

<b>Isle of Anglesey County Council</b>	
Report to:	COUNTY COUNCIL
Date:	23rd MAY 2023
Subject:	CORPORATE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2023
Portfolio Holder(s):	COUNCILLOR CARWYN E. JONES
Head of Service / Director:	CARYS EDWARDS, HEAD OF PROFESSION HR & TRANSFORMATION
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Local Members:	n/a

#### **A –Recommendation/s and reason/s**

As part of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 the following duty is recognized on Anglesey County Council –

##### **... to keep its performance under review**

- 1) must keep under review the extent to which -
- (a) it is exercising its functions effectively,
  - (b) it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively, and
  - (c) its governance is effective for securing the matters set out in paragraphs (a) and (b)

##### **and, in connection with all financial years,**

make a report setting out its conclusions as to the extent to which it met the performance requirements (a, b and c above) during that financial year.

To meet the expectation above, the County Council's draft Self-Assessment (SA) for 2022/23 was prepared. The report evidences the output of the Councils corporate planning and performance management framework and is the end of a process that merges several different aspects together.

The draft was considered by the Leadership Team during the week of May 4<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>.

**It is therefore recommended that the County Council adopts the attached document as a 'working draft' and invites further consideration as to its content by the Audit and Governance Committee in its meeting of June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

#### **B – What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?**

Other options were not considered as this expectation is one of the core changes of the new legislation - the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

### C – Why is this a decision for the Executive?

This process is to elicit the attention and comments of the Executive and Governance & Audit Committee before the final Self-Assessment is considered by the full County Council in September this year.

It is a process which is in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

### Ch – Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?

Yes - an ordinance different from what the full Council approved in April last year when changes to the Constitution were adopted on how the Council is to deal with the Self-Assessment will create a governance risk.

### D – Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?

It is anticipated that the associated work program (depicted at tail-end of the SA and inclusive of those areas rolled over into 2023/24) and its realisation is placed under the leadership and ownership of the Leadership Team (LT) within time in accordance with the County Council's financial year 2023/24.

### Dd – Assessing the potential impact (if relevant):

1	How does this decision impact on our long term needs as an Island?	Affects our long-term needs by recognizing related areas that require further attention as a council.
2	Is this a decision which it is envisaged will prevent future costs / dependencies on the Authority? If so, how?	In part - yes, regarding the expected improvements that are needed in the performance of some areas etc.
3	Have we been working collaboratively with other organisations to come to this decision? If so, please advise whom.	A specific part of the self-assessment recognizes all the collaborative work that takes place across the range of the Services
4	Have Anglesey citizens played a part in drafting this way forward, including those directly affected by the decision? Please explain how.	The citizens of Anglesey through the corporate scrutiny committees have a quarterly opportunity to express their opinion and challenge the corporation on its performance. The content also states how the different services involve citizens in its decisions.

Dd – Assessing the potential impact (if relevant):		
		The content of the draft SA is to be consulted upon with Trade Unions over the coming months prior to full adoption of final draft by County Council in September 2023.
5	Note any potential impact that this decision would have on the groups protected under the Equality Act 2010.	It is not anticipated that the work program will have an impact on the groups protected under the equality act 2010.
6	If this is a strategic decision, note any potential impact that the decision would have on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.	N/A
7	Note any potential impact that this decision would have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.	N/A

E – Who did you consult?		What did they say?
1	Chief Executive / Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (mandatory)	This was considered by the Chief Executive / Leadership Team (LT) and their comments are reflected in the report
2	Finance / Section 151 (mandatory)	The comments of the Section 151 Officer as a member of the LT have also been included
3	Legal / Monitoring Officer (mandatory)	Monitoring Officer's comments as a member of the LT have been included
4	Human Resources (HR)	Comments are reflected in the report
5	Property	
6	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	
7	Procurement	
8	Scrutiny	

