

CABINET

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held in Conference Room 1, Council Offices, Ruthin on Tuesday 22 February 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Councillors S A Davies, Lead Member for Business & Communications; P A Dobb, Lead Member for Health & Wellbeing; E C Edwards, Lead Member for Communities; R W Hughes, Leader and Lead Member for Regeneration; P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Finance and Personnel; D Owens, Lead Member for Lifelong Learning; S Roberts, Lead Member for Promoting Denbighshire; J Thompson Hill, Lead Member for Property and Asset Management and E W Williams, Lead Member for Environment.

Observers: Councillors R E Barton; M LI Davies; G C Evans; H H Evans; S Frobisher; K N Hawkins; C L Hughes; N J Hughes; T R Hughes; N Hugh Jones; D Jones; M M Jones; G M Kensler; N P Roberts; J A Smith; C H Williams and R LI Williams.

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive; Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources, County Clerk and the Financial Controller.

APOLOGIES

Councillor M A German, Lead Member for Children and Young People

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader welcomed parents, the public and Councillors to the meeting and said it was important to have representatives from schools present. She and the Cabinet Members had received much correspondence regarding the Managing School Places report and the petitions from Ysgolion Prion and Dyffryn Ial would be passed to Councillors H H Evans and P J Marfleet, the Local Members. She apologised to the people who were unable to be present in the room, there was a restriction on the number of people who could be present in the rooms owing to health and safety issues. However, she would speak with those outside the offices once a resolution on the item had been agreed.

Part II: The Chief Executive and County Clerk reminded Members that **all** Part II reports and appendices remained confidential, even after the meeting had been held.

Declaration of Interests - Managing School Places Report: The County Clerk informed Cabinet Members that a declaration of interest was not appropriate in regard to the current report as it sought agreement to go to consultation, rather than a proposal to close schools in their Wards. Members of the Council who were not school governors would not need to declare an interest but should not commit themselves for or against proposals before such a report was placed before Cabinet or Council. Members of the Council who were governors of a school mentioned in such a report would need to seek dispensation from the

Standards Committee when decisions on possible closures needed to be taken. He asked that Members sought his advice at that time.

Councillor P J Marfleet said he had written to the three Community Councils in his area, saying he would seek their views on any possible closure or merger or school in the Wards. The County Clerk said Community Councillors would need to consider their position if they were also school governors.

1 URGENT MATTERS

There were no Urgent Matters.

2 MINUTES OF THE CABINET

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 January 2005 were submitted.

Asset Management Committee Councillor J Thompson Hill said a seminar for all Members, on the Agricultural Estate, will now be held at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday 4 May 2005. He hoped that as many Members as possible would attend.

Item 5 Housing Revenue Account Budget 2004/2005 Councillor M LI Davies had referred to garages in Cefn Meiriadog and not Trefnant.

Item 11 Agricultural Estate Capital Programme Councillor J Thompson Hill said the Head of Development Services would be providing a report to the Asset Management Committee, not the Agricultural Estates Committee.

***RESOLVED** that, subject to the above, the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 January 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.*

3 PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT UNDER S31 OF THE HEALTH ACT 1999 FOR THE INTEGRATION OF ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN CONWY AND DENBIGHSHIRE

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report seeking endorsement of the Legal Partnership Agreement for Conwy and Denbighshire Adult Mental Health and Social Care Partnership, commencing with a rolling programme from 04.07. 2005.

Councillor R W Hughes congratulated and thanked officers for being the first in Wales to achieve a Partnership Agreement.

Councillor E C Edwards also thanked the officers involved for their work on the partnership and he believed that partnership working was required in many areas, particularly for the smaller Authorities. The WLGA Leader was encouraging partnership working.

***RESOLVED** that Cabinet endorse the S31 Legal Partnership agreement for Conwy and Denbighshire Adult Mental Health and Social Care Partnership.*

4 DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

Councillor R W Hughes presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to the Authority's priorities attached at Appendix 1 to the report. She reminded Members that Education was at the top of the list.

In response to a request from Councillor S A Davies, Members agreed CO8 should read "We aim to sell £3m of surplus land and buildings each year over 2 years to improve our school buildings and roads".

The Corporate Director: Environment, in response to a query from Councillor P A Dobb, detailed "public realm" and "improving roads". He said improving roads was to bring the roads network into better condition. This did not cover new roads required as this would impact on the current capital budget. It was agreed to include "improve" when referring to roads in the current priorities. The Corporate Director: Environment said enhancing Denbighshire's distinct environment covered a range of items and the public wanted good quality services. Short term gains often resulted in long term impact.

Councillor E W Williams said the meaning of public realm covered many things. He had not known that the Cae Ddol Park, Ruthin had achieved an award as the Best in Wales until it was reported in the press but the result had been achieved by many departments working together. He said a small working group covering the north and south of the County would bring items forward to Scrutiny Committee. He said he would also be asking the Community Councils in his Ward for their views.

Councillor P J Marfleet reminded Members that these priorities were in addition to the statutory requirements, not instead of. Members needed to be aware and react to different circumstances when necessary.

The Corporate Director: Environment confirmed, in response to a query from Councillor G M Kensler, that the Best Value Green Spaces report had been discussed at both Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet but had not yet been fully implemented.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree the Authority's Priorities, as amended above, be presented to Full Council on 24.04.2005 for adoption.

5 CORPORATE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT AGAINST IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2004-2005

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report seeking Members' consideration of the Corporate Quarterly Performance Report against the Improvement Plan for 2004 / 2005 and urged Members to monitor closely the progress being made against corporate and service risks with reference to local performance indicators and progress towards target of statutory performance indicators, with a view to considering any issue in greater depth as deemed necessary.

Councillor Marfleet referred to the good progress made by the Revenues Team. He also referred to the considerable improvement achieved by Personnel with the levels of sickness absence and ill health retirement.

Councillor S A Davies said the ICT figures showed an upward trend and were moving towards the target figure of 64%. He was also pleased with the improvements being made in Equalities, as the new officer had only been in post for 6 months.

Councillor E C Edwards said it was essential he and the Principal Crime and Disorder Officer worked with the Welsh Assembly Government, there was much work still to be done. He also thanked the Acting Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager for her hard work.

The Acting Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager agreed to clarify the cumulative figures regarding NAWPI12.1 for Councillor R E Barton.

Councillor R W Hughes said as Economic Regeneration were not being measured, she would be working with the Head of Development Services to develop a Regeneration Strategy and a European Funding Strategy as part of the system.

Councillor D Owens said many of the Education indicators were annual and generally improvements were being made.

Councillor J Thompson Hill said there was slow progress with the DDA access, as some of the requirements had changed half way through the process. The following year's funding would be spread generally across the County. He suggested local PIs should also be considered.

Councillor P A Dobb again reminded officers that Councillor M A German was responsible for the looked after children PIs. She said recruitment difficulties had led to not as many houses in multiple occupation being registered in Rhyl as was hoped for. The joint target with the NHS for delayed transfers of care for social reasons per 1000 population aged 75 and over was under control and a good working relationship had been established with the NHS. Officers had reduced the number of families housed in B & B accommodation. The emergency / urgent repairs completed within target had not been met but the DSO and Housing programmes used were being looked at to ensure repairs were classed correctly to emergency or urgent.

Councillor J A Smith expressed his concern regarding looked after children and the ongoing difficulties with recruitment and retention of staff.

Councillor E W Williams said the Transport figures were mainly annual targets. The Planning figures were on target. The Environmental Health Department were experiencing problems, mainly as a result of the difficulties with recruitment, but some Authorities paid higher salaries and were therefore able to fill posts more easily. However, the staff were to be commended on their work. He detailed the recycling pilot project to take place in Clawddnewydd and Nantglyn.

Councillor S Roberts reported that the museums and galleries target should be met by March 2005. She offered her thanks to the Heather and Hillforts officer for her work. She was also pleased to announce that Rhyl Leisure Centre would be partly open from the following week following refurbishment. Councillor Roberts expressed concern regarding the ongoing underfunding of the book fund for the Library and Information Service but was pleased with the progress on both Nantclwyd House and the Craft Centre.

The Chief Executive thanked Members for their precis of the PIs in their portfolios. However, many of the PIs would be changing over the coming months and the number of national indicators would drop. He said the focus should be on what really is of concern to the Authority, for example the number of homeless people. Cabinet Members agreed to hold an informal discussion on items which had the greatest impact on local communities.

Councillor E W Williams said Denbighshire occasionally had differing priorities from the Assembly, which could lead to a conflict, for example TAN8 and the Spatial Plan and suggested the way forward was to use local indicators. Councillor R W Hughes agreed and said Denbighshire must be clear and strong on their priorities.

RESOLVED that Members note the progress on the Corporate Quarterly Performance report attached at Appendices I and II to the report.

At this juncture (12.10 a.m.) the meeting adjourned for 10 minutes to allow Members to participate in refreshments.

6 REVENUE BUDGET 2004-2005

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report for Members, in the light of the budget performance figures for the current financial year as detailed in the appendices attached to the report, to consider any actions necessary to reduce the balance of overspending on services.

Councillor Marfleet had raised concerns at the last County Council meeting regarding school transport and said that since the current report had been prepared agreement to the payment of outstanding sums had been received. The £522k overrun was now at £366k with the Lifelong Learning overrun of £633k now at £477k. At the end of the day, the Authority would have to fund the overspend.

Councillor E W Williams suggested that some of the staff in the Lifelong Learning Directorate were becoming disillusioned with constant reference to their budget overspend and that the school transport sums were an external problem. Councillor P J Marfleet agreed the school transport sums were due to external circumstances but as the Lead Member for Finance it was his responsibility to draw attention to any shortfall in budgets.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the figures in the Appendices and agree the remedial actions to align projected spending levels with approved budgets.

7 REVENUE BUDGET 2005-2006 TO 2007-2008

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report seeking Cabinet consideration of the impact of the debate at County Council on 08.02.2005 on the budget proposals included in Appendix 1 to the report, and to note the latest position regarding budget efficiency savings in 2005-2006 and recommend to Full Council the amended budget proposals for 2005-2006 to 2007-2008.

Councillor Marfleet said the Police precept had been agreed at 4.8% with an average decrease of 0.7% agreed for Community Councils and the County Council element resulting in an increase at 4.6% for those properties remaining in the same band. Denbighshire was currently at 5.35% increase in budget requirement and he reminded Members that any increase over and above 5.4% would have been subject to capping by the Welsh Assembly Government. The Denbighshire Council Tax increase would be the lowest increase for a considerable number of years and it was unfortunate that the Government were imposing revaluation at this time.

Councillor Marfleet stressed the need for the budgets to be monitored closely and delivered and to ensure that overruns do not occur. It was essential that adequacy of reserves was also addressed.

The Financial Controller confirmed that any capping would not include the Police precept element. With regard to the WAG capping, Denbighshire had been allowed 0.4% above the increase in the SSA which would allow up to in a 5.4% increase in budget requirement.

The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources said one representation on Prudential Indicators had been received previously and asked the Principal Management Accountant to outline the Prudential Indicators.

The Principal Management Accountant said Prudential Indicators were an element of the budget setting and had resulted from legislation. Prudential Indicators were not forward predictions but gave an indication of where the Authority would be. The Authority needed to determine what was affordable for prudential borrowing.

In particular he outlined the ratio of financing costs to the net revenue stream and the incremental impact of capital investment decisions which showed increases in Band D as a result of the Capital Plan impacting on the revenue budget. It was possible to borrow in excess of the level supported by WAG but any excess could increase the level of Council Tax.

Councillor P A Dobb informed Members that the Housing Revenue Account figure was 12% rather than 12.83%. The Principal Management Accountant confirmed that the Housing Subsidy would impact on this figure.

In response to a query from Councillor E W Williams, the Principal Management Accountant confirmed that capping limits only applied to revenue budgets. Members had a choice of how much to allocate to meet the cost of borrowing but corresponding savings were required if that figure was exceeded. The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources estimated that the revenue budget would

support roughly 10 times the £603k shown as potentially available in 2007/08 as capital funding but would cost an extra £16 on Band D.

RESOLVED that:-

- [a] *Members note the revised service budget proposals detailed in appendix 1, together with the efficiency savings proposals detailed in appendix 3 and recommend the total budget package to County Council for approval.*
- [b] *Members recommend the resulting 4.5% impact of the proposals on Band D of Council Tax in 2005/06 to full Council.*
- [c] *Members note the likely budget position for 2006/07 and 2007/08 and endorse the proposal to carry out further reviews of service budget requirements to identify additional efficiency savings to boost reserves, fund the development of priority areas and reduce pressure on Council Tax in these years.*

8 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2004/2005

Councillor P A Dobb presented the report for Members to note the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the current financial year and the surplus of £210k.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the figures in Appendix 1 to the report including the surplus of £210k.

9 PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2005-2006 TO 2007-2008

The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources presented the report seeking Cabinet recommendation to Council of the Prudential Indicators for 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008.

The Principal Management Accountant had previously outlined the Indicators to Members in Item 7 on the Agenda.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommends to Council the setting of the Prudential Indicators for 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 as detailed in the report.

10 RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE PENSIONS GREEN PAPER

The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to the Green Paper as detailed in Annex A to the report and to note the potential industrial action by unions in response to changes to the Pension Scheme.

He informed Members of the deficit within the Pension Fund, which was driving the Central Government approach to seek changes. The Authority needed to be mindful of these financial pressures but also had to balance the importance of the Pension Scheme to current and future staff.

The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources agreed to review the response at Q4(b) at Councillor R E Barton's request and amend, if necessary. He also confirmed that the shortfall within the pension scheme were not as a result of employees who may have left the scheme in earlier years.

The Unison Branch Secretary said their potential strike action was aimed at the Government and not the County Council and was based on employees' expectations and rights. He hoped the situation would be resolved quickly.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the response to the Green Paper as detailed in Annex A to the report, and as amended above, and note the potential industrial action following consultation on the Green Paper.

11 MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Councillor R W Hughes presented the report seeking Cabinet approval to revoke the notice to withdraw from the Local Government Association [LGA], following the agreement between the WLGA and the LGA on a new relationship between the two bodies.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree to revoke the notice of withdrawal from the Local Government Association.

12 CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor S A Davies presented the report and asked officers to ensure that Lead Members were fully involved in developing the Cabinet Forward Work Programme and involving Members from the start.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the contents of the Forward Work Programme.

13 MANAGING SCHOOL PLACES

Councillor D Owens presented the report for Members to note the findings of the Managing School Places review and the main proposals within the report as measures to ensure the most efficient use of resources in Education that would improve the quality of provision and buildings and impact on performance. Members were also asked to authorise County officers to commence on a consultation exercise on the proposed 2 phase programme of rationalisation of primary school places as detailed in the report and to continue with the review of Standard Number of Prestatyn area primary schools.

Councillor Owens said he wished to sincerely thank officers who had prepared the report, although he realised that not everyone would agree with its contents. Many hours of work had gone into its preparation and he was grateful to everyone for their work. The report was a consultative document that was prepared as a result of direction from the Welsh Assembly Government and was actioned by the last Council.

Along with every other authority in Wales, Denbighshire had for the past three years been responding to the Welsh Assembly Government's initiative to refocus schools. The Moving Forward Together, Managing School Places Programme, was part of the response and was started in October 2001 with initial consultation with schools. Objective criteria for the review were developed and approved by Cabinet in November 2002. Since then eleven first stage consultation meetings took place. The criteria were applied to all schools and the finding of the review culminated in the current document which included improving buildings, plans for new schools, merger of primary schools to give pupils better facilities and possible closures.

As it stood currently in Denbighshire, some towns were not able to meet the demand for school places whilst in others there were so few pupils that the schools had surplus places. By 2006 it was estimated there would be 1600 surplus places. In Denbighshire schools there was a wide range of cost per pupil which also needed to be addressed. He was sure all parents would want to see a fairer distribution so that all children, regardless of where they lived, had an equal standard of education and access to resources.

Many of Denbighshire's school buildings were old and would not easily adapt to keep pace with the demands of modern teaching and learning requirements. We also had some schools without communal halls, games areas, separate dining areas, all things which were needed for modern day education.

Naturally, communities were concerned about some of the proposals. Many communities considered that rural schools played a role in community life that far exceeded that purely of education and quite rightly so. The proposals were just a starting point, one way of possibly moving forward. It was possible that the consultation would show that there were better alternatives out there. The Authority was ready and waiting to listen and to act on good constructive ideas. It would consult widely with parents, governors and community councils and consider very carefully all of their comments before developing final proposals. The full Council will decide what the final proposals would be, giving all Councillors a say on behalf of their communities, bearing in mind that they had a corporate responsibility for all the children in Denbighshire education.

He wanted to emphasise that the report does not commit any Councillor to agreeing to implement any change but sought permission to consult the public about the findings of the review.

Councillor R W Hughes read a statement she had prepared in response to representations made to her by parents, teachers and school governors, as well as from several fellow Councillors, particularly those who were elected for the first time in June last year.

"Before presenting it today I have shared the contents with Councillor Dewi Owens, Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning.

I have become increasingly concerned as to how this extremely important matter on Managing School Places has been hijacked by a number of politicians from all levels of government. It is difficult not to see their involvement as more to do with their own

personal and political self interest than with any regard to the impact on teachers, parents and children, who all have genuine concerns about some of the draft proposals.

As a new administration and as the new Leader of this Council, we have since last June been working to make this Council one which delivers better services and which both listens and responds to the communities it serves.

Only eight months ago we inherited a range of decisions taken by the last Council which we have been evaluating and assessing as to their appropriateness to the type of Council we would wish to run. Managing School Places has been one of these issues. I feel it is necessary to set the record straight and put the facts before you on a number of points.

The first important fact is that this process, which we call Managing School Places, was not initiated by the County Council. It originated in 2001 with a report from the District Audit which resulted in an action plan being drawn up to progress the matter.

Assembly Minister Jane Davidson also developed guidance and the Assembly ruled that Counties with more than 10% surplus places in their schools were required to take steps to reduce that percentage. When we in Denbighshire took this guidance on board using the Assembly criteria for measuring school places we found that we would be nearing a 30% level of surplus places by 2006. As a result of this we were required to look at these issues locally.

We must not forget that Managing School Places is about building new schools, to respond to overcrowding in some of our schools. It is about continuing the development of area schools to provide a wider choice and better facilities and about making the best use of our resources.

I repeat again - in setting the record straight today these proposals were not developed by the new Council, which is what I believe has been said to some parents. Managing School Places was progressed under the leadership of Councillor Eryl Williams through Cabinet and other meetings from 2002 until 2004. Discussions took place with Cabinet as to the process on a number of occasions.

I list below a timetable of the Cabinet's considerations on the issues during this period.

In November 2002 Cabinet agreed the criteria for carrying out an analysis of the options and a consideration about the level of resource required for the task. November 25, 2003, the Authority sought Members' approval to proceed to formal consultation with schools with fewer than 30 pupils on roll. The report referred to consultation with Chairs of Governors and head teachers of all Denbighshire schools from October 2001 to May 2002. January 27, 2004 Cabinet had a progress report on a number of scenarios as to the options and way forward, the resources needed for this work and the consultation plan which included a feedback on meetings which took place with the then Corporate Director for Lifelong Learning, other education officers, staff, governors, parents and the community.

Members did not believe that some of the points raised in the letters had been covered at these meetings. My reasons for including this calendar of events this morning is to respond to the politicians who claim not to know anything about the way in which this matter was dealt with by the last administration.

Managing School Places has been a part of both the Council's and the schools' business for over two years. There seems to be a lot of selective amnesia going on with some who have been involved. It is, I believe, either naive or mischievous for any politician who has been in any way involved in the issues to now try to argue that they were unaware of the deliberations underway.

I do not think that anybody could accept that any politician from the previous Council or other local representatives working within their community, could not have been aware of the process which was going on.

In referring to politicians' behaviour I have been very concerned about the response by AM's and MP's. Up until yesterday, I had not had any communication with them about this matter. I had a phone call yesterday, but was busy with meetings relating to today and could not meet with the MP concerned. I am also aware that an AM contacted a Cabinet Member yesterday. Up until then I am not aware of any phone calls or even emails from any AM or MP about this matter now or in the last couple of years, asking for the documentation nor any request for a meeting to discuss these matters.

I have, however, as Council Leader, endeavoured to set up meetings with them to gain their views. Unfortunately this has been very difficult to progress, but I will continue to try.

I have listened to the representations which have been made to me and given the matter a great deal of thought. I have concluded that I cannot agree to the recommendations of the report, to authorise officers to commence with the consultation that was planned for the Managing School Places Programme.

The previous Leader, Councillor Eryl Williams, and the Cabinet from the last Council, for which I was a Member, believed that the consultation which was underway over the past couple of years had made people aware of the issues we are looking at today.

But faced with the situation as it is here and now it is transparently clear that the document that has been prepared for the next stage in the consultation process does not have the support necessary to take it forward.

Accordingly the next actions which I am putting forward as recommendations are:

- 1 To hold a number of members' seminars to give new members of the Council in particular an opportunity to look at how we got to where we are today and the outside influences which as a Council we have to respond to so that the decisions are not taken out of our hands. This action has been agreed with the Leaders of the Plaid Cymru, Liberal Democrats, Labour, Conservative and Independent groups on the Council.

2 To arrange meeting with all AM's and MP's representing Denbighshire.

3 To undertake a series of personal visits to all schools identified within the report along with other cabinet and local members. The meetings will include discussions about the local community as well as the school circumstances.

4 To ask Scrutiny to re look at this issue.

I hope this statement sends a clear message to all that whilst we will not all agree with all the decisions taken by the Council, those involved can be assured that any decisions will be taken only when people and Councillors feel that they had the opportunity to have their say. The most important thing is that our decisions stand up to scrutiny.

I would like to end by offering my thanks to all the officers who have done this work in good faith. We need to respect their professionalism and accept that some of this work has been because of pressures outside the Council. This has in some respects clouded and confused the issues, rather than helped. This exercise needs to be about improving education for all the children of Denbighshire.

Every Councillor is a school governor. We now need to take a step back and look at how we can work more positively together.

In conclusion, I will not be supporting the recommendations of the report before us today for the reasons outlined above. Instead I suggest that the four actions, listed above, are a more positive way forward.”

Councillor S A Davies proposed the new recommendations and was seconded by Councillor D Owens. Councillor Owens asked that school governors and parents move forward with Members on the management of school places.

Councillor E W Williams thanked Councillor R W Hughes for the new recommendations and said he wholeheartedly supported it. He also had received letters and phonecalls from school governors and parents. He said he had expressed informally to her that he was against the original proposals and agreed it was the Welsh Assembly Government who had set targets for school places. He said he had met with the then Corporate Director, the Acting Director of Education and the Head of Strategy and Resources Lifelong Learning in April 2004 to consider the findings of the consultation but the previous Council had no remit to set the timescale. He asked how many meetings had been held since the new Council was in place regarding the results of the consultation. Councillor Williams stressed the current report should not have been presented in such a way as it appeared negative. Schools required a positive message from the Council.

