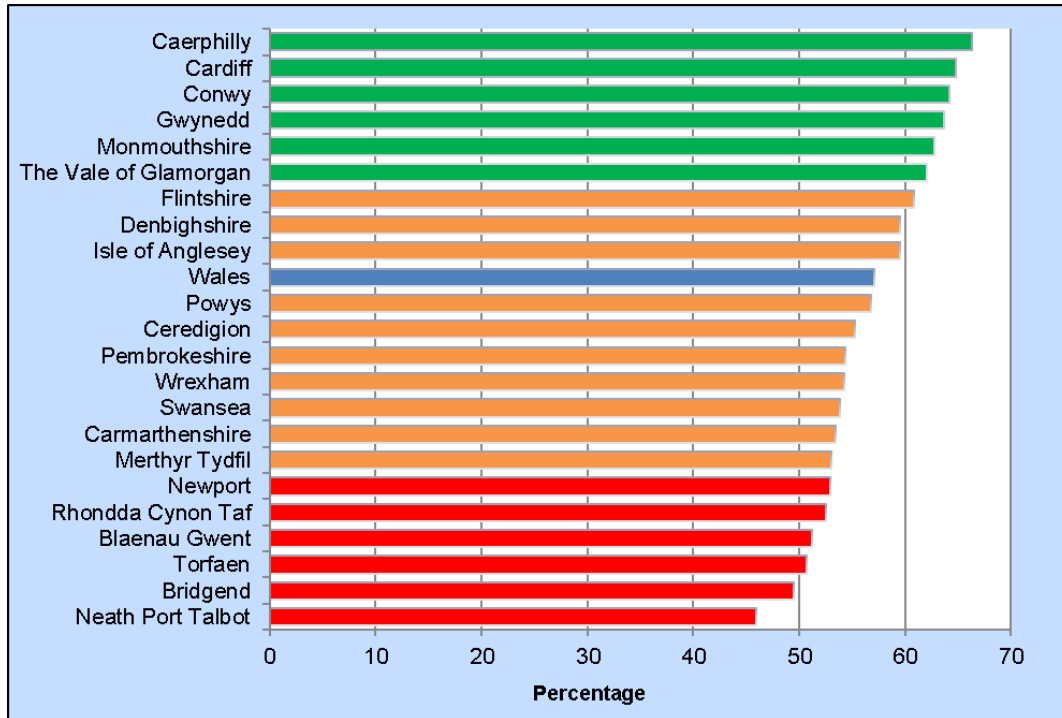


Source: National Survey for Wales, April 2013 to March 2014, sample size 14,600 people

**For more information on this area:**

- National Survey for Wales Statistical Release – http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/nationals-survey/?lang=en

## 6.  SOCIAL CARE

Social Care Services are an integral part of the services provided by Local Authorities. They work closely with other services such as health and education to ensure that people are helped to live as fulfilling lives as possible.

Work is ongoing to transform Social Services in Wales to ensure that they meet the needs of people now and for the longer term. This includes a programme of work to support more voice and greater control for people who use services and to improve wellbeing. This includes a new national outcomes framework to provide a clear way of identifying outcomes and measuring the success of those outcomes across the whole sector.

Your Local Authority Director for Social Services is responsible for providing leadership in relation to how the Local Authority delivers social care services for adult and children to meet your needs and requirements.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) has a statutory duty to encourage the improvement of social care, through regulating, inspecting and reviewing services. All care homes providing personal and/or nursing care and those agencies providing care services at someone's home have a legal duty to be registered with and regulated by CSSIW in order to operate.

Being able to lead an active and healthy lifestyle, as independently as possible, is important no matter what stage we are at in our lives. As we get older, having the appropriate level of support and the most up to date information available to make those important life choices is crucial. Each Local Authority employs an Older Persons Coordinator who is responsible for ensuring that your voice is heard and ensuring that your needs and concerns are reflected in all aspects of Local Authority activity.

**Figure 3: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head of population on Social Services, 2013-14**
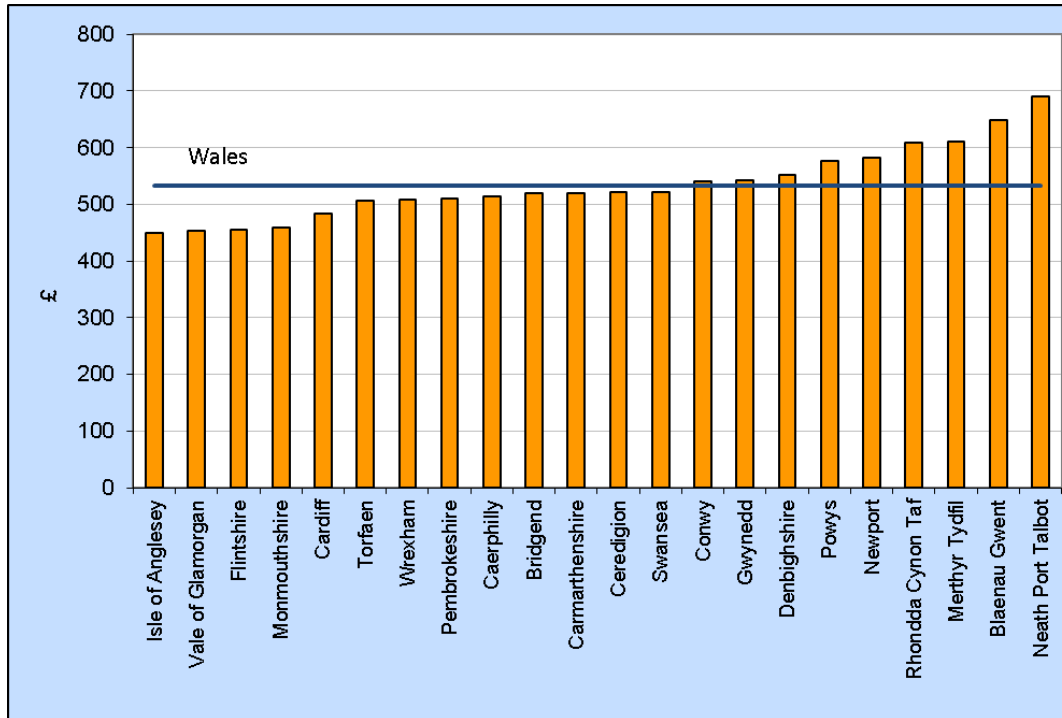


Source: Welsh Government

**Figure 4: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head of population on Social Services, Wales**
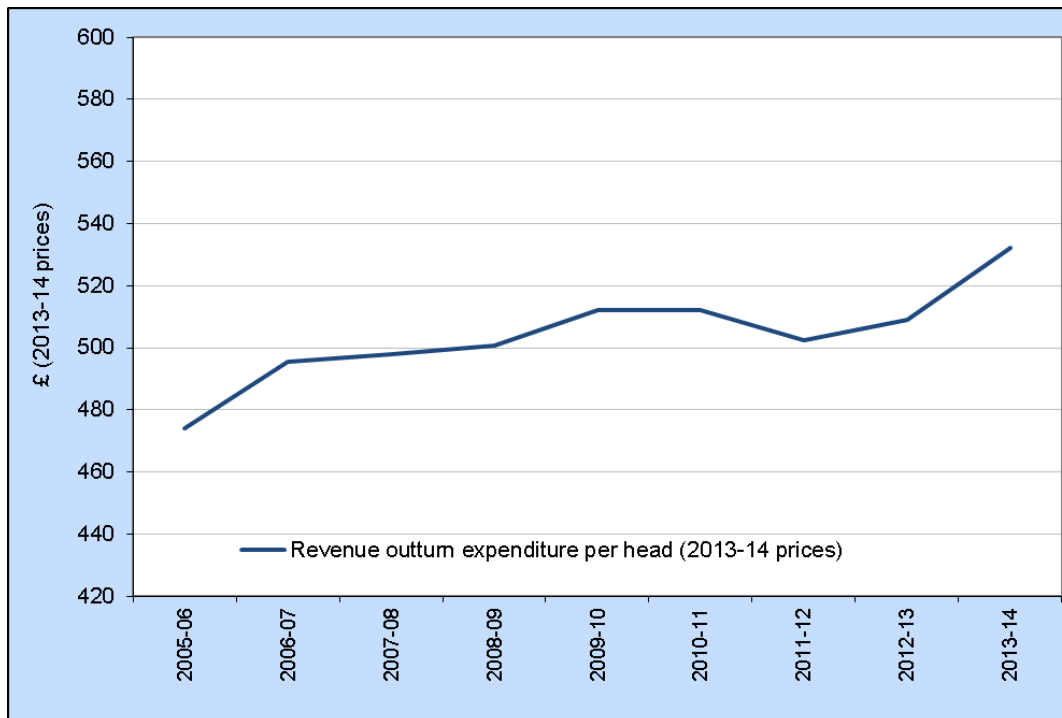


Source: Welsh Government

## 6.1    Older Adults

**Figure 5: Percentage of population aged 65 and over, 2013**
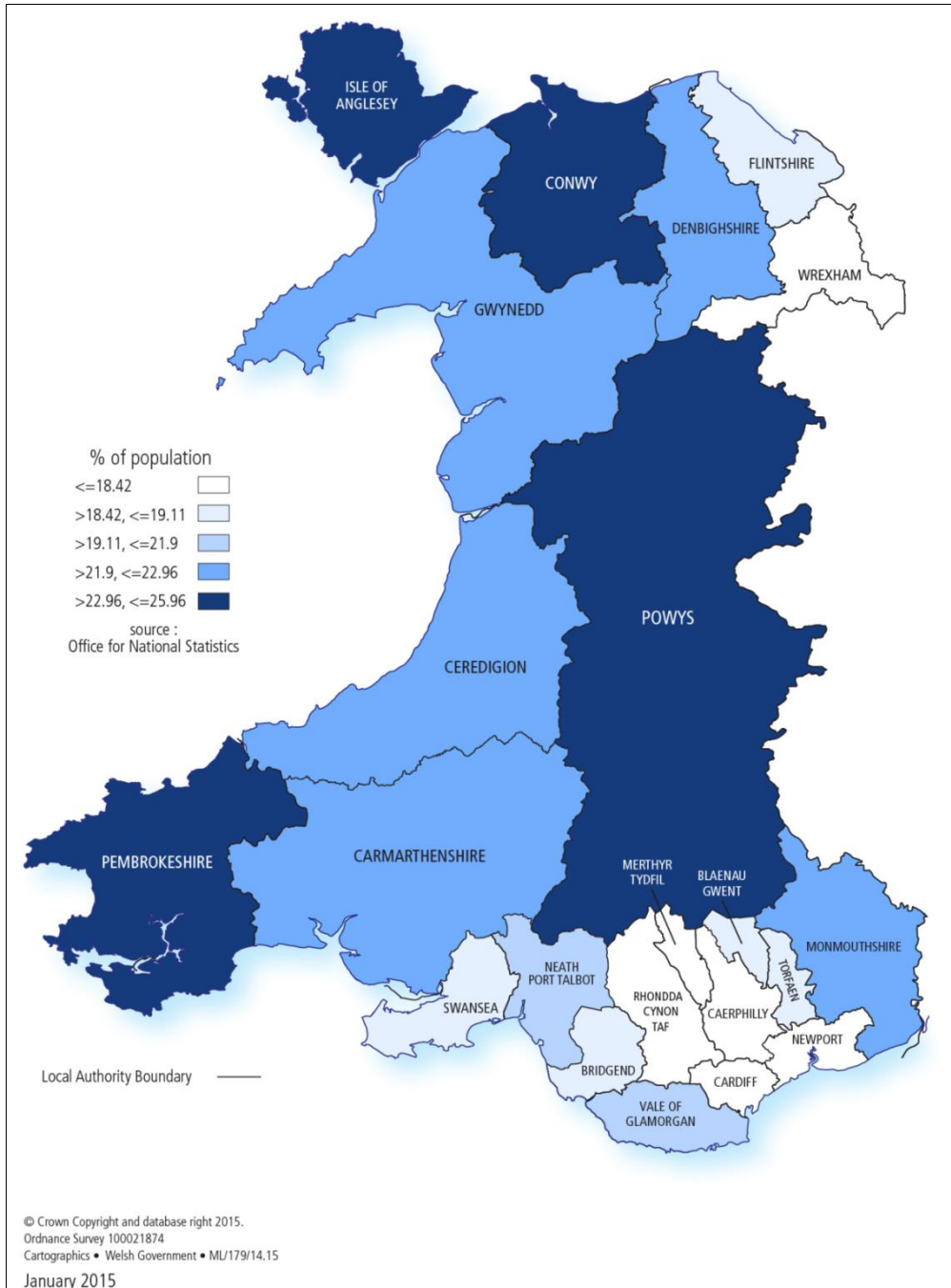


Source: Office for National Statistics

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### 6.1.1 Delayed Transfers of Care

**Why is this important?**

A delayed transfer of care happens when a hospital patient is ready to move on to the next stage of care but is prevented from doing so for one or more reasons.

A delayed transfer of care can have a negative impact on a patient's long term wellbeing. For an elderly person, the effect can be particularly profound. Having to stay in hospital for a longer period than required can lead to further potential health risks. Also, having to rely on support to undertake activities previously managed alone can lead to low self-esteem, loss of confidence and feelings of dependency, which can in turn lead to depression.

Timely transfer and discharge arrangements are also important in ensuring the availability of beds.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

If during your stay in hospital it appears that you will need ongoing care and support when you leave, Social Services will work alongside health professionals to undertake an assessment of your needs and how they can best be met. A Care Plan will then be developed setting out how and when those needs will be met, for example with a period of reablement or with home care support services. Planning for your discharge from hospital should start as soon as you have been admitted, the ultimate goal being to enable you to return to your usual place of residence, where possible.

If it has been agreed that your longer term needs are better met within a care setting, social care staff will be responsible for keeping you fully informed about what this will involve and in supporting you to make choices about the move to a residential or nursing home. You will be entitled to select suitable placements, in accordance with your assessed needs, and to visit them before making a final decision. Your Local Authority will be responsible for arranging your accommodation if a financial assessment concludes that they will need to fund the cost of it, in whole or in part.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 6: Delayed Transfers of Care for Social Care reasons per 1,000 head of population aged 75 or over, 2013-14**
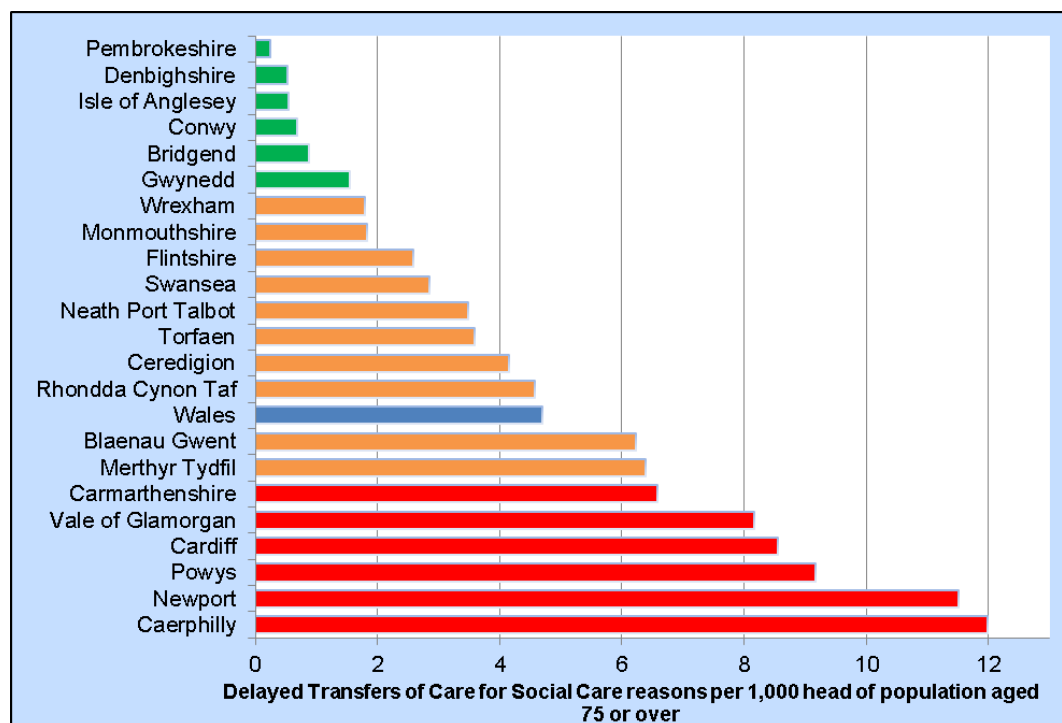


Source: National Strategic Indicator, SCA/001

In 2013-14 there were an average of 4.7 delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 people aged 75 and over. This proportion ranged from below 1 in Pembrokeshire (0.24), Denbighshire (0.54), Isle of Anglesey (0.55), Conwy (0.69), and Bridgend (0.88) to over 10 in Caerphilly (11.99) and Newport (11.51). The biggest improvements during the year were in Cardiff and Neath Port Talbot with falls in the rates of 3.0 and 2.5 respectively. The largest rises were in Merthyr Tydfil (3.0), Powys (2.9), and Caerphilly (2.7). Half the Local Authorities stayed about the same with rises or falls of less than 1.0.

Before and during stays a service plan is formed for individuals. Their carers and families are involved in developing this together with social workers and therapists. This means families can be involved in decision making in a safe and supportive environment.

## 6.2    Looked After Children

**Figure 7: Looked after children as a percentage of the population aged 0 to 17, (LAC data 2013-14, population data 2013)**
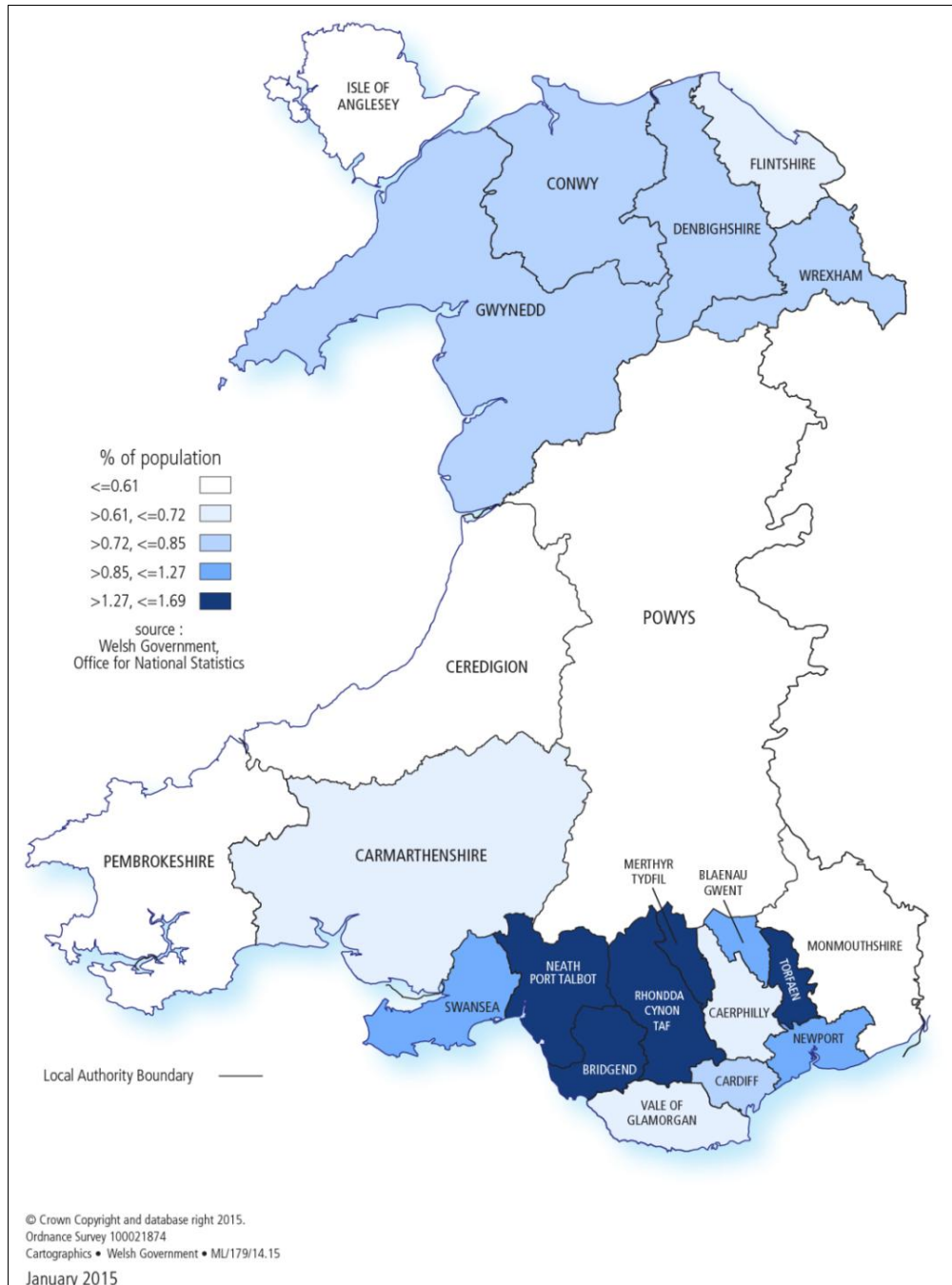


Source: Welsh Government, Office for National Statistics

Looked After Children are children who are in the care of a Local Authority or who are provided accommodation by the Local Authority.

Local Authorities, as corporate parents for looked after children, are required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of them and to ensure that they are given the same opportunities as their peers.

Corporate parenting guidance *"If this were my child: A councillor's guide to being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers"*, issued by the Welsh Government, sets out the distinct responsibilities for Local Authority elected members (and officers) for looked after children. A copy of this guidance can be found by following this link: (http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/publications/socialcare/guidance1/corporate parent/?lang=en).

The numbers of children in Local Authority care are relatively small and the numbers in each age bracket are smaller still. Hence performance data about looked after children can be volatile and liable to influence by just a handful of decisions about small numbers of children. This is especially true comparing one Local Authority with another or one year with another. So the analysis should be read with that in mind. However year on year increases over the past decade have made this an area for priority action. A strategy to repair families so that they can stay together, where it is safe to do so, is being prepared for consultation.

### 6.2.1   Former Looked After Children in Education or Employment

**Why is this important?**

Children looked after and care leavers are significantly disadvantaged, often having multiple learning, disability and mental health needs. Many will have experienced chaotic family lifestyles which can have an adverse impact on their development. Having the stability to grow and develop in their relationships and in education is vitally important if they are to achieve their full potential and move on successfully into the adult world.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

Schools in Wales give priority to the admission of looked after children. All schools have a lead person, usually, but not necessarily a teacher, who is responsible for ensuring that there is appropriate support and procedures in place to enable looked after children to achieve their full potential.

Each looked after child will have a Care or Pathway Plan, which sets out the support they are entitled to, including study support and materials or equipment. The plan is drawn up by their allocated social worker who will work with the child, teacher, parent, relative or carer along with other professionals.

If you are a care leaver wanting to move on to higher education, your Local Authority can provide you with a bursary to assist you with your studies.

Young people who had been in care previously but who have left care are now able to approach their Local Authority to reconnect to care services for the purpose of education or training following an assessment of their needs.

The Local Authority will then create a 'new' pathway plan which will set out the services and entitlements they can access.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 8: Percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the Authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19, average of 2012-13 and 2013-14 (a)(b)**
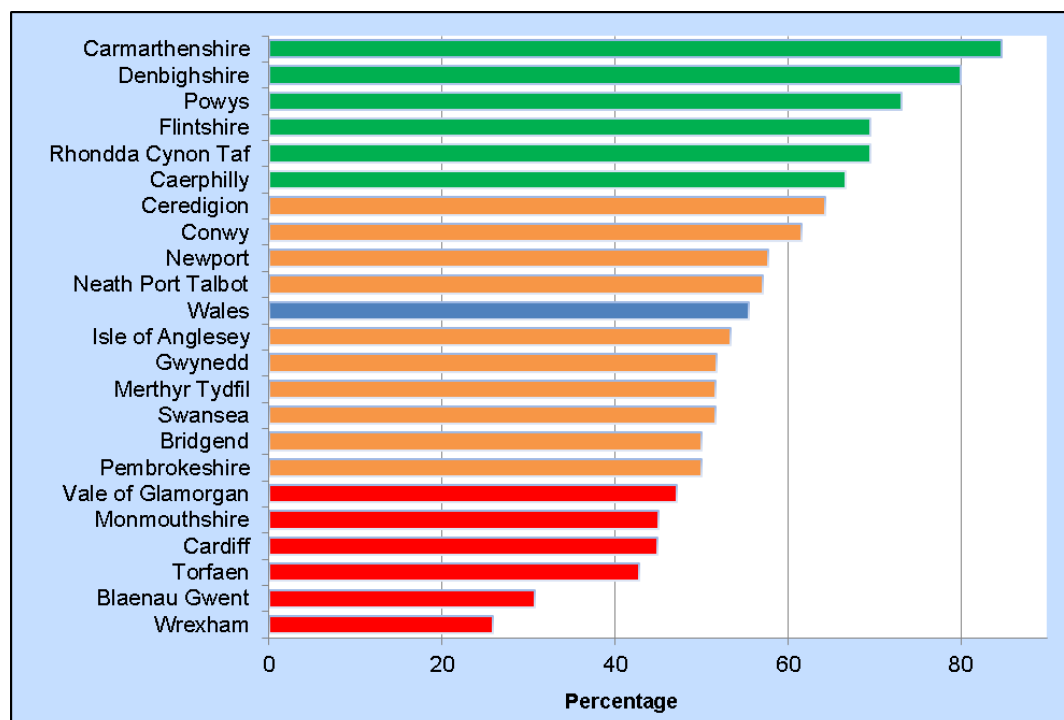


Source: National Strategic Indicator, SCC/033f

(a) *These data are volatile therefore a two-year average has been taken*
(b) *Data for 2011-12 excludes children who have been looked after for less than 13 weeks*

Over 2012-13 and 2013-14, an average of 55.5 per cent of former looked after children with whom the Local Authority is in contact were known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19 (a slight increase on the previous figure of 54 per cent). This ranged from the best performing Local Authorities Carmarthenshire (85 per cent) and Denbighshire (80 per cent) to Wrexham (26 per cent) and Blaenau Gwent (31 per cent).