E – Who did you consult?		What did they say?
9	Local Members	Not applicable

#### F - Appendices:

Anglesey County Council Draft Self-Assessment – 2023

#### Ff - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):

- Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
- [Self-Assessment Improvement Actions 2022](#)
- [Record of an Executive Decision taken by the Leader, 12 May 2023](#)



CYNGOR SIR  
YNYS MÔN  
ISLE OF ANGLESEY  
COUNTY COUNCIL

## **Self Assessment - 2023**

The County Council's annual self-assessment as expected under  
Local Government and Elections Act 2021

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**Prepared by** – Transformation Service

**Publication date:** April 2023

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg / This document is available in Welsh

**The Council's Annual Self-Assessment as a result of –**

**Service Performance Reviews (SPR's) / Performance Reports /  
Annual Governance Statement (AGS) / External Reviews /  
Stakeholder Engagement**

Self-Assessment Category	Performance	Reasoning
Performance Management	Good	<p>Good performance against key indicators highlighted within the quarterly Corporate Scorecard Report</p> <p>An ever improving and modernised customer service provision through a newly installed CRM</p>
Use of Resources	Good	<p>Lower than inflation Council Tax increase, balanced budget and healthy balances during the current cost of living crisis</p> <p>Collaboration improved on an already excellent rating during the previous year</p>
Risk Management	Good	<p>Many positive external audit reports throughout Council provision including from Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales</p> <p>New risk management strategy in place</p>

## Introduction

This report reflects the Isle of Anglesey County Council's second self-assessment as expected under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

It reflects the output of the corporate planning and performance management framework and provides an evidential basis of -

- how the Council has performed
- using its available resources whilst
- managing and mitigating associated risks

during a challenging and changing time for local government.

The new national performance and governance framework aims to support a cultural and organisational change within local government. The aim is to build on existing strengths and create a more innovative, open, honest, transparent and ambitious sector, which challenges and assesses itself and collectively drives up service delivery outcomes and standards across Wales. The Isle of Anglesey County Council recognises and adheres to such expectations and the following report is drafted as such.

The Local Government and Elections Act requires each council to keep under review the extent to which it is fulfilling the 'performance requirements', that is the extent to which it is:

- exercising its functions effectively;
- using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- has effective governance in place for securing the above.

Last year's assessment was the first of its kind, the realisation of associated improvements has taken great strides during 2022. This is encouraging and shows the maturity of the political and operational discussion which continued apace in a year that saw the establishment of a revised Leadership Team within the Council together with a new (coalition) administration led by Plaid Cymru. The associated improvements can be demonstrated through our recent report considered by the [Corporate Scrutiny committee in April 2023](#).

Following the consideration of this report it is acknowledged that the following work-streams will continue to be progressed and developed as part of this Self-Assessment into 2023 –

### **Performance Management -**

- Improve the indicator in terms of the percentage of Waste Reused, Recycled or Composted indicator and meet Welsh Government targets as soon as possible
- Utilise software to become more data aware and informed to make even more effective evidence-based decisions.
- Modernising our approach from customer service to a more rounded customer experience
- Develop a means by which Council performance can be communicated to a wider audience of staff

## Use of Resources -

- Minimise future housing subsidy with-holds by agreeing a suitable timetable with external auditors and reviewing staffing capacity;
- Increase the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to ensure their voice is heard, through the adoption of a revised, revamped and post pandemic public participation strategy

## Risk Management -

- Implement the 'three lines of assurance' model as one method to collect information to assist with assurance mapping for the Council;

In coming to the conclusions of the assessment this year the Council once again used the core elements of the Corporate Planning & Performance Management Framework (CPPMF) and the function and purpose of the service review process were an essential element of the strong corporate governance arrangements adopted.

Self-evaluation is an integral part of any organisation's improvement process and its primary purpose is for self-assurance; however, it is recognised within the Isle of Anglesey County Council that if self-evaluation is done well, it can also provide assurances to external audiences, including partners, regulators and indeed residents.