Councillor Williams said he had originally hoped to have the Education portfolio rather than the Environment portfolio. He felt it important to keep rural schools open. He asked that figures be provided showing a breakdown of what village communities received for their Council Tax - villages did not have grass cutting or flowers planted as they did in the towns. Councillor Williams also said the matter of school

transportation was an important factor and that parents had a legal choice of which school to send their children but the Authority was not obliged to pay for the school transport. He suggested that if there was a percentage of tolerance in the budgets it should be allocated to schools to help the public understand the importance of rural schools. Nursery school provision was a way forward and bids should be made, for example to Cadwyn Clwyd, to help with such provision.

Councillor P J Marfleet said there was no tolerance level in the budget provision and reminded Members that the Council would be subject to capping if the Council Tax exceeded 5.4%. He supported Councillor Hughes' recommendation and also agreed with Councillor Williams that rural schools were important. However, he said on reading earlier reports to Cabinet when Councillor Williams was Leader, he had at that time not said anything on school places and parents had not been updated since the consultation. Parents should not be left in a situation of stress and concern. However, he said facts change over time and he had no criticism of the report produced by officers but any future report would have to be based on the most up to date pupil occupancy figures.

Councillor E W Williams said consultation had been carried out with school governors in the spring term 2004. He asked why Council had not progressed the matter before now and said the Leader should take responsibility for the report before them. He said he had no further aspirations to be Leader of the Council again, he was there to represent the community rather than himself and although he had stood for Parliament once that had been enough. He did not wish to be the Leader of Denbighshire again.

Councillor S Roberts said she appreciated the views of the rural areas and as a school governor had been aware of the consultation and had attended one meeting on managing school places prior to the Council elections in 2004 where only two parents had bothered to attend. Meetings had been held at various locations in the County.

Councillor P A Dobb said as a rural Councillor she also was pleased the report was being withdrawn at this time and delighted at the number of people in the communities who had become involved. She encouraged parents and governors to lead the process and not lose the momentum gathered.

Councillor D Owens said the report had put him in a predicament, if the report had not been brought into the open the parents and governors would not have realised what the possible total effect could be. He hoped the schools and the Authority could move forward together.

Councillor N Hugh Jones said he felt the discussion had been constructive and that Lifelong Learning Scrutiny were prepared to consider all facts carefully.

Councillor D Jones said he felt democracy was alive in Denbighshire and whatever mistakes may have been made it was time to move forward. The Acting Corporate Director: Lifelong Learning confirmed that the figures for the two schools in Upper Denbigh were from January 2004 and assured Members that the latest figures would be made available in any future report.

Councillor R W Hughes said Councillor D Owens had acted in an honest way. She reminded Members that Councillor E W Williams had been Leader for 2 years and could have dealt with the matter but had chosen not to. She, as Leader, would take the responsibility.

RESOLVED that Members unanimously agree:

- [a] to hold a number of Members' seminars, as agreed with the Leaders of the Plaid Cymru, Liberal Democrats, Labour, Conservative and Independent Groups on the Council, to give new Members of the Council in particular an opportunity to look at how we got to where we are today and the outside influences which as a Council we have to respond to so that the decisions are not taken out of our hands.
- [b] to arrange a meeting with all AM's and MP's representing Denbighshire.
- [c] that the Leader undertake a series of personal visits to all schools identified within the report along with other Cabinet and local Members. The meetings will include discussions about the local community as well as the school circumstances.
- [ch] to ask Scrutiny to re look at this issue.

14 **RESTRUCTURING AND RETIREMENT COSTS**

The Chief Executive apologised that the report had been tabled late. He introduced the report requesting Members to note the completion of the restructuring of the Chief Executive's Department, approve the costs associated with the restructuring and early retirements and note the next steps in developing area partnerships / area working.

Part of the information was personal to the individuals and it was:

RESOLVED under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources gave an indication to Members of the proportion of the ongoing costs that related to the former Corporate Director: Lifelong Learning. The County Clerk stressed the need for Members to keep this information confidential.

RESOLVED unanimously that Members:

- [a] note the completion of the Chief Executive's department restructuring;
- [b] approve the restructuring and early retirement costs incurred, as detailed in section 2.2 of the report;

[c] *note the changes to Directorate Budgets as a result of the restructuring will be tabled at the Council meeting on 24 February 2005, as part of the finalisation of the budget process, and*

[ch] *note the forthcoming consultation on the future of Area Partnerships, including discussions on the possibility of area based delivery.*

15 URGENT ITEMS

There were no Urgent Items.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED *under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

PART II

16 CAPITAL PLAN 2004-2005

Councillor P J Marfleet presented the report seeking Members' consideration of any actions necessary in the management of the Capital Plan. He detailed the current position and said any slippage would be carried forward to the following year. A new column had been included in the report identifying the level of committed expenditure for the year.

Councillor Marfleet discussed the appendices in detail and said the payment arising from the Pontin's lease had been received and consideration would need to be given to where this receipt would be used in the next financial year. He detailed the predicted overspend at the Crown House, Ruthin project which would be met from the Objective 1 match funding allocation. He also expressed his concern regarding any slippage.

RESOLVED *that Cabinet note the updated position in respect of the Capital Plan.*

17 AWARD OF TRAFFIC SIGNAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Councillor E W Williams presented the report to seek Cabinet approval to the award of a new Traffic Signal Maintenance Contract for the period April 2005 to March 2009. The decision constituted an exemption from Contract Procedure Rules in accordance with CPR 9.

RESOLVED *that Cabinet approves the award of a new Traffic Signal Maintenance Contract for the period April 2005 to March 2009. The decision constitutes an exemption from Contract Procedure Rules in accordance with CPR 9.*

18 RESIDUAL MATTERS RELATING TO THE FORMER WIRRAL AND NORTH WALES PURCHASING CONSORTIUM [WNWPO]

The Deputy Chief Executive / Corporate Director: Resources presented the report for Members note the updated position and support the recommendation of officers from the four Councils concerned that the matter of allocating the accumulated losses of the former Wirral & North Wales Purchasing Consortium be placed before the relevant Welsh Assembly Government Minister for arbitration.

***RESOLVED** that Members note the updated position and support the recommendation of officers from the four Councils concerned that the matter be placed before the relevant Welsh Assembly Government Minister for arbitration.*

The meeting concluded at 1.05 p.m.

Report to: Cabinet

**Cabinet member: Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing
Lead Member for Children and Young People**

Date: March 22 2005

**Subject: Progress in Implementation of Joint Review
Action Plan**

1. Decision Sought

1.1 For Cabinet to consider further action relating to risk areas arising from monitoring of the Joint Review Action Plan.

2. Reason for seeking decision

2.1 To give an update on progress and to consider areas of risk.

2.2 Denbighshire's delivery of its Social Services functions were subject to "Joint Review" by the Social Services Inspectorate (Wales) and the Audit Commission between January and March 2003, with the formal report published in September 2003. The Joint Review concluded that Denbighshire was "serving some people well, with uncertain prospects for improvement."

2.3 Cabinet adopted the Action Plan arising from the Joint Review in December 2003. Two versions were adopted- a 3-year Management Action Plan with over 50 main actions, and a Summary Action Plan, which focussed more on the difference we expected the plan to make to service users. As part of the adoption process, it was agreed that Cabinet would monitor implementation of the Plan on an exceptions basis.

2.4 The first monitoring report was discussed by Cabinet in July 2004 and with representatives of the Audit Commission and the Social Services Inspectorate Wales on July 13th, 2004.

2.5 A comprehensive internal exercise was undertaken to monitor progress in the latter part of 2003/04 and 2004/05 against the detailed Management Action Plan and the Summary Action Plan. This showed a high level of compliance with key tasks and processes. The impending SSIW Inspection Report of Adult Services, which we expect to be positive, will undoubtedly make further recommendations. Work is now in hand to roll the Joint Review Summary Action Plan, and actions required from recent inspections, into core business planning from 2005/06.

2.6 A progress report against the Summary Action Plan is attached. Progress is generally very positive in Adult Services and Business Support and Development, with the following key achievements

- * progress on target in developing Extra Care Housing, additional housing/social care developments and other preventive services as new cost effective service components
- * continuing good performance in enabling a range of service groups (older people, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems) to remain living at home plus excellent reductions in OT waiting lists
- * delayed discharge from hospital rates remain low
- * nationally leading good progress in implementing “Unified Assessment” with Conwy and health colleagues
- * Integrated Mental Health Service developed with Conwy, 2 LHBs and the Trust and scheduled to go live in July 05
- * development of “low level” services to meet the needs of a range of vulnerable people, funded via Supporting People
- * systematic extension of user consultation
- * success in meeting workforce and training targets
- * systematically improving the range of management information available despite problems with care.comm
- * balanced budget

2.7 The main areas in which progress has remained behind target, following the Joint Review relate to Children’s Services.

2.8 The issues in Children’s Services

SSIW involvement

2.8.1 Children’s Services has not been able to achieve the progress we planned following the Joint Review and remains a high risk to the reputation of the Authority. Much excellent work continues to be done with individual children and families, and we can evidence that the most vulnerable children are appropriately safeguarded and protected. However, in a critical number of areas, the quality of service causes us significant concerns. The Social Services Inspectorate (Wales) have recently asked to meet with us on a quarterly basis as they share our concerns.

2.8.2 The SSIW process will require monitoring against an agreed core dataset designed to reflect key child care processes and outcomes where Denbighshire’s services are currently weakest. The experience of other authorities indicates that intensive action will subsequently be required to ensure improvement within a set timescale.

Current strengths

2.8.3 The good work includes

- * 100% record in undertaking Child Protection Reviews on time
- * sound multi-agency work to ensure children are safe (recognised as such by health and education)
- * excellent foster care improvement project picking up all the threads required to address the poor inspection report, proactive recruitment and retention of foster

carers and forthcoming inspection of the adoption service (The quality of this work has recently been validated by the CSIW foster care reinspection)

- * increased investment in Children's Services
- * participation initiatives with young people in care
- * improving rate of completion of Pathway Plans for careleavers
- * improving core datasets available from care.comm
- * regular compliments as to the quality and professionalism of social work undertaken for the Courts and elsewhere
- * well established trainee and bursary schemes for social workers
- * increasing amount of linkage between the Framework and Children's Services agendas

Current weaknesses

2.8.4 The weaknesses, as demonstrated in the progress report attached, include

- a narrow range of current or planned preventative/family support services for children in need, children with disabilities and care leavers
- foster care recruitment, retention and remuneration
- High placement breakdown rates for children in our care
- Ability to allocate all cases of children in care and children in need
- Child care social work vacancies, turnover and sickness
- Performance in undertaking assessments, care plans and reviews within required timescales
- Workload management
- Robust auditing/QA processes to ensure the quality of services provided

The complexity of the improvement challenge

2.8.5 While the good work is heartening, the number of the weaknesses is enough to create a vicious circle, with difficulties in one area exacerbating others and jeopardising the impact of progress elsewhere. The overall environment is tough. The front-line work is unremitting, the WAG agenda large, caseload volumes high, many workers inexperienced, resources scarce (eg in terms of family support services or placements) and budget pressures acute. The nature of the work, dealing with vulnerable children and young people, requires constant vigilance, oversight and careful prioritisation to ensure basic day to day safety. This is an exhausting picture and can lead to rapid "burn-out" and the significant difficulties in retaining staff which we have (and continue to) experience.

2.8.6 We have had successes in recruiting staff (including from Canada) and the statistics in the progress report show what has been done. But the progress is extremely fragile, and prone to rapid deterioration, and we continue to lose experienced staff to other authorities and to higher paid settings. Though the vacancy rate is lower than at the time of the last report, it is still very high and, exacerbated by turnover and sickness, far too high to create any sense of stability for staff (or the children and families they work with).

2.8.7 Pay, though not everything, is a major issue. The starting salaries for social workers, teachers, and nurses are similar at around £19k per annum though starting

social worker salaries are lower than special needs teachers or health visitors (which are better comparisons). And the progression routes are quite different. For example, classroom teachers, with threshold payments, can now earn substantially more than the top of the social work scale. In addition, a social worker for an independent sector foster care agency or CAFCASS (the organisation which provides social work services for children in Family Proceedings) can earn more than a team manager in Denbighshire, with substantially less responsibility. Authorities in Wales (though not North Wales yet) are now offering starting salaries of £22k per annum. Social worker pay is the subject of a national initiative with a report due in the summer of 2005.

2.8.8 Where staffing is robust, with a reasonable balance of staff with different levels of experience, and able confident management at all levels, it is possible to manage high workloads and sustain staff. Where this is not the case, as it is not in Denbighshire, managing the work can involve high levels of crisis management. It leaves little headroom for managers to take forward change management and strategic improvement and leaves practitioners with little energy or confidence to engage with improvement initiatives. Shortfalls in practice can lead to complaints, disciplinary issues, higher levels of inspection activity and litigation- which further deplete energy, resources and confidence. Three managers within the Service (out of a total of 10) are in the process of leaving or moving as the result of this spiral. Critically both Service Manager posts will be vacant within the next two months - the prospects for permanent recruitment to these pivotal roles is uncertain. This creates opportunities as well as threats but the vulnerability of the service is all too clear.

2.8.9 Additional investment has been made in Children's Services over the last two years to boost staffing and management levels, placement budgets and social worker and foster care recruitment. Where we have been able to recruit, these resources are enabling a degree of "catch-up"- required as the result of successive years of cuts and identified as essential in the Joint Review report. The foster carer pay report, also on the agenda for March Cabinet, is a good illustration of Denbighshire's position in relation to other North Wales authorities. Resources have also been used to good effect in specific improvement projects using project management approaches, though the improvements have not always been easy to sustain.

2.8.10 The level of spend on Children's Services was certainly below the average for Wales from the most recent figures available (£298 per head of population under 18 compared with a Wales average of £323 per head of population- LGDU figures for year ending 31 March 2003). More recent figures, when available, may demonstrate a narrowing of this gap. In reality, the service has had additional pressures arising from the need to invest in "improvement" and to deal with escalating placement costs and past complex and controversial cases. It has had to carve this resource from existing budgets and, to some extent, at the expense of Adult Services.

Impact on Adult Services

2.8.11 Indicators suggest that Adult Services is currently operating at a high level of efficiency, with good performance against statutory PIs, relatively low levels of spend (all client groups show well below Wales average levels of spend per head of relevant population with the exception of mental health services), and high levels of

cost- effective externalisation. However, the service faces critical challenges with demographic change and an expectation of investment in preventative services so as to assist with the overall health/social care management of this. Currently, the pressures on Children's Services are a brake on essential developments in Adult Services, for example the development of Rapid Response Services as an alternative to hospital admission and the generation of additional learning disability services to cope with higher levels of need. Plainly, there are significant risks attached to this.

WLGA role

2.8.12 Denbighshire is not unique in the kind of challenges it is experiencing in Children's Services, though the issues are acute here. The recent Social Services Summit, hosted by the WLGA, was in part prompted by the difficulties Welsh authorities are having in creating sustainable improvement in their services against a background of resource restraint, indifferent consultancy support and workforce problems. A series of pledges were recently considered by the Joint Co-ordinating Committee as a statement of intent. These include commitment to develop further "improvement resources" to work with Welsh local authorities and to commit to mutual support. Denbighshire is in the process of accessing some resources via WLGA/IDeA (though they are taking some time to arrive) and has used senior managers in neighbouring authorities for peer challenge and support.

Conclusion

2.8.13 However, what the Council has done so far has not proved sufficient to enable a step change to be made in Children's Services. We have hung on by our fingertips, but have not really moved forward. The strength of our Adult Services, and acknowledged competence at Head of Service level in Children's Services, demonstrates that this is not a "failing Department" issue but a deep complex improvement challenge in a critical, sensitive service area which requires the sustained resolve, creativity and focus of the whole Council to move on. The Head of Service is currently preparing a comprehensive Improvement Plan, drawing together all the current strands. This is likely to show that the range of improvement actions required cannot be delivered within existing human or financial resources. Staff are already beyond weary. Additional resources will be needed to enable the service to break out of a spiral of firefighting and start-stop improvement.

3. Power to make the decision

NHS and Community Care Act 1990
Children Act 1989

4. Cost implications

There are no specific cost implications arising from this report but additional resources may be required in future arising from the Social Worker Pay Review, the Children's Services Improvement Plan and SSIW monitoring.

5. Financial controller statement

The report highlights the ongoing areas of significant financial pressure within Children's Services. The pressures so far have been contained within the directorate budget. The financial implications of the forthcoming social worker pay review and the Children's Services Improvement Plan will have to be considered carefully and be the subject of a detailed review. Part of this should include a review of the apportionment of budget between services to adults and children.

Unless additional external funding is available the costs of any proposed initiatives will have to be met from within existing resources.

6. Consultation carried out

All those charged with delivering on targets in the Action Plan have been consulted as to progress and future plans, where progress is behind target.

7. Implications for other policy areas including corporate

The recommendations arising from the Joint Review report touched virtually all parts of the Authority and the Action Plan and monitoring arrangements mirror this.

8. Recommendations

That Cabinet

8.1 notes the overall good progress in implementing the Joint Review Action Plan

8.2 receives a further report on social worker pay when the Social Worker Pay Review is published later in the year

8.3 receives a further report on the resource implications of the Children's Services Improvement Plan and the SSIW monitoring process with a view to considering how the service might access "break-out" resources to help create a step change in improvement

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale/	Progress
OLDER PEOPLE			
Commissioning health, social care and wellbeing services for older people	Statement of older people's needs, trends and, patterns of need to be completed, kept up to date and fed into the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy. (This will show the impact of the growing population of very old people in Denbighshire and what this means for services.)	Needs assessment completed December 03	Needs assessment completed
	First draft of 3 year Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy to be produced, identifying developments in older people's services.	By April 2004- Public consultation to December 2004	HSCWB Strategy adopted December 2004 after extensive public consultation.
	Costed and timed development plan completed to meet present and future needs in different parts of Denbighshire - for both Social Services with health, housing etc	During 2004	Draft Commissioning Strategy completed May 2004. Accepted following consultation in Dec 2004. Action Plan to deliver Strategy will be formally presented for agreement at Cabinet in April 2005.
Developing new preventative /rehabilitative services for older people	Rate of older people helped to live at home kept at least to the Welsh average. This will be done through increasing the range of preventative and rehabilitative services e.g. through the Community Assessment Partnership, Contact Warden in private sector housing, Direct Payments, welfare rights support. We will set targets and establish monitoring systems to track our performance in:	From 2003 / 04	<p>NAWPI's currently exceeding Wales averages e.g.</p> <p>3.7 - Current performance is exceeding target and is in line with strategic intent and is demonstrating good performance in minimising the number of people in care placements.</p> <p>2x 0.5 Contact Warden posts established in public sector housing.</p> <p>Reablement Team significantly strengthened with an expected increase in capacity.</p> <p>EMH Stakeholder Workshops took place in Jan 2005.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post of part time POVA Co-ordinator established and filled. Dedicated admin support identified. • Significant increase in activity April - November . 20 formal investigations. • EMH Joint Commissioning Project Manager appointed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the rate of people helped to live at home above the Welsh average 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing short-term services that help people to live at home and the success of short-term services in enabling people to live at home without further service input. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The achievements of new specific preventative/rehabilitative services 		

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
OLDER PEOPLE (continued)			
Developing new preventative /rehabilitative services for older people (cont'd)	<p>At least 1 extra care housing scheme to be developed</p> <p>More people connected to Piper Lifeline and upgrade of local authority sheltered housing started</p>	By April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership Group established. ECH (extra care housing) Scheme in Rhyl developed and funding confirmed. On site 2005. • ECH Project Manager appointed. • Political consensus in relation to reprovision of existing EPH facilities in Prestatyn gained. • No of private sector connections to Piper Lifeline increased by 3% (830 to 854) • Upgrade of local authority sheltered housing (windows programme) begins 2005
	Denbighshire Conference of Older People to be held	Summer 2004	At the Older People's Wellbeing Steering Group it was concluded that activities and objectives identified in Denbighshire's Older People's Strategy Development Plan superseded the original proposal to hold this conference.
	Best Value Review of Services of Older People completed - showing i) how the County Council generally will help older people keep their independence and promote their wellbeing and ii) providing ways for older people to be recognised as involved and contributing to their communities	By April 2006	A Best Value Review is no longer being carried out. A Local Authority 'Falls' review is being undertaken with the aim of identifying ways in which numbers of falls and falls related injuries can be reduced among older people in Denbighshire Review of Stroke Services(led by LHB) undertaken. Piloting of block contract for EMH nursing beds Jan - March 05 to facilitate hospital discharge. Audit of older people's participation in Denbighshire underway via Beth Johnson Foundation- reports 05.
	Delayed discharge rates from hospital kept low; new schemes with the Local Health Board and the Trust started to avoid need for admission to hospital or residential care, including aiming to reduce the number of people suffering a preventable fall,.	As funding allows from April 2004	3.8 Good performance continues. There have been some specific problems with finding appropriate placements for adults and older people with MH problems who are awaiting discharge from the Ablett Unit.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
OLDER PEOPLE (continued)			
Developing existing independent sector services	Funding of independent care providers targeted to help reduce turnover of care staff and increase the stability of the sector. Subject to funding, increases will be above the rate of Inflation	From April 2004	Increases over the rate of Inflation were awarded to Independent Sector Providers in 2004/05 (6%)
	Quality of independent sector care services to be checked regularly by new Community Care Contracts Officer and Supporting People Contracts Officer	From April 2004	1 x Contracts Officer and 1 x Supporting People Contract Officer appointed. 1 further Contract Officer post out to advert.
	More block contracts to be negotiated by Contracts Officer Care Brokers to be appointed. (Both measures are to ensure care is available and available promptly when needed).	From 2004/05, depending on funding	3 Jointly commissioned block contracted beds in EMI Nursing Homes. Learning from this pilot will inform the future direction re: possible Dom. Care Block Contract arrangements. Improvement Group formed. Contract Broker out to advert.
Developing existing local authority services	Future of local authority residential homes to be agreed	2004	Achieved - Political approval given for future development of Extra Care Sheltered Housing in Prestatyn initially. Rolling out across rest of County subsequently. Outcome of discussions have resulted in a safety net role for LA Homecare in the South of County. Concentrating in the North on clients with complex needs (e.g EMI or P/Dis) All LA residential homes have received favourable CSIW Inspections. Food Hygiene has been identified as Good to Excellent.
	Local authority home care service to be focused increasingly on rehabilitation services as part of implementation of Commissioning Strategy for Older People.	From 2004/05	
	Quality of services directly provided by the local authority to be tested by formally developing and monitoring standards. Performance against standards will be made public.	from April 2004	
UNIFIED ASSESSMENT			
Streamlining arrangements for assessing needs across agency boundaries	Pilot of unified assessment approach undertaken in at least one service areas within Services for Older People. Success of the pilot evaluated including using service user views of the effectiveness / benefits.	2004/05	Successful pilot in Community Assessment Partnership (CAP) Team. Extensive training programme completed. Progress against all developmental milestones. Recent SSIW Inspection interim feedback was 'good progress'
OLDER PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS			
Developing specialist services	Specialist EMH Team to be established	During 2004	EMH Team Manager half time post identified and Specialist Team established.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
ADULT MENTAL HEALTH			
Establishment of Integrated Mental Health Service by Denbighshire and Conwy Councils, Denbighshire and Conwy LHBs and the Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust	Integrated Mental Health Service up and running, with * clear statement of the social care benefits to be delivered for users and carers, and * good links to other services e.g. learning disabilities, older people, children	By October 2004	On target for June / July 2005.
	Service users involved in measuring effectiveness ("outcome measures") as the basis for evaluating the integrated service.	From 2003	Users are part of the Project Board. There is an agreed Service User involvement strategy.
	Ways to develop and fund alternatives to hospital admission to be explored with health services	2004/06	Development of out of hours ("assertive outreach") support in MH Services are progressing subsequent to enhanced funding to LHB from WAG. (Wanless £)
PHYSICAL DISABILITY & SENSORY IMPAIRMENT (PDSI)			
Developing a specialist service and increasing the range of services	Initial work carried out for an Objective 1 bid to provide employment opportunities	2004/05	Joint project developed in conjunction with Children's Services and Job Centre Plus Bid about to be submitted.
	Specialist PDSI Team to be established with its own Team Manager and effective links to Children with Disabilities services	during 2004	PDSI Team established and fully staffed. Team placed in new accommodation.
LEARNING DISABILITY			
Maintaining the quality of existing services against the background of increasing numbers and limited budgets	Strategies to be developed for maintaining the quality of existing services, providing for increasing numbers, while keeping within budget.	2004/05	Additional budget 05/06 linked to demography. Work opps income target increased. Currently 8 people on Rhyl KeyRing Scheme (low level support) 2 x Stakeholder Workshops undertaken in Dec 2004. SSD & Health Officers Group established to review options for a way forward (integration or not).
	Pros and cons of establishing an Integrated Learning Disability Service considered.	2005	
	Dedicated Team Manager for the Learning Disability Team to be appointed, with good links to Education and Children's Services.	During 2004	Team Manager appointed
CARERS			
At least maintaining service levels	Service levels maintained to at least the level of grant funding provided by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2003 / 2004	ongoing	Service levels exceeded
	Increase number of Carers Assessments offered and those accepted by 20%		Data being collated at year end