**6.2.2  Looked After Children with Three or More Placements**

**Why is this important?**

The strategic framework *"Toward a Stable Life and a Brighter Future (2007)"* sets the Welsh Government's aspirations to improve placement choice and stability and to require Local Authorities to ensure sufficient services and

placements to meet the full and diverse needs of looked after children. Evidence shows that frequent moves between care placements can have a drastic effect on the ability of children and young people to succeed.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

The welfare and safety of children is the first consideration when providing services for them. Providing it is in their best interest children should grow up in the care of their families. Local Authority policies should promote permanence for children by seeking to enable those who cannot live with their parents to remain with members of their extended family or friends, providing where appropriate a better alternative to growing up in the care of the Local Authority. Permanence is the framework of emotional, physical and legal conditions that gives a child a sense of security, continuity, commitment and identity. For most looked after children, permanence is achieved through a successful return to their birth family, where it has been possible to address the factors which led to the child becoming looked after. Where this is not possible, the care of family and friends will often provide an important alternative route to permanence for the child, particularly where this can be supported by a residence order or a special guardianship order or, by adoption.

If the care of family and friends is not possible, there are a range of quality placements that can offer better outcomes for our looked after children and young people, through identifying their needs, whilst still ensuring their lives have the appropriate safeguards. Over three quarters of looked after children are in foster placements, for some this is a temporary arrangement, but for many children, particularly older children with a link to their birth parents, long term foster care, is the best permanent care option. At 31 March 2013 teenagers between the ages 13 and 18 make up 37 per cent of the 'looked after population', many of whom have higher needs requiring specialist care. For these young people a residential setting may be most suited as they are able to be cared for by professionals who have the skills and experiences to encourage them to reach their optimum potential.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 9: Percentage of Looked After Children with three or more placements in the year, average of 2012-13 and 2013-14 (a)**
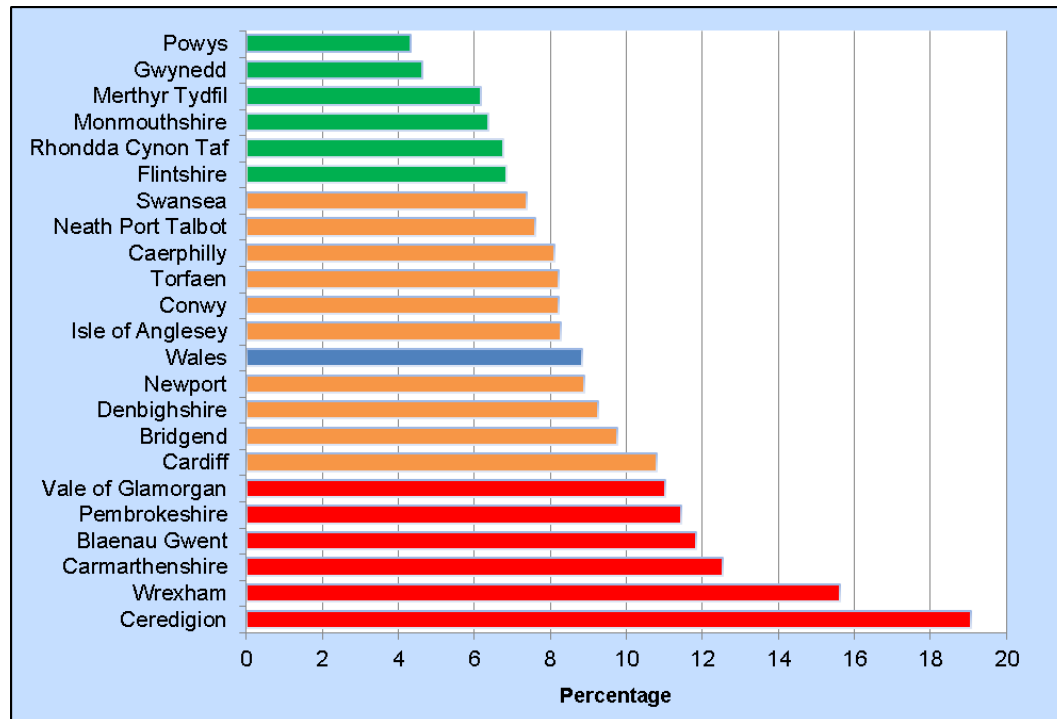
*(a) These data are volatile therefore a two-year average has been taken*

For 2012-13 and 2013-14, an average of 9 per cent of Looked After Children had three or more placements in the year (the same as the previous figure). This ranged from below 5 per cent in Powys (4.3) and Gwynedd (4.6) in Gwynedd to over 15 per cent in Ceredigion (19.1) and Wrexham (15.6). Most Local Authorities were in the range 5 to 10 per cent.

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used.
- Programme for Government - http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/culture/programme?lang=en;
- Financial Information - http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2631;
- Welsh Government Social Care Statistical Releases – http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/health/social-services/?lang=en http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/schools/?lang=en;
- Similar statistical releases for England can be accessed on the Department for Education website:

http://www.education.gov.uk/ ;
- Child protection statistics for Scotland can be accessed on the Scottish Government website:; http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork
- Children Looked After statistics for Scotland can be accessed on the Scottish Government website: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/PubChildrenSocialWork ;
- Child protection statistics for Northern Ireland can be accessed on the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety website: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib/stats-cib_pubs/stats-cib-children_order_bulletin.htm;
- UK Government Social Care Statistical Releases – http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Social+Care+Clients;
- European Social Care Statistics – http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/social_protection/publications;
- Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales - http://wales.gov.uk/cssiwsubsite/newcssiw/?lang=en.

## 7.    EDUCATION

Parents and young people have a right to expect the best from the education they receive. Local Authorities will work with regional consortia for school improvement and schools to ensure that all children and young people have access to high quality education, training and work experience, tailored to meet their needs.

**Figure 10: Percentage of pupils at Key Stage 4 achieving the Level 2 inclusive threshold, 2013/14 (a)**
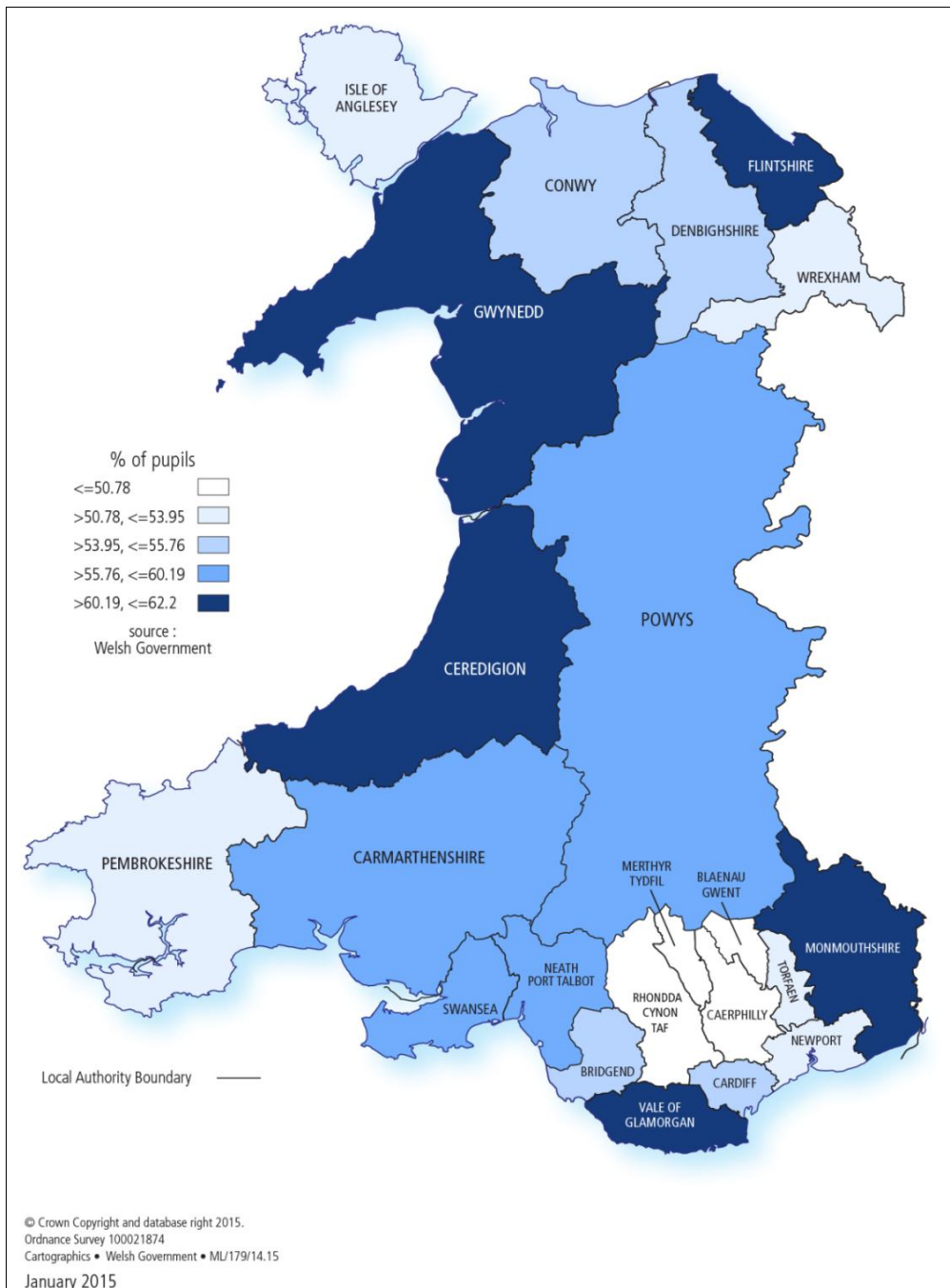


Source: Welsh Government

*(a) Level 2 inclusive represents the percentage of pupils aged 15 achieving 5 GCSEs at grade A\*-C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics.*

When analysing the performance of a Local Authority's education services it is important to place that performance in the local context. For data sources which can place the performance in context see the Contextual Data Sources section. For data sources to compare performance outside of Wales see the 'For more information on this area:' section at the end of this chapter.

In April 2013 to March 2014 92 per cent of respondents to the National Survey for Wales felt satisfied with their child's primary school and 85 per cent were satisfied with their child's secondary school.

**Figure 11: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per pupil, 2013/14 and Percentage of pupils at Key Stage 2 achieving the expected Level (L4+) 2014 (a)**
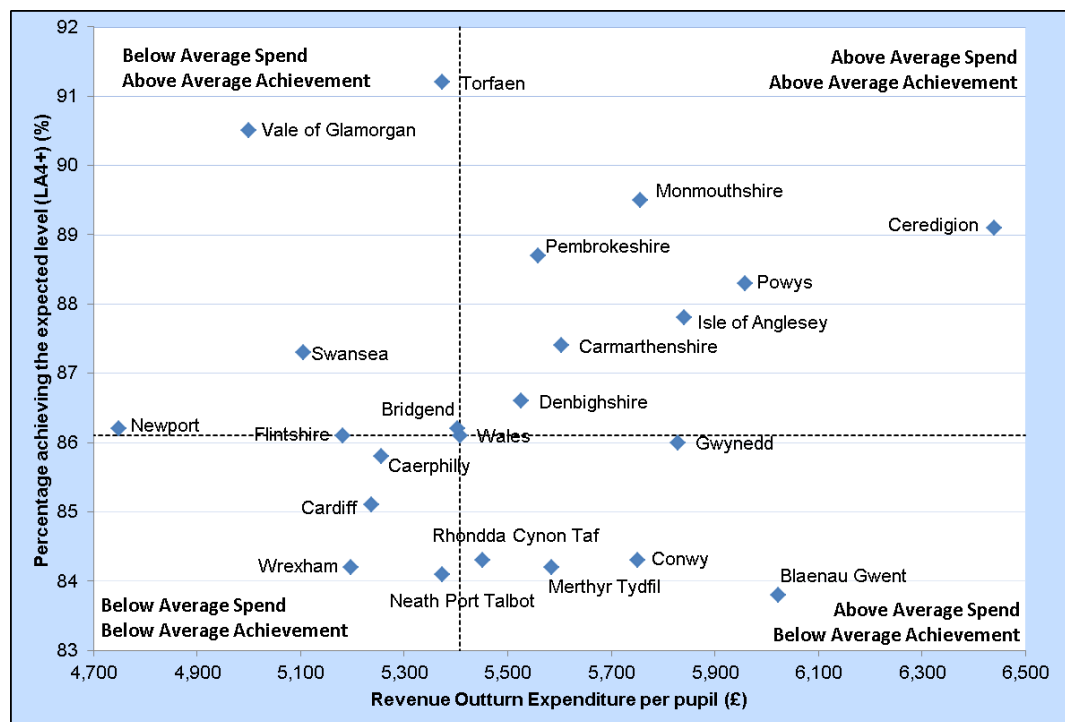


Source: Welsh Government

*(a) Excludes independent schools*

**Figure 12: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per pupil, 2013/14 prices and Percentage Achieving Expected Level (L4+) 2003/04 to 2013/14, Wales (a)**
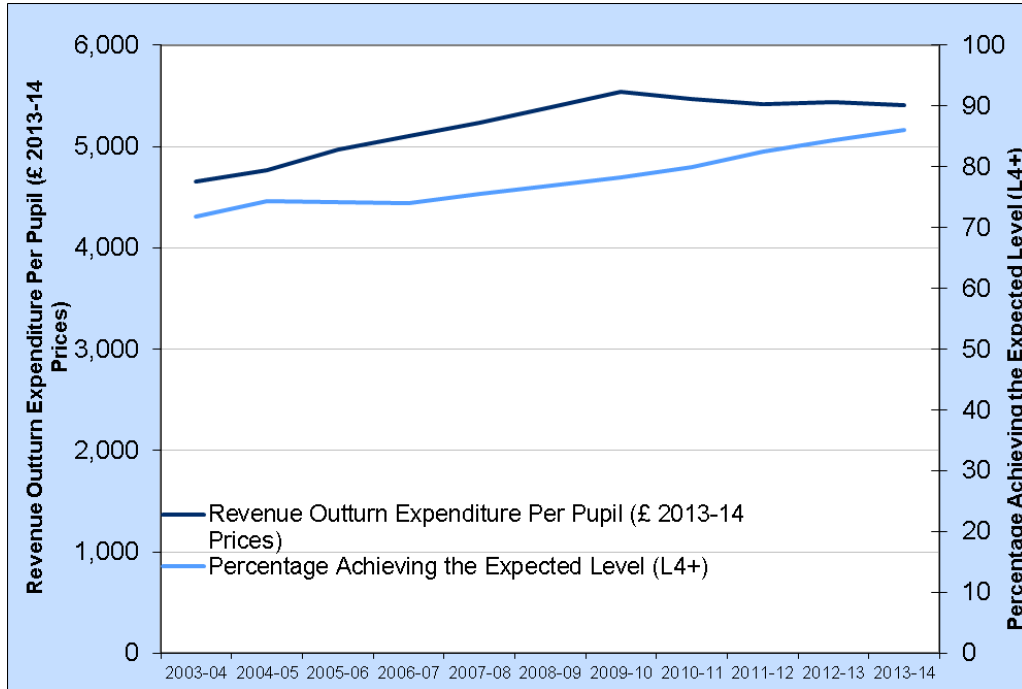


Source: Welsh Government

*(a) Excludes independent schools*

**Figure 13: Percentage of Working Age Population Qualified to National Qualification Framework Level 4 or Above (a)**
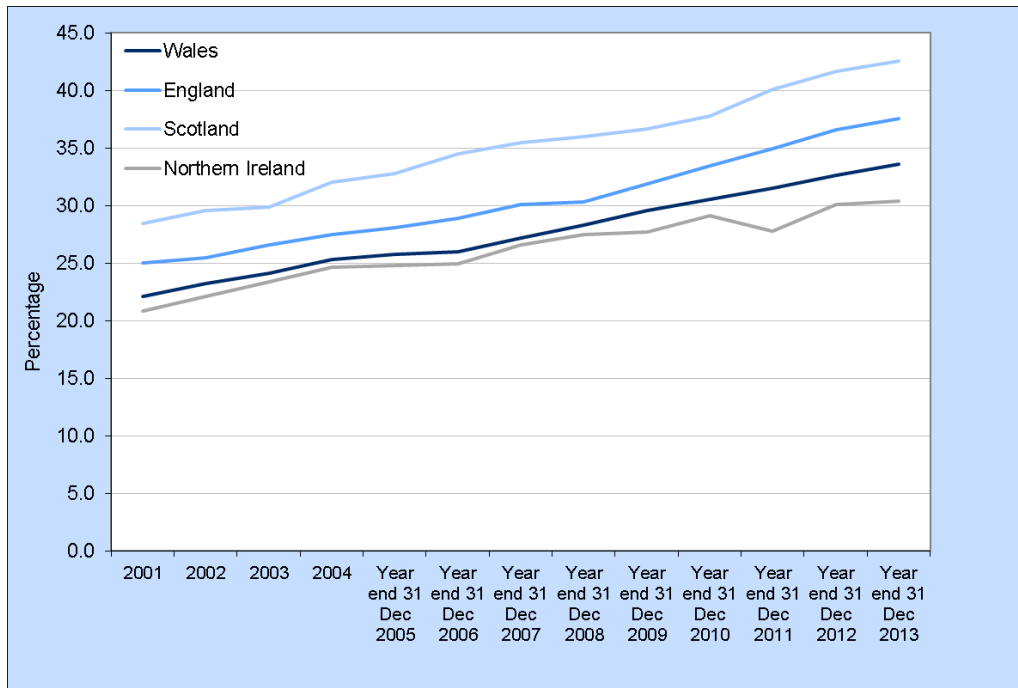


Source: Annual Population Survey

*(a) For years labelled 2001 to 2004 the actual periods covered are the 12 months running from March in the year given to February in the following year.*

Since 2004, the annual data for Figure 13 have been produced on a rolling annual basis, updated every three months. The rolling annual averages are on a calendar basis with the first rolling annual average presented here covering the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004. Note therefore that there is a two-month overlap between the last period presented on the former March to February basis, and the first period on the new basis.

## 7.1    Examination Attainment

A child and young person's educational attainment, including their ability to gain good qualifications provides them with a solid foundation in which to pursue further educational and employment opportunities.

Your Local Authority is responsible for supporting your school in ensuring that appropriate standards of performance are being met. School Improvement services are delivered on behalf of Local Authorities by regional education consortia.  There are 4 regional consortia covering North Wales, Mid and West Wales, South East Wales and Central South Wales.  Local Authorities and consortia are however still held to account through Estyn inspections and local scrutiny arrangements and are responsible for ensuring that schools are supported to improve managing and self-evaluating their overall performance.

**Why is this important?**

Everyone deserves to have the best chance in life. A good, high quality education forms part of that expectation. It not only allows young people to gain new knowledge and skills but it also extends their future life opportunities, enabling them to take a full and active part in community life, widen future education opportunities and preparing them for working life in the 21st century.

The Level 2 inclusive is regarded as "the gold standard" measure of achievement at the end of compulsory education. It is one of the component measures that feature in the categorisation of secondary schools.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

All schools are required to produce an annual public profile, which will give you information about your school's performance and a school development plan, which provides you with information on how they will ensure improved standards of education are being met.

Children and young people in secondary education are entitled to a rich and varied curriculum. From the age of 14 each young person has their own unique individual learning pathway which will lead to approved qualifications. This allows pupils to identify and record the help and advice required to enable them to achieve the qualifications they need.

As part of their learning pathway, pupils at Key Stage 4 can choose from a minimum of 25 course choices, which includes 3 vocational courses, enabling them to gain work experience and learning outside a school environment. They are also entitled to personal support and careers advice provided by a qualified Careers Wales Advisor. For post-16 pupils a choice of 30 courses are available.

Each national curriculum subject has its own set of challenging targets. Within each subject your child's progress is assessed against a national standard. You are also entitled to a written report about your child's progress at least once a year.

The average wider capped points score is calculated using the best eight results from all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales for each pupil. Where the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification has been achieved, each component part is counted as an individual qualification.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 14: Percentage of pupils at Key Stage 4 achieving the Level 2 inclusive threshold, 2013/14 (a)**
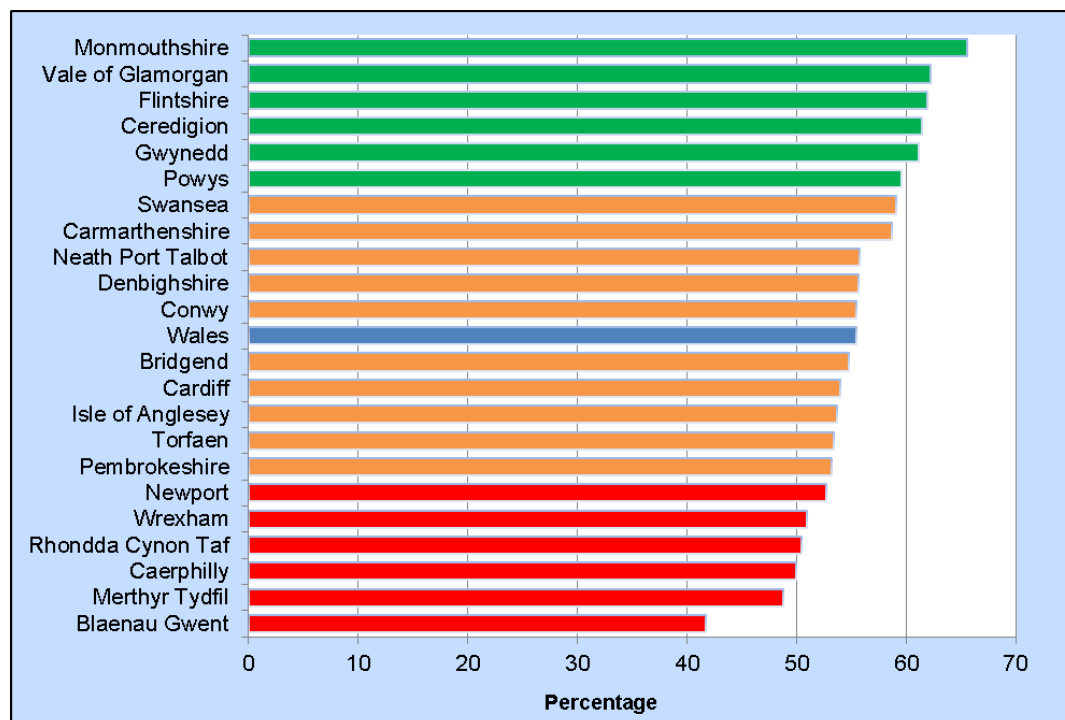


Source: Welsh Government

*(a) Level 2 inclusive represents the percentage of pupils aged 15 achieving 5 GCSEs at grade A\*-C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics.*

In 2013/14 the proportion of pupils aged 15 who achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics in Wales was 55 per cent (a rise of 2.7 percentage points on the figure for the previous year. The percentage ranged from over 60 per cent in Monmouthshire (66), Vale of Glamorgan (62), Flintshire (62), Ceredigion (61),

and Gwynedd (61) to below 50 per cent in Blaenau Gwent (42) and Merthyr Tydfil (49). The biggest improvement over the year was in Merthyr Tydfil with an increase of 10 percentage points. There were very small decreases in five Local Authorities but all were less than one percentage point.

## 7.2    Pupil Attendance in Secondary School
**Why is this important?**

Attendance at school is regarded as pivotal in education. The relationship between attendance and attainment is very strong. For example in 2012, 66 per cent of those pupils with an absence rate of less than 4 per cent attained level 2 inclusive (the average for Wales was 51.5 per cent). However for those absent for 30-50 per cent of the time only 11 per cent attained level 2 inclusive. Pupil attendance importance is recognised by it being a tracking indicator in the Welsh Government's Programme for Government.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

Local Authorities have a duty to ensure that a child for whom they are responsible is receiving suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. The officers who support the Local Authority in meeting their duties (Education Welfare Officers) should build effective working relationships with schools to resolve attendance problems by:

- working closely with schools to define their role and responsibilities surrounding school attendance;
- ensuring that policies and operational practices are shared between the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and schools;
- agreeing arrangements for referral, regular review, monitoring and evaluation;
- agreeing procedures for resolving enquiries.

Local Authorities are also required to set standards for attendance at primary and secondary schools.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 15: Percentage half day sessions attended at secondary School, 2012/13**
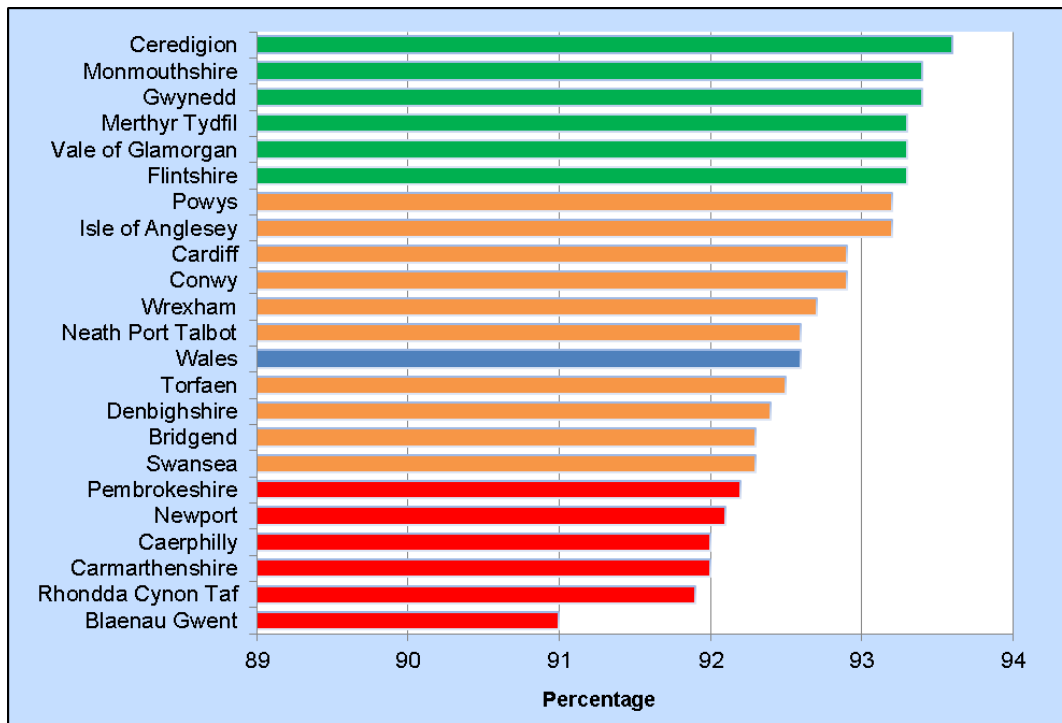
This data is for the same year as the previous report. In 2012/13 the percentage of half day sessions attended in Wales was 92.6 per cent, this ranged from 91 per cent in Blaenau Gwent to 93.6 per cent in Ceredigion. This is the sixth consecutive year that performance in Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil has improved; the fifth consecutive year of improvement for Conwy and the fourth consecutive year of improvement for Newport and Monmouthshire. The biggest deterioration over the year was in Denbighshire and the biggest improvement was in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used.
- Programme for Government - http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/education/?lang=en
- National Survey for Wales – http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/nationalsurveyforwales/?lang=en;
- Financial Information - http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2631;
- My Local School – http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/
- Welsh Government Education Statistical Releases – http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/schools/?lang=en;

- UK Government Education Statistical Releases – http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Children%2C+Education+and+Skills;
- European Education Statistics – http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=edat_lfse_09&lang=en.