Each Service (of which Anglesey County Council has 9) was asked to complete a self-evaluation - scoring their performance on identified areas deemed important as to measure the general performance of services. They were asked to evaluate their performance against one of the 4 criteria listed below and were thereafter challenged as to their findings by a group of officers and elected members:

1. **Excellent** – Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
2. **Good** – Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
3. **Adequate** – Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
4. **Unsatisfactory** – Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The Council have been continuously improving and maturing it's evolvement of the performance management framework throughout the last 9 years.

This self-assessment summarises the conclusion of that work for 2022/23 and evaluates the overall performance of the Council, answering at the simplest level, the following questions –

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What and how can we do better?



## A. Performance Management

### How well are we doing?

To have a thorough, fair and rounded view of performance management within the Council, this section of the self-assessment will bring together information on Performance Reporting, Customer Service and Governance & Compliance. By bringing these together as evidenced in 2022, our organisational performance, our appetite for change management and the culture of improvement adopted demonstrates the overall conclusion that the County Council is performing well and at a level which staff, councillors and residents should be proud.

### How do we know?

Evidence from the following reports and activities throughout the year demonstrates positive outputs and emphasises an achieving culture which is embedded across a workforce which has faced increasing demands and expectations:

- [Annual Performance Report](#)
- [Annual Governance Statement and Local Code of Governance](#)
- Service Reviews (output)
- [Anglesey and Gwynedd Public Services Board Annual Report 2021/22](#)
- [Annual Directors Report on the effectiveness of Social Services 2021-22](#)
- [Scrutiny Social Services Progress Report](#)
- [STAR survey results 2021](#)
- [Quarterly Scorecard Reporting](#)
- Staff attendance levels

From these reports we can demonstrate that key performance indicators are operating at an appropriately robust level. Staff compliance rate with updated policies and procedures has improved. Staff compliance with mandatory e-learning training has also improved whilst formal Council meetings are broadcast and the 'annual conversation' amongst staff has been embedded further. We can also evidence that the customer experience is improving across a range of services.

We can also confirm that the Scrutiny committee and Executive are satisfied with the pace of progress and improvements made to date in Social Services, together with the current performance of the Council following a positive reports from Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). The report itself noted that the robust quality and effectiveness of the Learning Service leaders within Isle of Anglesey Authority contribute very effectively towards ensuring high quality education services.

It is also evidenced that the County Council has a revised and new Council Plan to guide direction of the organisation for the five-year period 2023-2028 inclusive. This was developed and adopted after a very comprehensive engagement and consultation exercise which gained feedback and input from residents, partners, staff and newly elected members.

### What and how can we do better?

Whilst this a positive story and encapsulates a developing ethos under a newly structured Leadership Team and political dynamic, improvements as recognised by the Council are always required. The improvements noted for 23/24 are as follows:

1. Review and revise the corporate scorecard provision to identify relevant and prioritised indicators to be tracked and managed through the life-course of the current administration.

2. Improve the indicator in terms of the percentage of Waste Reused, Recycled or Composted to meet Welsh Government targets as soon as possible, whilst also reviewing and revising the Planning Improvement Plan to ensure sustainability of change into the future
3. Utilise software to become more data aware and informed to make even more effective evidence-based decisions and by using such data, effectively communicate performance levels across the Authority to staff.
4. Continue to modernise our approach from customer service to a more rounded customer experience
5. Review and revise the service review process to ensure that it remains current and aligns with the expectations of the Corporate Self-Assessment

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## B. Use of Resources

### How well are we doing?

To fulfil its responsibility of utilizing its resources economically and efficiently, the Council shares details on its management of personnel, finances, and partnerships aimed at accomplishing its goals. The information presented showcases the Council's strong and successful performance, particularly in navigating a challenging cost of living crisis.