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
CHILDREN'S SERVICES			
Improving cross-sector planning and provision for children	Service planning for children better joined up through strengthening the influence and performance of the Children and Young People's Framework Partnership, and the Area Child Protection Committee - performance against Action Plans/Business Plans to be monitored	from 2003/04	Needs assessment undertaken 2004 providing basis for identifying joint priorities, allocation of resources eg audit of Family Support services. Cross-agency support for development of joint systems eg to improve participation of children/young people, information sharing, joint commissioning arrangements. Strategic plans in place and being monitored
	Clear agreements to be made cross-agency about referrals and criteria for services for vulnerable children	2004/05	Child Concern model adopted cross-agency. Pilot underway
	Integrated Children's System (cross agency method of streamlining arrangements for assessing children and families' needs) implemented	from 2004	Preparatory work undertaken. Procuring of new social care system has ensured ICS capability.
	Integrated Children's Centres providing services to Children and Families (e.g. pre-school and after school facilities, breakfast clubs, parenting support) to be opened in Rhyl and Prestatyn	Rhyl opens Spring 2004	Rhyl ICC opened January 2005. Manager in post with usage developing and second phase planned.
	Community, preventative and rehabilitative services to be provided to over 3000 children/young people and 1600 families in Communities First and other disadvantaged areas, and to children with disabilities using Cymorth funding. (Figures submitted by projects may double-count if children and families benefit from more than one initiative). Effectiveness of services monitored and evaluated through Service Level Agreements and feedback from children, young people and families. Annual report to be produced.	April 2004- April 2006	Cymorth funded services being provided to an estimated 4000+ children/young people following monitoring of Service Level Agreements, though monitoring information currently available is superficial in many cases. Progress report submitted to WAG. External evaluation to be commissioned 2005. Formal user feedback also to be collated 2005.
	Overall funding for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHs) increased by the Local Health Board, with monitoring systems put in place to track improved access to services - including for Looked After Children	From 2003/04	£400k investment in CAMHs services made by LHB during last 2 years, and specific arrangements for looked after children put in place. Waiting lists still extensive, however.
	More people claiming the benefits they are entitled to via the "Quids for Kids" Campaign in Denbighshire	2004/05	Estimated additional £250k generated for children, young people and families

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
Commissioning services for children in need)	Written, timed and costed strategies to be completed for children with disabilities, (and linked with the work of the new Adult PDSI team), care leavers and Family Support	2004/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited progress made via • Cymorth funded Family Support audit which reports March 05 • Supporting People Planning process and development of additional supported housing for young people
	More foster carers recruited and track record in keeping foster carers improved	By April 2005 - funding for intensive recruitment campaign agreed.	Payment for skills and recruitment campaign delayed following Foster Carer Network advice to delay pending involvement of foster carers. Foster Care Improvement Project in place since Autumn 04 following CSIW inspection of the service. Improvement measures being taken with high level involvement of foster carers. Reinspection February/March 05. Payment for skills scheme to Cabinet March 05.
	Increased number of foster carers with NVQ qualifications. 25% of foster carers recruited before April 2004 to achieve NVQ	September 2005	
	Foster care fee paying scheme to be introduced	From April 2004 (subject to funding)	Foster carers with NVQ3- ??????
	Placement breakdown rate reduced to Welsh average	By 2006	Placement breakdown rate still unacceptably high-aggregate rate at the end of the third quarter of 04/05 was 18.3% against a target for the whole year of 17%
	Care Co-ordination pilot underway; learning shared with adult PDSI and Learning Disabilities services	Begins 2003	Pilot in place and subject to review
	Rapid Response Team up and running	Begins 2003	Team in place
	Resources for Leaving Care Team to be identified; Modern Apprenticeships and other employment initiatives started. 80% of all pathway plans to be completed on time	2004/05	Leaving Care Team has been enhanced through provision of Team Manager post, Senior Practitioner, accommodation officer and 2 social workers. No specific employment initiatives yet started. Completion of pathway plans steadily increased to 60% in the last quarter.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
Performance Improvement Plan for Children's Services	All High and Medium priority cases to be allocated to an appropriately qualified and experienced worker	By December 2004	100% allocation of cases of children on the Child Protection Register has been maintained. However, allocation of looked after children dipped to below 80% in the last quarter and remained at approximately 60% for children in need
	Child Care social worker vacancy rate reduced from 30% (12 posts) to 15% (6 posts) - so that people get help earlier and there is a reduction in the number of social workers a child has. Where posts can not be filled permanently we will look to cover vacancies with competent agency staff.	By April 2005	Vacancy rate as at 30 December was 7 posts vacant = 22.5%. Though there has been an increase in posts from 26 to 36, stability in some teams has not yet been achieved with some teams also carrying high sickness rates.
	Assessments, care plans and reviews completed in line with national averages	By April 2005	Comparisons difficult because of the lack of available national data. However, local data shows 25% of initial assessments were completed within 7 days (the national standard) though all were completed within 10 days. No core assessments were carried out in the required national timescale (30 days). 100% of child protection reviews were completed in required timescales but a smaller % of looked after children's cases received timely review.
	Workload management in place	In 2004	Preparatory work has been carried out and a scheme is being piloted in the Childcare North Team. The scheme has not been finalised or implemented across all teams, largely for capacity reasons.
	Audit tool (checking system) to be used systematically to check that procedures, protocols and good practice in child protection are followed consistently by staff	from January 2004	Some file audit work is being carried out by managers and a core dataset to enable monitoring of key processes has been available monthly since 2004. However full implementation of audit programme and comprehensive monitoring against accountability framework has not been achieved.
	Corporate accountability framework, identifying who is responsible for what, and focussing on child protection to be adopted by the Council (This is a particular response to the Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié).	December 2003	

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
ALL SERVICES			
Recruitment and retention/ workforce planning	The number of social worker vacancies throughout the Department to be reduced from 20% (16 posts) to 11% (9 posts)	March 2005	7 posts vacant in Children Services and 1 post in Adult Services December 2004.
	Social Worker turnover rate to be reduced from a Departmental rate of 28% (21 posts) to 14% (10 posts)	March 2005	
	Social work traineeships to be increased to 10 - this is so we have a better supply of social workers in years to come	2005	8 Social Work Traineeships and bursaries and 2 OT traineeships in place.
	Occupational Therapist traineeships introduced - linked to new local college course, to increase supply of OTs	2004	
	Plan agreed for recruiting, training and retaining Approved Social Workers (ASWs)	2006	
	More young people and those over retirement age to be employed. Staff to have more flexible work patterns - this is so we have a better supply of social care staff	year on year increase to 2005, then review	Increase in younger age group employed and staff working either on specific projects or on relief pool after retirement.
	Our record in training our staff to be maintained, along with an increasing reputation for "growing our own" staff . Career paths, routes to traineeships, numbers of staff with recognised qualifications and secondment opportunities to be monitored.	from 04/05	Progress on qualifications remains good. But further opportunities to be developed for post qualifying skills development.
	The new recruitment measures will specifically aim to increase the proportion of staff in all services who are Welsh speaking	In place	Maintaining numbers able to speak Welsh but no increase in Children's Services, where numbers are low.
	Staff absence due to sickness to be reduced by 0.5% each year so that absence is reduced from 6.9% (10,959 days) in 2002/2003 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.4% in 2003/2004 (10,165 days) • 5.9% in 2004/2005 (9,731 days). 	by 2005	Half year figures show target exceeded- 5.8%. However, data does not reflect anecdotal position- true position under-reported?
	Co-operation with other agencies and sectors on training and work-force planning to be prioritised. This will be underpinned by a 5% increase in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of joint training schemes • The number of places on SSD courses available to the broader social care sector, service users and carers • The number of users and carers involved in the delivery of training events 	from 2004/05	Co-operation is being maintained and developed by Workforce Development Co-ordinator figures on delivery and attendances will be available in May.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
Using information and performance management	Useful and accurate information on social care activity, trends and costs is available to staff, other agencies, user and carer organisations to enable better planning and management of services and performance comparison. Information will be available every 3 months on Denbighshire's web site.	April 2004	Information is being made available to staff and managers but not yet to other agencies. The yearly return to the Assembly is a published document and the link will be available on the web site. It is considered that the level of detail would not be required by visitors to the web site until we have capacity to summarise the document each quarter.
	IT to be used to the full to improve the effectiveness of services to the public. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the range of public information on the web by 20% Using the web as part of the consultation exercise for at least 5 different consultation exercises Using the web as part of at least 2 user surveys A year on year increase in the number of services available via the internet and take up A year on year increase in the number of people accessing the web 	from 2004/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive HSCWB consultation undertaken SSIW Inspection of Adult Services undertook independent consultation with users / carers across all groups. Focused consultation with a groups of L/D users and carers (supported by advocacy service) Established consultation with MH users completed. Outcome measure QA exercise with all Rehab users undertaken Review Officers regular undertake QA interviews with residents of Older Peoples establishments. Dom. Care Survey in progress
	Programme of user surveys to be in place, with at least 10% of all clients to be surveyed each year. Surveys will have a specific focus on user satisfaction and outcomes	From 2004/05	
	A more comprehensive programme of file audits will be put in place in all services to check performance against key practice standards	to be built up from 2003/04	
	The Personal Services Scrutiny Committee will link up directly with user and carer groups to get their views on services. (The Scrutiny Committee has decided to focus on the topics of Older People (especially day care), services in rural areas, sheltered housing, staff recruitment and retention and Children's Services in the period up to the local government elections in May 2004)	From November 2003 - May 2004	
Funding social care	Detailed review of budget requirements to be undertaken by Social Services and the Central Finance Department jointly	2004/05	Not progressed
	1% savings to be found from Adult Services and Business Support and Development budgets in 2004/05 (£216k) and reinvested in services	2004/05	Savings were found and were used for Children's Services and Data clean up officers
	All Council resources, joint funding and external funding used to the full to support opportunities and independence for people who have social care needs - e.g. Council employment policies developed for vulnerable groups, access to Leisure Centres improved, Rhyl Regeneration Strategy implemented	from 2004	Specific policy developments have linked corporate priorities with the needs of social care users eg Extra Care scheme as part of Rhyl Regeneration, Social Inclusion in Employment

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

			Strategy, Youth Services prioritising future accessibility for disabled young people
--	--	--	--

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale/	Progress
OLDER PEOPLE			
Commissioning health, social care and wellbeing services for older people	Statement of older people's needs, trends and, patterns of need to be completed, kept up to date and fed into the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy. (This will show the impact of the growing population of very old people in Denbighshire and what this means for services.)	Needs assessment completed December 03	Needs assessment completed
	First draft of 3 year Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy to be produced, identifying developments in older people's services.	By April 2004- Public consultation to December 2004	HSCWB Strategy adopted December 2004 after extensive public consultation.
	Costed and timed development plan completed to meet present and future needs in different parts of Denbighshire - for both Social Services with health, housing etc	During 2004	Draft Commissioning Strategy completed May 2004. Accepted following consultation in Dec 2004. Action Plan to deliver Strategy will be formally presented for agreement at Cabinet in April 2005.
Developing new preventative /rehabilitative services for older people	Rate of older people helped to live at home kept at least to the Welsh average. This will be done through increasing the range of preventative and rehabilitative services e.g. through the Community Assessment Partnership, Contact Warden in private sector housing, Direct Payments, welfare rights support. We will set targets and establish monitoring systems to track our performance in:	From 2003 / 04	<p>NAWPI's currently exceeding Wales averages e.g.</p> <p>3.7 - Current performance is exceeding target and is in line with strategic intent and is demonstrating good performance in minimising the number of people in care placements.</p> <p>2x 0.5 Contact Warden posts established in public sector housing.</p> <p>Reablement Team significantly strengthened with an expected increase in capacity.</p> <p>EMH Stakeholder Workshops took place in Jan 2005.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post of part time POVA Co-ordinator established and filled. Dedicated admin support identified. Significant increase in activity April - November . 20 formal investigations. • EMH Joint Commissioning Project Manager appointed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the rate of people helped to live at home above the Welsh average 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing short-term services that help people to live at home and the success of short-term services in enabling people to live at home without further service input. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The achievements of new specific preventative/rehabilitative services 		

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
OLDER PEOPLE (continued)			
Developing new preventative /rehabilitative services for older people (cont'd)	<p>At least 1 extra care housing scheme to be developed</p> <p>More people connected to Piper Lifeline and upgrade of local authority sheltered housing started</p>	By April 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership Group established. ECH (extra care housing) Scheme in Rhyl developed and funding confirmed. On site 2005. • ECH Project Manager appointed. • Political consensus in relation to reprovision of existing EPH facilities in Prestatyn gained. • No of private sector connections to Piper Lifeline increased by 3% (830 to 854) • Upgrade of local authority sheltered housing (windows programme) begins 2005
	Denbighshire Conference of Older People to be held	Summer 2004	At the Older People's Wellbeing Steering Group it was concluded that activities and objectives identified in Denbighshire's Older People's Strategy Development Plan superseded the original proposal to hold this conference.
	Best Value Review of Services of Older People completed - showing i) how the County Council generally will help older people keep their independence and promote their wellbeing and ii) providing ways for older people to be recognised as involved and contributing to their communities	By April 2006	A Best Value Review is no longer being carried out. A Local Authority 'Falls' review is being undertaken with the aim of identifying ways in which numbers of falls and falls related injuries can be reduced among older people in Denbighshire Review of Stroke Services(led by LHB) undertaken. Piloting of block contract for EMH nursing beds Jan - March 05 to facilitate hospital discharge. Audit of older people's participation in Denbighshire underway via Beth Johnson Foundation- reports 05.
	Delayed discharge rates from hospital kept low; new schemes with the Local Health Board and the Trust started to avoid need for admission to hospital or residential care, including aiming to reduce the number of people suffering a preventable fall,.	As funding allows from April 2004	3.8 Good performance continues. There have been some specific problems with finding appropriate placements for adults and older people with MH problems who are awaiting discharge from the Ablett Unit.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
OLDER PEOPLE (continued)			
Developing existing independent sector services	Funding of independent care providers targeted to help reduce turnover of care staff and increase the stability of the sector. Subject to funding, increases will be above the rate of Inflation	From April 2004	Increases over the rate of Inflation were awarded to Independent Sector Providers in 2004/05 (6%)
	Quality of independent sector care services to be checked regularly by new Community Care Contracts Officer and Supporting People Contracts Officer	From April 2004	1 x Contracts Officer and 1 x Supporting People Contract Officer appointed. 1 further Contract Officer post out to advert.
	More block contracts to be negotiated by Contracts Officer Care Brokers to be appointed. (Both measures are to ensure care is available and available promptly when needed).	From 2004/05, depending on funding	3 Jointly commissioned block contracted beds in EMI Nursing Homes. Learning from this pilot will inform the future direction re: possible Dom. Care Block Contract arrangements. Improvement Group formed. Contract Broker out to advert.
Developing existing local authority services	Future of local authority residential homes to be agreed	2004	Achieved - Political approval given for future development of Extra Care Sheltered Housing in Prestatyn initially. Rolling out across rest of County subsequently. Outcome of discussions have resulted in a safety net role for LA Homecare in the South of County. Concentrating in the North on clients with complex needs (e.g EMI or P/Dis) All LA residential homes have received favourable CSIW Inspections. Food Hygiene has been identified as Good to Excellent.
	Local authority home care service to be focused increasingly on rehabilitation services as part of implementation of Commissioning Strategy for Older People.	From 2004/05	
	Quality of services directly provided by the local authority to be tested by formally developing and monitoring standards. Performance against standards will be made public.	from April 2004	
UNIFIED ASSESSMENT			
Streamlining arrangements for assessing needs across agency boundaries	Pilot of unified assessment approach undertaken in at least one service areas within Services for Older People. Success of the pilot evaluated including using service user views of the effectiveness / benefits.	2004/05	Successful pilot in Community Assessment Partnership (CAP) Team. Extensive training programme completed. Progress against all developmental milestones. Recent SSIW Inspection interim feedback was 'good progress'
OLDER PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS			
Developing specialist services	Specialist EMH Team to be established	During 2004	EMH Team Manager half time post identified and Specialist Team established.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
ADULT MENTAL HEALTH			
Establishment of Integrated Mental Health Service by Denbighshire and Conwy Councils, Denbighshire and Conwy LHBs and the Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust	Integrated Mental Health Service up and running, with * clear statement of the social care benefits to be delivered for users and carers, and * good links to other services e.g. learning disabilities, older people, children	By October 2004	On target for June / July 2005.
	Service users involved in measuring effectiveness ("outcome measures") as the basis for evaluating the integrated service.	From 2003	Users are part of the Project Board. There is an agreed Service User involvement strategy.
	Ways to develop and fund alternatives to hospital admission to be explored with health services	2004/06	Development of out of hours ("assertive outreach") support in MH Services are progressing subsequent to enhanced funding to LHB from WAG. (Wanless £)
PHYSICAL DISABILITY & SENSORY IMPAIRMENT (PDSI)			
Developing a specialist service and increasing the range of services	Initial work carried out for an Objective 1 bid to provide employment opportunities	2004/05	Joint project developed in conjunction with Children's Services and Job Centre Plus Bid about to be submitted.
	Specialist PDSI Team to be established with its own Team Manager and effective links to Children with Disabilities services	during 2004	PDSI Team established and fully staffed. Team placed in new accommodation.
LEARNING DISABILITY			
Maintaining the quality of existing services against the background of increasing numbers and limited budgets	Strategies to be developed for maintaining the quality of existing services, providing for increasing numbers, while keeping within budget.	2004/05	Additional budget 05/06 linked to demography. Work opps income target increased. Currently 8 people on Rhyl KeyRing Scheme (low level support) 2 x Stakeholder Workshops undertaken in Dec 2004. SSD & Health Officers Group established to review options for a way forward (integration or not).
	Pros and cons of establishing an Integrated Learning Disability Service considered.	2005	
	Dedicated Team Manager for the Learning Disability Team to be appointed, with good links to Education and Children's Services.	During 2004	Team Manager appointed
CARERS			
At least maintaining service levels	Service levels maintained to at least the level of grant funding provided by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2003 / 2004	ongoing	Service levels exceeded
	Increase number of Carers Assessments offered and those accepted by 20%		Data being collated at year end

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
CHILDREN'S SERVICES			
Improving cross-sector planning and provision for children	Service planning for children better joined up through strengthening the influence and performance of the Children and Young People's Framework Partnership, and the Area Child Protection Committee - performance against Action Plans/Business Plans to be monitored	from 2003/04	Needs assessment undertaken 2004 providing basis for identifying joint priorities, allocation of resources eg audit of Family Support services. Cross-agency support for development of joint systems eg to improve participation of children/young people, information sharing, joint commissioning arrangements. Strategic plans in place and being monitored
	Clear agreements to be made cross-agency about referrals and criteria for services for vulnerable children	2004/05	Child Concern model adopted cross-agency. Pilot underway
	Integrated Children's System (cross agency method of streamlining arrangements for assessing children and families' needs) implemented	from 2004	Preparatory work undertaken. Procuring of new social care system has ensured ICS capability.
	Integrated Children's Centres providing services to Children and Families (e.g. pre-school and after school facilities, breakfast clubs, parenting support) to be opened in Rhyl and Prestatyn	Rhyl opens Spring 2004	Rhyl ICC opened January 2005. Manager in post with usage developing and second phase planned.
	Community, preventative and rehabilitative services to be provided to over 3000 children/young people and 1600 families in Communities First and other disadvantaged areas, and to children with disabilities using Cymorth funding. (Figures submitted by projects may double-count if children and families benefit from more than one initiative). Effectiveness of services monitored and evaluated through Service Level Agreements and feedback from children, young people and families. Annual report to be produced.	April 2004- April 2006	Cymorth funded services being provided to an estimated 4000+ children/young people following monitoring of Service Level Agreements, though monitoring information currently available is superficial in many cases. Progress report submitted to WAG. External evaluation to be commissioned 2005. Formal user feedback also to be collated 2005.
	Overall funding for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHs) increased by the Local Health Board, with monitoring systems put in place to track improved access to services - including for Looked After Children	From 2003/04	£400k investment in CAMHs services made by LHB during last 2 years, and specific arrangements for looked after children put in place. Waiting lists still extensive, however.
	More people claiming the benefits they are entitled to via the "Quids for Kids" Campaign in Denbighshire	2004/05	Estimated additional £250k generated for children, young people and families

