

THE COUNCIL'S REGULATORY PLAN

The Council's external Regulators (the Wales Audit Office, Benefit Fraud Inspectorate, Social Services Inspectorate Wales and Estyn) have a duty to prepare an annual Regulatory Plan, listing the proposed programme of audit and inspections for the forthcoming year. The Council's Relationship Manager (appointed by the Audit Commission) must prepare the plan in conjunction with the other Inspectorates to ensure effective co-ordination and planning. The purpose of the Regulatory Plan is to provide all concerned with as clear a picture as possible of the level of regulatory activity which the Council will experience in the year ahead and to ensure that audit and inspection is both proportionate and manageable from the point of view of the authority's own capacity to manage change.

The Regulatory Plan for 2004/5 produced by the Wales Audit office recommended a wide range of inspections and audits.

Inspection Studies	
Work area	Proposed regulatory work
Efficiency savings	To be agreed
Housing Strategy	Review progress made and assess service improvements
Building Services	Monitor delivery of the Service Plan to assess progress
Grounds Maintenance	Review implementation of the improvement action plan
Legal Services	Review implementation of the improvement action plan
Human Resources	Review progress in the implementation of the HR Strategy and test the impact with customers. Detailed work on key risk areas: job evaluation; training and development; management of attendance; recruitment and retention
School Improvement and Strategic Management	Review progress since the Estyn inspection
Audit Work	
Whole Government Accounts	Refine accounts closure procedures and audit arrangements
New Accounts and Audit Regulations (Wales)	Identify issues and ensure compliance with the Regulations
Asset Register	Review arrangements for transferring assets onto the new register
Prudential Code	Review compliance and impact on treasury management and capital and financial accounting
Partnership and pooled budget arrangements	Review the arrangements with partner organisations
Service Level Agreements	Review the current position
Housing Stock Options	Monitor progress and review arrangements

School Investment Strategy	Support and challenge the option appraisal process
Use of revenue reserves and delivery of capital programme	Monitor and review financial management arrangements
Joint working with Health	Identify the progress made in implementing the Wanless recommendations
Improvement Plan	Audit the Plan and test the accuracy of performance information and management
Democratic Renewal	Monitor how key actions have been implemented and review how scrutiny has developed
Looked After Children Placement Strategy	Review progress against the issues raised in the review and in the implementation of the strategy
Information Governance	Review IT management arrangements, Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts compliance, internal security, SWIFT application and compliance with BS7799
e-government	Review progress in meeting the e-government agenda

The Wales Audit Office has reduced its audit fee by 7% since the previous year. This reduced level of regulation is as a direct result of the progress made by the Council in response to the improvement agenda and in terms of the accounting arrangements that have been put in place. The Council has agreed this Regulatory work with the Wales Audit Office.