### How do we know?

The coronavirus pandemic, which brought extreme sadness throughout the world, provided an opportunity for organisations to come together for the good of the people. The current cost of living crisis has also meant that costs for all including the Council have increased recently. In response the Council has undoubtedly improved partnership working, planned well for workforce challenges and implemented many cost saving initiatives over a number of years which has meant that whilst there is a financial hit, the Council are in a much better situation than many others at this current time. Evidence for these can be found in the following:

- Staff attendance – benchmarked to be amongst the best for Local Authorities in Wales
- Staff retention – turnover is lower than the industry standard at 8%
- Workforce Development Plans – plans in place for all services
- [Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2023/24](#) – “The Council's general financial position is still fairly strong”
- [Statement of Accounts](#) – Final accounts for 2021/22 published before deadline
- [Annual Governance Statement \(AGS\) and Local Code of Governance](#) – AGS published in accordance with CIPFA requirements alongside the statement of accounts, and the Local Code of Governance is in place
- [Welsh Housing Awards 2021 - Individualised Environmental Projects and First Time Buyers Empty Homes Grants](#), [Construction Excellence Wales Awards](#) - Housing national recognition for 2021/22
- [Anglesey and Gwynedd Public Services Board Annual Report 2021/22](#) – the report outlines many collaborative projects the Council have contributed to during the year
- [Annual Directors Report on the effectiveness of Social Services 2021-22](#) the report notes many key findings and examples of good work carried out by Social Services
- [Estyn Inspection of the Isle of Anglesey County Council](#) – many examples of good or better work being undertaken by the Council as noted by Estyn
- [Care Inspectorate Wales – Performance evaluation inspection](#) – many positive examples are highlighted throughout the report by CIW

Services clearly felt that their collaborative and integrated way of working and providing services for the benefit of Anglesey residents was excellent as demonstrated in the [matrix below](#). In addition, some of the comments within the reports above which support the conclusion include –

*“The robust quality and effectiveness of the Learning Service leaders within Isle of Anglesey authority contribute very effectively towards ensuring high quality education services. They set high expectations, lead teams effectively and co-operate well to drive strategic priorities.*

*The way in which the authority's leaders, officers and different departments consider the long term and work very closely with schools and external partners and each other is a strong feature.*

*There is a clear vision in terms of improving the quality of education, and education budgets have been protected from cuts compared with other departments within the authority.” [Estyn Inspection of the Isle of Anglesey County Council](#)*

*“Reducing the need for formal care and support is clearly a priority for IACC and we found successful joint working at a strategic level to drive forward the prevention agenda.*

*IACC demonstrates a strong enthusiasm and readiness to work with partners. We heard examples of successful joint working with partners at a strategic level with plans then implemented on an operational level for the benefit of people. We saw good examples of joint working on an operational level” [Care Inspectorate Wales – Performance evaluation inspection](#)*

*“A number of local authorities are similarly focusing their efforts on mobilising community capacity and empowering communities to identify their own needs and priorities and produce workable solutions. A good example of this is the work of Isle of Anglesey Council with Medrwn Môn, an independent agency providing support and advice to voluntary organisations and community groups. Under the ‘network of alliances’ initiative, Medrwn Môn is helping to create a system of local coalitions across the island which are empowered to identify the problems in their area, the assets that are available to help tackle these problems and the solutions needed to address them.” [Audit Wales, ‘Together we can’ Community Resilience and self-reliance](#)*

*“The Council recognises that it is ‘unable to change the world on its own’ and actively seeks to partner with organisations that can help it to deliver real benefits, but it recognises that some partnerships provide more added value than others.” [Audit Wales, Springing Forward](#)*

Some of the comments that support the [overall good](#) use of our resources can also be seen below -

*“We heard a consistent, positive message from the workforce regarding the quality of leadership and the culture across children and adult services. Feedback included managers being visible, approachable, providing regular and dependable support, with access and opportunities for professional development... Retention of social workers and occupational therapists across services remains positive... IACC’s commitment to provide a Welsh language service is positive. We saw consistent and encouraging evidence that people were receiving the “Active Offer” to speak Welsh, and people’s wishes were considered regarding language choice.” [Care Inspectorate Wales – Performance evaluation inspection](#)*

