

WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

10 June 2009

APSE Wales seminar

The new Local Government (Wales) Measure

Huw Rees

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Best Value

Local Government Act 1999

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WPI

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Limitations of WPI

- Focussed on risk not improvement
- Can discourage partnership working
- Input and output focussed
- Encourages short-termism
- Inconsistent application
- Who's best / worst?

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Local Government (Wales) Measure

- Passed by Assembly on 28 April 2009
- Becomes law June-ish
- Comes into force 1 April 2010
- Phased commencement

- Creates statutory regime
- Integrates community planning and service improvement
- New requirements on LAs and Regulators


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Requirements on LAs

- Reinforces duty to secure continuous improvement and account for it;
- Requires the setting of annual improvement objectives;
- Imposes a range of duties in respect of the collection, use and publication of performance information;
- Requires authorities to report achievement against its improvement objectives and compare performance against other authorities.

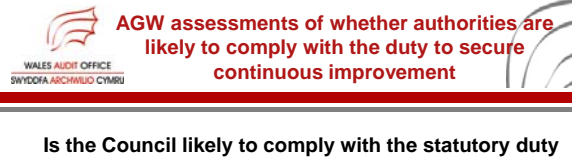
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- No more JRAs;
- AGW assessments of whether authorities are likely to comply with the duty to secure continuous improvement;
 - assessments of capacity and capability as well as performance;
- AGW may carry out Special Inspections as a result of his assessments
- An Annual Improvement Report for each authority, incorporating the outcomes of all regulatory work;
- Duty to collaborate with other regulators

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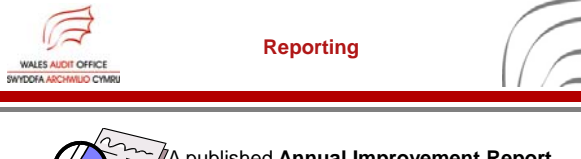
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AGW assessments of whether authorities are likely to comply with the duty to secure continuous improvement

Is the Council likely to comply with the statutory duty to secure continuous improvement?

- a **corporate assessment**
Has the Council put effective arrangements in place to support continuous improvement?
- a **performance assessment**
Does the Council have a proven track record of learning and improvement?

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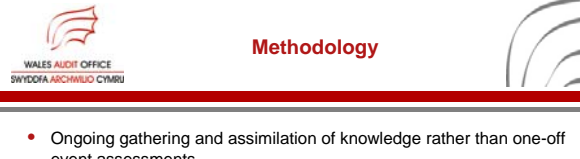
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Reporting

A published **Annual Improvement Report** containing conclusions resulting from the two assessments on:

- How well the council is performing (from the performance assessment)
- The Council's capacity and prospects for future improvement (from the corporate assessment)

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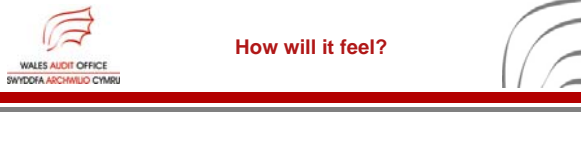


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Methodology

- Ongoing gathering and assimilation of knowledge rather than one-off event assessments
- Regulatory programme designed to inform our two assessments
- Particular focus on improvement in strategic priorities, improvement objectives and citizen outcomes
- A shared view of capacity and performance including regular review of accumulated knowledge
- Citizen-focused assessments – including seeking citizen views
- Identifying and sharing good practice through national studies.
- More citizen-friendly reporting
- Assessments to be underpinned by transparent and robust audit tools

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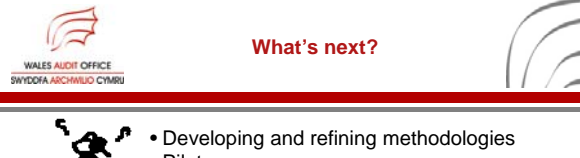


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How will it feel?

- Fewer formal reports – 2 per year
- Variety of different activity to inform assessments
- Very few set-piece events
- More flexible regulatory plan
- Regular updates
- Higher profile public reporting

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What's next?

- Developing and refining methodologies
- Pilots
- WAG guidance due in October
- Measure 'live' in April 2010
- Phased commencement

- April 2010
 - General duty, Improvement objectives, Publication of LAs performance assessment, WAO Improvement assessment and reports
- April 2011
 - Comparison and use of performance info, Improvement planning, Annual Improvement reports

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Thank you

huw.rees@wao.gov.uk

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