To Local Government Chief Executives

Dear Colleague

All Wales National Study – Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training

Following consultation with local government Chief Executives on options for the programme of all Wales local government studies to commence in 2012-13, the Auditor General for Wales decided that one of his studies would focus on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). He also decided to conduct a national value for money study on young people NEET.

The two studies will be closely linked and will result in a single national report. The objectives, outputs and impact differ for the local government study and the VFM study but both will contribute to the overall understanding of whether the Welsh public sector is well placed to enable better outcomes for young people who are, or are at risk of becoming, NEET. By undertaking both studies together we can:

- use the evidence of local engagement in actions to reduce the level of young people NEET to inform the national study;
- test the likely effectiveness of the developing new Welsh Government Engagement and Progression Framework; and
- achieve efficiencies through working jointly on datasets, engagement with organisations working with young people who are or may become NEET, and contact other stakeholders.

The local government element of the study aims to provide insight into the extent to which local government is adequately supporting local action to ensure better outcomes for young people who are, or are at risk of becoming, NEET.

The study will seek to answer the question:

Are there lessons for local government to learn from efforts to secure better outcomes for young people who are, or are at risk of becoming NEET?

The methodology will draw upon a range of evidence for this study. We do not intend to conduct fieldwork at all Councils but will do this at eight of them. These have been selected on the basis of geography, size, and levels of young people NEET. They are:
We will also undertake some fieldwork at Swansea and Wrexham Councils. Both of these Councils have been the focus of recent research commissioned by Welsh Government. Given this research, and their results in reducing young people NEET, we feel that these Councils should be included in our study, but that it will only be necessary to undertake a reduced amount of fieldwork.

We are aware that Welsh Government is developing an ‘Engagement and Progression Framework’ to identify effective approaches to supporting young people into sustained engagement, training and employment. We would wish to draw upon councils’ completed self-evaluation tool as well as other sources as part of our evidence gathering for this work.

We will publish one national report that draws together the findings from our local government work and from the value for money study. Each council will receive a report containing local data analysis alongside all-Wales messages. An important aspect of the study will be to capture practice that can be shared. We intend to hold a shared learning event following completion of the study.

The Auditor General is undertaking the work under his powers derived from section 41 of the Public Audit Wales Act 2004.

Fuller details will be provided in the project brief for the study, which your local engagement teams will share with you soon. The councils listed above will be contacted during April to make the necessary arrangements for undertaking the fieldwork.

Yours sincerely

Alan Morris
Group Director - Performance