*“The Council has a vision and key delivery themes for its workforce which can be strengthened by more prominent consideration of applying the sustainable development principle and further embedding the lessons learnt from the pandemic... The Council is of the view that effective workforce management is more important than ever, especially during and after the pandemic and ensuring business continuity is an essential part of designing resilient services.” [Audit Wales, Springing Forward](#)*

## What and how can we do better?

Whilst the above are positive examples of the good performance in the way the Council uses its resources and works in partnership, improvements identified for 2023/24 can be noted as follows:

1. Working together with partners to reduce the effects of the cost of living crisis and protect those in poverty

2. Reduce electricity and energy costs across the Council thereby consequently reducing carbon emissions to aid the Council's drive to become net zero by 2030
3. Identify opportunities to reduce costs/level of service and increase income by raising prices, improving services and the use of grants where appropriate
4. Develop the Council's Asset Management Strategy that demonstrates consideration of the sustainable development principle
5. Minimise future housing subsidy with-holds by agreeing a suitable timetable with external auditors and reviewing staffing capacity
6. Increase the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to ensure their voice is heard, through the adoption of a revised, revamped and post pandemic public participation strategy

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## C. Risk Management

### How well are we doing?

Effective implementation of risk management is crucial for a complex organization like a County Council to ensure that decision-making, performance, and service delivery are carried out in the most efficient and effective way possible. This section combines findings from completed Internal Audits, External Auditors and Peers which highlight risks needed to be mitigated as well as the Council's Risk Management and Corporate Safeguarding arrangements. The evidence available points towards a solid performing council in respect to its risk management arrangements.

### How do we know?

In recent years, the Council has made improvements to its use of risk management and its Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and the evidence available in the following reports provides assurance of this:

- [Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report](#)
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Statement of Accounts
- [Annual Governance Statement and Local Code of Governance](#)
- Service Reviews (output)
- [National reviews and their related recommendations update December 2022](#)
- Internal Audit Updates (reported to the Governance and Audit Committee throughout the year) – [Up to 31 March 2023](#)
- Internal Audit Annual Report – [June 2022](#)
- Outstanding Issues and Risks – [Up to March 2023](#)
- [Audit Wales Annual Audit Summary 2022](#)
- [Estyn Inspection of the Isle of Anglesey County Council](#)
- [Care Inspectorate Wales – Performance evaluation inspection](#)
- [Review of Risk Management Framework](#)
- [Annual Report of the Standards Committee](#)

Services felt that the management of risks, corporate safeguarding and responding to audit reports was good. Some comments from the various reports listed above which supports the [overall good rating](#) can be found below -

*“For the 12 months ended 31 March 2022, the Isle of Anglesey County Council’s Head of Audit and Risk’s opinion is that the organisation has an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control. While I do not consider any areas of significant corporate concern, some areas require the introduction or improvement of internal controls to ensure the achievement of objectives, and these are the subject of monitoring. There are no qualifications to this opinion.”* [Head of Internal Audit, Annual Governance Statement 2021/22](#)

*“IACC actively promotes a reflective learning culture with quality audit approaches throughout. We saw examples of good practice in audit work to identify practice which was good and where improvements are required. Corporate scrutiny and support is strong and helps to challenge performance across the local authority.”* [Care Inspectorate Wales – Performance evaluation inspection](#)

*“The Council is making good progress developing its arrangements to meet the requirements*

of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.” [Audit Wales, The Local Government and Elections Act \(Wales\) 2021 \(letter\)](#)

“The Auditor General gave an unqualified true and fair opinion on the Council’s financial statements on 31 January 2023.” [Audit Wales, Audit of Isle of Anglesey County Council’s 2021-22 Accounts](#)

