

Reference: IR836

Date issued: 01 September 2022

Wrexham Housing Report

I am writing in response to your request for information dated 8 August in which you requested information relating to a report issued by the Auditor General for Wales in August 2018 titled '[The Service User Perspective – the Welsh Housing Quality Standard – Wrexham County Borough Council](#)'.

In your information request, you sought to see the Council's response to the said report.

I have liaised with colleagues to identify the Council's response to our report issued in August 2018. We have been able to locate a Council Response Form and have attached this. We have received confirmation from the Council that this is the final version of the Response Form.

Proposed Council Actions set out in the attached Response Form would have been followed up with the Council's Homes and Environment Scrutiny Committee. Minutes of meetings held by this Committee are publicly available on Wrexham County Borough Council's Website.

It may be helpful to set out the meetings in which the Scrutiny Committee reviewed progress made by the Council in respect of the Housing Quality Standard:

- [10 January 2018 Meeting](#) – Item 45 - Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme Update
- [13 June 2018 Meeting](#) – Item 5 – Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme Update
- [12 December 2018 Meeting](#) – Item 34 - Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme Update
- [12 June 2019 Meeting](#) – Item 5 – Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme Update

Please note that I have withheld some personal data in the Response Form from disclosure, by virtue of s40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is because this is the personal data of the role holder and disclosure would breach the data protection principles of the Data Protection Act 2018. This is an absolute exemption.

If you have any queries, or questions about my handling of your request, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Information Officer

Council Response Form

Council action planned in response to the proposals for improvement /recommendations issued by the Wales Audit Office (WAO)

Council: Wrexham
Report title: The Service User Perspective – the Welsh Housing Quality Standard – Wrexham County Borough Council
Issue date: August 2018
Document reference: 737A2018-19

Exhibit: Proposed Council action

Ref	Proposal for improvement / recommendation	Council action planned in response to the proposal for improvement / recommendation issued by the WAO	Target date for completion of actions	Responsible officer
P1	The Council should work with tenants to review its approach to tenant engagement.	There is a significant review about to be undertaken with regard to tenant engagement. Part of the scope of the review is to look at how we can improve the engagement with younger tenants through the use of social media, website etc.	December 2018	

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		<p>A full review of the Tenant and Member Partnership will be undertaken to examine how it operates and to review its effectiveness in terms of inclusivity of the wider population of social tenants.</p> <p>The department has a Tenant Participation Officer who provides an impartial link between the service and its customers .The Tenant Participation Officer promotes and encourages tenants to contribute to the development of policies and procedures and more importantly to contribute to effecting real change in service delivery, where required. This is undertaken through various events and methods inclusive of the following new initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Picnic in the Park' was a joint event between WCBC and Wrexham Council tenants held on 22nd August 2018 to encourage more tenant engagement and was partly aimed at tenants with young families. The event was well attended and considered to be a resounding 		

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		<p>success and it is hoped to hold similar event in 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An article entitled 'Tenant Participation –What's It All About?' was featured in the summer edition of the 'Housing Hotline', a copy of which was delivered to every Council property in the County Borough. Requests for ideas on how we can engage through more modern and digital methods to promote further inclusion are continuing to be explored. 		
P2	The Council should review the impact of the ending of the resident warden service from its sheltered housing schemes.	<p>There is no intention to remove the warden service as we currently stand but this is subject to regular review based on the availability of funding from the Supporting People Grant. The service will continue to be based upon a needs assessment and a person centred approach, linked to the appropriate levels of support.</p> <p>The reference to the “residential warden service” is misleading and this was</p>	A further review of the sheltered accommodation service will be undertaken in 2019/20, with a view to improving the stock.	

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		<p>highlighted by the department during the audit. The department removed most of the residential wardens over a decade ago. This was done at that time to enable the Council to comply with the Working Time Directive and as part of a wider review to remodel the service to enable more tenants to receive support especially those elderly vulnerable people residing in the community.</p> <p>However, it is acknowledged that a very small number of residents in our sheltered accommodation will still remember the residential warden service and wish that it had not been removed. In these cases, it is acknowledged that the individuals may feel more vulnerable and in need of support.</p>		
P3	The Council should monitor the impact of the changes it has made to contractor management to ensure that the revised arrangements resolve the issues it has experienced.	Since the WAO visit in January, there has been a restructure within the Property Investment teams. This has resulted in additional staff being recruited. The main issues with the WAO audit related to the kitchen and bathroom programme, which has now been completed, (apart from tenants who have refused). The Property Investment	New Structure has been implemented. Ongoing monitoring process to be	

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		<p>teams are continually monitoring the performance and quality of the works being carried out by external contractors. .</p> <p>Additionally, tender documentation is being reviewed and revised to strengthen the Council's requirements and contractual obligations.</p> <p>Weekly/monthly meetings with contractors are already in place with a suite of key performance indicators being used to assess progress and to enable the Council to take action to improve performance.</p>	<p>reviewed December 2018</p>	