## 8.    LEISURE AND CULTURE

Having access to good quality recreational and leisure facilities is critical to the health and wellbeing of people. Local Authorities have a key role to play in ensuring that the facilities and services provided are good quality, accessible and meet the needs of the citizen.

**Figure 16: Percentage of adults meeting daily physical activity guidelines, 2012 & 2013 (a) (b)**
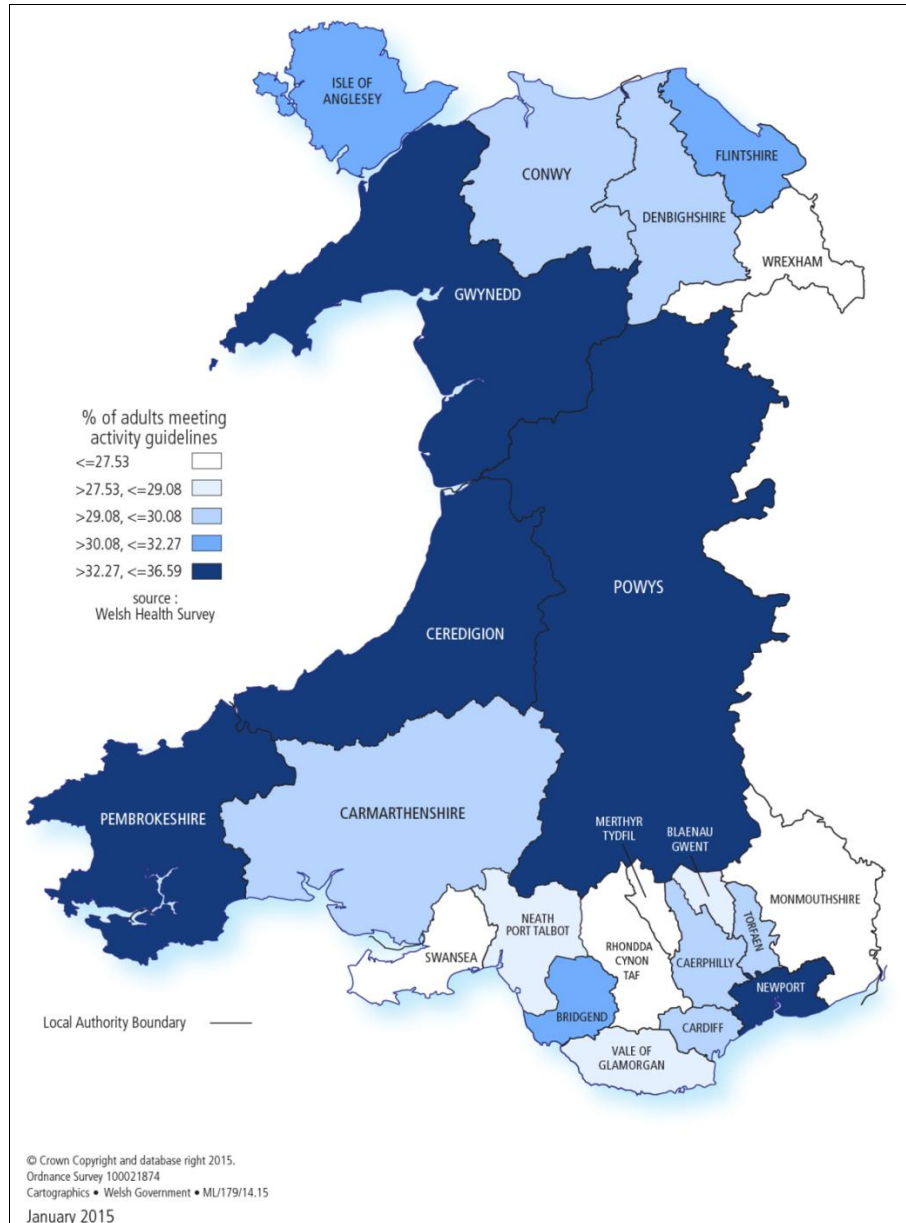


Source: Welsh Health Survey

*(a) Did at least thirty minutes of at least moderate intensity physical activity on five or more days in the previous week. (Prior to 2011 this was the target activity level for meeting physical activity guidelines, but guidelines were revised during 2011 to allow more flexibility in how target activity levels are met).*
*(b) These figures are age-standardised.*

**Figure 17: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head of population on libraries, 2013-14**
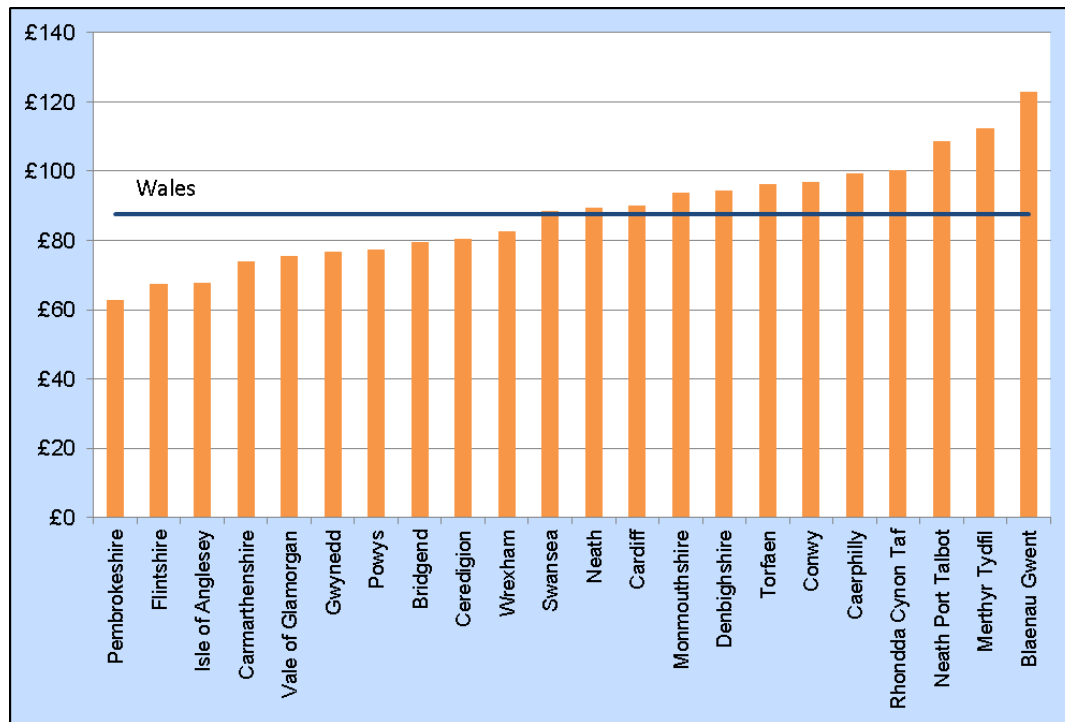


Source: Welsh Government

**Figure 18: Revenue outturn Expenditure per head on libraries and Visits to Public Libraries per 1,000 head of population**
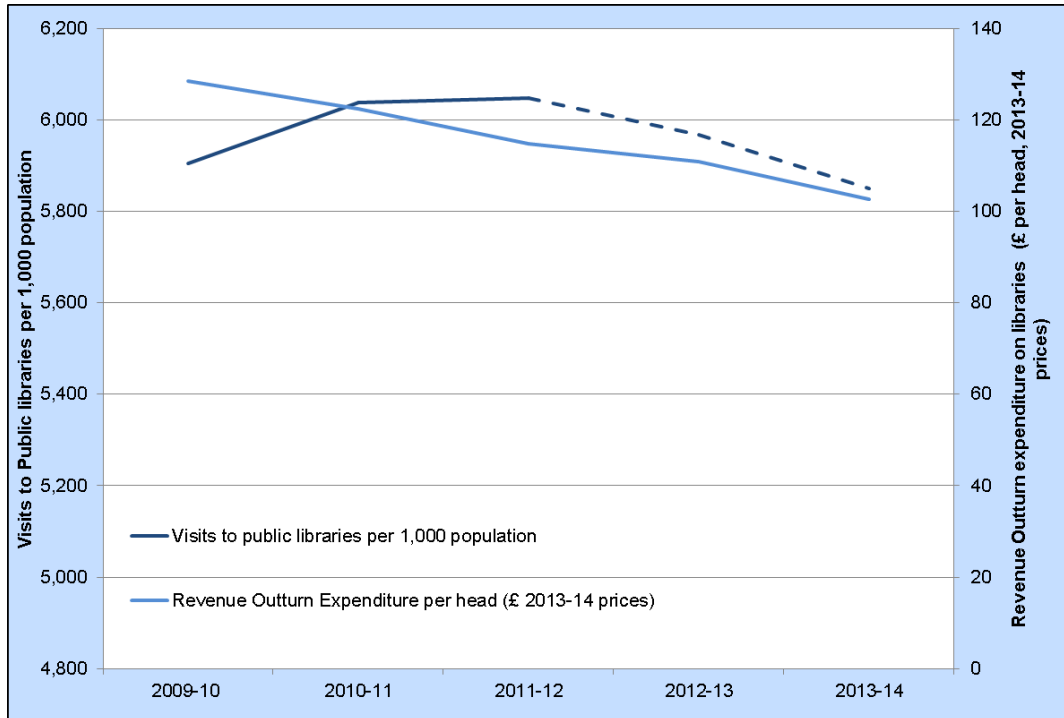


Source: National Strategic Indicators, LCL/001b, Welsh Government

*(a) Due to a change in the definition of the indicator LCL/001, from 2011-12 this indicator is not directly comparable with previous years.*

**Figure 19: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head on libraries and Visits to Public Libraries per 1,000 head of population, 2013-14**



Source: Welsh Government, National Strategic Indicator LCL/001b

31
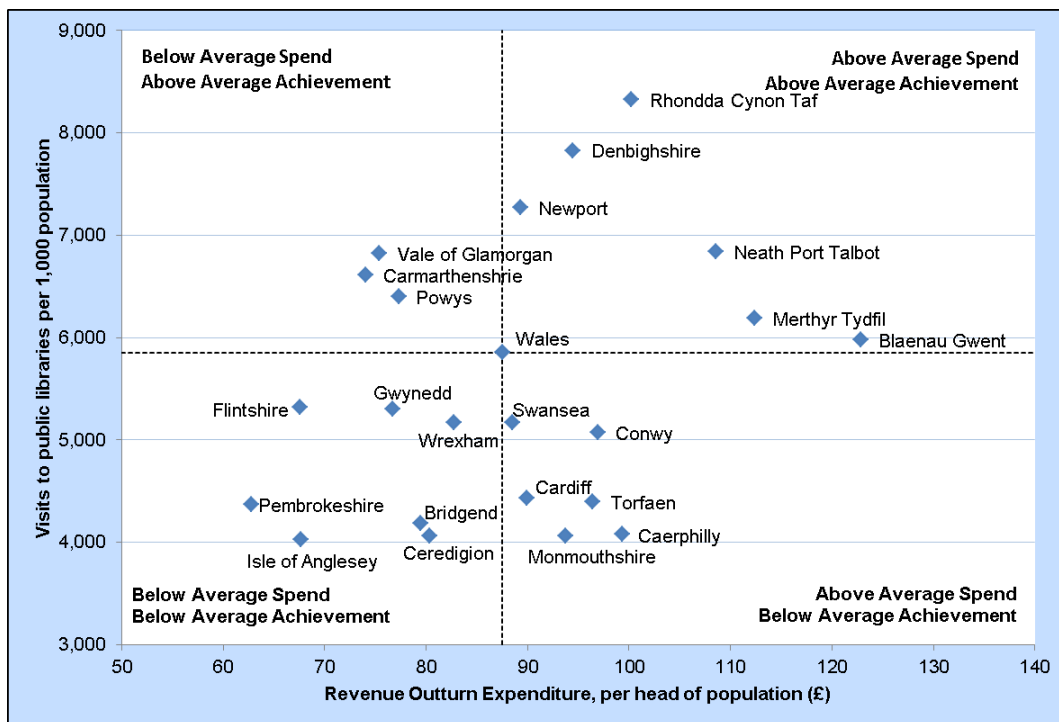
**8.1     Public Leisure Facilities**

Sport and physical activity are vital in promoting health and making people feel good about themselves. The free swimming initiative run by Local Authorities makes a key contribution towards improving the health and wellbeing of people in Wales.

**Why is this important?**

Free swimming is a national initiative to provide opportunities for young and older people to lead active healthy lifestyles through water-based activities in Local Authority owned leisure centres and swimming pools. The indicator is a part-measure of the Local Authorities' commitment to provide sport and physical activity opportunities for their citizens.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

The minimum provision for each scheme is:

**Children and Young People Aged 16 and Under**

- 14 hours of free swimming per week during all school holidays, of which a minimum of 7 hours is for structured aquatic activities;
- 1 dedicated structured session for disabled children per week per Local Authority area during all school holidays;
- 2 hours of free swimming or a dryside activity per weekend per Local Authority area throughout the year.

**Adults Aged 60 and Over**

- Free swimming during all public swimming sessions outside school holidays (and throughout the year where this is possible);
- A minimum of 1 hour per day per Local Authority, and a minimum of 1 hour per week per pool, will be dedicated to a free structured activity session such as swimming lessons, aqua aerobics and aqua chi. These activities should be targeted locally and ensure inclusive provision for older people.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 20: Number of free public swims for those aged 16 and under or 60 and over, per 100 persons in those age groups, 2013-14**
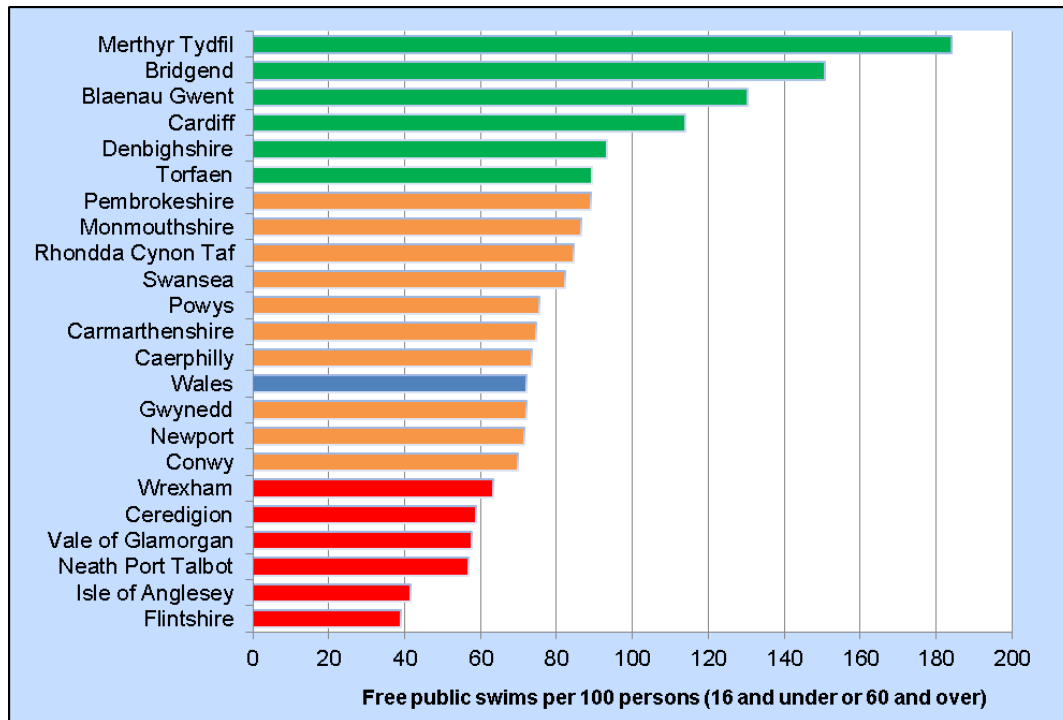


Source: Welsh Government, Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

In 2013-14 there were an average of 72 free public swims for those aged 16 and under or 60 and over per 100 persons aged in those age groups (lower than the previous figure of 81). This ranged from over 100 in Merthyr Tydfil (184), Bridgend (151), Blaenau Gwent (130), and Cardiff (114) to fewer than 50 in Flintshire (39) and the Isle of Anglesey (41).

**8.2    Public Libraries**

Public libraries are valuable cultural and educational hubs in our communities, where families, schools and all members of the public can access a wide range of information and resources. As a statutory service, Local Authorities are required to provide comprehensive and efficient library services.

In January to March 2012, 94 per cent of the working age population (16 to 64) said it was easy to get to and from a library although this dropped to 85 per cent for the population aged 65 and over.

**Figure 21: Location of public libraries**
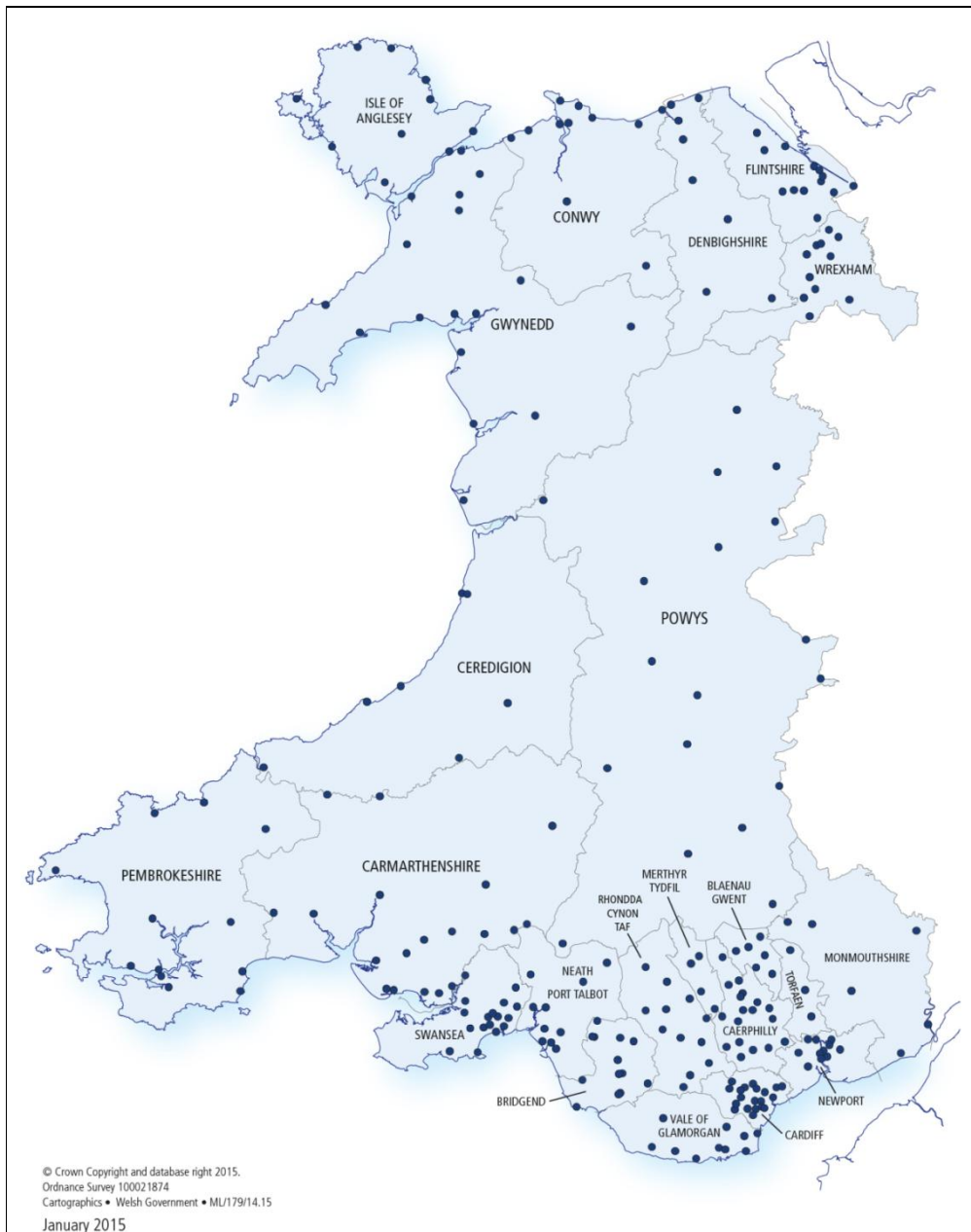


Source: Welsh Government

**Why is this important?**

Public libraries contribute to the social, educational, cultural and economic wellbeing of the people of Wales. They should be inclusive places welcoming people from all social and economic backgrounds to benefit from generally free access to the rich and varied resources provided.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

Libraries in Wales will:

- lend books for free;
- be open to all members of their communities;
- be free to join;
- provide free use of the internet and computers;
- deliver free access to online services in the library and from home, the workplace or via mobile devices;
- ensure friendly, knowledgeable and qualified staff are on hand to help;
- maintain a searchable catalogue of Welsh library resources.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 22: The number of visits to public libraries during the year, per 1,000 head of population, 2013-14**
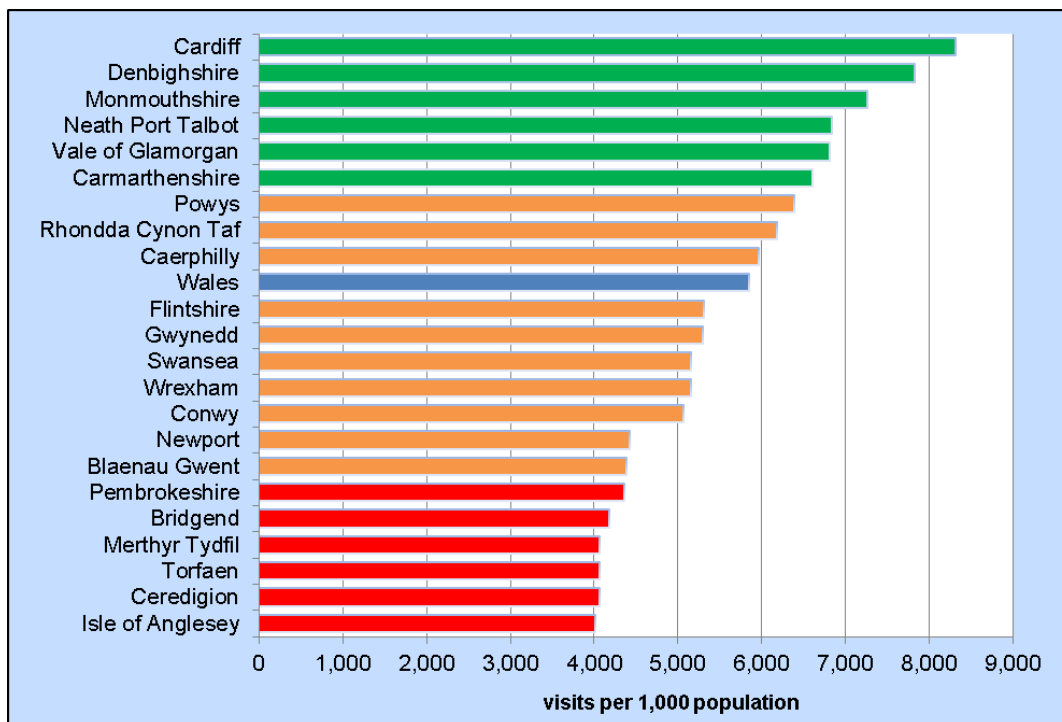


Source: Welsh Government, National Strategic Indicator, LCL/001b.

In 2013-14 there were an average of 5,851 visits to public libraries per 1,000 population (a small decrease on the previous figure of 5,968). This ranged from over 7,000 visits in Cardiff (8,326), Denbighshire (7827), and Monmouthshire (7,270) to about 4,000 in the Isle of Anglesey (4,024), Ceredigion (4,063),  Torfaen (4,064), and Merthyr Tydfil (4,076).

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used.
- National Strategic Indicators Viewer - http://data.wales.gov.uk/apps/nsi/;
- National Strategic Indicator Data - http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=32612;
- Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales - http://www.freeswimmingwales.net/
- Programme for Government - http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/culture/programme?lang=en;
- National Survey for Wales – http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/nationalsurveyforwales/?lang=en;
- Financial Information - http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2631;
- Welsh Public Library Standards – http://wales.gov.uk/topics/cultureandsport/museumsarchiveslibraries/cymal/libraries/wpls/?lang=en.

## 9.     HOUSING

Everyone has a right to a decent and affordable home which they can afford. A home is a vital part of people's lives, it affects their health and wellbeing, quality of life and the opportunities open to them. It is a key element in providing children with the best possible start to their lives and the chance to realise their full potential. Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to meet people's housing needs. The map below shows the number of households that were accepted as homeless as a rate per 10,000 households. The following charts show how much Local Authorities spend on housing per head of population and how that compares with other Local Authorities.