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
Commissioning services for children in need)	Written, timed and costed strategies to be completed for children with disabilities, (and linked with the work of the new Adult PDSI team), care leavers and Family Support	2004/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited progress made via • Cymorth funded Family Support audit which reports March 05 • Supporting People Planning process and development of additional supported housing for young people
	More foster carers recruited and track record in keeping foster carers improved	By April 2005 - funding for intensive recruitment campaign agreed.	Payment for skills and recruitment campaign delayed following Foster Carer Network advice to delay pending involvement of foster carers. Foster Care Improvement Project in place since Autumn 04 following CSIW inspection of the service. Improvement measures being taken with high level involvement of foster carers. Reinspection February/March 05. Payment for skills scheme to Cabinet March 05.
	Increased number of foster carers with NVQ qualifications. 25% of foster carers recruited before April 2004 to achieve NVQ	September 2005	
	Foster care fee paying scheme to be introduced	From April 2004 (subject to funding)	Foster carers with NVQ3- ??????
	Placement breakdown rate reduced to Welsh average	By 2006	Placement breakdown rate still unacceptably high-aggregate rate at the end of the third quarter of 04/05 was 18.3% against a target for the whole year of 17%
	Care Co-ordination pilot underway; learning shared with adult PDSI and Learning Disabilities services	Begins 2003	Pilot in place and subject to review
	Rapid Response Team up and running	Begins 2003	Team in place
	Resources for Leaving Care Team to be identified; Modern Apprenticeships and other employment initiatives started. 80% of all pathway plans to be completed on time	2004/05	Leaving Care Team has been enhanced through provision of Team Manager post, Senior Practitioner, accommodation officer and 2 social workers. No specific employment initiatives yet started. Completion of pathway plans steadily increased to 60% in the last quarter.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
Performance Improvement Plan for Children's Services	All High and Medium priority cases to be allocated to an appropriately qualified and experienced worker	By December 2004	100% allocation of cases of children on the Child Protection Register has been maintained. However, allocation of looked after children dipped to below 80% in the last quarter and remained at approximately 60% for children in need
	Child Care social worker vacancy rate reduced from 30% (12 posts) to 15% (6 posts) - so that people get help earlier and there is a reduction in the number of social workers a child has. Where posts can not be filled permanently we will look to cover vacancies with competent agency staff.	By April 2005	Vacancy rate as at 30 December was 7 posts vacant = 22.5%. Though there has been an increase in posts from 26 to 36, stability in some teams has not yet been achieved with some teams also carrying high sickness rates.
	Assessments, care plans and reviews completed in line with national averages	By April 2005	Comparisons difficult because of the lack of available national data. However, local data shows 25% of initial assessments were completed within 7 days (the national standard) though all were completed within 10 days. No core assessments were carried out in the required national timescale (30 days). 100% of child protection reviews were completed in required timescales but a smaller % of looked after children's cases received timely review.
	Workload management in place	In 2004	Preparatory work has been carried out and a scheme is being piloted in the Childcare North Team. The scheme has not been finalised or implemented across all teams, largely for capacity reasons.
	Audit tool (checking system) to be used systematically to check that procedures, protocols and good practice in child protection are followed consistently by staff	from January 2004	Some file audit work is being carried out by managers and a core dataset to enable monitoring of key processes has been available monthly since 2004. However full implementation of audit programme and comprehensive monitoring against accountability framework has not been achieved.
	Corporate accountability framework, identifying who is responsible for what, and focussing on child protection to be adopted by the Council (This is a particular response to the Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié).	December 2003	

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
ALL SERVICES			
Recruitment and retention/ workforce planning	The number of social worker vacancies throughout the Department to be reduced from 20% (16 posts) to 11% (9 posts)	March 2005	7 posts vacant in Children Services and 1 post in Adult Services December 2004.
	Social Worker turnover rate to be reduced from a Departmental rate of 28% (21 posts) to 14% (10 posts)	March 2005	
	Social work traineeships to be increased to 10 - this is so we have a better supply of social workers in years to come	2005	8 Social Work Traineeships and bursaries and 2 OT traineeships in place.
	Occupational Therapist traineeships introduced - linked to new local college course, to increase supply of OTs	2004	
	Plan agreed for recruiting, training and retaining Approved Social Workers (ASWs)	2006	
	More young people and those over retirement age to be employed. Staff to have more flexible work patterns - this is so we have a better supply of social care staff	year on year increase to 2005, then review	Increase in younger age group employed and staff working either on specific projects or on relief pool after retirement.
	Our record in training our staff to be maintained, along with an increasing reputation for "growing our own" staff . Career paths, routes to traineeships, numbers of staff with recognised qualifications and secondment opportunities to be monitored.	from 04/05	Progress on qualifications remains good. But further opportunities to be developed for post qualifying skills development.
	The new recruitment measures will specifically aim to increase the proportion of staff in all services who are Welsh speaking	In place	Maintaining numbers able to speak Welsh but no increase in Children's Services, where numbers are low.
	Staff absence due to sickness to be reduced by 0.5% each year so that absence is reduced from 6.9% (10,959 days) in 2002/2003 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.4% in 2003/2004 (10,165 days) • 5.9% in 2004/2005 (9,731 days). 	by 2005	Half year figures show target exceeded- 5.8%. However, data does not reflect anecdotal position- true position under-reported?
	Co-operation with other agencies and sectors on training and work-force planning to be prioritised. This will be underpinned by a 5% increase in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of joint training schemes • The number of places on SSD courses available to the broader social care sector, service users and carers • The number of users and carers involved in the delivery of training events 	from 2004/05	Co-operation is being maintained and developed by Workforce Development Co-ordinator figures on delivery and attendances will be available in May.

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

Programme	Targets and performance indicators	Timescale	Progress
Using information and performance management	Useful and accurate information on social care activity, trends and costs is available to staff, other agencies, user and carer organisations to enable better planning and management of services and performance comparison. Information will be available every 3 months on Denbighshire's web site.	April 2004	Information is being made available to staff and managers but not yet to other agencies. The yearly return to the Assembly is a published document and the link will be available on the web site. It is considered that the level of detail would not be required by visitors to the web site until we have capacity to summarise the document each quarter.
	IT to be used to the full to improve the effectiveness of services to the public. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the range of public information on the web by 20% Using the web as part of the consultation exercise for at least 5 different consultation exercises Using the web as part of at least 2 user surveys A year on year increase in the number of services available via the internet and take up A year on year increase in the number of people accessing the web 	from 2004/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive HSCWB consultation undertaken SSIW Inspection of Adult Services undertook independent consultation with users / carers across all groups. Focused consultation with a groups of L/D users and carers (supported by advocacy service) Established consultation with MH users completed. Outcome measure QA exercise with all Rehab users undertaken Review Officers regular undertake QA interviews with residents of Older Peoples establishments. Dom. Care Survey in progress
	Programme of user surveys to be in place, with at least 10% of all clients to be surveyed each year. Surveys will have a specific focus on user satisfaction and outcomes	From 2004/05	
	A more comprehensive programme of file audits will be put in place in all services to check performance against key practice standards	to be built up from 2003/04	
	The Personal Services Scrutiny Committee will link up directly with user and carer groups to get their views on services. (The Scrutiny Committee has decided to focus on the topics of Older People (especially day care), services in rural areas, sheltered housing, staff recruitment and retention and Children's Services in the period up to the local government elections in May 2004)	From November 2003 - May 2004	
Funding social care	Detailed review of budget requirements to be undertaken by Social Services and the Central Finance Department jointly	2004/05	Not progressed
	1% savings to be found from Adult Services and Business Support and Development budgets in 2004/05 (£216k) and reinvested in services	2004/05	Savings were found and were used for Children's Services and Data clean up officers
	All Council resources, joint funding and external funding used to the full to support opportunities and independence for people who have social care needs - e.g. Council employment policies developed for vulnerable groups, access to Leisure Centres improved, Rhyl Regeneration Strategy implemented	from 2004	Specific policy developments have linked corporate priorities with the needs of social care users eg Extra Care scheme as part of Rhyl Regeneration, Social Inclusion in Employment

JOINT REVIEW
Progress report for July 2004 - January 2005

			Strategy, Youth Services prioritising future accessibility for disabled young people
--	--	--	--

Report to: Cabinet

Report by: Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

Date: 22 March 2005

Subject: Fostering Services for Children
Payment for Skills 2005

1. Decision Sought

- 1.1 For Cabinet to agree the implementation of a Payment for Skills programme and Policy from 1 April 2005, as outlined below and in the attached appendixes and to agree the weekly Fostering allowances; to approve the fostering, birthday and holiday allowances; to approve the Weekly Residence Order Allowances rates; to freeze the current levels of allowances and fees to carers registered on the Foster plus scheme, as set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 For Cabinet to agree the revised payment Residence Order schedule allowances for relevant children.
- 1.3 For Cabinet to delegate to the Chief Executive, from the date of this meeting, the power to exercise the functions and make decisions on the matters as set out in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 above.

2. Reason for Seeking Decision

- 2.1 Children's Services uses Foster Care services as a prime source of care for Looked After Children (LAC). Up to 85% of the LAC population at any one time are placed with local authority Foster Carers. This approach represents good practice on behalf of the authority, maintaining children in everyday households instead of institutions; helping them to sustain links and community involvement rather than estranging children from usual environments and family networks.
- 2.2 There are some exceptions to this, so in some instances where children have a demand for more specific or special care for any number of reasons, they may be placed in Special Residential Placements or with Independent Foster Agencies (IFAs). Whilst these demands are very appropriate for some children, they are also very expensive.
- 2.3 In some instances IFAs have to be used because there are no other local fostering vacancies available. This increases costs to between £600 and £1,500 per week per child; at an average cost just exceeding £1000.00 per week.
- 2.4 Nationally in the UK there is an enormous shortage of Foster Carers. There are a number of reasons behind this:

- The needs of many of the children are increasingly complex and more challenging
 - Lifestyle changes and working patterns have increased other employment/caring opportunities/responsibilities for families
 - Remuneration and terms and conditions for Independent Fostering Agencies and within other Local Authorities have created a wider 'marketplace' for foster carers to consider
 - Support and involvement in foster care services has been generally better in the Independent Fostering Agencies where they only have a single focus
- 2.5 Locally we have experienced recruitment and retention difficulties. The position in Denbighshire has not been helped by an increase in LAC numbers, combined with a turnover of foster carer staff. Efforts have been made to reduce the numbers of children being cared for; the monthly average during the year has been 160 and is expected to remain at a similar level through 2005/06.
- 2.6 As you are already aware, we established a Project Managed approach to achieve change in the foster care services following a very poor CSIW review. The views of foster carers are foremost in these activities. They are saying that pay, support and involvement in Denbighshire differ entirely from their peers in other Local Authorities. Further information from our local North Wales Authority partners confirms this position; the rates we pay are substantially lower than others, and our approaches taken towards carer recruitment are not targeted or focussed with a marketing approach. Information about local rates is contained in Appendix 2
- 2.7 In addition recent research extrapolated from All Wales commissioned research in the Fostering Networks' 'Fit to Foster' report, has born out some of the statements; identifying that Denbighshire carers are very committed to their work, but that they have taken this on as a private activity rather than as an activity where they feel part of, and engaged with the authority. They particularly felt less well supported than other carers in Wales and they also felt they were less well informed about the children they cared for and less involved in work of the fostering service as a whole.
- 2.8 This means that Foster Carers in Denbighshire have been less well engaged, trained, supervised by the authority and consequently more vulnerable to complaints or allegations being made against them. Overall, this has made this service area very vulnerable and potentially unattractive to new carer recruitment. Denbighshire carers have indicated that they would actively recruit their friends if they felt more confident about these areas.
- 2.9 A range of changes are being implemented as part of the wider work of the Fostering project to improve care for LAC. Improved structures and procedures for training, work supervision and monitoring, and improvements in support and information relationships have been introduced. The benefits of these changes are already beginning to show as more foster carers are

attending regular meetings, attending more training and generally responding very positively to the changes around them.

- 2.10 Complementary to the greater involvement and to encourage and sustain recruitment, a new remuneration package is proposed based on the acknowledgement that we need to ensure that we offer comparable market opportunities and pay levels linked to carer career development and carer retention.
- 2.11 To address these difficulties, we propose to introduce the following tiered payment scheme for carers. There are four levels of foster carers, Primary, Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3; with the Tier 3 carers being those who have the NVQ qualification and with the greatest experience and expertise. Movement to achieve Tier 2 or Tier 3 will be determined by a Tier Assessment Panel, which will ensure that a robust selection process occurs.
- 2.12 A brief description of the tier structure is as follows:

➤ **Primary Foster Carers**

These are newly approved Foster Carers, generally in the first 6 months of their approval,

Or

Are Approved Family and Friends Foster Carers

➤ **Tier 1 Foster Carers**

These are Foster Carers who have demonstrated their ability over the initial period of their approval and who have commenced Post Approval training

➤ **Tier 2 Foster Carers**

These are Foster Carers who have completed the Post Approval and the Tier 1 training programme, who have met the core competencies requirement of their role and who have been approved by the Tier Assessment Panel as a Tier 2 Carer.

➤ **Tier 3 Foster Carers**

Are those carers who have achieved the NVQ Level 3 in 'Health and Social Care – Children's Pathways', who are approved by the Tier Assessment Panel, and who are actively involved in recruitment, the development of policy and practice, and who make a significant contribution to this area of service to the Authority.

3. Power to make the Decision

- 3.1 The Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002
The Care Standards Act 2000
The Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2003
The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (Wales)

Denbighshire County Council (DCC) Statements of Aims and Objectives for the Fostering & Adoption Service

4. Cost Implications

- 4.1 The current actual costs are £878,220, the proposed costs would be £1,195,981; the 2005/06 budget has been increased to allow for this.
- 4.2 The true costs for this service provision are variable; estimates have been prepared on the basis of a series of assumptions based on past information and knowledge. This is a demand-led service and thus subject to the vagaries of need as it occurs. However, costs are planned to be met through existing service budgets which have been modelled to identify the options available for these payments.
- 4.3 The impact of this change should enable greater opportunities for recruitment and retention, but this will also be enhanced by the requirement for carers to participate in mandatory departmental training and development to improve our Corporate Parenting standards through the quality of care they deliver.
- 4.4 It is hoped that we will be able to increase the number of foster carers so that we will be able to reduce the number of children we place in Independent Foster Placements. These placements are more expensive, are often outside the County and therefore require more work to maintain contact and relationships and more importantly are also outside of our direct control and management. Initially however, this change cannot happen until we have enabled the recruitment of more foster carers for Denbighshire.

5. Financial Controller statement

- 5.1 Specialist foster care and residential placements cause serious pressures within the Children's Services budget and have contributed to an estimated overspend of £423k in 2004/05. The introduction of the new payments scheme is intended to reduce the number of costly specialist placements in the longer term. The scheme will potentially increase expenditure by £318k although additional financial resources of £375k have been made available for fostering services in the base budget for 2005/06. The financial implications of the scheme must be contained within the resources available within the directorate and a key financial outcome of the implementation of the scheme should be a reduction in specialist placements although it is acknowledged that this may take more than a single financial year to achieve. The success of this scheme must be reviewed during 2005/06, including specific analysis of trends in specialist placements and foster carer retention.

6. Consultation carried out

- 6.1 Wide consultation has taken place in consideration of this proposal. Direct information and discussion meetings have been held with Foster Carers as individuals; via the Foster Carer Network meetings and through the Fostering Project workgroups.

6.2 Consultation has also taken place with the Family Placement Team members and with other internal DCC Personal Service staff. Less formal consultation has taken place with voluntary agency representatives working locally and specifically in Wales; with other partner LAs and also generally through the Fostering Project workgroups memberships.

7. Implications for other policy areas including Corporate

7.1 None other than as identified above in 6.0 above.

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Approve the introduction of the Payment for Skills programme and Policy from 1 April 2005, as outlined in this report and the attached appendixes.
- Approve the Fostering Allowance rates as detailed in Appendix 1
- Approve the Festival, Birthday and Holiday allowances as detailed in Appendix 1
- Approve the weekly Residence Order allowances as set out in Appendix 1
- Freeze the current levels of allowances and fees to foster carers registered on the Foster Carer register

8.2 It is recommended that Cabinet delegates to the Chief Executive, from the date of this meeting, the power to exercise the functions and make decisions on the matters as set out in paragraphs 8.1 above.

Denbighshire Foster Carer Payments

1. Current Payments

- Weekly Fostering Allowances by child age:

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 15	16+
Total	£66.01	£81.94	£102.06	£132.09

These allowances are paid to the carer for each child for each week the child resides with them.

- Additional Allowances

The Fostering Allowances for Looked after Children not being cared for by Friends and Family carers are supplemented by additional payments as follows:

- Holiday Allowance – Additional 2 Weeks Fostering Allowance
- Birthday Allowance – Additional 1 Week Fostering Allowance
- Christmas Allowance – Additional 1 Week Fostering Allowance

- Supplementary Fees

In 1999, we introduced supplementary fees for some Foster Carers based on their competency levels, but also linked to some of the more complex needs of those children for whom they cared, more particularly linked to their behaviour. These payments were generally referred to as 'Foster plus' allowances and were paid in addition to the Fostering Allowances at two levels:

£80 weekly – half fee
£160 weekly – full fee

The differential levels represented the different challenges appropriate to each child.

2. Proposed Payments

These are based payment at the level of 80% of 2004/05 National Fostering Network rates for the UK. We have assumed that we will need to move incrementally towards achieving payment at the full Fostering Network recommended levels; we understand that the Welsh Assembly Government are considering the establishment of National Payment rates, which may be introduced during 2006/07, however, we propose to phase payment changes until that position is known. Payments will continue to be made for each child for each week that a child remains in residence with the foster carer.

- **New Weekly Fostering Allowances by child age:**

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 15	16+
Total	£86.79	£98.86	£123.07	£153.10
Increase	£20.78	£16.92	£20.11	£21.01

Fostering Allowances are intended to meet the costs of care for the child, including food, clothing, transport, household costs and pocket money. These costs used to

Denbighshire Foster Carer Payments

be defined and broken down by element by the Fostering Network, but they ceased to provide this breakdown from 2003/04. For general guidance, approximately 30% is for food, 25% for clothing, 9% for transport, 25% for household costs and 11% for pocket money. This will vary slightly according to the age of the child. The Supervising Social Worker will ensure that the fostering allowances are applied appropriately for the benefit of each child.

• Payment for Skills Rates

Tier	Primary	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
1	£0	£50	£100	£150
2	£0	£75	£150	£200
3+	£0	£100	£200	£350

These payments are linked to the *number* of children residing in the household as well as the Tier level for each carer. They are payable when children are in their care i.e. this scheme is not paid as a salaried care arrangement.

Example: A Tier 2 carer fostering two children aged 8 and 9 will receive £150 Payment for Skills plus the relevant fostering allowances at £98.86 per child for each week the children remain living with that carer. Total payable £347.72.

Payment for Skills 2005

These payments are specifically for the Foster Carer's expertise, linked to the criteria as described in the new Policy and Procedure. A brief description of the tier structure is as below:

➤ Primary Foster Carers

These are newly approved Foster Carers, generally in the first 6 months of their approval,

Or

Are Approved Family and Friends Foster Carers

Interim authorised Family and Friends Foster Carers will receive limited allowances as follows during their assessment period (six weeks).

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 15	16+
Total	£55	£70	£85	£100

➤ Tier 1 Foster Carers

These are Foster Carers who have demonstrated their ability over the initial period of their approval and who have commenced Post Approval training

➤ Tier 2 Foster Carers

These are Foster Carers who have completed the Post Approval and the Tier 1 training programme, who have met the core competencies requirement of their role and who have been approved by the Tier Assessment Panel as a Tier 2 Carer.

Denbighshire Foster Carer Payments

➤ Tier 3 Foster Carers

Are those carers who have achieved the NVQ Level 3 in 'Health and Social Care – Children's Pathways', who are approved by the Tier Assessment Panel, and who are actively involved in recruitment, the development of policy and practice, and who make a significant contribution to this area of service to the Authority.

- **Protection**

In the event that these changes are not equivalent or exceed the payment levels paid currently to foster carers, payment protection will be applied. This situation may apply particularly to two or three foster carers who have been providing care for a number of children with complex needs and have been eligible for Foster plus payments at the full rate of £160 per child per week. Account has been taken of this possibility within the financial calculations. It is anticipated that over time, this disparity will reduce as the Payment for Skills rates change. There will be no further proportional increases to the Foster plus rates; they will remain fixed at current levels until they become superfluous.

- **Pocket Money**

Further guidance specifically about pocket money will be produced separately during 2005. This also will incorporate greater guidance about savings, which will be linked to the Child Trust Fund initiative and will include arrangements to ensure a balance for children placed in residential care.

- **Additional Allowances**

The New Fostering Allowances for Looked after Children not being cared for by Friends and Family carers will continue to be supplemented by special additional one-off payments for holidays, birthdays and for festivals i.e. Christmas; Eid, etc as follows:

These will be paid at the following rates:

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 15	16+
Holiday	£100	£150	£200	£250
Birthday	£50	£75	£100	£125
Festival	£50	£75	£100	£125

- **Insurance Benefits**

Additional benefits from another funding stream are being considered to offer additional 'All Risks' insurance cover for Foster Carer households. Foster carers are sometimes disadvantaged by their household contents cover, in that if malicious damage occurs as a result of actions taken by a fostered child in their care, they are precluded from making a claim because the child is deemed to be a member of their household. 'All risks' taken out on their behalf by Denbighshire, would ensure that they could claim for any malicious damage exceeding £100 and would also offer them additional benefits for expenses incurred in the event of any legal actions taken against them. In the event that this insurance can be obtained for foster carers,

Denbighshire Foster Carer Payments

there would be few instances where any additional payments or specific purchases of equipment would be required to compensate for this; it would represent options for overall savings by the service.

The Council's Insurance Manager is advising Children and Family services further about this option.

- **Welfare Benefits**

These new levels of payment may affect some Foster Carers who have previously had to supplement their household income from allowances from the Benefits Agency.