*Through open, regular and thorough self-evaluation processes, they have a good understanding of the education provision and identify sensibly the strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders, including elected members, are prepared to make difficult and timely decisions by changing and refining plans and priorities as circumstances require. For example, when making decisions about school modernisation or when responding to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.”* [Estyn Inspection of the Isle of Anglesey County Council](#)

### What and how can we do better?

To continue on the improvement journey and the positive arrangements already in place, improvements can be noted as follows:

1. Implementing post-inspection action plans for Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales reports when and where they arise
2. Implement the ‘three lines of assurance’ model as one method to collect information to assist with assurance mapping for the Council
3. Adopt a new risk management framework and ensure that new procedures are implemented and adhered to by services
4. Extend the understanding and use of the Trauma Informed model throughout the island
5. Prepare for the arrival of the Liberty Protection Standards
6. Provide training and guidance to officers on the General Power of Competence

## The Council's Service Position Statement – 2023

Please note below the response of each service against the categories of evidence for 2022/23:

Self-Assessment Category	Evidence Categories	Adults	Children	Council Business	Regulation & Econ Dev	Highways, Waste & Property	Housing	Learning	Resources	Transformation
Performance Management	Performance Reporting	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent
	Customer Service	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Adequate	Good
	Governance and Compliance	Good	Good	Good	Good	Adequate	Good	Good	Good	Good
Use of Resources	Workforce Development and People Management	Good	Good	Adequate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent
	Financial Health	Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent
	Collaboration and Integration	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent
Risk Management	External regulatory reports / peer input	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Adequate	Good
	Internal Audit	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Corporate Safeguarding	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good



## Identified Areas for Improvement

Below are all of the areas identified as needing improvement and monitoring throughout 2023/24

Area of improvement	Leading Service
1. Review and revise the corporate scorecard provision to identify relevant and prioritised indicators to be tracked and managed through the life-course of the current administration.	Transformation
2. Improve the indicator in terms of the percentage of Waste Reused, Recycled or Composted to meet Welsh Government targets as soon as possible, whilst also reviewing and revising the Planning Improvement Plan to ensure sustainability of change into the future	Highways, Waste and Property Regulation and Economic Development
3. Utilise software to become more data aware and informed to make even more effective evidence-based decisions and by using such data, effectively communicate performance levels across the Authority to staff.	Transformation
4. Continue to modernise our approach from customer service to a more rounded customer experience	Transformation
5. Review and revise the service review process to ensure that it remains current and aligns with the expectations of the Corporate Self-Assessment	Transformation
6. Working together with partners to reduce the effects of the cost of living crisis and protect those in poverty	Transformation / Housing
7. Reduce electricity and energy costs across the Council thereby consequently reducing carbon emissions to aid the Council's drive to become net zero by 2030	Chief Executive's Office / Highways, Waste and Property
8. Identify opportunities to reduce costs/level of service and increase income by raising prices, improving services and the use of grants where appropriate	Resources
9. Develop the Council's Asset Management Strategy that demonstrates consideration of the sustainable development principle	Highways, Waste and Property
10. Minimise future housing subsidy with-holds by agreeing a suitable timetable with external auditors and reviewing staffing capacity	Resources
11. Increase the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to ensure their voice is heard,	Transformation

Area of improvement	Leading Service
through the adoption of a revised, revamped and post pandemic public participation strategy	
12. Implementing post-inspection action plans for Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales and Audit Wales reports when and where they arise	All services
13. Implement the 'three lines of assurance' model as one method to collect information to assist with assurance mapping for the Council	Resources / Transformation
14. Adopt a new risk management framework and ensure that new procedures are implemented and adhered to by services	Resources
15. Extend the understanding and use of the Trauma Informed model throughout the island	Learning / Social Services
16. Prepare for the arrival of the Liberty Protection Standards	Social Services
17. Provide training and guidance to officers on the General Power of Competence	Council Business

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