**Figure 23: Homelessness**

**Households accepted as homeless, rate per 10,000 households, 2014**
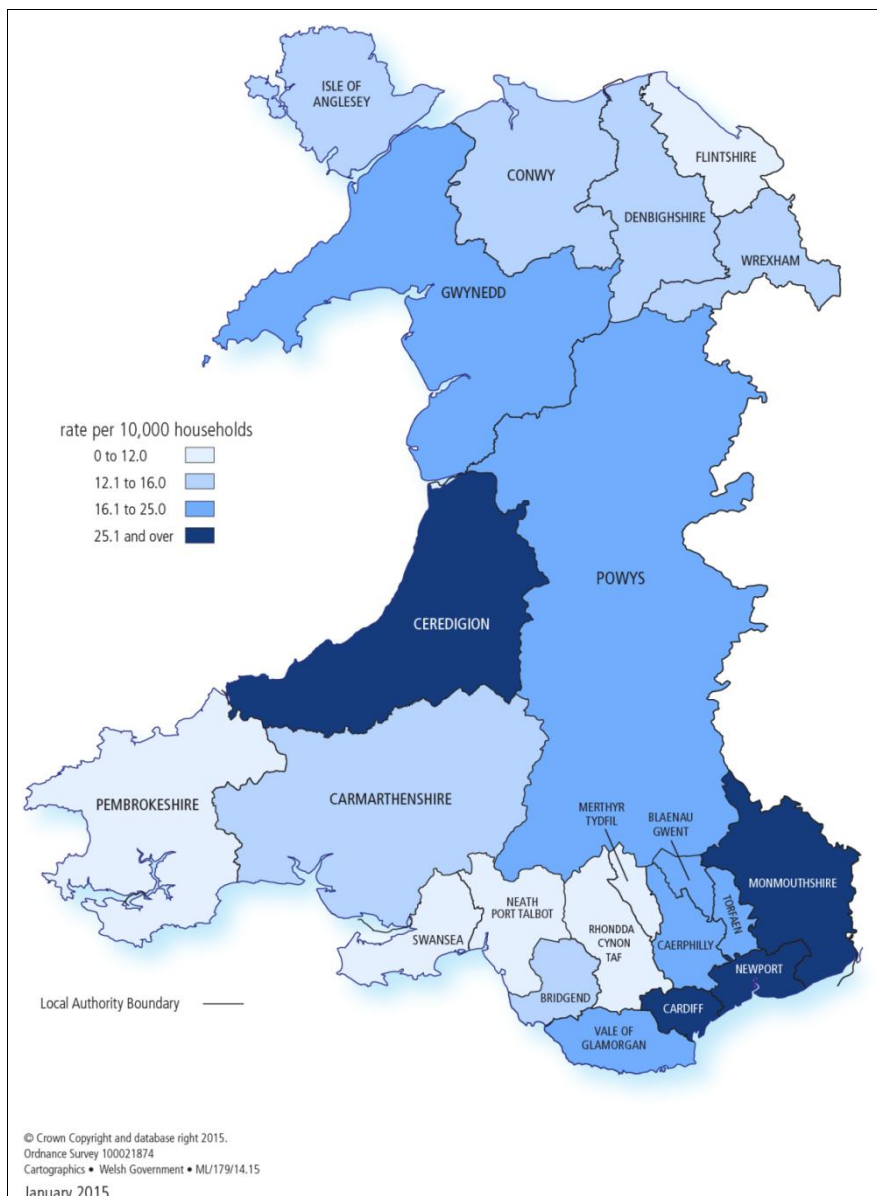


Source: Welsh Government

**Figure 24: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Council Fund Housing and Housing Benefit per head of population, 2013-14**
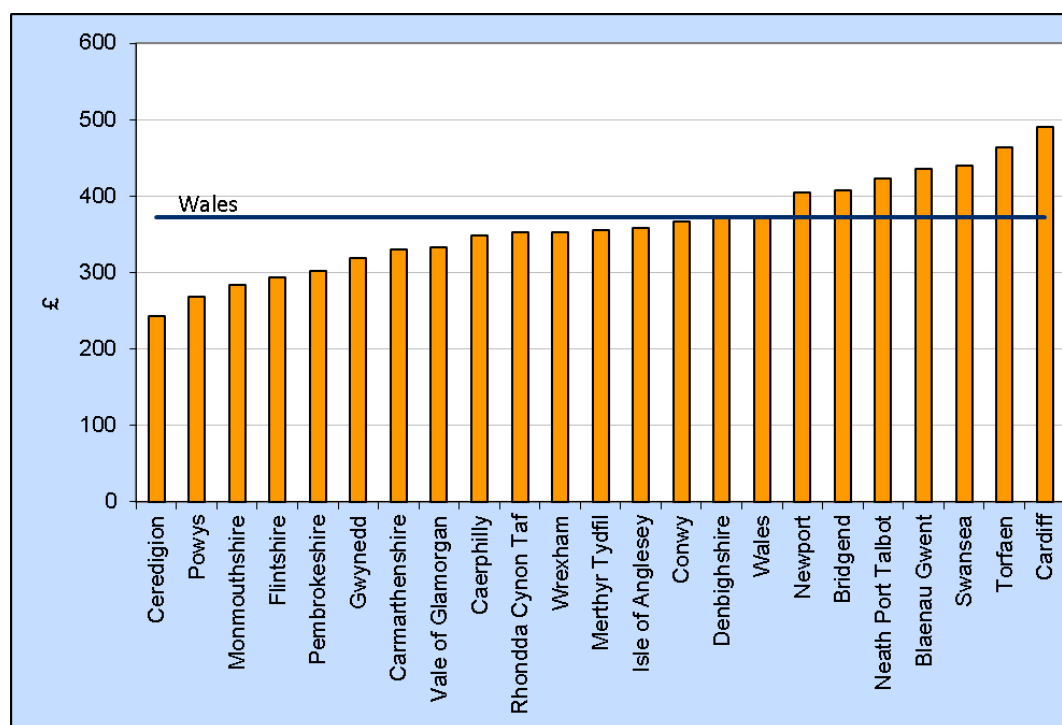


Source: Welsh Government

## 9.1    Homelessness

Homelessness is one of the most extreme forms of social exclusion. Structural factors such as the housing market and poverty affect the ability of individuals to avoid homelessness and to find their own solutions to overcome it. Local Authorities have a key role to play in ensuring that people have access to the widest possible housing options, which enables them to secure their own accommodation before they become homeless or as soon as possible after losing their home.

**Why is this important?**

After years of decline, homelessness is rising and is likely to do so in the coming years. Increasing costs of living, housing benefit changes and other pressures, including job losses, mean more people are at risk of losing their homes.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

The Housing Act 1996 places duties on Local Authorities to assist people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Local Authorities must have a

homelessness strategy which addresses prevention and support as well as the provision of housing. Your Local Authority has a duty to provide general homelessness advice to anyone on request. A series of tests are used to determine the help that someone receives from their Local Authority. The assistance provided depends on the outcome of the assessment. People who are unintentionally homeless, eligible and fall within the priority need category will have a right to be provided with housing. This can vary from temporary accommodation to more permanent accommodation. Priority need includes families with children, a woman who is pregnant, care leavers, young persons aged 16-17, people leaving the armed forces, people leaving prison and people escaping domestic abuse. If you are at risk of becoming homeless within the next 28 days, or you are homeless and don't fall into a priority need category you will be entitled to specific advice and assistance.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 25: Households with dependent children accepted as homeless and accommodated per 10,000 households, 2013-14 (a) (b) (c)**
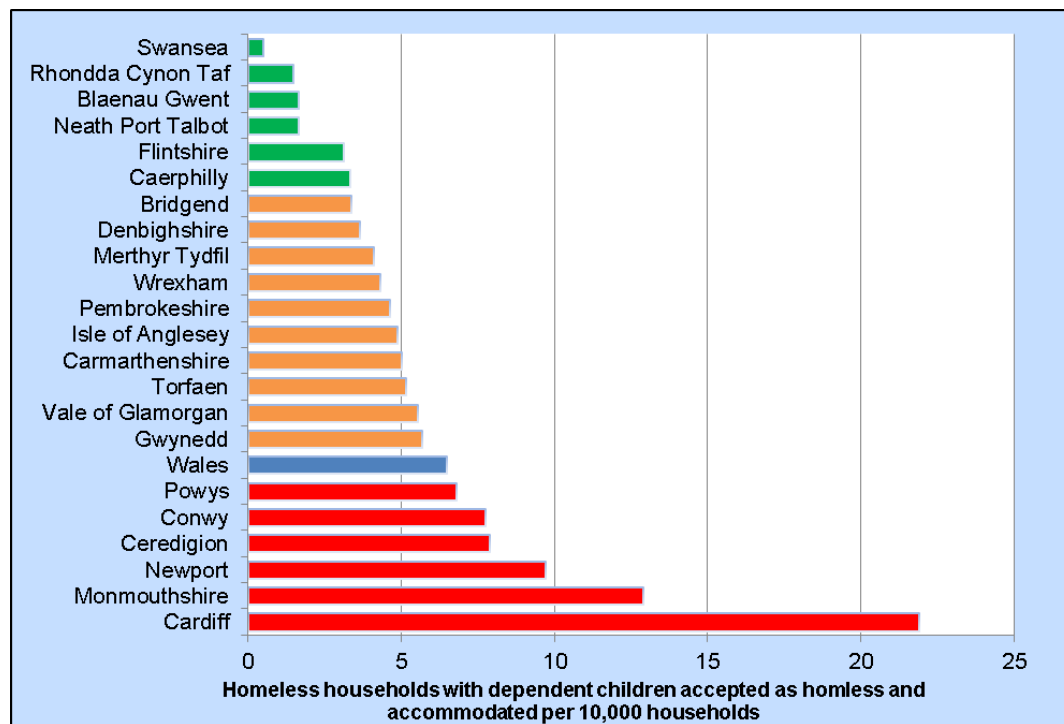


Source: Welsh Government

*(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996*
*(b) A homeless household is one that is eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need*
*(c) Number of households for 2013-14 are based on 2013 household estimates (latest available*

In 2013-14 there were an average of 6.5 households with dependent children that were accepted as homeless and accommodated per 10,000 households in Wales (a decrease from the previous figure of 7.7). This ranged from over 10 in Cardiff (21.9) and Monmouthshire (12.9) to fewer than 2 in Swansea (0.5), Rhondda Cynon Taf (1.5), Blaenau Gwent (1.6), and Neath Port Talbot (1.6).

## 9.2 Affordable Housing

Every citizen should have the opportunity to live in a good quality, energy efficient home which is affordable. Housing is fundamental to the quality of people's lives and communities.

Local Authorities have a key role to play in ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of affordable housing to meet identified need including more choice of affordable and social housing.

**Why is this important?**

The benefits of investing in homes and related services extend well beyond putting a roof over someone's head. A decent home that people can afford is essential to their ability to live healthy, productive lives in safe, strong, inclusive and fair communities.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

Most affordable housing is today delivered by Registered Social Landlords with Social Housing Grant (SHG) funding from Welsh Government which is allocated on a Local Authority basis. Local Authorities decide their local priorities for the expenditure of SHG. Affordable housing is also delivered through the planning system as part of market housing developments. Your Local Authority negotiates with housing developers to secure this affordable housing.

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to prepare Local Development Plans. The Local Development Plan will set out your Local Authority's proposals and policies for future development and use of land in its area. The Local Development Plan will include policies on the proposed new housing development based on the needs and requirements of the area identified by the Authority's Local Housing Market Assessment, including a target for the amount of affordable housing to be delivered through the planning system over the period of the plan.

All Local Authorities must have a published scheme for allocating housing. This includes all forms of affordable housing for which eligibility criteria may differ. Local Authorities will hold a housing register or housing waiting list through which people can apply for housing. Some Local Authorities have joint or common housing registers with local housing associations. If people want to apply for any form of subsidised housing they need to contact their Local Authority in the first instance.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 26: Rate of additional affordable housing units delivered per 10,000 households, by Local Authority area, 2013-14**
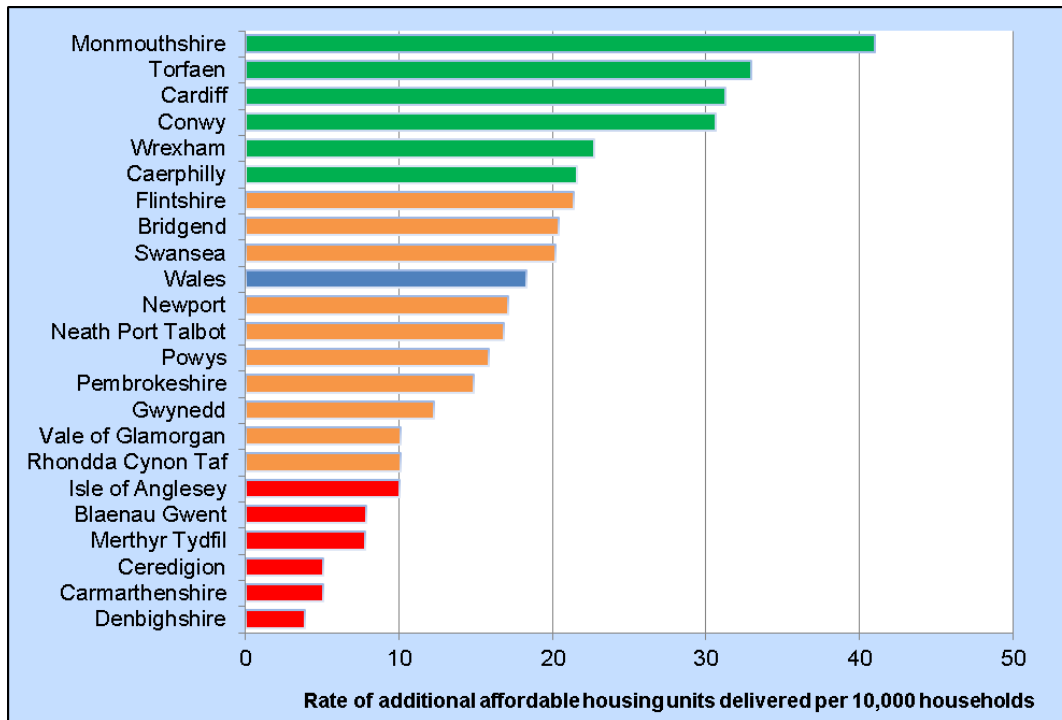
In 2013-14 there were on average 18.3 additional affordable homes provided per 10,000 households (a rise from the previous figure of 15.5). This ranged from over 30 in Monmouthshire (41), Torfaen (33), Cardiff (31) Conwy (31) to under 10 in Denbighshire (4), Carmarthenshire (5), Ceredigion (5), Merthyr Tydfil (8), Blaenau Gwent (8). The largest increases compared with the previous year were in Conwy and Wrexham and the largest decreases were in Blaenau Gwent and the Isle of Anglesey.

**9.3    Empty Homes**

Bringing empty homes back into use can help address a number of housing and social issues by increasing supply in areas where there are housing shortages and pressures and where there is an opportunity to link suitable empty homes with housing need.

**Why is this important?**

Empty homes represent a housing resource that is currently underutilised. As well as a wasted resource, they can also create nuisance and environmental problems. Empty homes can be a focus for increased levels of crime, vandalism, anti-social behaviour and drug-abuse.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

Local Authorities have a range of enforcement tools that can be used to deal with empty properties. A Local Authority will consider using them when all efforts to persuade owners and landlords to bring their properties back into use have failed, and such properties continue to prove to be a nuisance or be in poor condition. The appropriate enforcement powers will vary and Authorities will consider each case on its merits. These include:

- Provision of advice and guidance;
- Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO) - enables Local Authorities to take management control of privately owned empty homes. There are two types of EDMO, interim and final. Both types may only be used when a dwelling has been empty without good reason for over six months and certain other conditions are met. They are made against the person with the most relevant interest in the dwelling, known as the 'relevant proprietor'. Sometimes there are good reasons for a property to be empty and there are safeguards to take account of these;
- Enforced Sale procedure (ESP) - The ESP, is used as a last resource and is a process by which a council brings about the sale of a privately owned house. It is used as a means to sell-on a long term vacant property to a new owner, in circumstances where the present owner is either unwilling or unable to deal with the house and its associated problems;
- Compulsory Purchase Orders – If the Authority is unable to purchase by agreement because they are unable to agree or it is impractical to do so they will go down the compulsory purchase route.

In addition to these powers, your Local Authority should be taking an active part in the national 'Houses into Homes' scheme. This is a loans fund designed to help the owners of empty properties to bring them back into use. Loans are available to owners to improve the properties for sale or rent but not for owner occupation. The scheme has the provision of interest free loans which, if the property is to be rented, can be paid back over 3 years. The scheme is progressing well and loans have been issued to bring back around 550 units of accommodation back into use, the majority of which are for rent.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 27: The percentage of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months at 1 April that were returned to occupation during the year through direct action by the Local Authority, 2013-14**
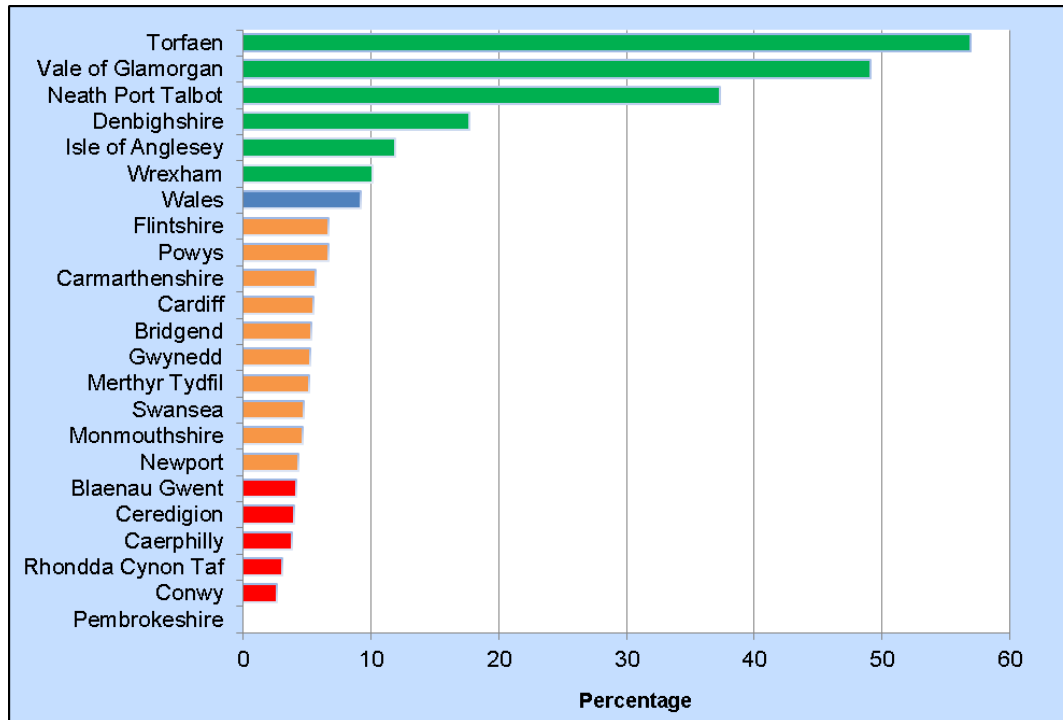
The percentage of vacant private sector dwellings that were returned to occupation by the Local Authority in Wales in 2012-13 was 9 per cent (an increase on the previous figure which was 5 per cent). But there were big variations within the Local Authorities from Torfaen (57 per cent), the Vale of Glamorgan (49 per cent), Neath Port Talbot (37 per cent) to zero in Pembrokeshire. Over half of the Local Authorities were in the range 3 to 7 per cent. The largest increases on the previous year were in the Vale of Glamorgan, Neath Port Talbot, and Torfaen; 47, 32, and 26 percentage points respectively. Apart from a fall of 5 percentage points in Denbighshire and a couple of small increases there was little change with the remaining authorities.

**9.4    Independent Living**

People need a decent home that is suitable to their needs. Homes may need to be adapted to meet people's changing needs in order for them to remain in their own home for as long as possible.

**Why is this important?**

For disabled people of all ages, housing is a key enabler of independent living. Accessible and adapted housing enables people to maintain their independence, remain in their communities and exercise choice in the way they live their lives.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) can help towards the cost of adapting your home to enable you to continue to live there.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG). Under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, Local Authorities should provide an answer to an application for a DFG as soon as is reasonably practicable, and no later than six months after the application is made. The actual payment of the DFG should take place no more than 12 months after the application was made.

An occupational therapist (or other approved qualified professional) will assess what work is required to make your home suitable. Your Local Authority will pay the grant when they are satisfied that changes to your home are necessary to meet your particular needs and that it is reasonable and practical to do the work.

The amount of grant will depend on the cost of the approved works and your financial circumstances. An assessment of your financial circumstances sometimes called a "means test" will be carried out by your Local Authority. Depending on the outcome of this assessment the amount of grant offered can vary from zero to one hundred per cent of the cost.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 28: The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant, 2013-14**
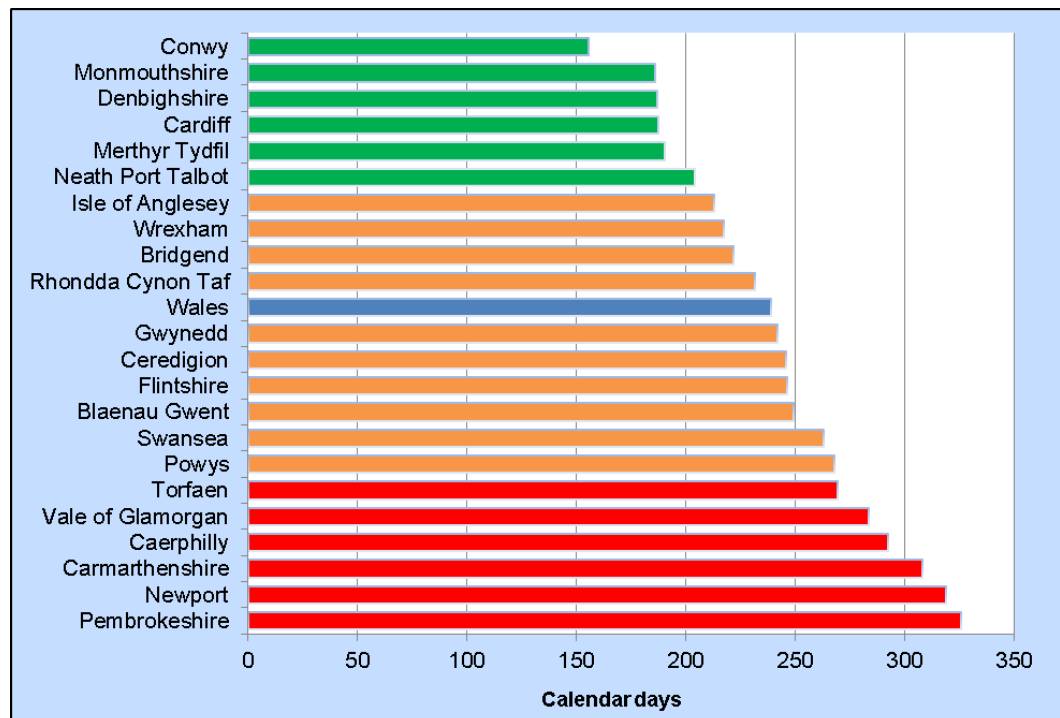


Source: National Strategic Indicators, PSR/002

It took an average of 239 days to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant in 2013-14 (a decrease from the previous figure of 271 days). This ranged from 156 days in Conwy to 326 in Pembrokeshire. The largest improvements on the previous year were in Newport, Flintshire, and Powys; with decreases of 220, 145, and 118 days respectively. Apart from rises of 28 days in Cardiff and 21 days in Bridgend, the remaining Local Authorities were similar to the previous year or showed small to medium decreases. The size and complexity of the adjustments the DFGs are funding should be taken into account as they may have an impact on the time taken to deliver.

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used.
- National Strategic Indicators Viewer - http://data.wales.gov.uk/apps/nsi/;
- National Strategic Indicator Data - http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=32612;
- Programme for Government - http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/homes/?lang=en ;

- Financial Information -
  http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2631;
- Welsh Government Housing Statistics –
  http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/housing/?lang=en
  http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/environment/?lang=en;
- UK Government Housing Statistics –
  http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=People+and+Places;
- European Housing Statistics –
  http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Housing_statistics#Data_sources_and_availability.

## 10.    ENVIRONMENT

Local environmental services cover cemetery, cremation and mortuary services, environmental health, street cleansing, waste collection and disposal. Local Authorities have historically provided a convenient and efficient service for dealing with people's rubbish.