The Welfare Benefit advice team will offer specific advice and assistance about income levels to any Foster Carers who are concerned about their position.

For general welfare benefit guidance:

- a two parent family with two children would receive £175.91 per week from April 2005
- a single parent family with two children would receive £143.96 per week from April 2005

These amounts would also be supplemented by additional means-tested allowances for Housing Benefits covering rent and council tax. Additional allowances linked to pension benefits may be payable to people over 60.

- **Tax**

The Inland Revenue give specific guidance to foster carers about their earned income; from April 2003, they offer specific 'Foster care relief' to local authority foster carers.

Carers may receive a household income of £10,000 annually, plus up to £200 per week for each cared for child under 11 and £250 for each cared for child over 11, before tax deductions are made. This is in addition to their tax personal allowances.

- **Residence Orders**

These will be paid at the new weekly Fostering Allowance rate, subject to the automatic deduction of child allowance rates prior to payment.

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 16
Total	£86.79	£98.86	£123.07

(N.B: Residence order payments cease at age 16)

From April 2005, child benefit deductions will occur at the following weekly rates:

For only/eldest child - £16.50

Denbighshire Foster Carer Payments

Lone parent rate - £17.55
For other children - £11.05

- **Short breaks for Non-Disabled children and Partial weeks**

These will be paid the rate of one seventh of the Fostering Allowances and PFS Rates.

Neighbouring LA Foster Carer Payments

1. Anglesey				
Fostering Payments				
Age	0 - 4	5 - 10	11 - 15	16+
	£109	£124	£154	£195
Skills	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	
	£0	£100	£200	

Anglesey pays the Fostering Network rates and has 3 tiers but only pay additional allowances for the upper two. Tier 3 carers must have NVQ level 3

2. Gwynedd				
Fostering Payments				
Age	0 - 4	5 - 10	11 - 15	16+
	£108.49	123.58	153.84	191.37
Skills	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	
	£0	£0	£230	

Gwynedd pay the Fostering Network rates and extra sum of £230 to carers who achieve NVQ level 3

3. Conwy				
Fostering Payments				
Age	0 - 4	5 - 10	11 - 15	16+
	£108.49	123.58	153.84	180.00
Skills	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	
	£0	£175	£250	
	£0	£200	£300	
	£0	£225	£350	

Conwy pay Fostering Network rates for all except the 16+ age group and pay variable skills rates depending on the age of the child(ren) in placement.

4. Flintshire				
Fostering Payments				
Age	0 - 4	5 - 10	11 - 15	16+
	£83.95	£96.60	£119.60	£150.65
Skills	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	
1	£65	£125	£230	
2	£65	£125	£230	
3	£81.25	£156	£287	
4	97.50			

Flintshire pay 80% of the Fostering Network rates and offer some additional variable skills payment rates depending on the number of children/their ages in the household.

5. Wrexham				
Fostering Payments				
Age	0 - 4	5 - 10	11 - 15	16+
	£108.36	£108.36	£153.79	£191.24

Neighbouring LA Foster Carer Payments

Wrexham pay around the Fostering Network rates, plus for Carers who achieve NVQ Level 3 a one-off payment of £250, followed by Skills payments at £250 weekly. No other skills payments are made.

Wrexham have an 'All Risks' cover policy for their Foster Carers.

- Every effort has been made to pitch the payment levels for Denbighshire to the right prevailing market level. Our benchmark 'competitor' and neighbour, Conwy, have significantly increased their foster carer payments and this has also significantly improved their recruitment rates.

Policies & Procedures

Appendix 3



**Personal Services Directorate
Social Services Department
Children and Family Services**

**Foster Care
Denbighshire Payment for
Skills scheme**

Date of Issue:	1 March 2005
Author:	Sue Williams
Implementation Date:	1 April 2005
Document Class:	New
Revision Date:	February 2006
Footer:	FOST/PfS/Spw/version1/April2005

FOSTER CARER - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Payment for Skills

1. CONTENTS	Page No.
1. Contents	2
2. Introduction	3
3. Policy Statement	3
4. Policy Objectives	3
5. Equal Opportunity Implications	3
6. Legal and Policy Context	4
7. Procedure - Training and Development	4
Before Approval as a Foster Carer	4
• Police Checks	4
• Competency Assessment	4
• Prior to Approval	4
• Skills to Foster Course	5
Foster Care – A Tiered Approach to Payment for Skills	6
1. Primary Foster Carers	6
2. Tier 1 Foster Carers	7
3. Tier 2 Foster Carers	9
4. Tier 3 Foster Carers	9
Being on Top, Staying on Top	10
5. The Tier Assessment Panel	10
6. Friends and Family Foster Care	11
7. When there are Problems	12
8. Interim, transitional or holding payments	13
9. Foster carers adopting children in their care	13
10. Residence Orders	13
APPENDIX 1 – Payment Levels	14
• New Fostering Allowances	14
• Payment for Skills	14
• Protection	14
• Pocket Money	15
• Additional Allowances	15
• Insurance Benefits	15
• Welfare Benefits	15
• Tax	16
• Residence Orders	16

2. INTRODUCTION

Foster Carers are important to Denbighshire County Council; the service they provide on behalf of the Council is unique and valued by the authority. It is therefore essential that the Children's Social Services is appropriately structured and organised to ensure standards for foster care are clear, well founded and maintained so that foster carers can be well trained, supported and appropriately remunerated for the services they provide.

This policy establishes new remuneration arrangements in keeping with these principles.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Training and development is a key part of foster carer personal and skills development and is considered as a vital element for quality foster care.

Attendance at training events and participation in supervision and management programmes will be a mandatory element to retaining registration as an Approved Foster Carer for Denbighshire County Council.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that foster carers have the skills to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child placed in their care
- To enable foster carers to work with parents and children¹ in the context of a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-linguistic society and develop positive attitudes to disadvantaged groups

NB: Where there are two adults in one household who jointly share the professional tasks of fostering, both must successfully complete all training. Where there are two adults approved in one household with one of them as the main carer, the main carer must meet all the criteria for the level and the other carer must complete all pre-approval training, the initial post-approval training and such subsequent training as is deemed necessary by the fostering service.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

This policy applies equally, and affects all staff, foster carers and service users.

¹ Throughout this document, reference is made to the child or children, this term is used generally to describe all children from 0 to 18 years of age, and thus will include all teenagers/young people

6. LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002
The Care Standards Act 2000
The Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2003
The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (Wales)
Denbighshire County Council (DCC) Statements of Aims and Objectives for the Fostering & Adoption Service

7. PROCEDURE - TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT - FOSTER CARERS

1. Before Approval as a Foster Carer

- 1.1 Most of the initial work immediately following contact from a prospective carer will focus on ensuring that they have all the information they require to feel confident about the role and responsibilities they are considering. Part of this process also includes the completion and submission of police check documents.
- 1.2 **Police Checks** - Prospective carers will not be approved by the Fostering Panel unless they can obtain enhanced clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The process of police checking will take place in parallel with the pre-approval training programme with an assumption that approval will be given. This will ensure that recruitment delay is minimised where possible. Prospective carers who do not achieve enhanced CRB clearance will be unable to receive approval as foster carers.
- 1.3 **Competency Assessment** - The process of foster carer recruitment will include assessment linked to the BAAF - British Association for Adoption and Fostering, Core Competency guidelines. The assessment process begins on the first visit from your allocated Supervising Social Worker. Progress will be monitored and recorded as part of the assessment process and will be linked to the Pre-Approval training programme.
- 1.4 **Prior to Approval** - As part of the competency assessment, prospective foster carers will need to attend specific training activities. These activities are intended to identify whether the household and all of its constituent members are safe and ready to deliver foster care services in conjunction with Denbighshire CC. The competency assessment will require successful completion of "**The Skills to Foster Course**".

The Skills to Foster Course contains:

**6 x 2 ½ hour sessions for Prospective Foster Carers and
1 x 5 hour session for the children in their household**

The 6 sessions contain the following modules:

- What do Foster Carers do?
- Who are Looked After Children?
- Working Together
- Safer Caring
- Understanding Behaviour & Attachment
- Moving On

Successful candidates will be submitted to the Fostering Panel for consideration; the Fostering Panel will decide whether to recommend carers for the Corporate Director of Personal Services to approve. Approval will enable carers to be actively considered for their first placement.

- 1.5 It is quite feasible that some applicants will not complete this course and assessment process. Some applicants will drop out as they realise fostering is not for them. Others may drop out because they are put off by parts of the training or assessment. We will work very hard to ensure that the training programme is meaningful and focussed with links to existing foster carers for guidance.
- 1.6 Once **Approved**, a foster carer will be identified as a **Primary Foster Carer**.
- 1.7 Family and Friends carers may, in accordance with regulation 38 of the Care Standards Act, begin caring for a child before they are approved as foster carers. These carers will also be known as Primary Foster Carers.

FOSTER CARE - A TIERED APPROACH TO PAYMENT FOR SKILLS

There are four tiers or levels to the Payment for Skills programme: Primary; Tier 1; Tier 2 and Tier 3. Each level brings a different range of requirements and responsibilities linked to training, development, support and supervision arrangements. Progression will be dependent on both wish and ability, and will be linked to achievement linked to set criteria gained through further on-going assessment. All aspects of foster care demand expertise and a foster care training programme will be a mandatory requirement.

1. Primary Foster Carers

General: The Primary status is designed to ensure that a newly approved carer receives support and training for the initial period of their work with fostered children. It recognises their availability and commitment to being a foster carer for Denbighshire County Council. After an initial 6 month period, a Primary Foster Carer will have a first review, at which time they will be assessed. In the event that the review confirms the Primary Foster Carer has fulfilled their training and care requirements, consideration will be given to their transfer to Tier 1.

To become a Primary Foster Carer you will have:

- Completed the “The Skills to Foster Course”
- Been Approved as a Foster Carer by Denbighshire Fostering Panel
- Attended the core mandatory training i.e. the Post Approval Training courses (or show evidence of prior learning which means you already meet the Aims and Objectives of the courses)
- Been available to accept your first placement OR you will already be caring for a named child or children as a Family and Friends Foster Carer

Most newly approved foster carers will be considered to be Primary Foster Carers, although this will be dependent on previous experience and the outcome of the Pre-approval assessment as, on some occasions, newly approved foster carers may be able to demonstrate the skills, training and experience necessary to begin on Tier 1.

To remain approved as a foster carer, a Primary foster carer must:

- Maintain at least 50% attendance at the Foster Care Forum meetings
- Maintain attendance at the mandatory post approval training
- Meet monthly for supervision with your Supervising Social Worker
- Participate annually in your personal development review meeting, or, the Annual Foster Home Review Meeting

Post Approval Training for Primary Foster Carers

- 1.8 Post Approval Training happens after being **approved** as a Foster Carer by Denbighshire Fostering Panel, but may come at varying points in time, dependent on course availability; the timing of the first placement; etc.
- 1.9 Each two-carer household must complete the training or must be able to demonstrate evidence of prior learning, which means they can already meet the Aims and Objectives of the course. In a household where there is a second adult who is not actively engaged in professional fostering tasks, agreement about essential training will be reached through supervision discussions with the Supervising Social Worker.
- 1.10 **Post Approval Training** = 5 x 4 hour courses

The courses are:

- What it means to look after a 'Looked After Child'(LAC)
This would include issues around preparing families and friends, working with families of Looked After Children and the LAC and Assessment Framework
- Receiving, Recording and Storing Information
- Helping to protect children and young people
This would include possible allegations against carers
- Promoting equality and children's rights
- Basic First Aid

2. TIER 1 FOSTER CARERS

General: It is expected that you will accept foster care responsibilities children within your approval range as **allocated** by the Family Placement Team.

OR

Accept foster care responsibilities for specific named child/ren on a Friends and Family carer basis.

Progress to achieve full placement for the number of children within your approval range, will be determined in agreement with your Supervising Social Worker through supervision, personal development review and Annual Foster Home review.

To become a Tier 1 Foster Carer you will have:

- Commenced the mandatory Post Approval Training (or show evidence of prior learning which means you already meet the Aims and Objectives of the course):

- Fulfilled the requirements of a Primary Foster Carer i.e. have been accepted by the Fostering Panel and been available for placements
- Accepted your first placement on an allocated basis OR be caring for a specific named child or children as per the terms of your interim approval by the fostering panel.
- Have normally completed an initial fostering period of 6 months

To remain approved as Tier 1, a Tier 1 Foster Carer must:

- Complete the mandatory Post Approval training (or show evidence of prior learning which means you already meet the Aims and Objectives of the course)
- Maintain at least 50% attendance at the Foster Care Forum meetings
- Maintain attendance at the mandatory post approval training
- Meet monthly for supervision with your Supervising Social Worker
- Participate annually in your personal development review meeting, or, the Annual Foster Home Review Meeting
- Have provided placement(s) for LAC for at least 20 weeks from the previous 52
- Commence the following mandatory Tier 1 Training courses:
 - Promoting Educational Opportunities and Leaving Care (1 x 4 hours)
 - Promoting Health, Social Wellbeing and a Positive Sense of Self and Identity (1 x 4 hours)
 - Attachment (1 x 4 hrs)
 - Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Family Care Providers (TCIF) (6 x 4 hours)

At this stage you may also:

Register an interest for the NVQ Level 3 studies 'Health and Social Care – Children's Pathway'

Acceptance onto this course will be subject to the availability of places and assessment of your ability to achieve the required work standards of the NVQ award.

Tier 1 Foster Carers who are approved for a named child or children are able to proceed to Tier 2 if they wish to extend the terms of their approval. For this, they must be approved to accept foster care responsibilities for children not known to them in a friends/relatives capacity i.e. provide foster care on a general, not just a named-child/ren basis.

3. TIER 2 FOSTER CARERS

General: Progression to Tier 2 will be dependent wish, ability, and will be linked to achievement linked to the set criteria gained through further on-going assessment as indicated above. Assessment of a request to move from Tier 1 to higher tiers will be considered by the Tier Assessment Panel

To become a Tier 2 Foster Carer, you will have:

- Complied with all requirements of Tier 1
- Met the core competencies requirement as assessed with you through discussion your Supervising Social Worker
- Been approved as a Tier 2 Foster Carer by the Tier Assessment Panel
- Completed the mandatory Tier 1 training
(Or, show evidence of prior learning which means you already meet the Aims and Objectives of the course)

To remain as Tier 2, a Tier 2 Foster Carer must:

- Maintain at least 50% attendance at the Foster Care Forum meetings
- Meet monthly for supervision with your Supervising Social Worker
- Participate annually in your personal development review meeting, or, the Annual Foster Home Review Meeting
- Provide placement(s) for LAC for most of the time
- Have demonstrated the skills to work with children with more complex needs within your agreed approval range
- Have attended core training according to your individual need as agreed with your Supervising Social Worker

You may also have:

- Registered for/commenced the NVQ Level 3 studies 'Health and Social Care – Children's Pathway'

4. TIER 3 FOSTER CARERS

To become a Tier 3 Foster Carer, you must have:

- Complied with all the requirements of Tier 2
- Met the core competencies requirement as assessed with you through discussion your Supervising Social Worker
- Been Approved as a Tier 3 Foster Carer by the Tier Assessment Panel
- Successfully completed the NVQ Level 3 studies 'Health and Social Care – Children's Pathway'
- Been a positive and active member of the Foster Care Forum

Tier 3 Foster Carers take on additional tasks, and are expected to have:

- Been actively involved in the recruitment, training and assessment of prospective carer's
- Contributed to the development of policy and practice
- Been able to offer support to carers on a formal basis through an agreed model of visiting, recording and group work

It is recognised that some Tier 3 foster carers may be restricted in their time available for these additional tasks due to the demanding nature of the foster care that they are providing.

Being on Top - Staying on Top – Tier 3 Foster Carers

Being a Tier 3 Foster Carer demands commitment and dedication. Not all of our lives permit this level of participation all of the time. In recognition of this, Foster Carers may request a change to their status and may ask to drop back into another Tier. This would bring about a representative change i.e. reduction to their payment level.

There may also be other instances when consideration of a Tier level may take place; your Supervising Social Worker or the Fostering Panel may request a review.

5. THE TIER ASSESSMENT PANEL

Making the transfer from Tier 1 to the higher Tiers at 2 and 3; is considered an important step. Ensuring that carers achieve the right level at the right time necessitates an additional competency assessment process. The Tier Assessment Panel will provide an independent assessment of a request to move between tiers.

The competency assessment used will gather information from the Foster Carer, their Supervising Social Worker, child care Social Worker of children currently or recently in placement, and will have regard to the supervision, training and competency records held. The panel will comprise the following members:

- The Family Placement Team Manager (Meeting Convenor and Chair)
- The NVQ Assessor
- A nominated Supervising Social Worker
- A nominated Foster Carer member

The panel will determine the application and make a recommendation for, or will decline upgrading, to the Service Manager - Resources and Specialist Services.

The panel may also be asked to consider assessment where foster carers are underperforming; this would be in circumstances where a Supervising Social Worker or the Fostering Panel has requested a review.

6. FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOSTER CARE

- 6.1 Family and Friends care is considered as an important model of support for children, providing some advantages through feeling safe with people known to them; maintaining links to family, siblings and friends; sustaining racial, linguistic and cultural heritage.
- 6.2 A child may be living within the extended family or with a close family friend for a number of reasons. The person caring for the child is also known as a “kinship carer”. Often this is informal care, and there is no involvement from social services. However, on other occasions, the child and/or his family may be assisted and supported by social services. In this situation, it is important that everybody is clear whether the child is living with the kinship carer as an informal arrangement as part of a private fostering arrangement (i.e. not approved by the Fostering Panel) or whether the child is looked after by Social Services and has been placed with Family and Friends Carer(s).
- 6.3 An assessment is carried out of the child’s needs. If it is agreed that the child’s welfare would be at risk unless the local authority takes action to provide accommodation and care, the child is placed by the local authority with the Family and Friends Carer. This means that the child is “looked after”, and the carer must become approved as a Denbighshire foster carer. Usually the carer will be approved specifically for that named child. These foster carers are commonly called “Family and Friends Foster Carers”. The Care Standards Act allows Denbighshire to place a child with family or friends before the carer has been approved as a foster carer, but there are strict guidelines governing such placements. These are laid out in Regulation 38 of the Care Standards Act.
- 6.4 The use of Family and Friends Foster Carers is considered as essential to a well run fostering service, and thus a vital component of Denbighshire’s approach. We recognise that all foster carers will require support and assistance to play a full part for fostered children. We therefore require family and friends foster carers to participate fully in the mandatory selection assessment processes and training programme. We do, however, recognise that some of the needs and circumstances of family and friends foster carers differ from those of other foster carers. We are therefore flexible in how we provide training to ensure it is appropriate to their needs.

Some training may be provided on an individual basis as assessed by the Supervising Social Worker, however, Family and Friends foster carer training

will generally be provided as part of the regular training programme for all foster carers.

- 6.5 Approved Family and Friends foster carers will be Primary carers, eligible for Fostering Allowances.
- 6.6 Interim authorised Family and Friends carers will receive specific allowances pending their approval.
- 6.7 Family and Friends foster carers may apply for approval to foster children on an allocated basis in addition to fostering the named child/ren. If they are successful in their application, they may progress to Tiers 2 and 3 of the Payment for Skills scheme (provided they meet all the other requirements of those Tiers).
- 6.8 Following assessment, some children may not be determined to be at risk, they may only be considered as a 'child in need'. In these circumstances, their family/friend carers may receive cash or assistance in kind (Section 17 of the Children Act). The child has not been placed by social services with these carers, and therefore the child is not legally a "looked after child". As the child is not placed by social services, there is no need for the carer to become an approved foster carer. None of the requirements, responsibilities or provisions for approved foster carers would therefore apply to these informal family and friends carers, although private foster regulations might apply.

7. WHEN THERE ARE PROBLEMS

- 7.1 This covers arrangements in those unfortunate instances where there are Complaints and Allegations; issues that require Suspension and where a Foster Carer requests Resignation at one of these times.
- 7.2 In general the severity of the issue under consideration will decide the actions that need to be taken. All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Corporate/Departmental timescales for inquiry. Matters of concern will be raised with the Fostering Panel.
- 7.3 Where it is deemed that inquiries or investigations must be implemented and the fostered children cannot remain in the placement, the foster carer will be eligible to receive **Payment for Skills** for the maximum period of 12 weeks. These will be paid at full rate for the first 6 weeks and at half rate (50%) for the remaining 6 weeks.
- 7.4 All investigations and inquiries will be conducted in accordance with part 4 of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures. In the event that those inquiries

identify no cause for concern, the Head of Service will authorise placement use.

- 7.5 In the event that there are further concerns or the allegations are more serious, the outcome will be determined by the Fostering Panel
- 7.6 During the period of any inquiries or investigations in accordance with the regulations governing POCA; Foster Carers may not resign. This is to ensure child safety in the event of any founded concerns relating to the foster carer.

8. INTERIM, TRANSITIONAL OR HOLDING PAYMENTS

- 8.1 There are occasional issues where change for a child may bring about the need to retain the existing placement for a child for the initial stages of a new placement. Examples include:
- an adoption placement
 - for a specific planned rehabilitation period/activity
- 8.2 In the event that a placement is deemed to offer challenges to the child and there is a need to retain a former placement for a limited period, the Foster carer will be eligible to receive **Payment for Skills** for a maximum of 6 weeks. Authorisation can be given for the first 3 weeks by the Family Placement Team Manager, with approval for any second three weeks from the appropriate Service Manager.
- 8.3 For any periods exceeding 6 weeks, approval may only be sought from the Head of Service.

9. FOSTER CARERS ADOPTING CHILDREN IN THEIR CARE

- 9.1 Foster Carers who apply to adopt children in their care will cease to remain eligible for Fostering Allowances and Payment for Skills. They will receive payments in accordance with the agreed policy in the Denbighshire Adoption Allowance Scheme.

10. RESIDENCE ORDERS

- 10.1 Family and Friends carers may wish to accept a greater responsibility for the children in their care and, in agreement with the child's family, may wish to apply for a Residence Order

- 10.2 Carers will be eligible for allowances and payment for skills as follows:
XXXXXXXX

APPENDIX 1 – PAYMENT LEVELS

- New Weekly Fostering Allowances by child age:**

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 15	16+
Total	£86.79	£98.86	£123.07	£153.10
Increase	£20.78	£16.92	£20.11	£21.01

Fostering Allowances are intended to meet the costs of care for the child, including food, clothing, transport, household costs and pocket money. These costs used to be defined and broken down by element by the Fostering Network, but they ceased to provide this breakdown from 2003/04. For general guidance, approximately 30% is for food, 25% for clothing, 9% for transport, 25% for household costs and 11% for pocket money. This will vary according to the age of the child, where it would generally be expected that there would be less for the household element and more for pocket money. The Supervising Social Worker will ensure that these resources are applied appropriately for the benefit of each child.