**Figure 29: Household Waste Refuse collection per head (tonnes), 2013-14 (a) (b)**
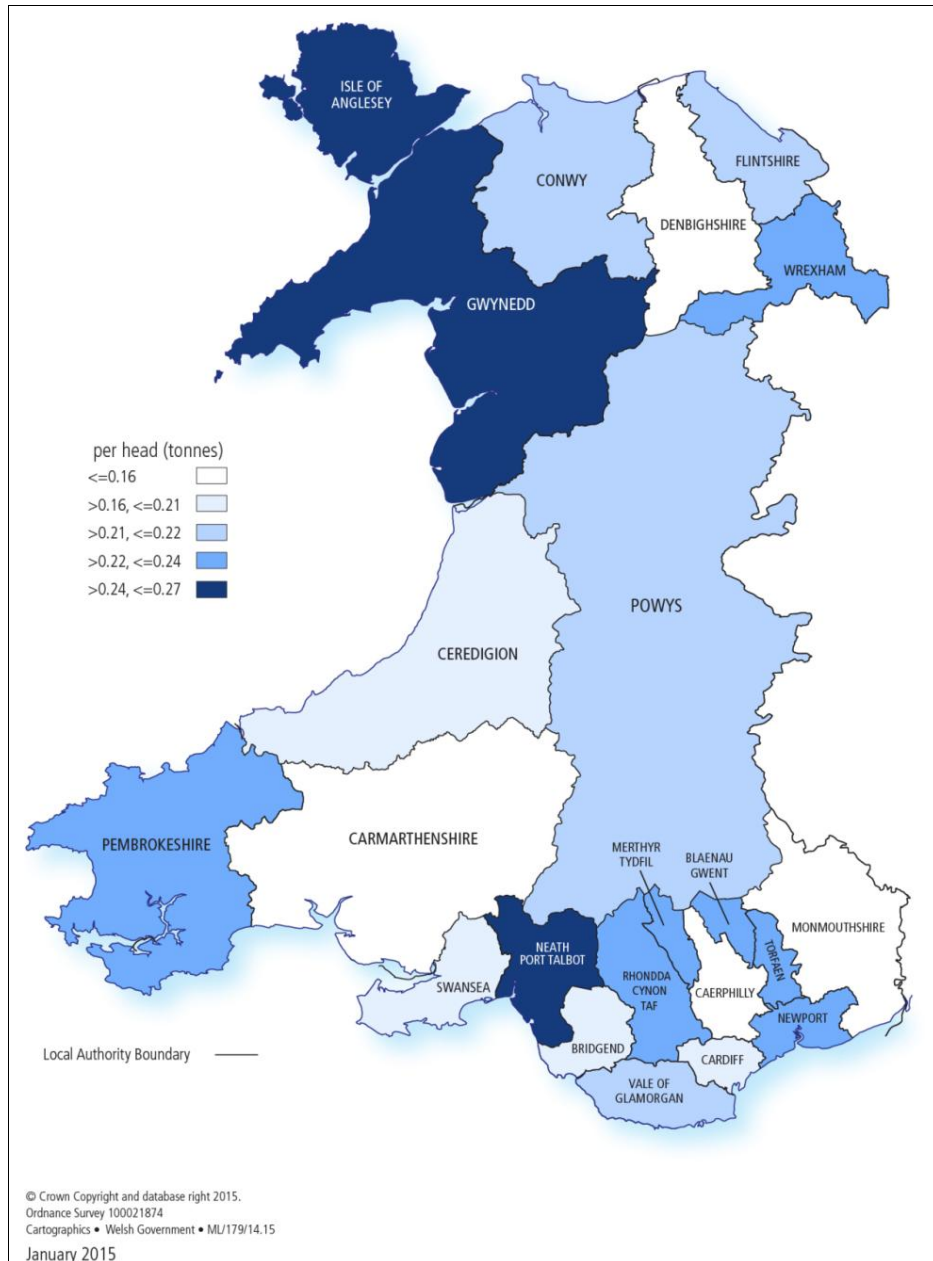


Source: Welsh Government

*(a) Includes all residual household waste collected at the kerbside for landfill or incineration. Waste collected at the kerbside for recycling and reuse is excluded.*
*(b) Figures do not take into consideration any material collected at the kerbside for recycling that was subsequently rejected to landfill/incineration.*

Local Authorities are now at the forefront of helping achieve a circular resource management economy for Wales that will bring economic benefits to Wales and its businesses. At the same time this will help reduce the impact of consumption on the wider planet by helping householders reduce and recycle far more of their wastes. Results from the National Survey for Wales show that in April 2013 to March 2014, 62 per cent of respondents said that their local area was free from litter and rubbish and 70 per cent said that their local area was well maintained.

**Figure 30: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Local Environmental Services (a) per head of population, 2013-14**
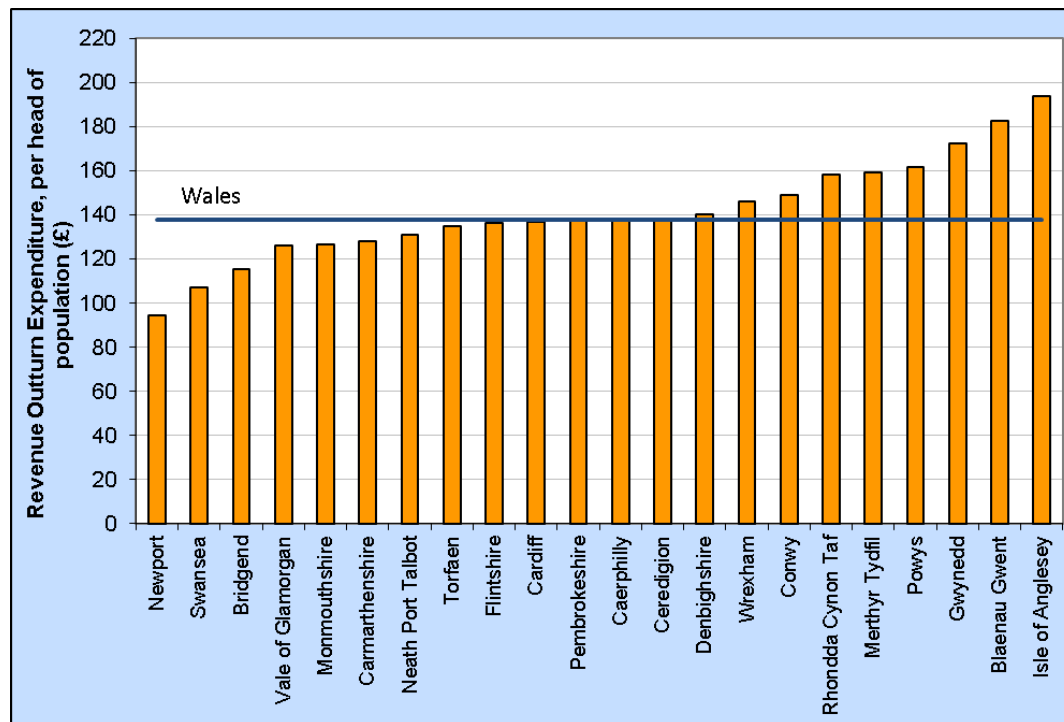


Source: Welsh Government

*(a) Covers cemetery, cremation and mortuary services, environmental health, street cleansing, waste collection and disposal.*

**Figure 31: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Local Environmental Services (a) per head of population and Percentage of Waste sent to Landfill (b)**
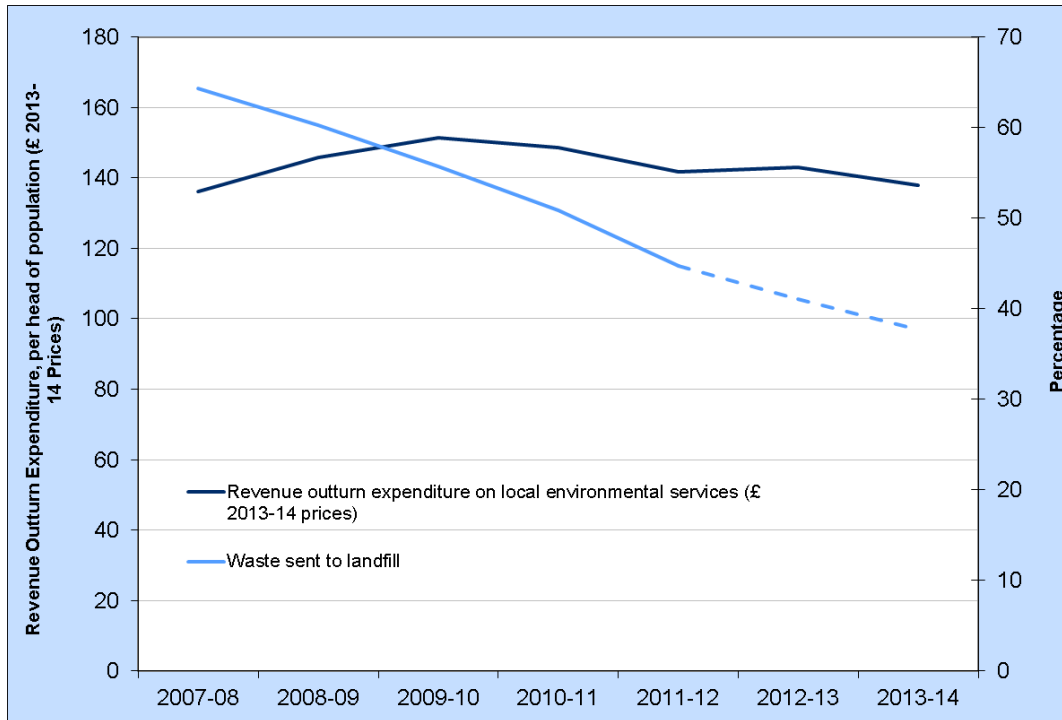


Source: Welsh Government, National Strategic Indicator WMT/004b

*(a) Covers cemetery, cremation and mortuary services, environmental health, street cleansing, waste collection and disposal.*
*(b) Due to a change in the definition of municipal waste for 2012-13 the indicator will not be directly comparable to previous years. The following waste types were formerly excluded as contributing towards the indicator, but are now included: rubble, soil and Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA), beach cleansing wastes.*

**Figure 32: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Local Environmental Services (a) per head and Percentage of Waste Recycled, 2013-14**
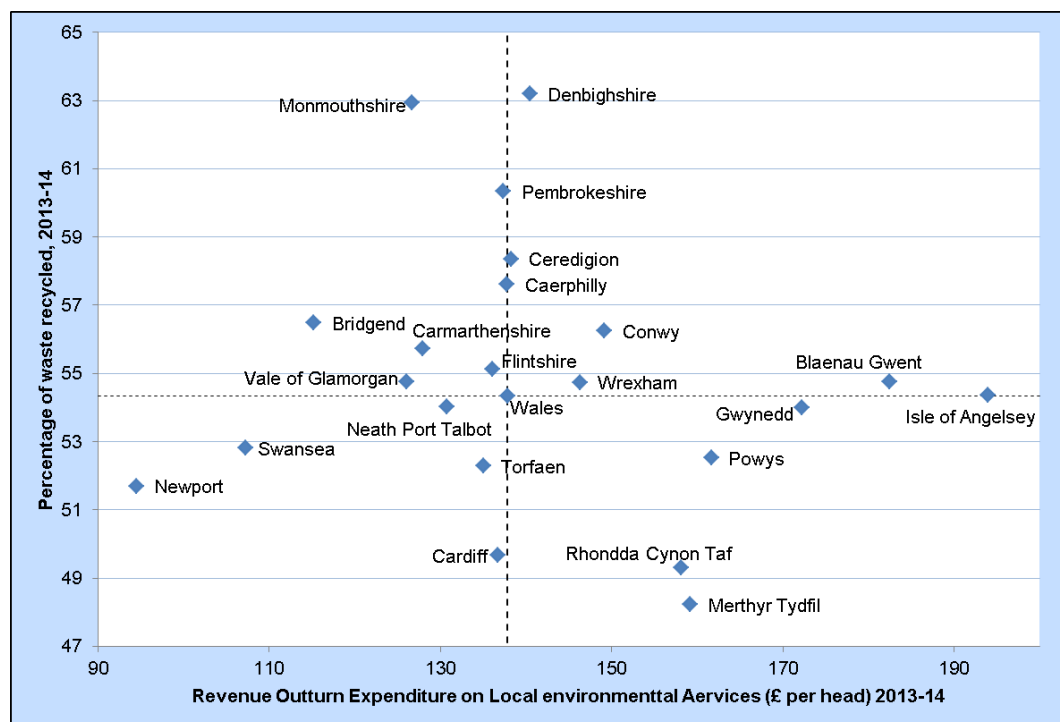


Source: Welsh Government, National Strategic Indicators, WMT/009b

*(a) Covers cemetery, cremation and mortuary services, environmental health, street cleansing, waste collection and disposal.*

## 10.1   Recycling and composting

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to collect and dispose of municipal waste. This includes regular household collections, recycling collections, collection of bulky items and waste received at civic amenity sites. The Welsh Government has set a target for Local Authorities of 58 per cent of household waste to be recycled in 2015-16 with the possibility of fines imposed for those who don't meet the target.

**Why is this important?**

The amount of landfill space left in Wales is running out fast and landfill taxes mean we cannot afford to keep sending waste to landfill. Landfill can cause air, soil and water pollution and when food is sent to landfill it breaks down to produce methane.

Developing ways of preventing waste, reducing waste going to landfill and increasing recycling, composting and anaerobic digestion will have a significant impact on our ability to combat climate change, which will lead to an improved quality of life, including economic and environmental benefits.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

Local Authorities in Wales have a statutory duty to reduce the amount of waste that is sent to landfill. They also have a statutory duty to collect waste and recycling from households.

Your Local Authority is responsible for informing you about the collection scheme they operate and communicating details about collection days and explaining how and when you should leave your waste and recycling out at the kerbside for collection.

You may be provided with bags, boxes or wheeled bins for recyclables and residual waste in which to put your recyclables and residual waste, depending on the type of service provided by your Authority. All Local Authorities in Wales have a dedicated team to deliver the waste collection and recycling service, and provide help and information via their own website and help lines.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 33: Percentage of Municipal Waste Collected that is Reused, Recycled or Composted, 2013-14**
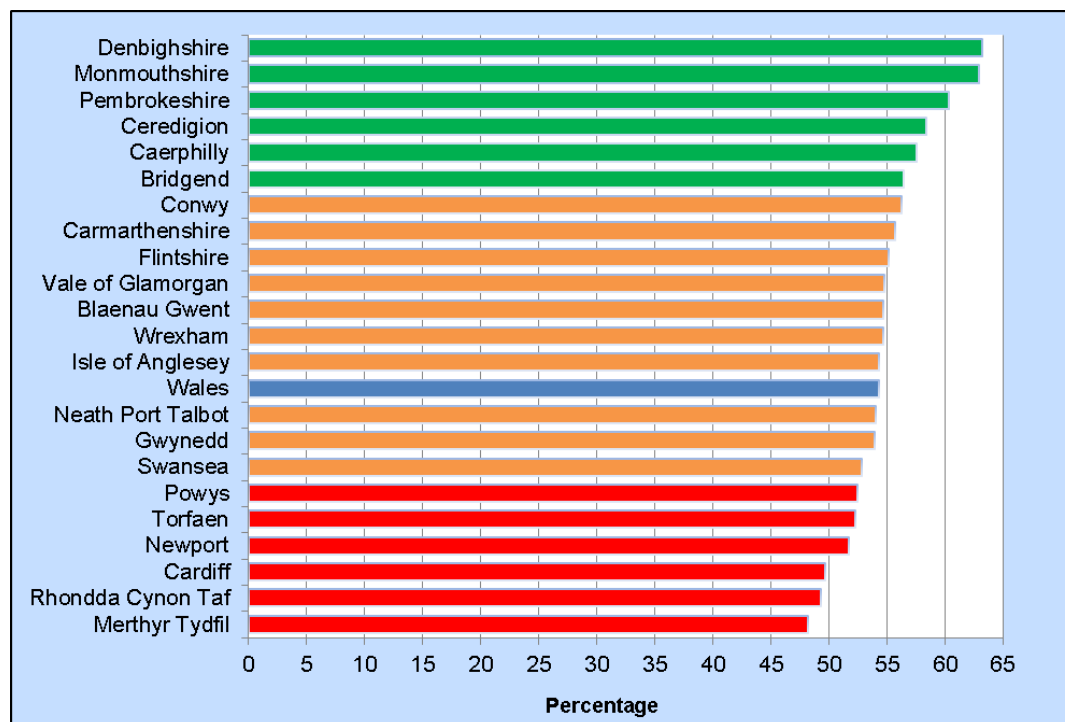


Source: Welsh Government National Strategic Indicators, WMT/009b

In 2013-14 an average of 54 per cent of municipal waste was recycled, reused or composted in Wales (an increase of 2 percentage points on the previous figure). This ranged from over 60 per cent in Denbighshire (63), Monmouthshire (63), and Pembrokeshire (60) to less than 50 per cent in Merthyr Tydfil (48) and Rhondda Cynon Taf (49)

Local Authority Services Performance 2013-14

The definition for the National Strategic Indicator and therefore how the targets are being monitored has changed since April 2012. The 2012-13 figures published were based on the new definition. Details on this can be found in our statistical article:
http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/articles/municipalchange/?lang=en

## 10.2   Fly-Tipping

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of waste and can vary in scale from a bin bag of rubbish to large quantities of waste dumped by trucks. The size and type of fly-tipped waste on public land will determine which organisation, either Natural Resources Wales or the Local Authority, would deal with the incident. Essentially large scale fly-tipping or tipped waste which is hazardous or is carried out by organised criminals is dealt with by Natural Resources Wales. Local Authorities focus on tackling smaller scale and more frequent incidents.

**Why is this important?**

Fly-tipping is a serious environmental crime which can cause long lasting contamination, pollution and can put human health at risk.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

A member of the public can report an incident of fly-tipped waste which is on public land either through the Natural Resources Wales hotline or directly to the Local Authority.

Your Local Authority is required to clean up the small scale fly-tipping incident on public land within five days of it being reported.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 34: Percentage of reported fly-tipping incidents cleared within five working days, 2013-14 (a)**
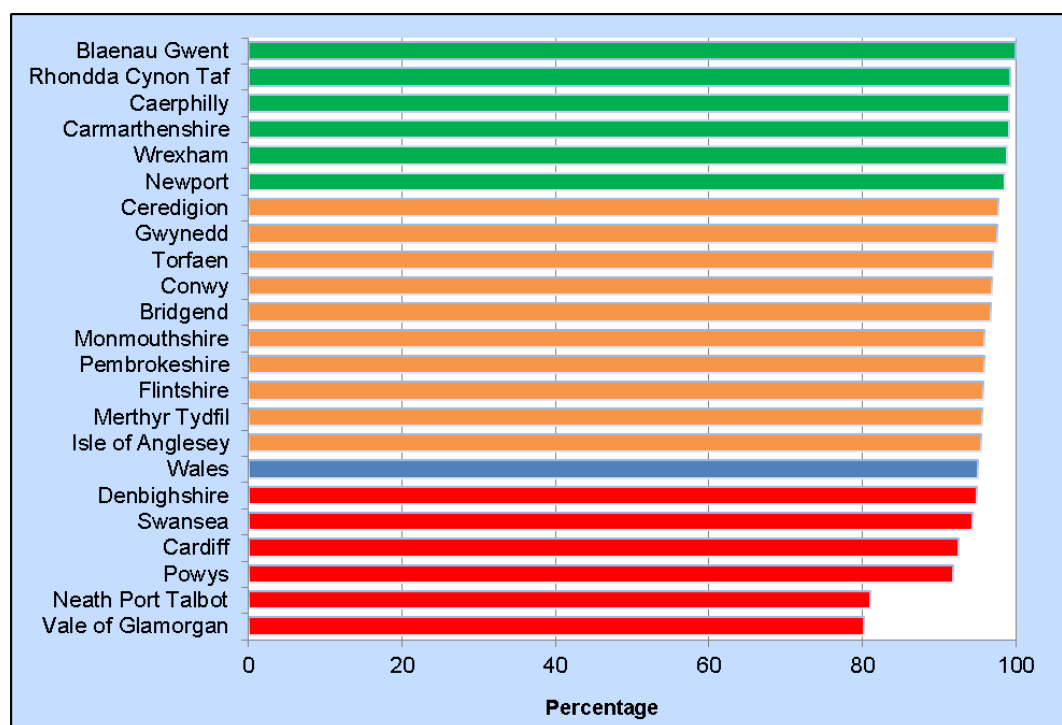


Source: Welsh Government National Strategic Indicators, STS/006

In 2013-14 95 per cent of reported fly-tipping incidents were cleared within five working days, an increase of 3 percentage points on the previous figure. Apart from the Vale of Glamorgan (80 per cent) and Neath Port Talbot (81 per cent) all the other Local Authorities were above 90 per cent; with Blaenau Gwent at 100 per cent (the same as in previous years). Apart from a decrease on the 2012-13 figure for the Vale of Glamorgan, a decrease of 14 percentage points in Neath Port Talbot, and increases of 18 percentage points in Torfaen and 14 percentage points in Monmouthshire; the remaining Local Authorities stayed the same or showed small increase.

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used.
- National Strategic Indicators Viewer - http://data.wales.gov.uk/apps/nsi/;
- National Strategic Indicator Data - http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=32612;
- Programme for Government - http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/environment/?lang=en;
- National Survey for Wales – http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/nationalsurveyforwales/?lang=en;

- Financial Information -
  http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2631;
- Welsh Government Environmental Statistics –
  http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/environment/?lang=en;
- UK Government Environmental Statistics –
  http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Waste+and+Recycling and
  http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/environment/waste/;
- Scottish Government Environmental Statistics –
  http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Environment;
- Northern Ireland Government Environmental Statistics -
  http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/waste-home.htm;
- European Environment Statistics –
  http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=env_wasmun&lang=en.

## 11.   TRANSPORT

Transport plays a key role in our lives. It provides opportunities for people to gain access to jobs, leisure and social activities as well as vital services, including education and health. Local Authorities are charged with developing safe, integrated, efficient and effective transport policy within their areas. To achieve this they  work in partnership with transport operators – bus and rail, the construction sector, planning, utilities, transport groups and most importantly, with each other, to ensure that our transport system is fit for purpose and meets the different needs of all citizens.

**Figure 35: Traffic volume (billion Vehicle Kilometres) per 100,000 population, 2013**
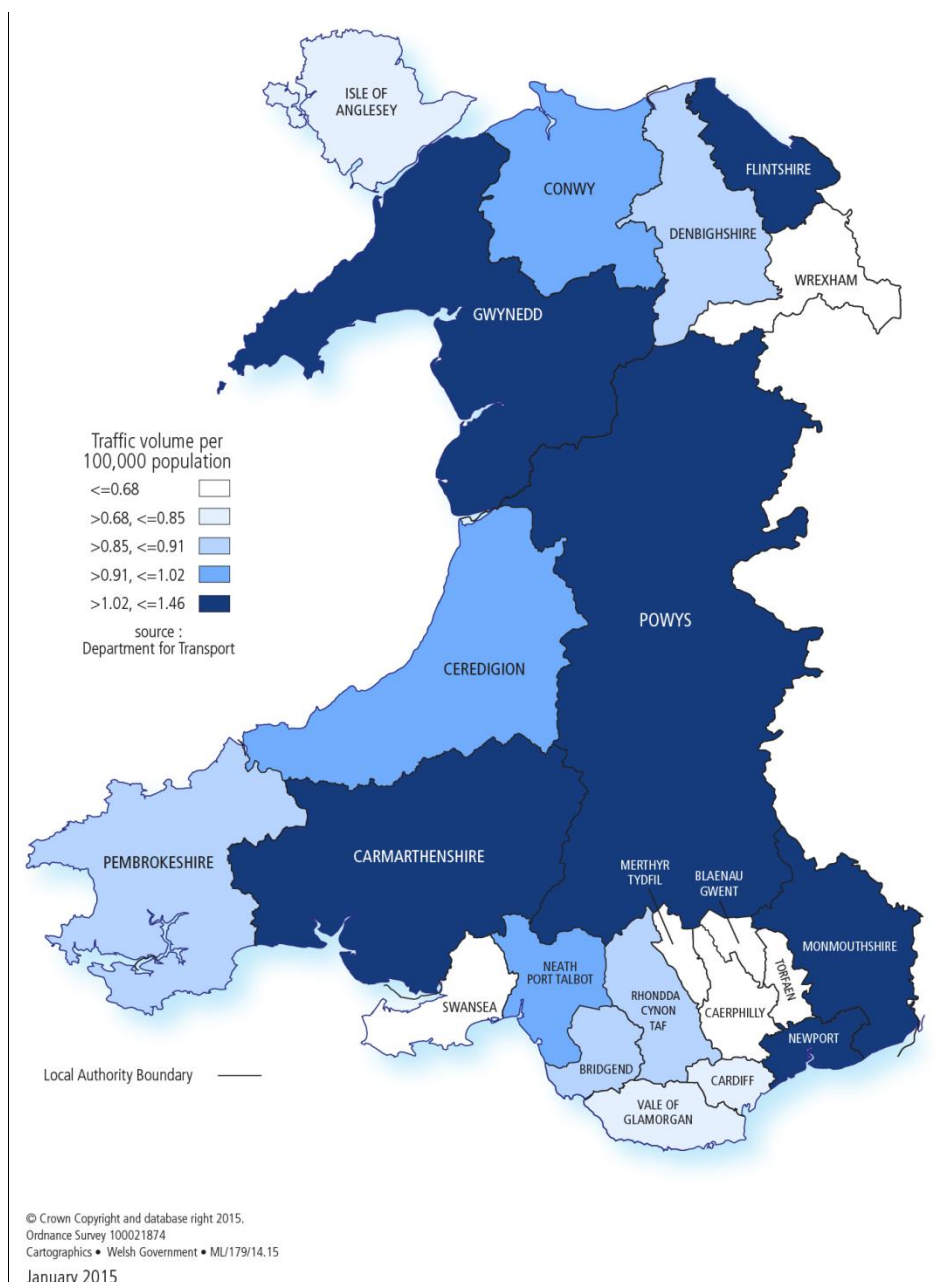


Source: Welsh Government

**Figure 36: Revenue Outturn Expenditure, Roads and Transport
per Kilometre of road, 2013-14**
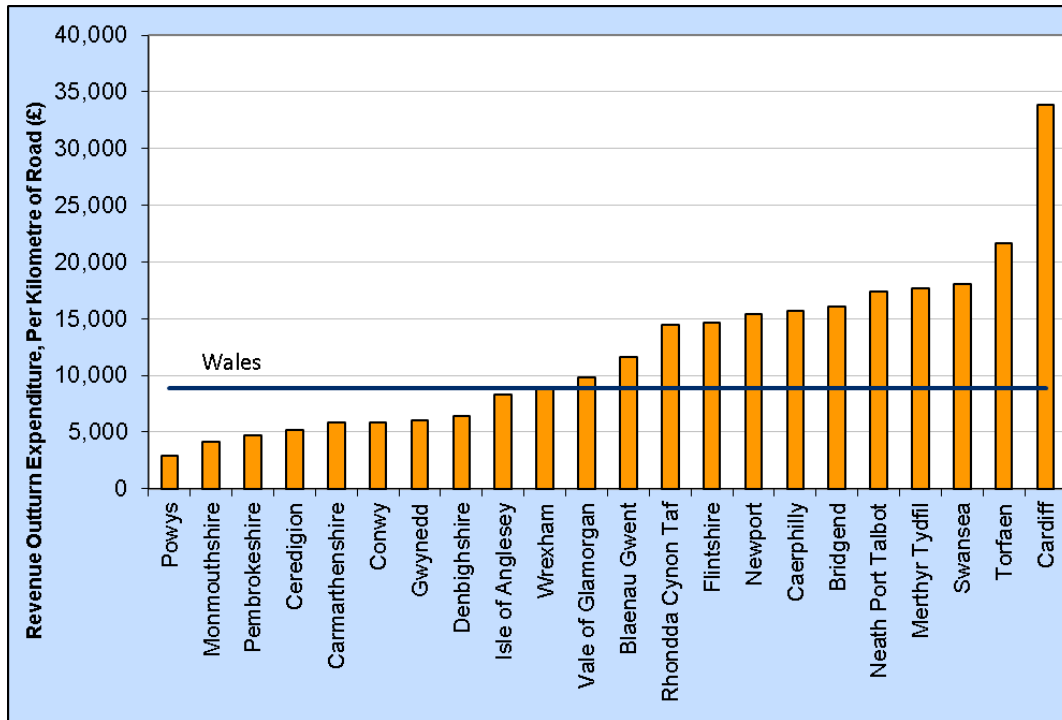


Source: Welsh Government

**Figure 37: Revenue Outturn Expenditure, Roads and Transport
per Kilometre of road and percentage of roads
in poor condition 2013-14**
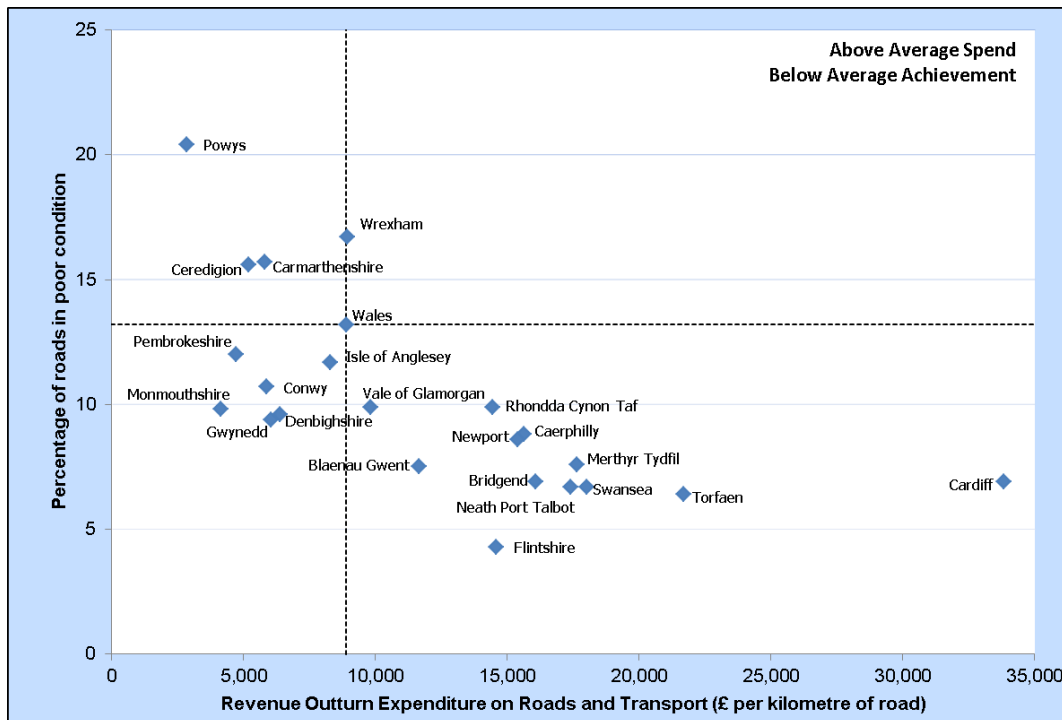


Source: Welsh Government

In the National Survey for Wales April 2013 to March 2014, people were asked what they thought about the transport system in Wales. Respondents were asked to consider roads, rail and bus services as well as cycling and walking. Answers were given on a scale of zero (extremely bad) to ten (extremely good). The average score was 5.9. Scores ranged from 5.2 in Ceredigion to 6.5 in Flintshire.

## 11.1   Road Network

The provision of well maintained principal roads plays an important role in supporting our national and local economy including our overall health and wellbeing.

**Why is this important?**

Principal roads are important in facilitating the safe and effective movement of goods and people. They have a key role to play in linking up with the rest of the highway network, increasing access to employment opportunities, health and education services, shops and leisure facilities.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

A Local Authority in accordance with its statutory obligations under the Highways Act 1980, is expected to maintain its roads ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by such things as snow or ice.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 38: Percentage of roads in poor condition, 2013-14**
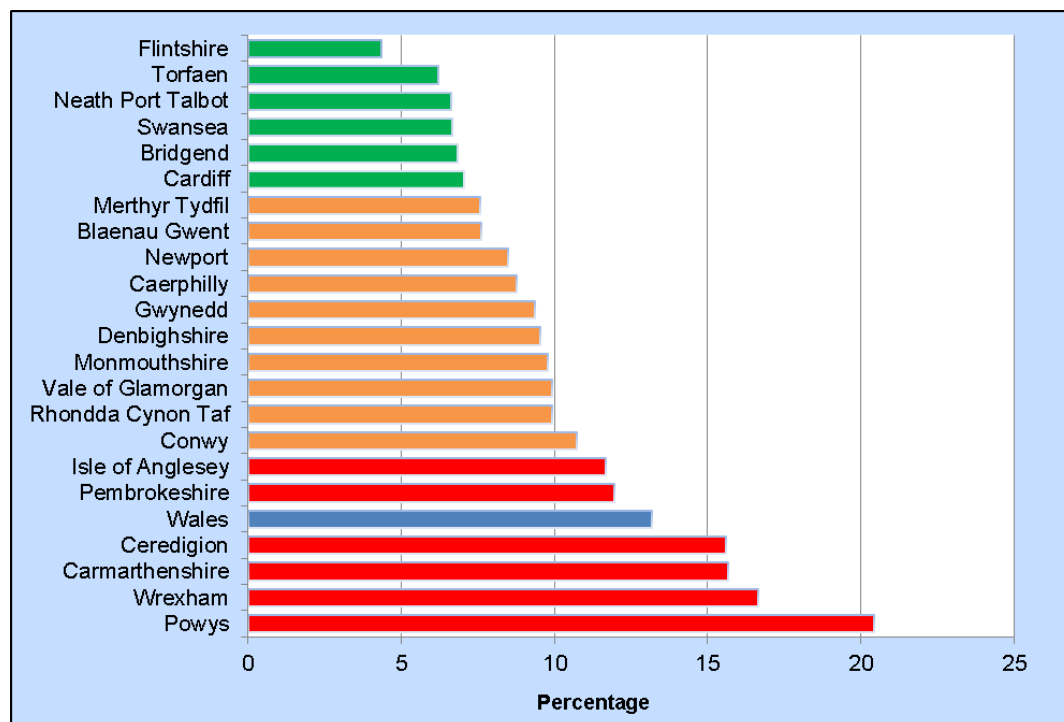


Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales, THS/012

In 2013-14 13 per cent of roads in Wales were in poor condition (the same as the previous figure). This ranged from 4 per cent in Flintshire to 20 per cent in Powys. Wrexham (17 per cent), Carmarthenshire (16 per cent), and Ceredigion (16 per cent) were above the Wales average. Over half of Local Authorities were in the range 5 to 10 per cent.

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used.
- Programme for Government – http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/culture/programme?lang=en;
- National Survey for Wales – http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/nationalsurveyforwales/?lang=en;
- Financial Information – http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2631;
- UK Government Statistics Release – http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/travel-transport/index.html;
- Scottish Government Transport Statistics – http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Transport-Travel;
- Northern Ireland Transport Statistics – http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/statistics/stats-catagories/ni_transport_statistics.htm;
- European Transport Statistics – http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/transport/introduction.
- Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales http://www.infobasecymru.net/IAS/dataviews/tabular?viewId=199&geoId=1&subsetId=

## 12.    COMMUNITY SAFETY

Tackling crime and the fear of crime is key to making people feel safe in their communities. This is a top priority for the Welsh Government, reflected in the 'Five for a Fairer Future' commitment in the Programme for Government to introduce an additional 500 Community Support officers.

Most data for community safety is either at the Wales level or the Police Force level and so analysis here is restricted to those levels. For statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales some statistics may be based on a small number of responses so care should be taken when using these figures. For more information follow the links in the List of Data Sources Used section to the source data.

On the 15 January 2014 The UK Statistics Authority published an assessment report which removed the National Statistics designation from police recorded crime. The Crime Survey for England and Wales was not affected by this decision.

Local Authorities should be working with the police and other key partners such as Health Boards to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Local Partners should use their understanding of local priorities to reduce crime and substance misuse, and improve community safety. This local approach allows local partners to address the issues that are important to their community, collaborating and working together to address common priorities and needs.

**Figure 39: Police Recorded Offences per 1,000 population (year to March 2014)**



Offences per
1,000 population

<=40.59
>40.59, <=48.68
>48.68, <=53.67
>53.67, <=64.02
>64.02, <=85.33

source : Home Office

Local Authority Boundary

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Ordnance Survey 100021874
Cartographics • Welsh Government • ML/179/14.15

January 2015
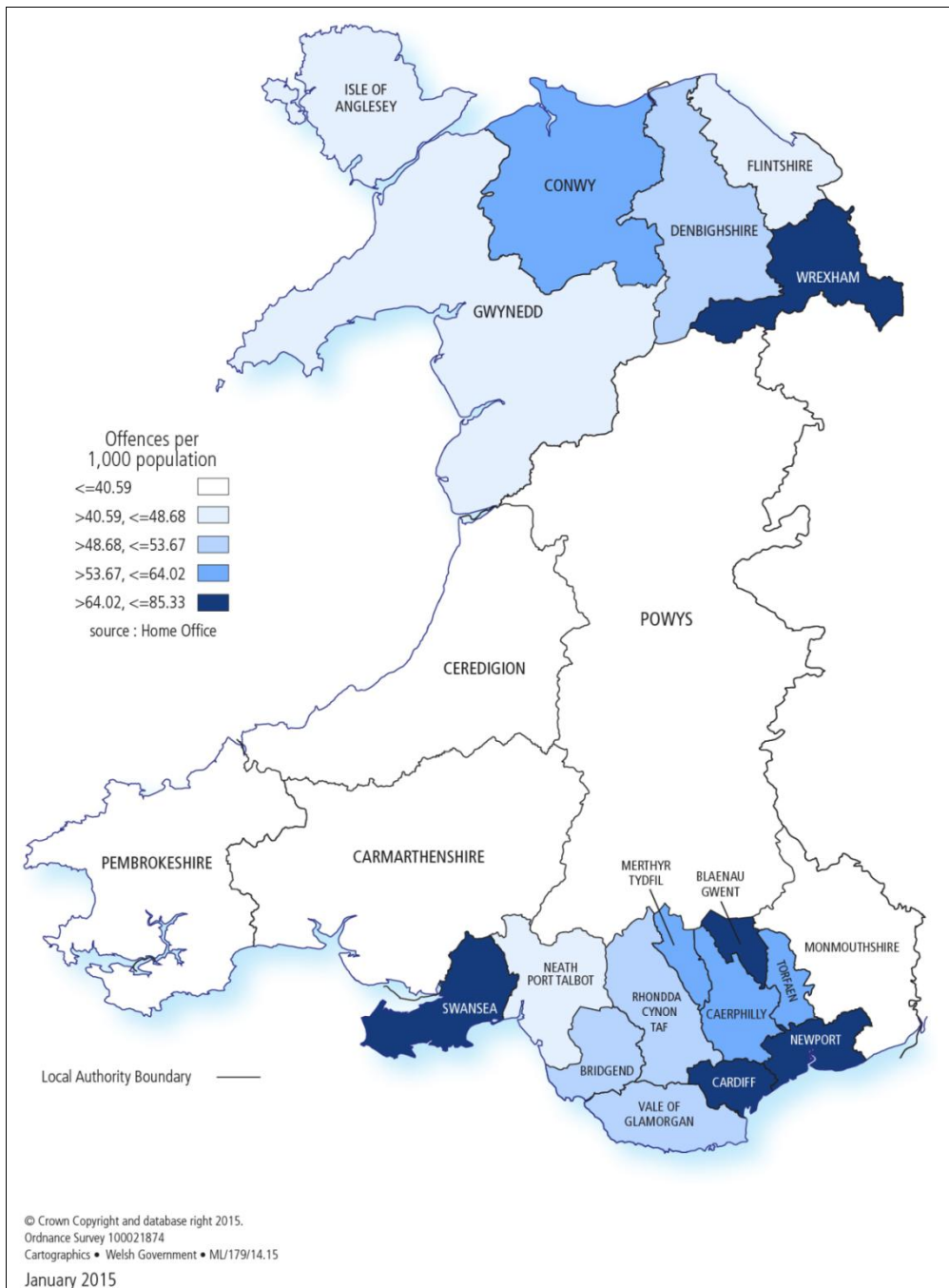
Source: Home Office

**Figure 40: Percentage of respondents who felt safe when walking in their local area after dark**
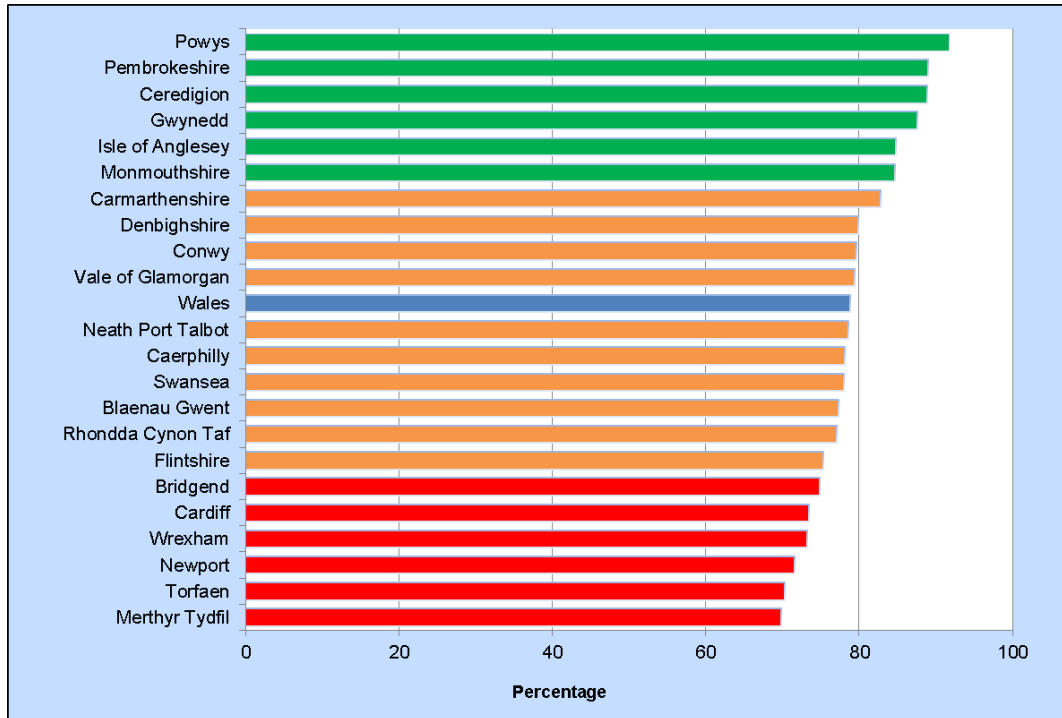


Source: National Survey for Wales, April 2013 to March 2014, sample size 14,300 people

In 2014 an average of 8 in 10 people said they felt safe when walking in their local area after dark. The highest proportions were in Powys (92 per cent), Pembrokeshire (89 per cent), Ceredigion (89 per cent), and Gwynedd (88 per cent); and the lowest in Merthyr Tydfil (70 per cent) and Torfaen (70 per cent). Most of the other Local Authorities were within 4 percentage points of the Wales average.

**Figure 41: Adults who have experienced or witnessed anti-social behaviour by police force area, 2013-14 (a)**
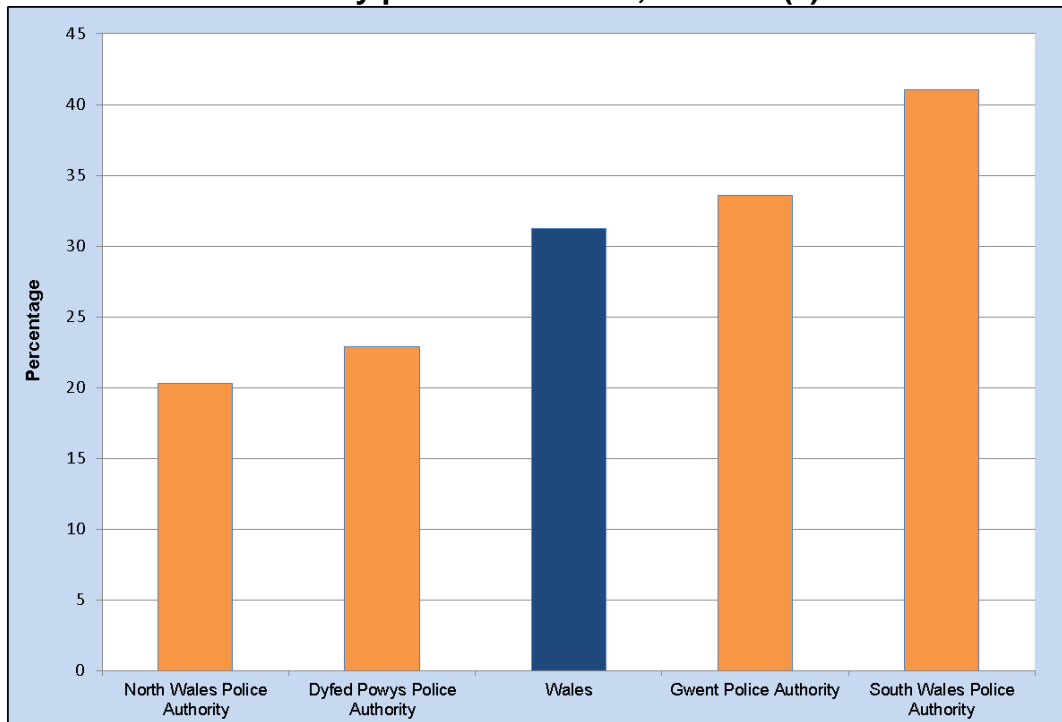


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), Office for National Statistics
*a) Adults aged 16 and over*

**Figure 42: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head on Law, Order and Protective Services, 2013-14**
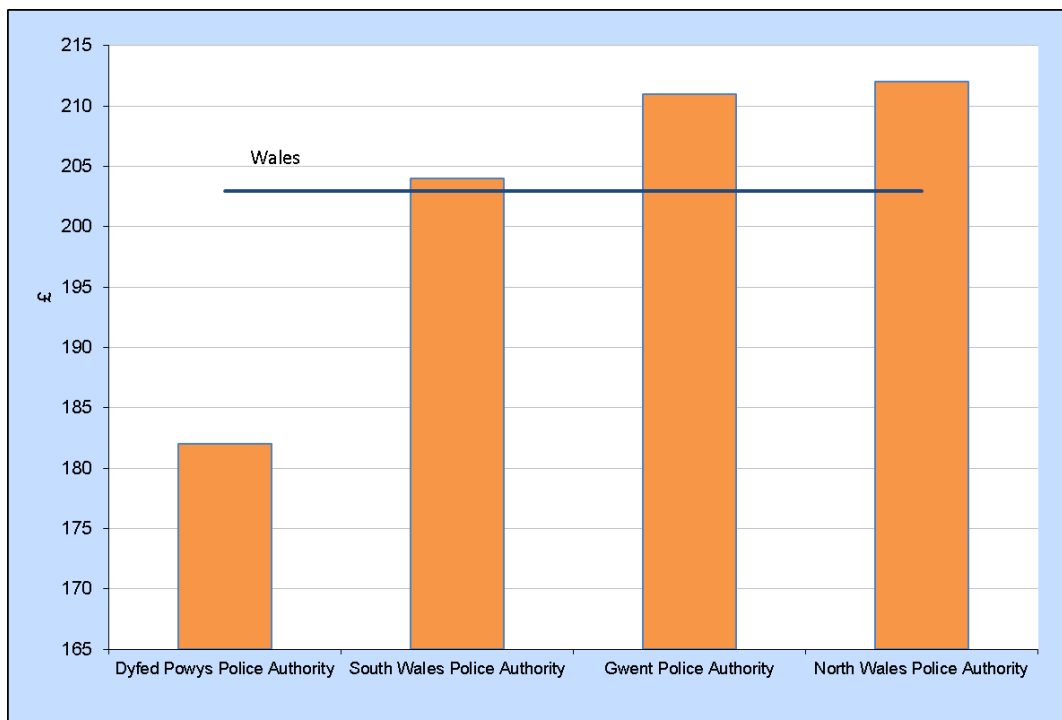


Source: Welsh Government

**Figure 43: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head on Law, Order and Protective Services and Perceptions of Anti-Social Behaviour (a)**
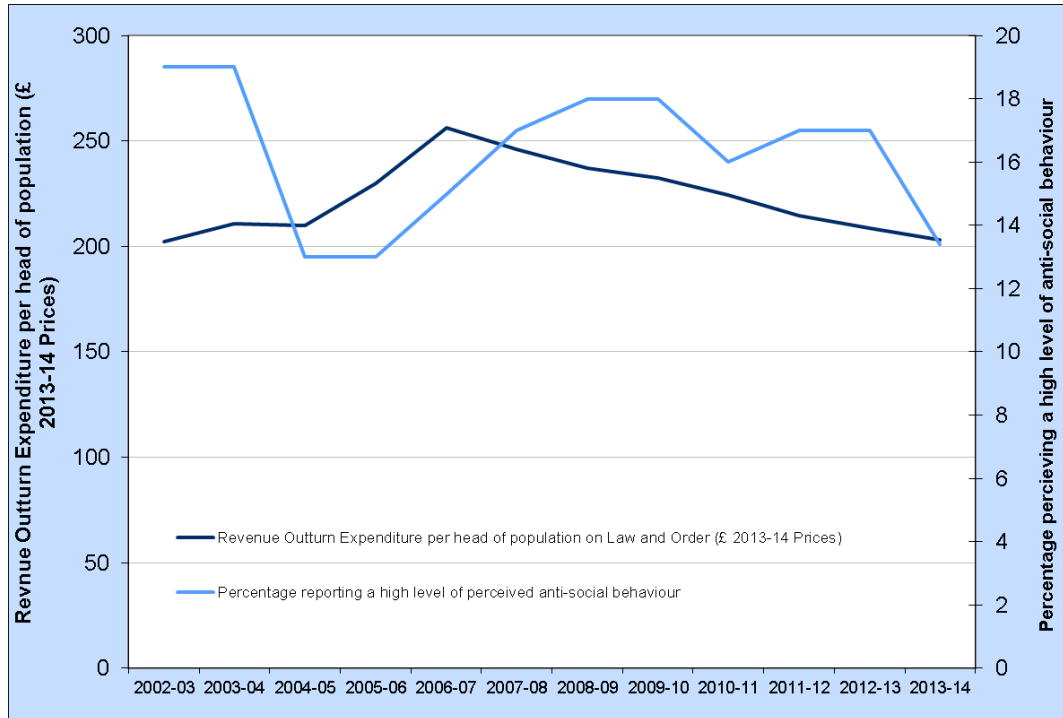


Source: Welsh Government, Crime Survey for England and Wales

a) This data is derived from responses to seven individual anti-social behaviour strands as described in Sections 5.7 and 6.3 of the Crime Survey for England and Wales User Guide

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used.
- Programme for Government - http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/communities/?lang=en ;
- National Survey for Wales – http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/nationalsurveyforwales/?lang=en;
- Financial Information - http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=2631;
- Welsh Government Statistical Releases on Crime– http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/communitysafety/crime/?lang=en;
- UK Government Statistical Releases on Crime – http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/crime-justice/index.html;
- European Crime Statistics – http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/crime/introduction.

## 13.    WELLBEING

Health services are delivered by Health Boards throughout Wales but Local Authorities have a role to play in supporting the health of their population through actions across the breadth of their responsibilities relating to wellbeing.

**Figure 44: Map showing hospitals in Wales and Local Authority boundary**
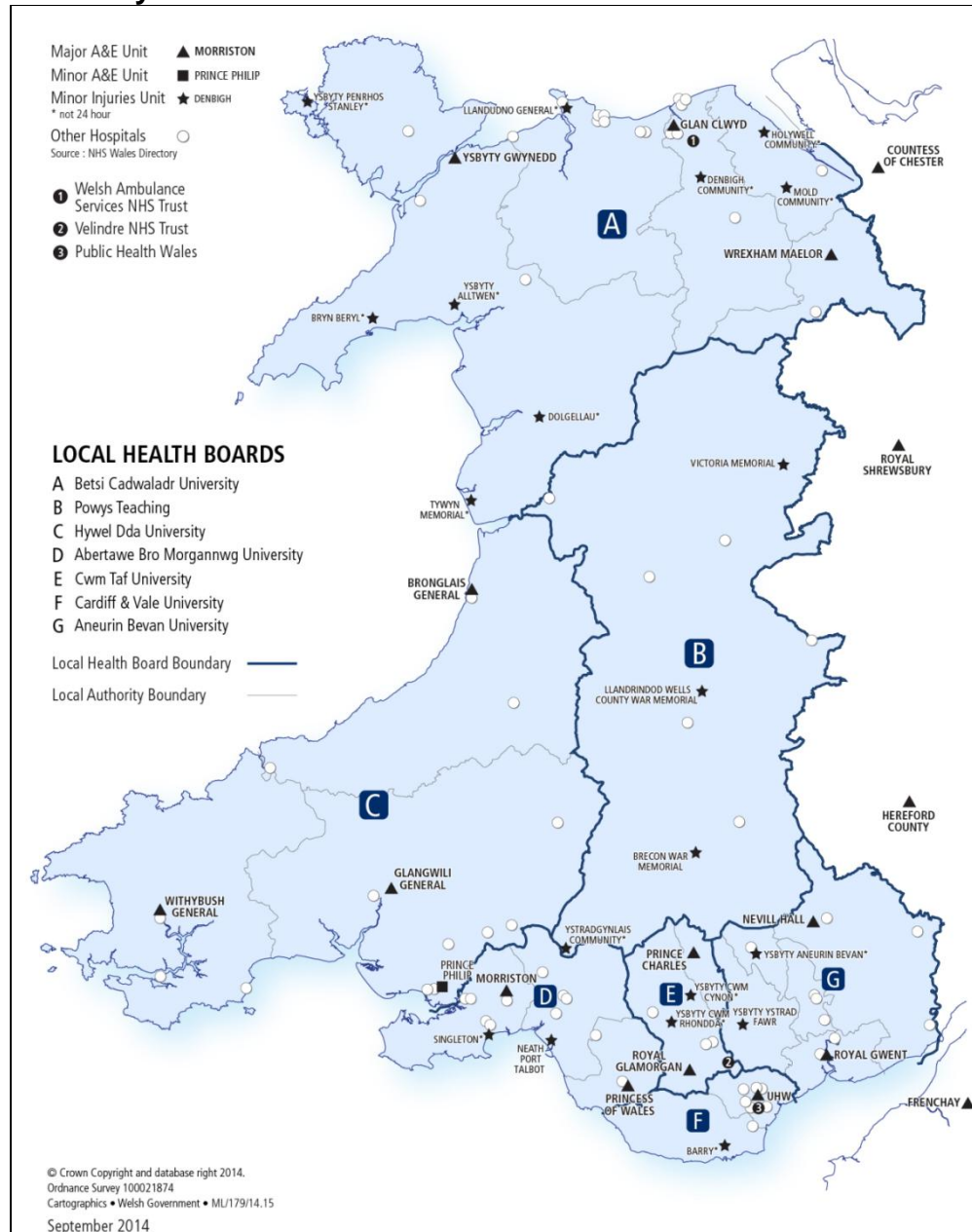


Source: Welsh Government

The potential contribution of Local Authorities to health and wellbeing is huge as good health depends on the interaction of people's position in society, physical and social environment, personal circumstances and lifestyle and life experiences. Local authorities have a role in influencing many of these aspects of life.  Recent studies have examined how Local Authorities could impact on health and highlighted issues such as support for parents and children during the early years, the role of schools, help with employment opportunities and in improving workplace health, and improving access to green spaces.  All of the other chapters in this report are therefore relevant to health and wellbeing  and this chapter picks up the additional issue of healthy lifestyles.