- Payment for Skills Rates**

Tier	Primary	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
1	£0	£135	£175	£225
2	£0	£175	£225	£275
3+	£0	£225	£275	£350

These payments are linked to the *number* of children residing in the household as well as the Tier level for each carer. They are payable when children are in their care i.e. this scheme is not paid as a salaried care arrangement.

Example: A Tier 2 carer fostering two children aged 8 and 9 will receive £225 Payment for Skills plus the relevant fostering allowances at £98.86 per child for each week the children remain living with that carer. Total payable £422.72.

- Protection**

In the event that these changes are not equivalent or exceed the payment levels paid currently to foster carers, payment protection will be applied. This situation may apply particularly to two or three foster carers who have been providing care for a number of children with complex needs and have been eligible for Foster plus payments at the full rate of £160 per child per week. Account has been taken of this possibility within the financial calculations. It is anticipated that over time, this disparity will reduce as the Payment for Skills rates change. There will be no further proportional increases to the Foster plus rates, they will remain fixed at current levels until they become superfluous.

- **Pocket Money**

Further guidance specifically about pocket money will be produced separately during 2005. This also will incorporate greater guidance about savings, which will be linked to the Child Trust Fund initiative and will include arrangements to ensure a balance for children placed in residential care.

- **Additional Allowances**

The New Fostering Allowances for Looked after Children not being cared for by Friends and Family carers will continue to be supplemented by special additional one-off payments for holidays, birthdays and for festivals i.e. Christmas; Eid, etc as follows:

These will be paid at the following rates:

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 15	16+
Holiday	£100	£150	£200	£250
Birthday	£50	£75	£100	£125
Festival	£50	£75	£100	£125

- **Insurance Benefits**

Additional benefits from another funding stream are being considered to offer additional 'All Risks' insurance cover for Foster Carer households. Foster carers are sometimes disadvantaged by their household contents cover, in that if malicious damage occurs as a result of actions taken by a fostered child in their care, they are precluded from making a claim because the child is deemed to be a member of their household. 'All risks' taken out on their behalf by Denbighshire, would ensure that they could claim for any malicious damage exceeding £100 and would also offer them additional benefits for expenses incurred in the event of any legal actions taken against them. In the event that this insurance can be obtained for foster carers, there would be few instances where any additional payments or specific purchases of equipment would be required to compensate for this; it would represent options for overall savings by the service.

The Council's Insurance Manager is advising Children and Family services further about this option.

- **Welfare Benefits**

These new levels of payment may affect some Foster Carers who have previously had to supplement their household income from allowances from the Benefits Agency.

The Welfare Benefit advice team will offer specific advice and assistance about income levels to any Foster Carers who are concerned about their position.

For general welfare benefit guidance:

- a two parent family with two children would receive £175.91 per week from April 2005

- a single parent family with two children would receive £143.96 per week from April 2005

These amounts would also be supplemented by additional means-tested allowances for Housing Benefits covering rent and council tax. Additional allowances linked to pension benefits may be payable to people over 60.

- **Tax**

The Inland Revenue give specific guidance to foster carers about their earned income; from April 2003, they offer specific 'Foster care relief' to local authority foster carers.

Carers may receive a household income of £10,000 annually, plus up to £200 per week for each cared for child under 11 and £250 for each cared for child over 11, before tax deductions are made. This is in addition to their tax personal allowances.

- **Residence Orders**

These will be paid at the new weekly Fostering Allowance rate, subject to the automatic deduction of child allowance rates prior to payment.

Age	0 - 4	5 -10	11 - 15	16+
Total	£86.79	£98.86	£123.07	£153.10

From April 2005, child benefit deductions will occur at the following weekly rates:

For only/eldest child - £16.50
Lone parent rate - £17.55
For other children - £11.05

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

REPORT TO: CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR P A DOBB, LEAD MEMBER FOR HEALTH & WELL BEING

DATE: 22ND MARCH 2005

SUBJECT: IMPROVING THE COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 That Cabinet note progress on consultations with Members and tenants, and with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).
- 1.2 To delegate to the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing the authority to submit a draft Housing Stock Business Plan to WAG.
- 1.3 That a further report be presented on the options of Stock Transfer or Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing after more consultations and consideration of the HSBP by WAG.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

2.1 Progress to Date

- 2.1.1 Cabinet on 23rd November 2004 agreed to a new round of consultations on the options for improving the Council Housing Stock to Welsh Housing Quality Standards.
- 2.1.2 A Seminar for Members and tenant representatives was held at Henllan on 20th December 2004 and a further Discussion Day at Trefnant 20th January 2005. Area meetings for all tenants are being arranged for late March/early April.
- 2.1.3 A meeting between Denbighshire Officers and WAG Officers was held on 13th January 2005 to clarify assumptions to be included in the Business Plan models for each option. WAG officials emphasised the need to submit a "Housing Stock Business Plan" by 31st March 2005 or penalties could be imposed. The HSBP is the basis of the Prudential Borrowing Model.
- 2.1.4 The Housing Options Working Party met at Trefnant on 25th January 2005 and should now be the main formal channel for continuing consultation with tenants.

2.2 Stock Transfer Option

- 2.2.1 A provisional version of this model was submitted to WAG in the early stages of this process in 2002. The model has been updated to take account of the proposed capital programme for 2005/06 and beyond and matching the

revenue and capital programmes in each option except where they differ for legal reasons such as liability for VAT. Future rent levels have been increased slightly given WAG advice that average rents should increase by 2012 to 100% of Benchmark Rents rather than the previous proposal of a range from 90% - 100% and only the 'best' properties at Benchmark.

2.3 Retention with Prudential Borrowing Option

- 2.3.1 This model has been further amended to take in WAG advice on treatment of capital receipts once existing debts are cleared, and particularly that rents in excess of Benchmark Rents would be unlikely to be approved even if that was required to pay for Prudential Borrowing. This shifts the emphasis to ensuring that adequate savings can be achieved and/or subsidy entitlement maximised within the HRA to release funding to pay for such borrowing.
- 2.3.2 The revised model appears to provide a possible way forward but only if a number of variables are validated. Some of these are controlled by WAG and, therefore, their formal approval to the 'Housing Stock Business Plan' is required to ensure that they will continue to provide the level of funding assumed in the plan.
- 2.3.3 One major variable in the plan is the cost of future improvements and there is some concern about these given the unexpectedly high level of recent tenders. This will need to be monitored carefully once new tenders for the major contracts for 2005/06 are assessed.
- 2.3.4 A draft Housing Stock Business Plan has, therefore, been prepared for submission to WAG before their deadline of 31st March 2005 but this could only be implemented if it is approved by WAG and then Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing were adopted. At this stage, Cabinet Members are not being asked to express support for either option since we need WAG's comments on the business plans first.

3. POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Housing Act 1985.

4. COST IMPLICATIONS

Full costs of revenue and capital works for the HRA and for the Council Fund would need to be included in the appropriate Business Plan under either option. The continuing costs of the investigations themselves are being monitored.

5. FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The Business Plan must be submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government by 31 March 2005 in order to avoid potential financial penalties being imposed against the Council. WAG approval of the business plan will determine whether Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing can be considered as an

option for improving the Council's housing stock. The continuation of full consultation will assist in ensuring that the financial implications of Stock Transfer or Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing are fully understood.

6. CONSULATION CARRIED OUT

Meetings as referred to above have been held with Members and with tenant representatives and with WAG officials. A joint meeting of Resources Scrutiny Committee and Personal Services Scrutiny Committee is to be held on 14th March to receive a presentation on the current position.

7. IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The improvement of housing under either option will have benefits for community development and energy efficiency policies and health and well being of tenants. Rent increases above inflation would impact on Anti-Poverty policies. The level of tenant involvement and empowerment in the selected option will have implications for community governance.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet note progress on consultations with Members and tenants, and with Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

To delegate to the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing the authority to submit a draft Housing Stock Business Plan to WAG.

That a further report be presented on the options of Stock Transfer or Stock Retention with Prudential Borrowing after more consultations and consideration of the HSBP by WAG.

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: CLLR S ROBERTS, LEAD MEMBER FOR PROMOTING DENBIGHSHIRE

DATE: 22 MARCH 2005

SUBJECT: HEATHER AND HILLFORTS

1 DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to proceed to the Development and Implementation stages of the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme which would secure an investment of £2 million in conserving and improving the upland heritage of the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountains, increase people's enjoyment and understanding of the area, and improve tourism opportunities in Denbighshire.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

- 2.1 In 2002 Cabinet gave approval to proceed with a Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Project Planning Grant Application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This was approved in July 2003, and provided funding to develop a Stage 1 Heather and Hillforts Project application. A Project Planning Officer was appointed by Countryside Services to develop the partnership and to work up the project on behalf of the County Council as the lead partner.
- 2.3 The Project Planning Phase has involved undertaking a condition survey of both the heather and hill forts within the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountains, together with the development of a Conservation Plan, Access and Audience Development Plan, Training Plan, Business Plan and Landscape Character Assessment, required to accompany the stage 1 application by the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 2.4 Excellent work has already been completed by the project to date, especially through increasing our understanding of the heritage in this area. For example, the hillforts condition survey commissioned identified over 70 potential hut platform sites that were previously unrecorded, providing important new information for the future management of these sites.
- 2.5 A comprehensive programme compliment has been developed by the Project Planning Phase, which will include habitat and hillfort restoration work, community based study projects, improvement to footpath routes, education and training projects, cultural tourism initiatives, audience development schemes and access projects. A summary paper outlining the aims and objectives of the Heather and Hillforts initiative as it has developed through the Project Planning stage is attached as Appendix 1.

- 2.6 The Project Planning phase is nearing its conclusion and a decision is now required on progressing to the next stage of the project. The Heritage Lottery Fund application procedure is quite lengthy. Subject to Cabinet approval at today's meeting, submission of the Stage 1 Development Phase Application will be made in April 2005. This should be determined by the Heritage Lottery Fund by October 2005, following which the Project would enter the Development Phase which will take a further year to complete. It will involve the development of in-depth management plans, the review of the Landscape Partnership Scheme and an implementation plan for the first year. A subsequent Stage 2 Implementation Phase application will then be required to secure their approval for the final implementation of the Heather and Hillforts Project. If approved, it is anticipated that the Implementation Stage would commence in 2007/08 and cover a three year period up to 2009/10.
- 2.7 If successful, the Heather and Hillforts initiative would be a flagship partnership project led by Denbighshire County Council for the integrated heritage management of the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountain, which is such an important asset within the County. The Heather and Hillforts Project would also be the first Landscape Partnership Scheme in Wales, a great achievement which would reflect well on the Authority.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 3.1 Section 2, Local Government Act 2000; power to promote the social, economic and environmental well being of the area

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Project Planning phase cost £60,000, but most of this has been financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partnership funding; the County Council's capital contribution has been £5,000. The Phase 1 Development Stage of the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Project will require an investment of £160,000 towards the development of upland heritage projects in the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountains. £106,500 of the project costs will be secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and £27,500 funding has been secured from other sources (Cadwyn Clwyd and the Countryside Council for Wales). The County Council will be asked to make a contribution of £25,000 in the 2005-06 Capital Plan (£1,000 of the Development Stage costs will be an in-kind contribution), and Cabinet approval is sought to make such a recommendation to Council.
- 4.2 If the Heather and Hillforts Development Stage and subsequent Implementation (Stage 2) Heritage Lottery Fund Applications are successful, it would result in a £2 million investment for heritage restoration, management and interpretation, together with audience development and access projects to be spent over three years. Up to 75% of the project cost would again be secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund with additional funding from other sources. The County Council will be asked to make a contribution of £75,000 per annum for each of the three years of the implementation phase of the

project. This is just over 10% of the total project costs and would represent excellent leverage and value for money for the Council.

- 4.3 Although the Heritage Lottery Fund would back this project with up to 75% of the funds, discussions with their senior officers indicate that our application is likely to be more successful if a significant financial contribution is made by the County Council as the lead partner to demonstrate a clear commitment to the Landscape Partnership.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

- 5.1 The block allocation provision for match funding for capital schemes within the capital programme is £100k in 2004/5 and 2005/6. £29k is currently committed from the 2004/5 block. The 2005/6 allocation is still intact. The allocation is usually retained until late in the financial year to ensure match funding is available for any late schemes attracting last minute funding from external sources.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 6.1 Both the Lifelong Learning and Environment Scrutiny Committees expressed their support for the Heather and Hillforts project when it was originally conceived, and have since then confirmed their support to proceed to the Development and Implementation stages at their meetings on 27 January and 2 February 2005.
- 6.2 The Heather and Hillforts Project has been developed within an inclusive framework. Representatives from Flintshire and other statutory bodies (such as the Countryside Council for Wales, Cadw and the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historic Monuments Wales), interest groups, local businesses, landowners and members of the local community have contributed towards the development of the Project Programme through themed focus groups and through the Landscape Partnership Board.
- 6.3 A survey of the Denbighshire 500 has also been undertaken to ask representatives of the local community about their feelings towards the uplands, their knowledge about local heritage, and their priorities for spending any new grant money secured. The survey received a very positive response rate of 37%. The survey was also undertaken in shows and events across Denbighshire during the summer and was also made available in local libraries.
- 6.4 The results of the Heather and Hillforts residents questionnaire clearly demonstrates the importance of the upland heritage of the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountains to the residents of Denbighshire. 88% of local residents felt that the countryside was part of their heritage. 81% of respondents strongly agreed that it was important to conserve the heritage of the uplands, whilst 77% strongly agreed that education about local heritage was vital. A very positive response was also given in terms of the interest in participating in future heritage events. In response to the question as to what

should be the emphasis of actions within the Heather and Hillforts project, erosion management was given the highest priority followed by the provision of more information, heather moorland management and education.

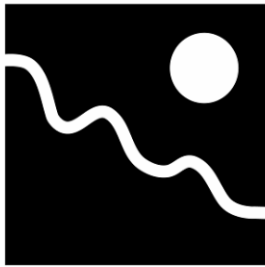
- 6.5 A further comprehensive community consultation programme was undertaken through the Countryside Exchange Scheme. The Heather and Hillforts Project hosted a visit from a team of international delegates who provided advice and guidance relating to developing community links within the Project. Three well attended public open meetings were arranged as part of the Exchange, again clearly demonstrating the importance of the upland areas to the local communities.
- 6.6 Presentations have also been given about the Heather and Hillforts Project to the Hillforts Study Group, Civic Trust, Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee, the NFU and the National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

- 7.1 The Heather and Hillforts Project will directly contribute to attaining the strategic aims and goals of many cross cutting policy areas, including the Culture and Leisure Strategy, Denbighshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan. In addition it will deliver outcomes related to the Lifelong Learning, Economic Prosperity and Environment themes of the Community Strategy. Securing substantial external grant aid will also contribute to the Council's financial targets.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 That Cabinet expresses its support for the Heather and Hillforts Project, and approves that it should proceed to the Development and Implementation phase.
- 8.2 To recommend to County Council that they make provision for a £25,000 contribution to the Heather and Hillforts project in the 2005-06 Capital Plan.



ygruga'r caerau heather and hillforts

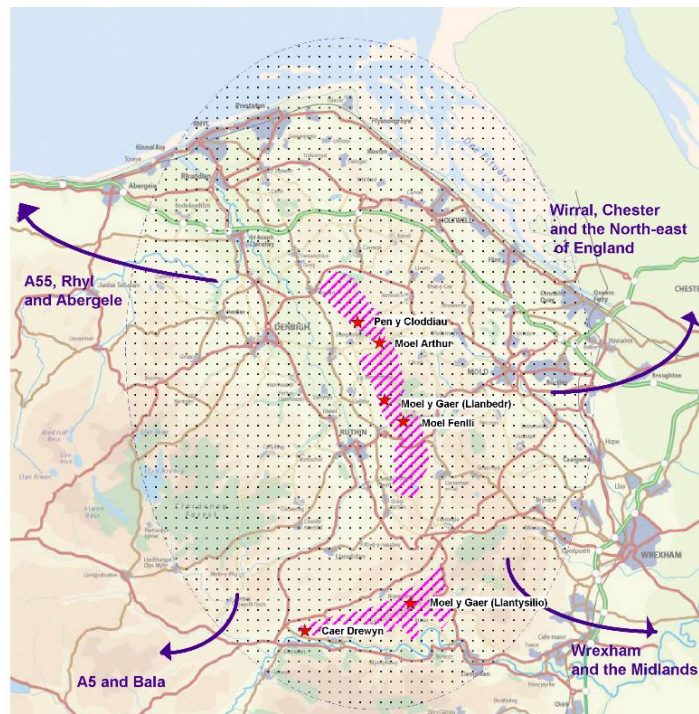
Heather and Hillforts Project – Landscape Partnership Scheme

What is the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme?

Two distinctive features of north east Wales' countryside, the Heather and the Hillforts, will be the focus of an exciting project which may be in the pipeline for areas of the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountain.

The distinct purple heather moorland that carpets the Clwydian uplands contributes to creating its outstanding beauty, it is a valuable habitat for wildlife and provides grazing for sheep, linked to traditional cynefin areas. Over the past fifty years the area of heather moorland has declined by half, with a significant amount of the remaining area being in poor condition. Enhancing the quality of the heather moorlands, through better management and understanding, is a key aim for the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme.

Another striking feature of the Clwydian uplands is the chain of hill top Iron Age forts. The hillforts are remnants of a past culture and a way of life, which form a unique historic landscape in Wales. Little is known about this intriguing pattern of hillforts, the aim is therefore to investigate our past, ensuring that the remains are suitably managed for the future.



Key

- Core upland project area
- Sphere of influence
- Hillfort site located within the project area

The Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme Aims

Overall, the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme hopes to improve understanding, increase awareness and accessibility, and influence the future management of the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountain.

The aim is to provide a strategic approach to restore and maintain the historic and natural heritage of the uplands as a sustainable landscape through;

- the conservation and restoration of the heritage of the hillforts and heather moorland, demonstrating sustainable agriculture in harmony with a landscape of outstanding historic and biodiversity value;
- reconnecting people to and increasing their enjoyment of the heritage of the uplands, through education, interpretation, events and audience development initiatives;
- increasing our understanding of the hillfort and moorland heritage which will provide the basis for future management, restoration and interpretation projects.

The Heather and Hillforts Project Programmes

Our Hillfort Heritage

The six hillforts of Pen y Cloddiau, Moel Arthur, Moel y Gaer (Llanbedr), Moel Fenlli, Moel y Gaer (Llantysilio) and Caer Drewyn are a spectacular feature of the historic landscape in the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountain. The Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme aims to develop a community study programme of the hillfort sites, which would greatly increase our understanding of these important monuments. The potential to gain new information about the hillforts was highlighted by a recent condition survey commissioned by the Project Planning Phase, which identified over 90 previously unidentified hut platform sites.

The Our Hillfort Heritage Programme would also develop a strategic approach towards positive management work to restore and limit erosion damage to the hillfort sites. The work would involve restoring damaged footpaths, redirecting some routes to avoid further damage to important archaeological features and taking action to prevent further damage from the illegal use of the uplands by off-road vehicles.

Our Moorland Heritage

Heather moorland is a highly valued wildlife habitat that is considered to be of regional, national and international value. The Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme aims to restore the favourable condition of the moorland through heather management and bracken control. The aim is to facilitate areas of Common Land especially to enter into management agreements and agri-environment schemes, which will provide financial assistance to sustain positive moorland management in the long term. The project also aims to develop a training programme in partnership with Llysfasi College in traditional moorland management techniques. A moorland watch initiative and a fire risk management project would also be established, with the aim of adopting a proactive approach to minimising the potential future damage to the habitat.

Understanding Our Uplands

Every year over half a million people visit the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Area and many of those are completely unaware of the natural and historic heritage significance of their destination. A broad range of innovative interpretation projects will be established by the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme, ranging from exhibitions, remote trails, education resources, and information publications. Increasing public participation in upland heritage management will create a greater understanding of the value of these special areas.

The hillfort settlements were built on the hill tops to take advantage of easily defensible sites, which means that these areas will remain in-accessible to many. Bringing the heritage character of the uplands down to the local communities is a core aim of the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme, making the special heritage of the area accessible to those who would otherwise be unable to enjoy these sites.

Improving Access for All

The fourth core programme under the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme will improve physical accessibility to the heritage of the uplands. The Access Programme will involve footpath improvements, establishment of heritage trails, development of the public transport network and a programme of events. The Programme also aims to subsidise the cost of transport to the Project Area for educational purposes and from disadvantaged areas. The Improving Access for All Programme will be closely linked to the Understanding Our Uplands Programme.

Project Management

A project team would be established to deliver the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme, which would involve a Project Manager, Hillforts Conservation Officer, Moorland Field Officer, Interpretation Officer and an Administration Officer. A seasonal graduate placement would also be provided through the scheme. The Heather and Hillforts Project staff will be integrated into Denbighshire Countryside Service division of the Culture and Leisure Department.

Supporting the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme

The aim of the Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme is to develop an exemplar area for integrated upland heritage management. If successful, the Heather and Hillforts Project would be one of the first Landscape Partnership Scheme in Wales, which would provide far reaching benefits for the upland heritage of the Clwydian Range and Llantysilio Mountain.

Further Information

Please Contact

Helen Mrowiec
Heather and Hillforts Project Officer
Denbighshire Countryside Service,
Yr Hen Garchar,
46 Clwyd Street,

Tel: 01824 708257

Ruthin
LL15 1HP

Fax: 01824 707202

Email: helen.mrowiec@denbighshire.gov.uk

Project Planning Phase Funded by:



Gyda chymorth
Cronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri
Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund



REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor P J Marfleet, Lead Member for Finance and Personnel

DATE: 22 March 2005

SUBJECT: Revenue Budget 2004/05

1 DECISION SOUGHT

That Members note the budget performance figures for the current financial year as detailed in the attached appendices.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The need to deliver the Council's agreed budget strategies for the current financial year and avoid budget pressures in 2005/06.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Local Authorities are required under section 151 of the Local Government Act (1972) to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

The projections undertaken at the end of February 2005 show a potential overspend at year end of £0.349m (£0.366m at the end of January 2005, following the resolution of disputed college transport charges). This position is consistent with the projections presented to Cabinet since December 2004.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

There is now very little time until the end of the financial year and the latest projections reflect the anticipated outturn position. The impact of the budget overspend will be offset against budget savings in respect of capital financing charges and improved investment income returns. It remains imperative for Directorates to contain budget pressures during the remaining weeks of the current financial year.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Lead Cabinet members will be required to consult with Heads of Service to agree necessary remedial action to prevent overspends in 2004/05.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The level of funding available to services together with budgetary performance impacts upon all services of the Council.