## 13.1   Healthy Lifestyles

The National Health Service Wales Act 2006 placed a statutory duty on each Local Authority and Local Health Board (LHB) to prepare a Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy. These Strategies set out how LAs and LHBs would work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population through:

- improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequities;
- improving the provision, quality, integration, and sustainability of 'overlapping services'.

Following publication of revised guidance by Welsh Government in June 2012, *"Shared Purpose - Shared Delivery"*, this duty - along with those duties relating to planning for children and young people, community safety and community planning – was to be discharged through the production of single integrated plans to be in place in all areas by April 2013.

A healthy lifestyle is one which helps to maintain and improve people's health and wellbeing. An individual's perception of a healthy lifestyle may vary significantly, but for the majority of people it means living their life in a way that enables them to be more physically and emotionally healthy. The choices people make will depend on many factors including their own personal circumstances.

**Why is this important?**

Regular physical activity has many benefits to health, including mental health and wellbeing. People who are physically active have up to a fifty per cent reduced risk of developing the major chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers and a 20-30 per cent reduced risk of premature death. It has been estimated that the cost of physical inactivity to Wales is about £650 million per year.

Overweight and obesity represent serious public health problems and are risk factors for chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers.  Any increases in the levels of such illnesses not only affect

the individuals concerned and their families, but also puts pressure on the NHS and society more generally.

An indicator on alcohol is important as excessive alcohol consumption is a major cause of serious liver disease, which is often fatal. In addition, drinking above the lower-risk guidelines on a regular basis puts people at risk of serious health problems, from liver damage to a greater risk of getting cancer or suffering a heart attack.

Living a healthy lifestyle can prevent thousands of adults and children facing deteriorating health and a lower quality of life, and the Government from facing spiralling health and social care costs.

The following indicators have been chosen as Local Authorities have some influence over these areas. The data comes from the Welsh Health Survey 2012 and 2013 and as such differences between Local Authorities may not be statistically significant. Follow the links for the Welsh Health Survey at the end of this section for more information on confidence intervals.

**What should I expect from my Local Authority?**

It is for individual Local Authorities and Local Health Boards (LHBs) to decide how they deliver on the aims of their health, social care and wellbeing strategies however a number of national initiatives have been rolled out across Wales. These include;

- Specifically developed nutrition training "Nutrition Skills for Life" provided by Public Health Dieticians and support workers free of charge to those working in the community wishing to gain a recognised qualification and/or knowledge in nutrition, such as school caterers and other staff working in schools, care home workers, community volunteers, youth workers, Flying Start and Communities First project staff, etc.  They also deliver non-accredited courses in food and nutrition. In doing so, the importance of healthy eating as part of a healthy lifestyle will be better understood, and hence more likely to be effectively incorporated into a variety of settings.

- Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme and the Healthy and sustainable pre-school scheme, work across the early years age group up to 18 years to support all school settings to develop a healthy environment. School meal provision is supported by the Healthy Eating in Schools measure to ensure a balanced healthy choice is available for all.

- An All Wales Obesity Pathway has been developed which sets out a tiered approach for the prevention and treatment of obesity, from community based prevention and early intervention to specialist medical and surgical services.  Local Health Boards, working jointly with Local Authorities and other key stakeholders have mapped local policies, services and activity for both children and adults against four

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tiers of intervention, have identified gaps and are implementing local solutions, supported by national leadership.

- The National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) is a national scheme which has been developed to standardise exercise referral opportunities across all 22 Local Authorities. The scheme offers GPs and other Primary Care practitioners the opportunity to refer patients to exercise.  It targets clients who are at risk of developing chronic disease. Standard protocols for a number of chronic conditions are being implemented where there are rehabilitation programmes in operation and exercise professionals hold the necessary qualifications.

- The physical activity action plan *Creating an Active Wales* recognises that physical activity and sport are beneficial to health. The action plan was developed in partnership with key stakeholders and partners. Each Local Authority has been required to demonstrate how it will deliver on the key actions it has been set.

**How is my Local Authority performing?**

**Figure 45: Percentage of adults who are overweight or obese, 2012 and 2013, age-standardised**
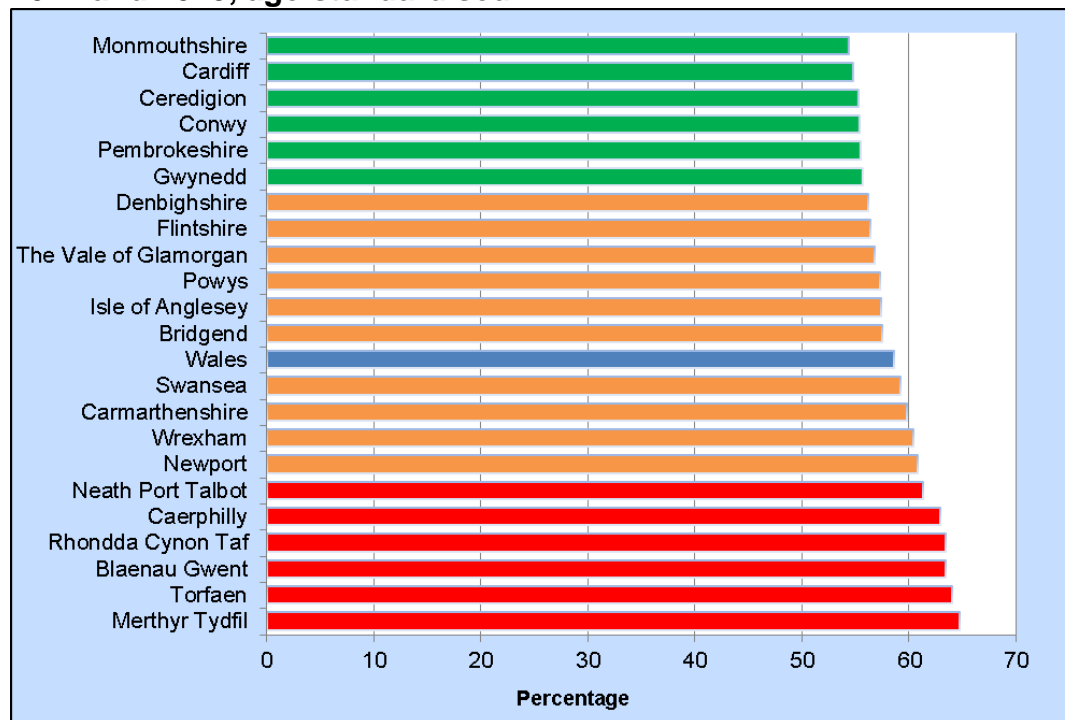


Source: Welsh Health Survey

In 2012 and 2013 59 per cent of adults in Wales were overweight or obese, and increase of 1 percentage point compared with the previous figure. This ranged from 54 per cent in Monmouthshire to 65 per cent in Merthyr Tydfil and 64 per cent in Torfaen. Over half of all Local Authorities were within 3 percentage points of the Wales average.

**Figure 46: Percentage of adults who report being physically active on five or more days in the past week, 2012 and 2013, age-standardised**
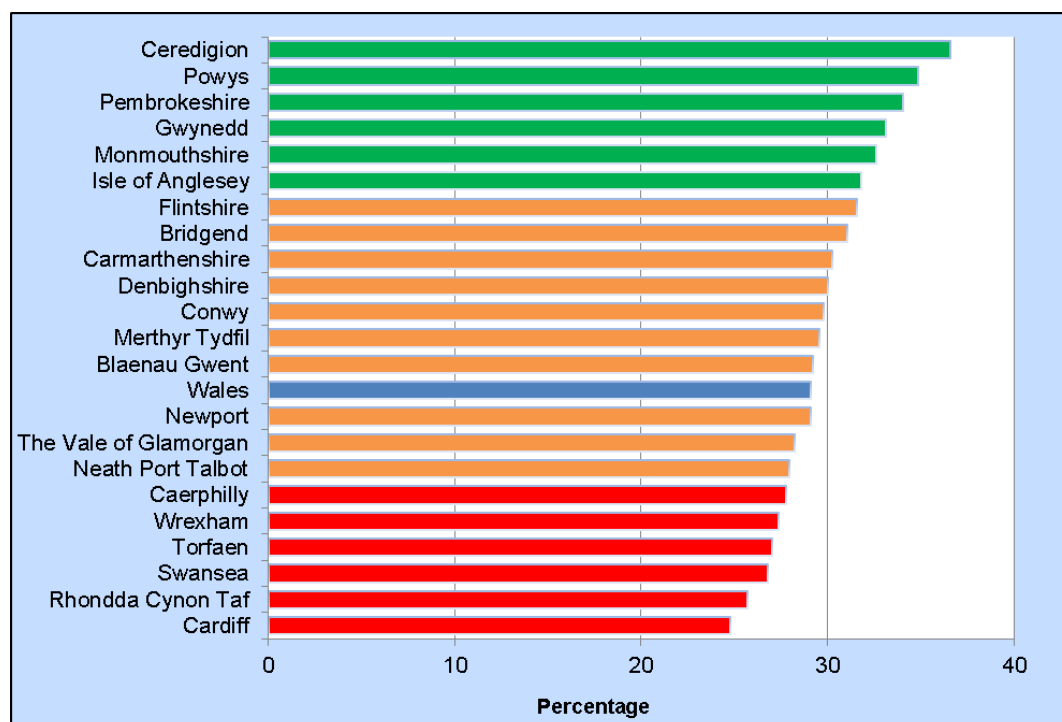


Source: Welsh Health Survey

In 2012 and 2013 29 per cent of adults reported being physically active on five or more days in the past week, the same as the previous figure. This ranged from below 26 per cent in Cardiff (25) and Rhondda Cynon Taf (26) to above 34 per cent in Ceredigion (37), Powys (35), and Pembrokeshire (34). Two-thirds of all Local Authorities were within 3 percentage points of the Wales average.

**Figure 47: Percentage of adults who reported drinking above guidelines on at least one day in the past week, 2012 and 2013, age-standardised**
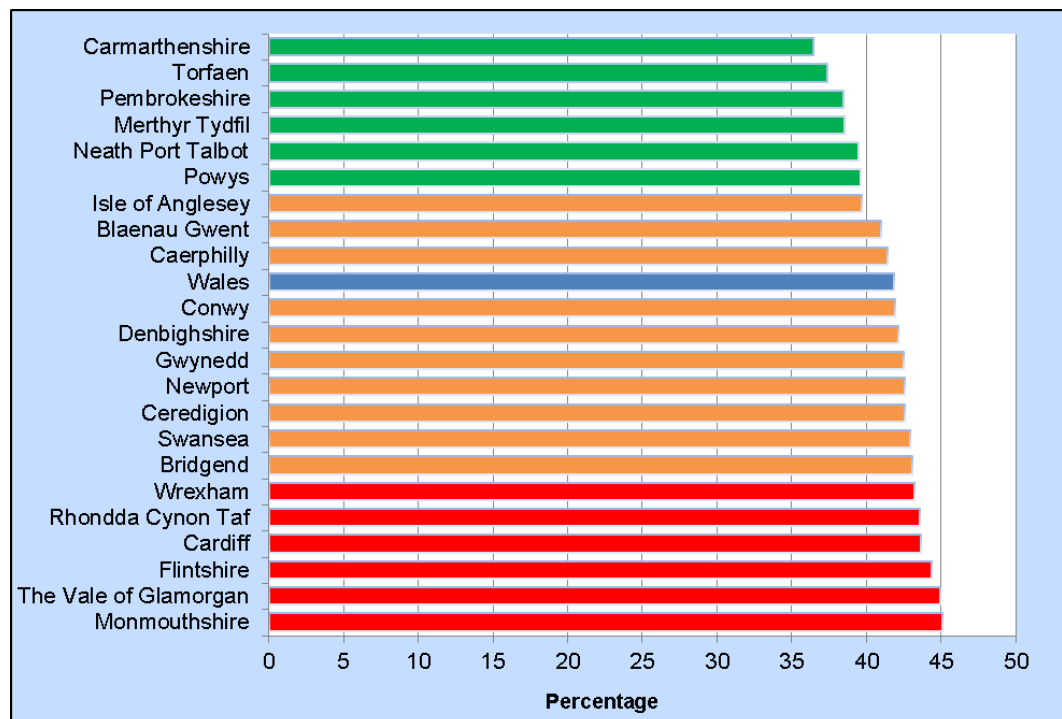


Source: Welsh Health Survey

In 2012 and 2013 42 per cent of adults reported drinking above the guidelines on at least one day in the past week, a fall of 1 percentage point on the previous figure. This ranged from below 38 per cent in Carmarthenshire (36) and Torfaen (37) to above 45 per cent in Monmouthshire and the Vale of Glamorgan. Two-thirds of all Local Authorities were within 2 percentage points of the Wales average.

**For more information on this area:**

- Data used in this section, see list of data sources used .
- Programme for Government - http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/culture/programme?lang=en;
- Welsh Government Health Statistics– http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/health/?lang=en;
- Welsh Health Survey Statistical Release - http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2012/1209191/?lang=en;
- UK and Devolved Administration Government Statistical Releases on Health – http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/health-social-care/index.html;
- European Health Statistics – http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/introduction.

## 14. Glossary

**Average Wider Capped Points Score:** The Average Wider Capped Points Score is calculated using the best 8 results from all qualifications approved for pre-16 use in Wales for each pupil. Where the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification has been achieved, each component part is counted as an individual qualification.

**Composting:** Disposing of waste by turning it into compost using a variety of methods. Food waste, garden waste, fallen leaves and so on can usually be processed in this way.

**Confidence Intervals:** A confidence interval when calculated around a survey estimate, gives a range within which the true value for the population is likely to fall.

**Delayed Transfer of Care:** A transfer of a patient from one care setting to another e.g. hospital to care home, that is delayed. Sometimes known as 'bed-blocking'.

**Disabled Facilities Grant:** A grant provided by Local Authorities to make adaptations to homes to allow people with disabilities to continue to live in their own home.

**Landfilling:** Disposing of waste by placing it in a landfill site. When such a site is full, it is normally covered with topsoil and landscaped. However, landfill capacity in Wales (and in many other countries) is becoming scarce; and new landfill sites are both unpopular and environmentally unsustainable.

**Local Authority municipal waste:** Includes household and non-household waste that is collected and disposed of by Local Authorities. It includes regular household collections, specific recycling collections, special collections of bulky items, waste received at civic amenity sites and waste collected from non-household sources.

**Local Environmental Services:** Covers cemetery, cremation and mortuary services, environmental health, street cleansing, waste collection and disposal.

**Looked After Child:** The term used to describe any child who is in the care of the Local Authority or who is provided with accommodation by the Local Authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours. This covers children in respect of whom a compulsory care order or other court order has been made. It also refers to children accommodated voluntarily, including under an agreed series of short-term placements which may be called short breaks, family link placements or respite care.

**National Strategic Indicators:** A set of performance indicators which Local Authorities are required by law to collect and use.

**Priority Need:** A category of need that allows the person or household to access temporary accommodation.

**Problematic Drug Misuse:** Drug use which leads to problems in the lives either of those using the drugs or those around them.

**Programme for Government:** The plan of action for the Welsh Government outlining what it aims to achieve.

**Recycling:** Any recovery operation by which waste materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes. It does not include energy recovery and the reprocessing into materials that are used as fuels of backfilling operations.

**Registered Social Landlord:** Organisations that provide and manage properties for people who would otherwise be unable to afford to rent or buy privately. Social landlords must be registered with the Welsh Government and are inspected on a regular basis to maintain a good standard of management.

**Residual Household Waste:** Household waste that is not prepared for reuse, recycled or composted.

**Revenue Expenditure Outturn:** The actual amount of money spent by Local Authorities.

**Session:** Half a school day.

**StatsWales:** The online dissemination tool for official statistics from the Welsh Government. This tool allows you access to the fine detail behind the high level statistics.

## 15.    Contextual Data Sources

### 15.1  Local Authority Improvement Plans

Local Authorities are required to publish improvement plans each year. To access your Authority's Improvement Plan follow the links below.

- Isle of Anglesey - http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/governance-and-performance-/corporate-business-plan/;
- Gwynedd - http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/gwy_doc.asp?cat=7066&doc=15861&Language=1&p=1&c=1;
- Conwy - http://www.conwy.gov.uk/section.asp?cat=8239&Language=1 ;
- Denbighshire - https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/your-council/about-the-council/performance.aspx;
- Wrexham- http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/documents/council_plan.htm;
- Flintshire - http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/YourCouncil/Council-and-Democracy/Improvement-Plan.aspx;
- Powys - http://www.powys.gov.uk/index.php?id=296&L=0;
- Ceredigion - http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=18408;
- Pembrokeshire - http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=101,2096,1566,1710&parent_directory_id=646;
- Carmarthenshire - http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/English/council/CouncilPerformance/Pages/performancereports.aspx;
- Swansea - http://www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=50884;
- Neath Port Talbot - http://www.npt.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=10240;
- Bridgend - http://www1.bridgend.gov.uk/services/corporate-improvement.aspx;
- The Vale of Glamorgan - http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/our_council/achieving_our_vision/improvement.aspx;
- Cardiff - http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=2872,3250,5096&parent_directory_id=2865&id=6106&d1p1=1;
- Rhondda Cynon Taf - http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/en/councildemocracy/councilperformance/corporate-improvement-plan-and-summary/corporate-improvement-plan-and-summary.aspx;

- Merthyr Tydfil - http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/english/councilanddemocracy/performance/pages/executiveforwardplan.aspx
- Caerphilly - http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/site.aspx?s=SL2mZIIqChPvAmyM8BNW1Rc1GUD1zNde
- Blaenau Gwent - http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/council/166.asp;
- Torfaen - http://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/AboutTheCouncil/ImprovingTorfaen/Ourperformance/Our-performance.aspx;
- Monmouthshire - http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/improvement/;
- Newport - http://www.newport.gov.uk/_dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=improvement.plan.

## 15.2   Data Sources

There is a wealth of data available that can be used to assess the performance of public services and these have been referred to within each subject section above. In addition to the subject specific data sources there are also wider data which help to put performance in context of local priorities.

For an overview of the latest official statistics for your area you could use the 'Neighbourhood Statistics' tool from the Office for National Statistics (http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/). A Local Authority focused set of statistics is also available from the Welsh Government http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/localarea/?lang=en.

For more detailed data on particular topics the official statistics published by the Welsh Government are all available from http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/?lang=en and the detailed data tables behind the statistics are available from the online dissemination tool StatsWales https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/

Further information on Local Authority performance and other related data is available from the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales http://www.dataunitwales.gov.uk/data

## 15.3   Regional Data Sources

At a higher geographical level a set of comparative statistics has been published by the Welsh Government and is available here: http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improvingservices/publications/comparisons-regional-collaborative-areas-2014/?lang=en

## 15.4  National and International Data Sources

At the Wales level a set of performance data is available through the Programme for Government here http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/?lang=en.

In the UK official statistics that have been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority are awarded the quality mark of 'National Statistic' to denominate their compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. All National Statistics in the UK are published through the Publication Hub here https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics

For official statistics for Europe the official outlet is Eurostat here http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/. Please note that definitions and collection and calculation methodology may differ between countries and so comparisons between countries should be made carefully.

## 16.  List of Data Sources used

Figure 1: The number of visits to public libraries during the year,
Figure 2: The percentage of respondents who felt their council  provides a high quality service
Figure 3: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head of population  on Social Services, 2013-14
Figure 4: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head of population  on Social Services, Wales
Figure 5: Percentage of population aged 65 and over, 2013
Figure 6: Delayed Transfers of Care for Social Care reasons  per 1,000 head of population aged 75 or over, 2013-14
Figure 7: Looked after children as a percentage of the population aged 0 to 17, (LAC data 2013-14, population data 2013)
Figure 8: Percentage of young people formerly looked after  with whom the Authority is in contact, who are known to be  engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19,  average of 2012-13 and 2013-14 (a)(b)
Figure 9: Percentage of Looked After Children with three or more  placements in the year, average of 2012-13 and 2013-14 (a)
Figure 10: Percentage of pupils at Key Stage 4 achieving the Level 2 inclusive threshold, 2013/14 (a)
Figure 11: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per pupil, 2013/14  and Percentage of pupils at Key Stage 2 achieving  the expected Level (L4+) 2014 (a)
Figure 12: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per pupil, 2013/14 prices  and Percentage Achieving Expected Level (L4+)  2003/04 to 2013/14, Wales (a)
Figure 13: Percentage of Working Age Population Qualified  to National Qualification Framework Level 4 or Above (a)
Figure 14: Percentage of pupils at Key Stage 4 achieving  the Level 2 inclusive threshold, 2013/14 (a)
Figure 15: Percentage half day sessions attended at secondary School, 2012/13

Figure 16: Percentage of adults meeting daily physical activity guidelines, 2012 & 2013 (a) (b)
Figure 17: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head of population on libraries, 2013-14
Figure 18: Revenue outturn Expenditure per head on libraries and Visits to Public Libraries per 1,000 head of population
Figure 19: Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head on libraries and Visits to Public Libraries per 1,000 head of population, 2013-14
Figure 20: Number of free public swims for those aged 16 and under  or 60 and over, per 100 persons in those age groups, 2013-14
Figure 21: Location of public libraries
Figure 22: The number of visits to public libraries during the year,  per 1,000 head of population, 2013-14
Figure 23: Homelessness
Figure 24: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Council Fund Housing and Housing Benefit per head of population, 2013-14
Figure 25: Households with dependent children accepted as homeless  and accommodated per 10,000 households, 2013-14 (a) (b) (c)
Figure 26: Rate of additional affordable housing units delivered  per 10,000 households, by Local Authority area, 2013-14
Figure 27: The percentage of private sector dwellings that  had been vacant for more than 6 months at 1 April that  were returned to occupation during the year  through direct action by the Local Authority, 2013-14
Figure 28: The average number of calendar days taken to deliver  a Disabled Facilities Grant, 2013-14
Figure 29: Household Waste Refuse collection per head (tonnes),  2013-14 (a) (b)
Figure 30: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Local Environmental  Services (a) per head of population, 2013-14
Figure 31: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Local  Environmental Services (a) per head of population  and Percentage of Waste sent to Landfill (b)
Figure 32: Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Local Environmental Services (a) per head and Percentage of Waste Recycled, 2013-14
Figure 33: Percentage of Municipal Waste Collected that is Reused, Recycled or Composted, 2013-14
Figure 34: Percentage of reported fly-tipping incidents cleared  within five working days, 2013-14 (a)
Figure 35: Traffic volume (billion Vehicle Kilometres) per 100,000 population, 2013
Figure 36: Revenue Outturn Expenditure, Roads and Transport  per Kilometre of road, 2013-14
Figure 37: Revenue Outturn Expenditure, Roads and Transport  per Kilometre of road and percentage of roads  in poor condition 2013-14
Figure 38: Percentage of roads in poor condition, 2013-14
Figure 39: Police Recorded Offences per 1,000 population  (year to March 2014)
Figure 40: Percentage of respondents who felt safe when walking  in their local area after dark
Figure 41: Adults who have experienced or witnessed  anti-social behaviour by police force area, 2013-14 (a)

Welsh Health Survey data is available at
http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2011/1109131/?lang=en

**APPENDIX 2 :**

**NATIONAL STRATEGIC INDICATORS (NSI) PERFORMANCE 2012/2013 – 2014/2015**

**KEY**

**DIRECTION OF TRAVEL**

**National Strategic Indicator - NSI description**

**2012/2013 = our National quartile position**
Example Green

**2013/2014 = our National quartile position**
Example Yellow
↑ Improved performance

**Where we are now as at end of Quarter 3**

**Current direction**

ROYG STATUS in relation to National position
RED – Bottom quartile - Priority for improvement
ORANGE – 3rd quartile - Acceptable
YELLOW – 2nd quartile - Good
GREEN – Top quartile - Excellent

Quartile position as at end 2013/14 in relation to 2012/2013
↑ = Improved performance
↔ = Performance same
↓= Performance decline

Where we are now – ROYG status with regard to direction of travel

1

# EDUCATION

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EDU002i - All pupils (including those in local authority care) in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August that leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification. | 2012/2013 0.82 bottom quartile | ↑ **2013/2014** 0.24 3rd quartile | Annual Indicator | Improvement (NB. Best in Wales = 0) |
| EDU002ii - Pupils in local authority care in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August that leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification. | 2012/2013 0 top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 0 top quartile | Annual Indicator | Quartile position maintained 0 pupils in last two years |
| EDU003 - The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment | 2012/2013 83.5% 3rd quartile | ↑ **2013/2014** 86% 2nd quartile | Annual Indicator | Quartile improvement (NB. Best in Wales = 89%) |
| EDU006i - The percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of Key Stage 3 | 2012/2013 21.9% top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 23.1% top quartile | Annual Indicator | Quartile position maintained |
| EDU011 - The average point score for pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority | 2012/2013 504.9 top quartile | ↔ 553.2 **2013/2014** top quartile | Annual Indicator | Quartile position maintained |

# EDUCATION

| EDU015a - The percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks, including exceptions | 2012/2013 100% top quartile | ↔ 2013/2014 100% top quartile | Annual Indicator | Denbighshire has maintained 100% completion for over 5 years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EDU015b - The percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks, excluding exceptions | 2012/2013 100% top quartile | ↔ 2013/2014 100% top quartile | Annual Indicator | Denbighshire has maintained 100% completion for over 5 years |
| EDU017 - The percentage of pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics | 2012/2013 54.7% 2nd quartile | ↓ 2013/2014 53.4% 3rd quartile | Annual Indicator | Decline in quartile position (NB Best in Wales = 62.2%) |

3

# SOCIAL SERVICES - ADULTS

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SCA019 - The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed** | 2012/2013 96.91 2nd quartile | ↑ **2013/2014** 100% top quartile | Quarter 3 data 93.33% completed | Quarter 3 data currently at a good level |
| **SCA001 - The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over** | 2012/2013 1.09 top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 0.54 top quartile | Quarter 3 data 0.74 | Currently on target - excellent level |
| **SCA002a - The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) supported in the community per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March** | 2012/2013 53.44 bottom quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 50.34 bottom quartile | Annual Indicator | √ **Accepted by service** Supporting Independence in Denbighshire |
| **SCA002b - The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) whom the authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March** | 2012/2013 21.61 3rd quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 20.85 3rd quartile | Annual Indicator | Improvement in rate, however remains as acceptable |

NB. SCA/002a does not take into account Denbighshire's ambition to meet people's need through reablement and community services rather than managed care. Good performance should be low in this indicator. In that case, Denbighshire's performance for 2013/14 has improved and is in the upper quartile.

4

# SOCIAL SERVICES - CHILDREN

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SCC004 - The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year | 2012/2013 8.1% 2nd quartile | ↓ **2013/2014** 10.4% 3rd quartile | Quarter 3 data 7.55% | Below target of 10% for service and outcome agreement |
| **SCC041a - The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required** | 2012/2013 100% top quartile | ↓ **2013/2014** 90.9% 3rd quartile | Quarter 3 data 66.67% cumulative | Current data recording issues to be rectified by end of Quarter 4 |
| SCC011b - The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker | 2012/2013 52.9% top quartile | ↓ **2013/2014** 52.6% 2nd quartile | Quarter 3 data 53% | Above service target of 50% (NB Best in Wales = 60.7%) |
| SCC002 - The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March | 2012/2013 6.1% top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 8.1% top quartile | Annual Indicator | 8.1% Best in Wales |
| **SCC037 - The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children in any local authority maintained learning setting** | 2012/2013 261 2nd quartile | ↓ **2013/2014** 164 bottom quartile | Annual Indicator | Annual Indicator |

# SOCIAL SERVICES - CHILDREN

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SCC033d - The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19 | 2012/2013 100% top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 100% top quartile | Annual Indicator | Maintained contact performance of 100% for past 5 years |
| SCC033e - The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19 | 2012/2013 88.9 3rd quartile | ↑ **2013/2014** 93.8 2nd quartile | Annual Indicator | Improved performance to good level |
| SCC033f - The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training | 2012/2013 77.8 top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 81.3 top quartile | Annual Indicator | Maintained top quartile performance |

# HOMELESSNESS, PRIVATE SECTOR RENEWAL AND PLANNING

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HHA013 - The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months | 2012/2013 100% top quartile | **2013/2014** 93% - quartile | Annual Indicator | Doubts around consistency of LocalAuthority data - no Wales comparison ** |
| PSR002 - The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant | 2012/2013 176 days top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 187 days top quartile | Quarter 3 data 168 days | Maintained top quartile performance |
| PLA006 - The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all additional housing units provided during the year | 2012/2013 28 3rd quartile | ↑ **2013/2014** 49 top quartile | Annual Indicator | Improved performance from 3rd to top quartile (NB Best in Wales = 173) |
| PSR004 - The percentage of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months at 1 April that were returned to occupation during the year through direct action by the local authority | 2012/2013 22.75% top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 17.74% top quartile | Quarter 3 data 5.3% - currently good against service target. Outcome Agreement - Green | Maintained top quartile performance |

** HHA/013 will need to be collected for 2014-15, however, it will not be collected centrally by Welsh Government for 2015-16.  In respect of the 2014-15 data for HHA/013, it will again be noted that the data should not be compared across authorities due to inconsistencies in the way that local authorities record this indicator when it is published.  New homelessness data collection is currently being developed by the Welsh Government to align with new legislation and data from this collection will be the focus for monitoring homelessness performance from April 2015 onwards.

# WASTE MANAGEMENT, FLY TIPPING, TRANSPORT

| WMT009b - The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way | 2012/2013 58.02% top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 63.21 top quartile | Annual Indicator | Improved performance within top quartile **Best in Wales** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| WMT004b - The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities sent to landfill | 2012/2013 37.44% top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 27.24% top quartile | Annual Indicator | Maintained top quartile performance |
| STS006 - The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days | 2012/2013 88.9% bottom quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 94.88% bottom quartile | Annual Indicator | Improved performance - remained in bottom quartile |
| THS007 - The percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a concessionary bus pass | 2012/2013 88.1% 2nd quartile | ↓ **2013/2014** 80.8% 3rd quartile | Annual Indicator | Decline in quartile position to 3rd quartile (NB Best in Wales 96.8%) |

# LEISURE & LIBRARIES

| LCS002 - The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities during the year per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity | 2012/2013 5740 bottom quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 6713 bottom quartile | Annual Indicator | Improved performance from Worst in Wales Remained in bottom quartile |

| LCL001 - The number of visits to Public Libraries during the year, per 1,000 population | 2012/2013 6825 top quartile | ↔ **2013/2014** 7827 top quartile | Annual Indicator | Maintained top quartile postition (NB Best in Wales = 8326) |

9

# SUMMARY OF NSI QUARTILE POSITIONS - 2012/2013 – 2013/2014 COMPARISON

Legend:
- Quartile Improved:
- Quartile Stayed the same:
- Quartile Worsened:

Pie chart values: 5, 18, 7
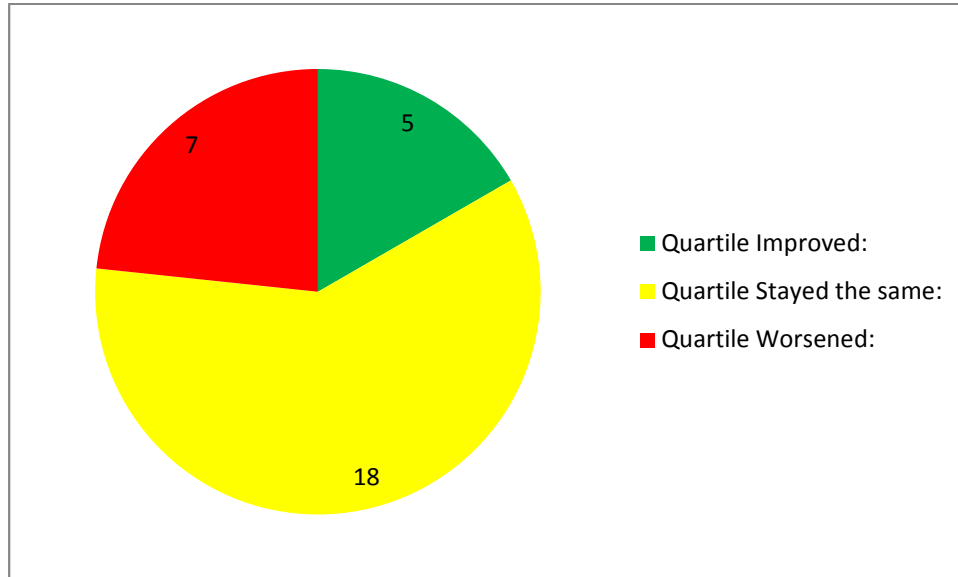
2013/2014 Denbighshire's performance in these statutory indicators = excellent

16 in the top quartile (which is more than any other council in Wales).

Report to:                    **Performance Scrutiny Committee**

Date of Meeting:        **16 April 2015**

Report Author:            **Scrutiny Coordinator**

Title:                            **Scrutiny Work Programme**

## 1.      What is the report about?

The report presents Performance Scrutiny Committee with its draft forward work programme for members' consideration.

## 2.      What is the reason for making this report?

To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

## 3.      What are the recommendations?

That the Committee considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate.

## 4.      Report details.

4.1      Article 6 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, whilst the rules of procedure for scrutiny committees are laid out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

4.2      The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work.  By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.

4.3      For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report.  The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.

4.4      In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and the Wales Audit Office (WAO) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users.  Going forward scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions

which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens.  In future the WAO will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.

4.5  Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) recently recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:

> budget savings;
> achievement of the Corporate Plan Objectives (with particular emphasis on the their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
> any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2) and;
> Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues

Scrutiny Proposal Forms

4.6  As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work.  To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic.  This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested subjects.  No officer proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.

4.7  With a view to making better use of scrutiny's time by focussing committees' resources on detailed examination of subjects, adding value through the decision-making process and securing better outcomes for residents, the SCVCG recently decided that members, as well as officers, should complete 'scrutiny proposal forms' outlining the reasons why they think a particular subject would benefit from scrutiny's input.  A copy of the 'member's proposal form' can be seen at Appendix 2.  The reverse side of this form contains a flowchart listing questions which members should consider when proposing an item for scrutiny, and which committees should ask when determining a topic's suitability for inclusion on a scrutiny forward work programme.  If, having followed this process, a topic is not deemed suitable for formal examination by a scrutiny committee, alternative channels for sharing the information or examining the matter can be considered e.g. the provision of an 'information report', or if the matter is of a very local nature examination by the relevant Member Area Group (MAG).  In future no items will be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by

the Committee or the SCVCG. Assistance with their completion will be available from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this purpose a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

Progress on Committee Resolutions

4.9 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.

## 5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 2 April. No items were referred to this Committee for consideration.

## 6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council in monitoring and reviewing policy issues.

## 7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

No Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the purpose of this report as consideration of the Committee's forward work programme is not deemed to have an adverse or unfair impact on people who share protected characteristics.

## 8. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

## 9. What consultations have been carried out?

None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represent a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

10. **What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme.  However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

11. **Power to make the decision**

Article 6.3.7 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work.

**Contact Officer:**  Scrutiny Coordinator
Tel No: (01824) 712554
Email: dcc_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk

**Note: Any items entered in italics have <u>not</u> been approved for inclusion at the meeting shown by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.**

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | |
| 11 June | **Cllr. Hugh Irving** | 1 | Your Voice' complaints performance (Q 4) | To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints. The report to include a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe | Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. | Jackie Walley/Clare O'Gorman | February 2013 |
| | **Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill** | 2. | Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report | To consider the Council's management of general health and safety and fire safety matters | Assurances that the Authority is abiding and conforming with all relevant H&S legislation and therefore mitigate the risk of litigation | Gerry Lapington | May 2014 |
| | **Cllr. Bobby Feeley** (required) | 3. | Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report for 2014/15 | To scrutinise the content of the draft annual report to ensure it provides a fair and clear evaluation of performance in 2014/15 and clearly articulates future plans. | Identification of any specific performance issues which require further scrutiny by the committee in future | Tony Ward | June 2014 |
| | **Cllr. Barbara Smith** | 4 | Corporate Plan (Q4) 2014/15 | To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17 (with particular emphasis on the delivery of the Outcome | Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, its Outcome Agreements, delivers its Corporate Plan and | Alan Smith/Liz Grieve/Nicola Kneale | May 2014 |

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Agreements) | | the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents, and maximises the financial incentives available through meeting its Outcome Agreements | | |
| 16 July | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 24 September

Representatives from GwE to be in attendance for all education items on the business agenda | **Cllr. Eryl Williams** | 1. | Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments **[Education]** | To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children | Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement | Karen Evans/Julian Molloy | September 2014 |
| | **Cllr. Eryl Williams** | 2. | Increasing A* and A grade attainment at Level 2 and 3 (including vocational equivalents)

**[Education]** | To evaluate the effectiveness of the support provided by the County and GwE in improving the number of A* and A grade passes at all levels, increasing the wider points score and the impact of the Welsh Baccalaureate on educational attainment | Identification of further measures to improve attainment levels and points score in order to support the County's pupils and students to realise their full potential and access the education/career pathway of their choice (including linking to the Oxbridge Hub initiative) | Chief Executive of GwE/Karen Evans/Julian Molloy | SCVCG February 2015 |
| | **Cllr. Eryl Williams** | 3. | Effectiveness of current support offered to schools within the County identified as requiring additional | To monitor the effectiveness of the County and GwE support provided to Rhyl, Blessed Edward Jones and Prestatyn High Schools to | Identification of the long-term sustainability for continued improvement at all four schools both with, and | Chief Executive of GwE/Karen Evans/Julian Molloy | SCVCG February 2015 |

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | input <br><br> **[Education]** | improve Level 2 and Level 3 (incl. vocational) grades, and Ysgol Brynhyfryd to regain its Level 2 and 3 (incl. vocational) grades and continue on its journey towards excellence | without, the additional support with a view to ensuring that all pupils/students achieve their full potential and access their chosen education/career pathways | | |
| | **Cllr. Eryl Williams** | 4. | Rhyl Sixth <br><br> **[Education]** | To examine and monitor the Level 3 educational achievements (both academic and vocational) of Rhyl Sixth students | (i) An assessment of whether the Rhyl Sixth is realising the Council's vision for the establishment and whether students are realising their full potential and accessing their chosen education/career pathways; and <br> (ii) Identification of areas in which the Council may be able to support and work with the College to deliver common aims | Principal of Rhyl College/Karen Evans/John Gambles | SCVCG February 2015 |
| | **Cllr. Hugh Irving** | 5. | Your Voice' complaints performance (Q 1) | To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints. The report to include a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and | Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. | Jackie Walley/Clare O'Gorman | February 2013 |

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 10 December | **Cllr. Barbara Smith** | 1. | Corporate Risk Register | To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register | Effective monitoring and management of identified risk to reduce risks to residents and the Authority | Alan Smith/Liz Grieve/Nicola Kneale | November 2014 |
| | **Cllr. Hugh Irving** | 2 | Your Voice' complaints performance (Q 2) | To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints. The report to include a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe | Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. | Jackie Walley/Clare O'Gorman | February 2013 |
| | **Cllr. Huw Ll Jones** | 3. | Library Services | To consider CyMAL's Annual Assessment on the County's Library Service's performance for 2014/15 under the Fifth Framework for Library Service and progress to date in developing the County's libraries into community hubs | Determination whether the County's libraries provide a valuable service for the communities they serve, realise value for money and can be developed into multi-disciplinary community hubs which deliver a wide range of services that enhance the health | Arwyn Jones/Roger Ellerton/Jamie Groves/Jackie Walley | January 2015 |

4

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | and well-being of residents | | |
| | **Cllr. Barbara Smith** | 4 | Corporate Plan (Q2) 2015/16 | To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17 (with particular emphasis on the delivery of the Outcome Agreements) | Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, its Outcome Agreements, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents, and maximises the financial incentives available through meeting its Outcome Agreements | Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale | May 2014 |
| 28 January 2016 | **Cllr. Hugh Irving** | 1 | Your Voice' complaints performance (Q 3) | To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints. The report to include a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe | Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. | Jackie Walley/Clare O'Gorman | February 2013 |
| | **Cllr. Eryl Williams** *(representative from GwE also to attend)* | 2. | Verified External Examinations and Teacher Assessments **[Education]** | To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children; and GwE's impact on the educational attainment of the County's powers. | Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement | Julian Molloy | September 2014 |

5

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | The report to incorporate GwE's Annual report and information on the 5 year trend in relation to educational attainment in Denbighshire | | | |
| 17 March | **Cllr. Barbara Smith** | 1. | Corporate Risk Register | To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register | Effective monitoring and management of identified risk to reduce risks to residents and the Authority | Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale | November 2014 |
| 28 April | **Cllr. Hugh Irving** | 1 | Your Voice' complaints performance (Q 4) | To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints. The report to include a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe | Identification of areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. | Jackie Walley/Clare O'Gorman | February 2013 |
| 9 June | **Cllr. Barbara Smith** | 1 | Corporate Plan (Q4) 2015/16 | To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17 (with particular emphasis on the delivery of the Outcome Agreements) | Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, its Outcome Agreements, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the | Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale | May 2014 |

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | satisfaction of local residents, and maximises the financial incentives available through meeting its Outcome Agreements | | |
| | **Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill** | 2. | Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report | To consider the Council's management of general health and safety and fire safety matters | Assurances that the Authority is abiding and conforming with all relevant H&S legislation and therefore mitigate the risk of litigation | Gerry Lapington | May 2014 |
| | **Cllr. Bobby Feeley** (required) | 3. | Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report for 2015/16 | To scrutinise the content of the draft annual report to ensure it provides a fair and clear evaluation of performance in 2015/16 and clearly articulates future plans. | Identification of any specific performance issues which require further scrutiny by the committee in future | Tony Ward | June 2014 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 14 July | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 29 September (GwE representatives to be invited) | **Cllr. Eryl Williams** | 1. | Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments **[Education]** | To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children | Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement | Karen Evans/Julian Molloy | September 2014 |
| | | | | | | |
| 8 December | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| *January 2017* (GwE representatives to be invited) | **Cllr. Eryl Williams** | 1. | Verified External Examinations and Teacher Assessments **[Education]** | To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children; and GwE's impact on the educational attainment of the County's | Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement | Julian Molloy | September 2014 |

Note: the columns for Lead Member(s) and Item number are combined in some rows.

| Meeting | Lead Member(s) | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | powers.<br><br>The report to incorporate GwE's Annual report and information on the 5 year trend in relation to educational attainment in Denbighshire | | | |

**Future Issues**

| Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Expected Outcomes | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Impact of Budgetary Cuts on the Deliverability of the Corporate Plan and the Council's performance in delivering services (late 2015 and periodically thereafter)<br><br>**[Task & Finish Group]** | To detail the impact of present and projected budgetary cuts on the deliverability of the Corporate Plan 2012-17; and the Council's overall performance | An evaluation of the Plan's deliverability, the anticipated impact of the cuts on the Council's performance versus the actual outcome to inform the planning of a communication strategy to inform residents and stakeholders | Task and Finish Group | October 2014 |
| | | | | |

**Information/Consultation Reports**

| Date | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Author | Date Entered |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Monthly Information Bulletin** | Your Voice Complaints Procedure | Details of number of complaints received and dealt with for each Service via the 'Your Voice procedure to inform the information required in the quarterly reports to the Committee | Jackie Walley/Clare O'Gorman | June 2014 |
| **Available during the spring term 2015** [Information] | Use of Supply Teachers **[Education – to be shared with coopted members]** | To detail the use made of supply teachers within the county during recent years and to date this year.  The report to detail the costs to the Council of hiring supply teachers, the lengths of time for | Karen Evans | September 2013 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **[Education]** | | their hire, the expectations/objectives given to them upon engagement and the quality monitoring arrangements in place to evaluate their effectiveness | | |
| **Corporate Plan (Q1 & Q3) 2015/16**<br><br>**September 2015 & March 2016**<br><br>[Information] | To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2012-17 (with particular emphasis on the delivery of the Outcome Agreements) | Ensuring that the Council meets its targets, its Outcome Agreements, delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents, and maximises the financial incentives available through meeting its Outcome Agreements | Alan Smith/Nicola Kneale | May 2014 |

**Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines**

| Meeting | **Deadline** | Meeting | **Deadline** | Meeting | **Deadline** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| 11 June | **28 May** | 16 July | **2 July** | 24 September | **10 September** |

Performance Scrutiny Work Programme.doc

Updated 02/04/15 RhE

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| Member Proposal Form for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme | |
|---|---|
| **NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** | |
| **TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION** | |
| **TOPIC** | |
| **What needs to be scrutinised (and why)?** | |
| **Is the matter one of concern to residents/local businesses?** | YES/NO |
| **Can Scrutiny influence and change things?** (if 'yes' please state how you think scrutiny can influence or change things) | YES/NO |
| **Does the matter relate to an underperforming service or area?** | YES/NO |
| **Does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area of the County** (if 'yes' please give an indication of the size of the affected group or area) | YES/NO |
| **Is the matter linked to the Council's Corporate priorities** (if 'yes' please state which priority/priorities) | YES/NO |
| **To your knowledge is anyone else looking at this matter?** (If 'yes', please say who is looking at it) | YES/NO |
| **If the topic is accepted for scrutiny who would you want to invite to attend e.g. Lead Member, officers, external experts, service-users?** | |
| **Name of Councillor/Co-opted Member** | |
| **Date** | |

**Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny**

**Proposal Form/Request received**

(careful consideration given to reasons for request)

**Does it stand up to the PAPER test?**

- **P**ublic interest – is the matter of concern to residents?
- **A**bility to have an impact – can Scrutiny influence and change things?
- **P**erformance – is it an underperforming area or service?
- **E**xtent – does it affect a large number of residents or a large geographic area?
- **R**eplication – is anyone else looking at it?

**YES**

**NO**

No further action required by scrutiny committee. Refer elsewhere or request information report?

- Determine the desired outcome(s)
- Decide on the scope and extent of the scrutiny work required and the most appropriate method to undertake it (i.e. committee report, task and finish group inquiry, or link member etc.)
- If task and finish route chosen, determine the timescale for any inquiry, who will be involved, research requirements, expert advice and witnesses required, reporting arrangements etc.

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

| Meeting | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Cabinet Decision required (yes/no) | Author – Lead member and contact officer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **28 April** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 2 | Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group | To report the key findings and recommendations of the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group | Yes | Cllr David Smith / Angela Loftus / Sue Lewis |
| | 3 | Draft Denbighshire Housing Strategy | To present the Draft Denbighshire Housing Strategy for endorsement before final approval by Council | Yes | Angela Loftus / Sue Lewis |
| | 4 | Business Rates Write Offs | To seek approval for uncollectible Business Rates Debts to be written off | Yes | Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill / Rod Urquhart |
| | 5 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |
| | | | | | |
| **26 May** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

| Meeting | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Cabinet Decision required (yes/no) | Author – Lead member and contact officer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2 | Ruthin Primary Proposals | To consider the formal consultation reports following the publication of proposals for the amalgamation of Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn and the closure of Ysgol Rhewl and to consider whether to publish the relevant statutory notices. | Yes | Councillor Eryl Williams / Jackie Walley |
| | 3 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |
| | | | | | |
| **30 June** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 2 | Final Outturn Report | To consider the final revenue outturn position for 2014/15 | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 3 | Corporate Plan Performance Report 2014/15 Q4 | To consider progress against the Corporate Plan | Tbc | Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve |
| | 4 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |
| | | | | | |

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

| Meeting | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Cabinet Decision required (yes/no) | Author – Lead member and contact officer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **28 July** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 2 | The Future of In-house Care Services | To consider the results of the consultation with existing users of in-house care services | Yes | Councillor Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy |
| | 3 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |
| | | | | | |
| **29 September** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 2 | Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 Q1 | To consider progress against the Corporate Plan | Tbc | Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve |
| | 3 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |
| | | | | | |
| **27 October** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 2 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |

# Cabinet Forward Work Plan

| Meeting | | Item (description / title) | Purpose of report | Cabinet Decision required (yes/no) | Author – Lead member and contact officer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Cabinet's attention | | |
| | | | | | |
| **24 November** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 2 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |
| | | | | | |
| **15 December** | 1 | Finance Report | To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council | Tbc | Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Paul McGrady |
| | 2 | Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 Q2 | To consider progress against the Corporate Plan | Tbc | Cllr Barbara Smith / Liz Grieve |
| | 3 | Items from Scrutiny Committees | To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention | Tbc | Scrutiny Coordinator |
| | | | | | |

## Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

| Meeting | Deadline | Meeting | Deadline | Meeting | Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| April | 14 April | May | 11 May | June | 16 June |

Updated 27/03/15 - KEJ
Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

## Progress with Committee Resolutions

| Date of Meeting | Item number and title | Resolution | Progress |
|---|---|---|---|
| 26 February 2015 | **5. Estyn Action Plan Recommendation 2** | *RESOLVED – that:-*<br>*(a) based on the information provided and the above observations, the Committee concludes that the Local Education Authority has met Estyn's recommendations; and*<br>*(b) the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group determines the most appropriate way to monitor the impact and value for money of services available to children and young people within their communities in delivering improved outcomes for them, for the Authority and its partners.* | At its meeting on 2 April the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group decided that Communities Scrutiny Committee should in future monitor the strategic aspect of this work with the local aspect being subject to scrutiny by the Member Area Groups (MAGs) |
| | **6. Long Term Strategy for the Agricultural Estate** | *Resolved - to recommend to Cabinet that:-*<br>*(a) that it approves and adopts the future strategy for the Agricultural Estate; and*<br>*(b) the Committee noted that covenants(s) relating to the above mentioned holding, and any other Estate holdings would be researched and clarified prior to the disposal of the holding(s).* | Cabinet considered the draft strategy at its meeting on 24 March 2015 and resolved as follows:<br><br>*a) approve the future strategy of the Agricultural Estate as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report subject to clarification in paragraph 4.2 of the strategy that disposal will only be considered to be appropriate where it is found to be the most* |

| | | | economically advantageous option for the Council following an appraisal of other possible uses of the land by the Council and having regard to all the circumstances pertaining at the time of the proposed disposal; (b) emphasised the need for any disposal of a farm to be considered on the most economically advantageous terms to the Council having regard to all the circumstances pertaining at the time of the proposed disposal, and (c) requires officers to progress discussions referred to in paragraph 2.10 of the strategy for the provision of practical experience for new entrants to the farming industry and report back to Cabinet within the next six months. |
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| | 7. 'Your Voice' Complaints Report – Quarter 3 2014/15 | *RESOLVED – that the Committee receives the report and emphasises the need to work across the Authority to ensure that the corporate target of 95% was met at all times.* | Officers informed of the recommendation |
| | 8. Councillor Enquiries | *RESOLVED - subject to the above observations to receive the report and that officers should respond to individual members as per their preferred method of communication.* | Officers informed of the recommendation |

| | 9. **Update on Challenges Highlighted in the Director of Social Services' Annual Report 2013/14** | *RESOLVED – subject to the above observations, to receive the report and note the progress made to date in addressing the challenges highlighted in the Director of Social Services Annual Performance Report 2013/14.* | Officers informed of the recommendation |
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