8 RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the figures in the appendices.

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2004/05
POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2005**

Directorate	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Net Expenditure (Previous Report) £000s
	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Lifelong Learning (excluding schools delegated)	28,086	-9,474	18,612	28,338	-9,288	19,050	252	186	438	477
Environment	29,526	-8,322	21,204	29,391	-8,278	21,113	-135	44	-91	-108
Personal Services	47,348	-20,153	27,195	45,898	-18,740	27,158	-1,450	1,413	-37	-42
Chief Executive	3,370	-876	2,494	3,431	-869	2,562	61	7	68	68
Resources	7,595	-2,243	5,352	7,954	-2,631	5,323	359	-388	-29	-29
Corporate, Miscellaneous & Benefits	18,802	-15,342	3,460	18,802	-15,342	3,460	0	0	0	0
Total All Services	134,727	-56,410	78,317	133,814	-55,148	78,666	-913	1,262	349	366
Capital Financing Charges/Investment Income			10,931			10,931			0	0
Precepts & Levies			4,737			4,737			0	0
			93,985			94,334			349	366

Note:

The Management Accounting rules of the Council require debtor account entries to be reversed in respect of amounts outstanding for more 30 days after the due date. In the event that debts cannot be collected, services will be required to meet the cost of the debt write-off. This may impact on the actual outturn achieved by services at the year end.

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2004/05
LIFELONG LEARNING
POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2005

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Net Expenditure (Previous Report) £000s
	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
Individual School Budgets	47,544	-5,036	42,508	47,894	-5,536	42,358	350	-500	-150	0
School Funds Held Centrally	15,687	-4,256	11,431	15,772	-3,964	11,808	85	292	377	377
Non school Funding	1,219	-817	402	1,219	-797	422	0	20	20	0
Leisure Services	6,553	-3,387	3,166	6,708	-3,473	3,235	155	-86	69	122
Culture	2,923	-317	2,606	2,922	-318	2,604	-1	-1	-2	0
Countryside	1,107	-658	449	1,141	-696	445	34	-38	-4	0
Youth	597	-39	558	576	-40	536	-21	-1	-22	-22
	28,086	-9,474	18,612	28,338	-9,288	19,050	252	186	438	477
Total Lifelong Learning	75,630	-14,510	61,120	76,232	-14,824	61,408	602	-314	288	477

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2004/05
LIFELONG LEARNING
POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2005**

Comments	Current Month	Previous Month
	£ 000s	£ 000s
Individual School Budgets: The latest estimates/projections covering school expenditure indicates that schools are reducing expenditure (probably in anticipation of next year's reduced budget levels). It should be remembered that any underspends achieved by individual schools are carried forward within school reserves.	-150	0
Education: School Funds Held Centrally		
School Transport: Additional costs arising from contract retendering. A Further Education college had queried the legitimacy for charges being levied in respect of providing transport of students to college. Agreement has been reached that charges are applicable, although some small amounts are disputed.	44	44
	20	0
	64	44
Special Educational Needs: Shortfall of income due to reduction in Out of County placements in Special Schools. Behavioral Support Service anticipated overspend. The underspends in other areas e.g. free school meals and vacancy management are being maintained.	317	317
	97	97
	-81	-81
	333	333
Culture and Leisure: Effect of closure at Rhyl Leisure Centre for refurbishment. Withdrawal of funding for security at Ffrith Beach. Backdated gas & NNDR invoices relating to Ruthin Leisure Centre Increased staffing costs & reduced income at Royal International Pavilion Impact of reduced revenue at Pavilion Theatre. Miscellaneous savings achieved through management actions. The figure has increased since that last reported, through the recovery of a bad debt and due to the impact of slippage on the Capital Programme, which has had an impact on income levels within the current year.	83	83
	16	16
	24	24
	14	14
	38	38
	-106	-53
	69	122
Culture & Countryside: Miscellaneous net savings achieved through management actions	-6	0
Youth: Delayed appointments	-22	-22
TOTAL	288	477

**MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2004/05
ENVIRONMENT
POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2005**

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Net Expenditure (Previous Report) £000s
	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
Development Services - (Note 1)	7,679	-3,211	4,468	7,530	-3,017	4,513	-149	194	45	0
Transport & Infrastructure	8,575	-3,046	5,529	8,592	-3,063	5,529	17	-17	0	0
Planning & Public Protection - (Note 2 & 3)	3,719	-1,462	2,257	3,779	-1,586	2,193	60	-124	-64	-59
Environmental Services - (Note 3)	8,456	-575	7,881	8,443	-595	7,848	-13	-20	-33	-27
Director & Support - (Note 3)	1,097	-28	1,069	1,047	-17	1,030	-50	11	-39	-22
Total Environment	29,526	-8,322	21,204	29,391	-8,278	21,113	-135	44	-91	-108

Notes:

1. Restructuring within the service and a review of its operations indicate that income and expenditure will be reduced.
2. Projected increased Building/Development Control income as well as additional DEFRA grant for Trading Standards.
3. Savings as a result of the delay in recruitment.

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2004/05
PERSONAL SERVICES
POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2005

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Net Expenditure (Previous Report) £000s
	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Children Services	8,644	-1,656	6,988	9,114	-1,692	7,422	470	-36	434	423
Adult Services	31,005	-12,279	18,726	29,020	-10,666	18,354	-1,985	1,613	-372	-358
Business Support & Development	1,481	-104	1,377	1,431	-107	1,324	-50	-3	-53	-57
	41,130	-14,039	27,091	39,565	-12,465	27,100	-1,565	1,574	9	8
Non HRA Housing	6,218	-6,114	104	6,333	-6,275	58	115	-161	-46	-50
Total Personal Services	47,348	-20,153	27,195	45,898	-18,740	27,158	-1,450	1,413	-37	-42

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2004/05
PERSONAL SERVICES
POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2005

Comments	Current Month £000s	Previous Month £000s
Children's Services: The overspend is due to increasing expenditure on specialist child placements. In addition the anticipated spend in the Care Leavers service has increased from the previous report.	434	423
	434	423
Adult Services: Learning Disabilities: A detailed budget review has been undertaken. Cost increases in family support, work opportunities, residential placements and community living (in-house) continue to cause pressure.	310	307
Mental Illness: This overspend is due to the cost of residential placements.	146	149
Older People: The projected service underspend is due mainly to the receipt of higher than anticipated residential care grant. The increased underspend from last month is due to savings made on vacant posts. It should be noted that employee costs in residential homes have increased by £15k though this is matched by a reduction in staffing costs in homecare and day care.	-186	-175
PDSI: The community care element of this budget was overspent by £220k in 2003/04. This has reduced in 2004/05 due to input from the Supporting People grant. The overspend this year includes Direct Payments of £91k now being reported here rather than in 'Other Adult Services'. The projected overspend has increased from last month due to increased expenditure on community care services.	185	181
Performance Management & Commissioning: The increasing anticipated underspend is due to savings made through slippage on staff appointments.	-162	-143
Supporting People: The reported underspend is due to slippage on planned projects. Detailed analysis of all projects is ongoing. Any overspend above the £250k reported will be carried forward to meet cuts in the 2005/06 grant.	-250	-250
Other Adult Services: The underspend reported includes the balances brought forward from 2003/04 and direct payment transfers to PDSI. The reduction in the overspend previously reported is due to increased costs within the carers service.	-337	-368
Cefndy Enterprises This underspend relates to an increased sales forecast.	-78	-59
	-372	-358
Business Support & Development: An underspend is shown because the balance of the Supporting People grant not allocated to projects is recorded here. The reported underspend has reduced from last month due to increased costs on Health & Safety required by office moves.	-53	-57
	-53	-57
TOTAL	9	8

MONTHLY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2004/05
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES, CORPORATE & MISCELLANEOUS
POSITION AS AT END FEBRUARY 2005

	Budget			Projected Outturn			Variance			Net Expenditure (Previous Report) £000s
	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Chief Executive's Department	3,370	-876	2,494	3,431	-869	2,562	61	7	68	68
Resources Directorate:										
Finance	4,046	-1,731	2,315	4,313	-1,998	2,315	267	-267	0	0
Audit	416	-41	375	423	-48	375	7	-7	0	0
I.T	2,059	-339	1,720	2,153	-433	1,720	94	-94	0	0
Personnel	1,074	-132	942	1,065	-152	913	-9	-20	-29	-29
	7,595	-2,243	5,352	7,954	-2,631	5,323	359	-388	-29	-29
Corporate & Miscellaneous	3,497	-57	3,440	3,497	-57	3,440	0	0	0	0
Benefits	15,305	-15,285	20	15,305	-15,285	20	0	0	0	0
	18,802	-15,342	3,460	18,802	-15,342	3,460	0	0	0	0
Total Chief Executive's, Resources, Corporate & Misc. and Benefits	29,767	-18,461	11,306	30,187	-18,842	11,345	420	-381	39	39

REPORT TO CABINET

CABINET MEMBER: Councillor P Dobb, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing

DATE: 22 March 2005

SUBJECT: Housing Revenue Account Budget 2004/05

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To note the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account (H.R.A.) for the current financial year.

2 REASON FOR SEEKING DECISION

The need to deliver the Council's agreed budget strategies for the current financial year.

3 POWER TO MAKE THE DECISION

Housing Act 1985, Part II.

4 COST IMPLICATIONS

The projections undertaken at the end of February 2005 show a potential net under-spend at year end of £185k (Appendix 1). This represents a reduced under-spend of £25k to that forecast one month ago (£210k).

A comprehensive review of the Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts has been undertaken. The Provision is now actually higher than the arrears currently owed by tenants. There is a 'best practice' formula for calculating the level of provision required. This shows that the Provision is over-funded by £286,612 – this amount, therefore, will be transferred back into the H.R.A.

Expenditure pressures continue on gas boiler maintenance (£180k) and legal costs associated with disrepair claims (£80k). Last month, the receipt of Climate Energy Grant (£200k) was used to fund the potential overspend in the repairs budget. In view of the revised financial position, this has now been 'released' to fund additional repairs expenditure.

Also included within the budgets, for this year, was £60,000 for the stock transfer ballot. As this will not happen before April 2005, the allocation has been removed from the budget for this year.

Rental income has increased because voids are lower this year and sales have been lower than originally forecast. This is, however, partly offset by an increased subsidy payment to WAG (due to higher dwelling numbers).

Debt charge costs are forecast to be £33k lower than originally estimated, but this has no financial gain to the Council, as the H.R.A. subsidy payment (to WAG) is increased by a similar amount.

Additional H.R.A. Subsidy payments of £22k (due to higher dwelling numbers) and £10k (as a result of an amendment to 2003/04 final claim) are to be made to WAG.

5 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER STATEMENT

The improvement if the overall budgetary position is welcomed, but it will be necessary to remain vigilant in the management of budgets to ensure that the anticipated surplus is delivered at the end of the financial year.

The present level of reserves need to be maintained to protect the financial position should the Authority proceed with Housing Stock Transfer.

6 CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Lead Cabinet members will be required to consult with Heads of Service to monitor the H.R.A. in 2004/05.

7 IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER POLICY AREAS INCLUDING CORPORATE

The level of funding available to services together with budgetary performance impacts upon all services of the Council.

8 RECOMMENDATION

To note the latest financial forecast position of the Housing Revenue Account (H.R.A.) for the current financial year.

Housing Revenue Account ~ 2004/05

<u>2003/04</u>		<u>2004/05</u>		
<u>Actual</u>		<u>Revised</u>	<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<u>£</u>		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Out-turn</u>	<u>Variance</u>
		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
930,338	Supervision & Management - General	971,469	968,967	-2,502
206,524	Supervision & Management - Special	202,511	198,022	-4,489
145,969	Welfare Services	134,265	124,457	-9,808
78,922	Homelessness	83,222	72,825	-10,397
415,317	Rents	430,012	415,704	-14,308
2,605,253	Repairs and Maintenance	2,536,060	2,763,979	227,919
4,382,323	Total - Management and Maintenance	4,357,539	4,543,954	186,415
5,099,232	Rent Rebates	57,489	57,489	0
1,408,151	Debt Charges	1,118,204	1,085,131	-33,073
0	C.E.R.A.	0	0	0
0	Subsidy	2,518,943	2,584,629	65,686
100,000	Provision for Bad Debts	50,000	-286,612	-336,612
10,989,706	Total Expenditure	8,102,175	7,984,591	-117,584
<u>INCOME</u>				
8,547,660	Rents (net of voids)	8,293,676	8,365,200	71,524
86,944	Garages	92,500	88,250	-4,250
14,572	Interest (R.T.B. mortgages)	15,000	15,000	0
2,701,299	Subsidy	0	0	0
0	Other Income	0	0	0
11,350,475	Total Income	8,401,176	8,468,450	67,274
360,769	Surplus / Deficit (-) for the Year	299,001	483,859	184,858
301,301	Balance as at start of year	662,070	662,070	0
662,070	Balance as at end of year	961,071	1,145,929	184,858

**CABINET, ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND DELEGATED DECISION
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

AGENDA ITEM NO: 11

MONTH	RESOURCES DIRECTORATE INCL COUNTY CLERK'S	ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE	LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE	PERSONAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE
April 2005	<p>Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital - C</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Budget - C</p> <p>Progress Against ACiW - C</p> <p>Customer Charter – C</p> <p>Collaboration With Other Public Bodies – C</p>	<p>Public Transport Tender Exercise - C / D</p> <p>Highways Fees and Charges – C</p> <p>Park Homes Site Licensing - Proposals for Reform – D</p>	<p>Denbigh Museum Designation Feasibility - A</p> <p>Royal International Pavilion Phase I – A</p>	<p>Commissioning Strategy for Older People – C</p> <p>Extra Care Housing Developments in Prestatyn - C</p> <p>Eligibility Criteria for Services - D</p>
May 2005	<p>Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital - C</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Budget - C</p> <p>Corporate Quarterly Performance Report - C</p> <p>Member Training – C</p> <p>E Govt – C</p> <p>Approval of Improvement Plan – C</p> <p>Corporate Improvement Assessment Update – C</p> <p>Procurement – C</p>	<p>Affordable Housing – C</p> <p>Waste Management Strategy Consultation Feedback - D</p>	<p>Youth Services Best Value Final Report – C</p> <p>Scala Development Study Progress Report – A</p> <p>Urdd Eisteddfod Staging / Proposals / Programme – C</p> <p>Leisure Centre Vending Policy – D</p> <p>Ryder Cup Legacy Fund – D</p>	<p>SSIW Adult Service Report / Action - C</p>

KEY: C ~ CABINET
A ~ ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
D ~ DELEGATED DECISION

	Update on Further Efficiencies / Different Ways of Working - C			
June 2005	<p>Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital – C</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Budget - C</p> <p>Area Partnerships and Future of Area Delivery and its Options – C</p> <p>Corporate Improvement Assessment Followup – C</p>	<p>Deposit LD Plan – C</p> <p>Approval of Highways Fees and Charges – C</p> <p>Regeneration Strategy – C</p> <p>Housing Grant Scheme - C</p>	<p>ESTYN Self Assessment Report – C</p> <p>Ruthin Craft Centre Development Study – C</p> <p>Prestatyn Hillside Local Nature Reserve Designation - D</p>	<p>Emergency Duty Team – C</p> <p>Improving Housing Stock – C</p>
July 2005	<p>Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital – C</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Budget - C</p> <p>Corporate Quarterly Performance Report - C</p>	Waste Disposal Contract - C		Homeless Review – C
August 2005	<p>Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital – C</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Budget - C</p>			
September 2005	<p>Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital – C</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account</p>			

KEY: C ~ CABINET
A ~ ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
D ~ DELEGATED DECISION

	Budget - C Customer Service Centre Update - C			
October 2005	Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital - C Housing Revenue Account Budget - C Corporate Quarterly Performance Report - C	Approve Deposit LD Plan for Public Consultation - D	Culture and Leisure Charges - D	
November 2005	Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital - C Housing Revenue Account Budget - C	Approve Deposit LD Plan for Public Consultation - C	Managing School Places: Proposals for Consultation - C	
December 2005	Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital - C Housing Revenue Account Budget - C			
January 2006	Monthly Budget Monitoring Report: Revenue and Capital - C Housing Revenue Account Budget - C Corporate Quarterly Performance Report - C			

KEY: C ~ CABINET
A ~ ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
D ~ DELEGATED DECISION

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT BY: COUNCILLOR JULIAN THOMPSON-HILL, LEAD MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

DATE: 22 MARCH 2004

SUBJECT: CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2003/2004

1.0. Decision Sought:

1.1. That Cabinet approve the draft Corporate Asset Management Plan 2004 and its submission to the WAG; and that work should begin immediately on the next Corporate AMP 2005, for completion in Autumn 2005.

2.0. Reason for seeking Decision

2.1. The WAG has previously indicated that Welsh Authorities should have Corporate Asset Management Plans in place by April 2004 and the Authority has been working towards this since 2001. Preparation of the document was delayed during Spring 2004 by resourcing problems within the property functions, subsequent deferral of the approval process until after the County Council elections, and the property restructuring.

2.2. The document has been prepared with the assistance of Messrs IPF Consulting. It is the Authority's first Corporate AMP and areas for improvement (both in the document and in the asset management process) have been identified by the Corporate Asset Management Team and IPF for future development. It will be updated annually.

2.3. The format of the Corporate AMP is in accordance with the main and supplementary guidance issued by the WLGA / CLAW.

3.0. Power To Make the Decision

3.1. Section 132 Local Government Act 1972.

4.0 Cost Implications:

4.1. The Corporate AMP will become a key instrument for the assessment and management of the financial and other costs associated with the estate.

5.0 Financial Controller Statement:

5.1. Asset Management planning is a key element in the production of the Council's 3 year Capital Programme.

6.0 Consultation Carried out:

6.1 The draft Corporate AMP (Rev 0.7) was circulated for comment to:

- Corporate Director: Resources
- Corporate Director: Environment
- Assistant Chief Executive: Strategy
- Financial Controller
- Head of Development Services
- Chief Management Accountant
- County Landlord
- Valuation and Estates Manager
- Building Services Manager
- Asset Management Team

6.2 Comments received were favourable. Some detailed suggestions were incorporated into the draft. Rev 0.8 was submitted to CET and suggested amendments have been incorporated into Rev 0.9 attached.

6.3 The Asset Management Plan was submitted to the Asset Management Committee on 10.03.2005 and approved for submission to Cabinet.

7.0 Implications on other Policy Areas including Corporate

7.1. The Corporate AMP is intended to become a key strategic document in the Authority, consistent with all other strategies and policies. Its fundamental purpose is to align the estate with the needs of service delivery in order to implement the Authority's Corporate Objectives.

8.0 Recommendation

8.1. That Cabinet approve the draft Corporate Asset Management Plan 2004 and its submission to the WAG; and that work should begin immediately on the next Corporate AMP 2005, for completion in Autumn 2005.



DRAFT

Corporate Asset Management Plan 2004

Revision 0.9

Iwan Prys Jones
Corporate Property Officer
Environment Directorate

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**
 - 1.1 Introduction
 - 1.2 The Council
 - 1.3 Corporate Planning Framework
 - 1.4 Corporate Goals and Objectives
 - 1.5 Organisational Framework
 - 1.6 Asset Management Function

- 2.0 CORPORATE ASSET POLICY**
 - 2.1 Corporate Asset Objectives
 - 2.2 Headline Performance Measures
 - 2.3 Stakeholder Views
 - 2.4 Government Policy and Statutory Responsibilities
 - 2.5 The Capital Strategy and Resource Context

- 3.0 CHANGES IN EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR PROPERTY**
 - 3.1 E-Government
 - 3.2 Market for Accommodation and Support Services Provision
 - 3.3 Market for Property Services
 - 3.4 Other?

- 4.0 SERVICE DELIVERY AND ACCOMMODATION NEEDS**
 - 4.1 Overview
 - 4.2 Council Services
 - 4.3 New Working Practices within the Council
 - 4.4 Other Relevant Agencies and their Possible Joint Accommodation Requirements

- 5.0 LIKELY FUTURE REQUIREMENTS**

- 6.0 THE EXISTING PORTFOLIO AND CURRENT PERFORMANCE**
 - 6.1 Statement of Portfolio
 - Summary of Portfolio Details

- 7.0 REVIEW AND CHALLENGE**
 - 7.1 Gap Analysis
 - 7.2 Review of Asset Strategy, Property Objectives and Delivery Mechanisms
 - 7.3 Review of Roles and Responsibilities for Property
 - 7.4 Review of Decision-making Process

- 8.0 OPTIONS APPRAISAL**
 - 8.1 Strategic Options
 - 8.2 Options Appraisal
 - 8.3 Preferred Strategy Option

- 9.0 ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**
 - 9.1 Capital Programme
 - 9.2 Revenue Programme
 - 9.3 Responsibilities for Implementation
 - 9.4 Timetable for Implementation & Overall Programme
 - Outline Improvement & Action Plan

APPENDICES

- A** DCC organisational structure :
- B** DCC Priorities Objectives and targets
- C** SAMP Executive Summaries
- D** Draft Three-year Programme
- E** Glossary

FOREWORD

Property is a strategic resource for Denbighshire CC and this Corporate Asset Management Plan (AMP) is therefore a core strategic document for the Council. It is commended to all users of the County Council's property as a reference to understand the approach required to achieve our service delivery objectives.

It is fundamental to good asset management that decisions are taken in the light of good management information, on a corporate basis and with long-term sustainability in mind.

Our Community Strategy indicates the importance of facilities and points of focus in the towns and rural areas of the County. As one of the County's largest land and property owners, we are able to influence not only the delivery of services but also encourage and support the economic and wealth creation opportunities in each area. The Corporate strategy will enable us to understand the Communities' and Council's aspirations for property and its management; inform the responsibilities of users; determine how our property should perform; determine how this is measured; and how we will find the resources to manage the assets and invest in addressing future needs.

The Corporate AMP has adopted the structure of the guidance provided by the Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales (CLAW) for Asset Management Planning. The policy framework created and outlined for development is intended to become fully operational by April 2006. The AMP is a "Live" document and will require regular updating as the implementation plans for improvement are put into place.

The AMP strategy will be subject to continuous improvement so engagement with and contributions from the wider Community will be very welcome. This will ensure that we retain a customer focus in the development of the management processes, performance framework and delivery mechanisms necessary to achieve value from the Council's assets for Denbighshire.

Councillor J. Thompson-Hill
Lead Member for Property and Asset
Management
Chair of the Asset Management Committee

Iwan Prys-Jones
Corporate Property Officer
Corporate Director Environment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Denbighshire County Council (DCC) has produced this first Corporate Asset Management Plan (AMP) in line with Welsh Assembly Government guidance which has indicated that AMPs should be in place in 2004. Like most other Welsh Authorities, Denbighshire still has some way to go before it can say that a full Asset Management process is in place and working effectively but the Authority believes it has the structures and processes in place to achieve this by 2006 .

The collection of all the detailed property data has not been completed and as a result it is too early to have reached definitive strategic decisions about the Council's property portfolio. However, it can be stated with certainty, as suggested in the Consultancy Services Annual Statement prepared in 2003, that the current portfolio cannot be sustained. The maintenance backlog and maintenance budgets do not equate and therefore radical measures will need to be considered in order to achieve sustainability. What has become evident from the AMP work undertaken to date is that DCC's Corporate Asset Management Plan will result in a Corporate Improvement and Action Plan that will:

- ❑ Secure the strongest possible corporate position to attract capital and revenue funding from both public and private sources.
- ❑ Increase the medium to long-term capital receipts by identifying the direct and indirect development potential of the property portfolio.
- ❑ Ensure rationalisation of the property portfolio to:
 - Develop a core suite of properties to support service delivery.
 - Reduce the non-operational buildings as a percentage of the operational portfolio.
 - Reduce the number of properties that score badly in terms of accommodation condition, suitability or sufficiency or are the most expensive to run.
 - Highlight property which is not held for service delivery reasons.
 - Develop centres for co-located cross-service delivery points.

This will require DCC to work where practical with other agencies.

It is also recognised that actions need to be taken to fully integrate the Best Value Reviews with the Asset Management process. In addition, the structure and responsibilities of the associated groups and committees need to be modified to ensure that the Corporate AMP process is robust and the accountabilities at each stage are clearly defined and fully understood.

This report sets out the next steps needed to be taken in the development of DCC's Corporate Asset Management Plan and implementing the strategy, key steps will include to improve:

- 1) Asset Information and How it is shared:
 - complete the transfer of all property information to a web-based central database
 - completion of suitability surveys of schools
 - completion of the first batch of strategic site masterplans
 - updating of condition surveys
- 2) The Asset Management Planning process:
 - complete review of the asset management procedures including AMG and AMC
 - development of clearer prioritisation methods at all stages
 - incorporation of Highways, Housing and Infrastructure into the process by 2006
 - development of SMART property objectives / performance indicators
- 3) The Assets, Estate and Asset Management:
 - a report on the cost to the council of the strategy of locating offices in every main town
 - completion of the Managing School Places Study
 - study of all meeting spaces / conference rooms
 - High School Design Guide
 - Middle Lane Feasibility Study and its implications for core accommodation

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

From its formation in 1996 Denbighshire Council Council (DCC) needed to manage a serious level of inherited debt . This it has done successfully but factors such as the significant increase in employers superannuation contributions, the implementation of the 'single status agreement' on wage and salary scales and inflation growth will add to the council's costs in 2005-6 and in future years. It is recognised that assets, and property assets in particular, play a vital role in the delivery of services to the people of Denbighshire; both in the way services are delivered and the way they are perceived. It is essential for the property portfolio to be managed in such a way that it takes full account of the corporate objectives and service delivery needs. DCC recognises that if managed correctly asset management planning will make a significant contribution towards optimising future capital and revenue budgets.

It is against this background that this first Corporate Asset Management Plan is produced. It has been prepared in response to indications from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) that Local Authorities should aim to have AMPs in place by April 2004. The purpose of this document is to show how DCC's strategy for its property assets will be targeted at achieving better services and greater efficiency. It also records the progress made towards putting a comprehensive asset management planning process in place and what remains to be done in order to achieve WAG's target date for Authorities to have all assets, including housing and infrastructure in a single comprehensive Corporate AMP in 2006. This document covers all DCC's property owned, leased or managed by the council, whether this is used for the delivery of services, leased to third parties or unused awaiting allocation or disposal.

This document sets out the current state of the council's property assets, performance against set aims and an Action Plan for the development of Asset Management over the coming year and for establishing a fully comprehensive Corporate AMP by the April 2006 target date. It is, therefore, a statement of the current position and the changes identified as necessary to achieve a position of 'best practice' in asset management. The Corporate AMP is a 'live' document to be continuously reviewed and published annually.

The Corporate AMP will provide a framework within which decisions on all aspects of property can be made based on stated council objectives to enable DCC to:

- Make investment decisions about property
- Maintain and improve its property assets
- Improve the cost efficiency of owning property
- Develop corporate asset management
- Respond to service needs.

The format of this document is based on the 'Supplementary Guidance to Asset Management Planning in Wales' issued by CLAW (Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales)

1.2 The Council

Denbighshire County Council was formed in April 1996 as one of Wales' new unitary authorities. The new County took on the responsibilities and services of part of the former Clwyd County Council, the major part of the former Glyndwr District Council, the whole of the former Rhuddlan Borough Council and a part of Colwyn Borough Council.

The County is located in the heart of North Wales. It covers an area of approximately 84,400 hectares running from the coast resorts of Rhyl and Prestatyn down through the Vale of Clwyd, and south as far Corwen and the International Eisteddfod town of Llangollen.

The total population in 1999 was estimated to be 94,000 in about 40,000 dwellings, 74% of which are owner occupied. 70% of the population are of working age, 62% are economically active and unemployment is at 2.0%. Denbighshire includes the main population centres of Rhyl, Prestatyn, St Asaph, Denbigh, Ruthin, Llangollen and Corwen and has expanding

industrial and business parks but is largely a rural county with tourism and agriculture the main industries.

The whole of the County has Tier 1 “Assisted Area” status, which provides access to the highest rates of financial support for industry available in the UK. Denbighshire has qualified for and been successful in applying for Objective 1 Structural funds from the European Union.

1.3 Corporate Planning Framework

The Corporate Asset Management Plan does not exist in isolation and is one of a compendium of corporate strategic documents and plans produced by DCC to provide the overall context for managing all Council services. The AMP is written in the context of these documents and in particular provides support for the council’s Capital Strategy, Community Strategy, Procurement Strategy and Best Value Performance Plan. An overview of the top level documents is given below:

Capital Strategy: The Capital Programme Group (CPG) inaugurated in 2001 to establish and monitor a five-year projected capital programme was subsumed into a new Asset Management Group of Officers in August 2002. The arrangements comply with the DTLR and WAG guidance on asset management and its relationship with capital strategies. The asset management team has input to all capital bids to ensure compliance with the relevant Service AMP.

Community Strategy: The Community Strategy promotes the role of the 4 area partnerships in influencing and informing policy and service delivery. A key aspiration is the success of the local economy by ensuring the viability of town centres. The AMP team and the Area Partnership Managers met in early 2003 to discuss respective roles and explore future joint working. Area Partnership Managers have been involved in the series of Area Studies organised during March 2003 and March 2004. The relationship between the Community Strategy and Asset Management processes needs to be continuously developed in the future to ensure full integration.

Procurement Strategy: New procurement procedures were implemented in 2001 as part of the CPG arrangements and in accordance with Audit Commission guidance. These were then inherited by the AMG. The *Project Sponsor* is accountable for delivering projects on time, on budget, and with the appropriate content and quality. In order to ensure that all works to the estate comply with Authority policies and AMP’s, the Corporate Asset Management Team acts as *Client Adviser* to the Project Sponsor throughout and carries out Post-Project Evaluations (PPE’s). Project Management and multi-disciplinary design services are provided by the Development Services Division of the Environment Directorate.

Best Value Performance Plan: Although Best Value reviews have been highlighted in the relevant Service AMPs it appears that where they affect property strategy there is currently insufficient involvement of the Asset Management Team during the review and the resulting document may by-pass the AMG / AMC. The Asset Management and Best Value processes therefore need to be examined and, if necessary, better co-ordinated.

Service Asset Management Plans (SAMPs): These are individual service AMPs produced by service directorates with assistance from the Asset Management Team. (referred to in Welsh Assembly Government guidance as ‘Service Blueprints’). They are produced annually (for review quarterly in future) in a consistent format and inform both the Area Studies and the Corporate AMP. Previously these have been produced in November each year but this may now be moved to July in order to ensure that they feed in at the appropriate time to the Capital Planning process.

There are various other strategies and plans produced by the council that enable Services to prioritise their key activities and requirements:

Schools Organisation Plan	Crime and Disorder Strategy
DCC Wales Improvement Plan	Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Children and Young Persons Strategy	Housing Strategy Plan (from 2006)
Agenda 21 Strategy	Unitary Development Plan

1.4 Corporate Goals and Objectives

The following corporate priorities were adopted by the Council for the year 2004/5. These are reviewed annually in July of each year. DCC has agreed to work towards measurable targets against each of these priority areas. These are recorded at Appendix B.

DCC PRIORITIES are:
A. We aim to provide the services that the people of Denbighshire want.
B. We will obtain as much money as possible for Denbighshire.
C. We will invest in Councillors and staff.
D. We will improve the image of Denbighshire.

1.5 Organisational Framework

- 1.5.1 The Authority has adopted the Cabinet System of governance. The Cabinet is chaired by the Leader, supported by members who generally have cross-cutting portfolios, and includes the Lead Member for Property and Asset Management. The full council consists of 47 Councillors elected from 30 Electoral Divisions. Cabinet is assisted by four Scrutiny Committees, corresponding to the four main functional Directorates.
- 1.5.2 The Authority is organised into four Directorates and is managed by the Chief Executive Officer supported by four Corporate Directors (see organisation diagram at Appendix A).

1.6 Asset Management Function

The AMP process in DCC is designed to be inclusive of all those stakeholders with an interest in property. Consultation within the process is extensive and is designed to strike a balance between corporate and service needs. DCC property is held corporately with service directorates occupying space by agreement. Responsibilities within the process include:

Corporate Property Officer (CPO): This role has now transferred from the Financial Controller to the Corporate Director: Environment. The CPO has overall responsibility for developing asset management planning within DCC and overseeing the preparation of the SAMPs and Corporate AMP. The CPO is responsible for ensuring that best practice is followed in all matters associated with property and that the interests of the Authority are protected.

Asset Management Committee (AMC): This Members' Committee is chaired by the Lead Member for Property and Asset Management and has met on a six week cycle. AMC has delegated powers to make certain decisions on property matters.

Asset Management Group (AMG): This stakeholder group of officers is chaired by the Head of Development Services and has been meeting since August 2002 on a six-weekly cycle. The membership of this group includes representatives of all the main property using departments plus property specialists. Except for certain specific matters, all papers intended for AMC first pass through the AMG.

Corporate Property Unit (CPU): From 2001 – 2004 the CPU had responsibility for the strategic aspects of DCC property. The CPU consisted of the County Landlord's Group and the Forward Development and Policy Group and was located within the Management Accountancy Section of the Finance Department (Resources Directorate), reporting to the CPO. The CPU has been the focal point for the AMP process, being responsible on behalf of the CPO for drafting the Corporate AMP, data management policy, property performance measurement and for the effective and efficient use of property in matching service needs. The CPU also worked closely with the Policy Unit, Performance Management Unit and Community Partnership functions in the Chief Executive's Department. Under the September

2004 restructuring, the FDP has become a part of the responsibilities of the Design and Development Manager while the County Landlord's duties have passed to the Valuation and Estates Manager.

Asset Managers within the Asset Management Team have been allocated responsibility for one or more Directorates and departments, certain policy areas, and geographical areas based on the Area Partnership boundaries. Each Asset Manager works closely with Service Property Officers (SPOs) in the main property-using departments to develop Service AMPs (SAMPs) and deal with strategic property issues.

Prior to the 2004 restructuring, operational property matters, including architecture, engineering design, valuation and estates, and property maintenance have been dealt with by the Development Services Division of the Environment Directorate. The restructuring has now unified the property services within the Environment Directorate..

2 CORPORATE ASSET POLICY

2.1 Corporate Asset Objectives

The following high level strategic Corporate Asset Objectives were adopted by the Council on 4th November 2002:

No	Corporate Asset Objective	Corporate Priority
CAO1	To achieve a high quality, sustainable property portfolio for the authority which is defined by its corporate objectives and service delivery needs.	ABD
CAO2	To ensure that the opportunity cost of holding land and buildings is minimised and that the value of Council Assets is optimised.	B
CAO3	To ensure that all changes in the size, nature, use and operation of the authority's properties, including acquisitions, developments and disposals, are in accordance with the Council's Asset objectives, long term property strategies and policies, and support the continuous improvement of services.	AB
CAO4	To establish a culture whereby property is seen and managed as a <i>corporate</i> resource rather than a <i>service</i> resource, in order to maximise benefits to the Authority, and thence to the community, as a whole.	ABD
CAO5	To ensure that property plans, policies and standards are integrated with all of the Authority's other plans and strategies.	AB
CAO6	To ensure that the estate and its management conforms with legislation, good practice including Best Value, and external requirements including those of the National Assembly for Wales..	ABD

These Corporate Asset Objectives apply to all property held by DCC. They are also applied to new capital projects.

A set of supporting sub-objectives is being developed. These will provide measurable targets and Key Performance Indicators (see below) in support of the Corporate Asset Objectives. These will be introduced and incorporated in the relevant Business Plans as part of the performance measurement process (see the Implementation and Action plan at the end of Section 9).

The Draft Community Strategy 2004 provides further reinforcement of the linkage between the Corporate and Service objectives in the following areas:

- Lifelong Learning – the transformation of traditional “school” base into a resource for the whole community, to do that will improve our learning environments by improving buildings and maximising libraries, leisure and youth and community centres as learning resources;

- ❑ Economic Prosperity – a mature regeneration programme in our most economically deprived areas integrating funding initiatives and partnership arrangements; and building on the success of the partnership cooperation in the Object One programme;
- ❑ Environment – Accessible play and community facilities;

2.2 Headline Performance Measures

The property management functions have complied with the requirements to submitted specified performance data for the CLAW National performance indicators since the initiative began. These performance indicators are under review nationally.

DCC is currently contributing to the national debate about the appropriateness of the existing CLAW National Performance Indicators. The latest published CLAW report on Performance Indicators 2003/04 shows DCC's commitment and contribution to establishing information for comparison with other Welsh Authorities. The variability and lack of consistency in calculation of measures makes it difficult at this time to base a strategy on what has been shown nationally so far. DCC is developing a set of performance indicators that reflect its own criteria in terms of monitoring the effectiveness of its property portfolio.

The focus for DCC has been towards the impact of achieving corporate objectives in relation to wealth creation and economic regeneration across the County. Headline measures are therefore in relation to the outputs of Objective 1 funded EU schemes, the success in application for up to £10m of grants each year, the availability of Capital Receipts, Investment in Schools and the establishment of a programme to meet DDA requirements. In relation to the property itself the key measure is the scale of the Backlog Maintenance and more especially the amount of urgent and high priority works required.

The Draft Community Strategy 2004 provides some further headline measures against a 2008 time horizon:

- ❑ Targets set for investment in buildings and infrastructure of schools and learning environments and in 100% of secondary schools as a priority;
- ❑ Participants accessing the internet in our libraries to 60,000 users;
- ❑ Create 2,500 m² of new industrial/commercial premises per annum;
- ❑ All facilities brought up to DDA accessibility standards;

The last full reported set of CLAW performance indicators are summarised below:

CLAW Pis	DCC Pis 02/03
Strategic Property Management	
Gross Internal Area of Buildings per Head of Population	2.61 GIA/Head
% internal floor space in condition cats A-D	
Backlog maintenance by cost as a % of priority 1-4	
Backlog of maintenance value in priority 1-4	TOTAL £33m
Total expenditure on buildings per m ²	
Annual management costs operational and non-operational property	
Value of Capital Receipts	£892k
Number of sales	12
Average sales value	£74k
Building Maintenance	
Maintenance expenditure as a % of Total Asset Value	2.09%
Maintenance expenditure as a % of original budget	100%
Asset Value of surveyed buildings as a % of Total Asset Value	100%
No of surveyed buildings as % of Total No	
a) Condition surveys	100%
b) Asbestos Surveys	45%
c) Safety Glazing	100%
d) Disabled Access	1.67%
Staff costs as a % of expenditure	13.91%
Client Satisfaction surveys	96.4%
Energy consumption for Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Elderly Care Homes is available for Electricity, Fossil Fuels, Water and CO ² Emissions (details are available)	
Estates and Land Management	
Staff Costs as a % of receipts up to £10k	8%
Staff Costs as a % of receipts over £10k	1%

Ave staff costs per valuation	£100
Ave staff costs per RTB valuation	£65
Ave staff costs per acquisition	£510
Farms PI	
Staff costs as a % of rental income	3.25%
Percentage yield	0.06%
Commercial and Industrial Estate Management PI	
Staff costs as a % of rental income	8%
Ave staff costs per property	200
Rent Arrears as % of rental income	3%
Staff Costs per m ²	2
m ² per occupier	70
Asset Value per Head of Population	1611
Revenue running cost per m ²	£44.65
Design	
Cost of services as % of Total Contract Payments	17%
Number of contracts over time > 10% (Time predictability for capital projects)	56%
Number of contracts over budget > 10%	11%

A set of local DCC PIs is under consideration, to include:

- Realisation of capital receipts (already in place and currently set at £3m). This represents a significant increase on the Capital Receipts for 2002/03
- A condition index – eg a target % reduction in maintenance backlog p.a.
- A Suitability index – a target % increase in overall suitability ratings p.a. (split schools / non-schools?)
- Sufficiency: no of staff with accommodation meeting space standards
- Sufficiency: measure of alignment of no of school places needed / provided
- Sufficiency: degree of property utilisation
- Amount of surplus property not disposed of as % of estate
- Results from post-project evaluations (PPE's) – a target % improvement p.a.
- Amount of grant leverage achieved by DCC is targeted at £10m per annum.

A report will be brought forward at the earliest opportunity.

Business Plan in year target measures include:

- Improvement in the percentage of completed contract final accounts;
- Percentage of completed rent reviews, lease renewals, and land disposals;
- Access to DCC owned property meeting DDA requirements; and
- Raising appropriate awareness of Asbestos in buildings.

2.3 Stakeholder Views

- 2.3.1 The Asset Management Group provides the internal stakeholders' forum at officer level where all Directorates have an input into property decisions. Officers on the AMG are encouraged to participate in all matters put before it rather than merely those directly affecting their own Directorates in order that all decisions are taken on a corporate basis.

Consultation with service departments is mainly conducted through the preparation of annual Service AMPs. SAMPs have been prepared as a joint exercise since 2001, carried out by an Asset Manager assigned to the service and the Service Property Officer (SPO).

All the Service AMPs are discussed on an area basis at the Area Studies meetings which are convened in March each year. Four such meetings are held, based on each of the four Area Partnerships, and they are attended by Planning Officers, Area Partnership Managers, and property specialists rather than services. These annual area reviews are undertaken immediately after the annual SAMPs are completed to inform the Asset Management Team on the type of property needed to support cross-service delivery.

The results of consultation are fed back into the Service AMPs, and updated on a bi-annual basis. Additionally, as part of the Post-Project Evaluation procedure, feedback from all capital property projects is also reported bi-annually to the AMG and AMC.

2.4 Government Policy and Statutory Responsibilities

Prudential Borrowing: Legislation has now been introduced amending the controls exercised by central government over local authority capital expenditure. The new system (referred to as the Prudential Borrowing system) was effective from 1 April 2004. The main impact is that central government no longer sets a limit on the amount of borrowing which a local authority can undertake to finance capital spending.

In practice this means that capital spending can increase over past levels only where it can be demonstrated that the additional principal and interest can be funded from revenue by making savings from existing expenditure, by substituting borrowing for capital expenditure currently funded from Revenue, or by identifying new funding streams such as increased fees and charges.

Welsh Assembly Government: Schools 2010: The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to delivering a school estate that is 'fit for purpose' by the year 2010 and has announced funding plans aimed at achieving this. The Assembly has indicated that DCC will receive a grant of £9.0million towards this initiative. DCC is aware that to justify its spending priorities it will need to complete the updating of the condition, suitability and sufficiency surveys so that the case it makes for future funding is strong, based on factual evidence and supported by the Corporate AMP.

DDA: The County Landlord appraised Members of the implications of the Act. The required work has been prioritised and £1.06million allocated towards the cost, it is estimated that a further £1million is needed to complete the whole estate including schools. A schools action plan is to be put in place to support bids for funding. To date only a few buildings are listed as complying with the Act.

Asbestos: The County Landlord appraised Members of the requirement to comply with the Act by May 2004 and as a result funding of £450,000 was allocated. Consultants have been appointed as has an Asbestos Officer to oversee the process of compliance.

PFI: Central Government has encouraged authorities to innovate with alternative procurement strategies, offering PFI Credits for suitable projects. With this in mind DCC procured a PFI scheme (1997 – 2004) in Ruthin to build new offices for some of its staff. After a period of use the Authority will subject the project to its Post Project Evaluation (PPE) and consider whether or not it has been successful for DCC.

Estates Undervalue (sale of assets at less than market price): Interpretation of the statute has provided some clarity about the Council's ability to sell under value, how this will be managed in relation to the capital value and the circumstances for implementation.

Highways: By 2006 Highways assets are to be included in the asset management process. The Transport and Infrastructure Division (T&I) of the Environment Directorate is participating in the work being done jointly by all the Welsh Highways authorities. The CPU and T&I have begun to hold informal discussions to prepare for the 2006 target date for Highways assets to be included in the Corporate AMP.

2.5 The Capital Strategy and Resource Context

The Capital Plan for the Council has been categorised as follows:

- 1-Schemes Financed from General Funding resources (Unhypothecated Supported Borrowing and General Capital Grant),
- 2-Prudential Borrowing projects,
- 3-Schemes for which capital receipts have been earmarked to meet the costs,
- 4-Schemes subject to special (external) funding.

A significant element of capital spending is financed from grants and contributions from external organisations such as the Welsh Assembly Government. These resources can only be used for the specific projects for which they have been awarded.

Council has traditionally approved Block Allocations towards meeting items such as capitalised enhancement works to school premises and highway infrastructure works. Council must ensure that there are sufficient resources in place to meet anticipated capital spending. The importance of identifying surplus assets for disposal is paramount. It is demonstrated by the level of capital investment which cannot be funded. Capital receipts from asset sales will provide resources to tackle the significant requirement for capital investment identified above.

For 2004/05, Capital Plan strategy proposals were presented to and approved by Council to ensure that sufficient capital resources were in place to meet the capital investment requirements. This includes some adjustment and provision for priority schemes including Health and Safety works and DDA implementation.

3 CHANGES IN EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR PROPERTY

3.1 E-Government

The Authority has set up a Senior Management Task Force to co-ordinate the approach to Implementing E-government (IEG) and implementation of a programme in the period to 2005.

This has major property implications including:

- The establishment of Information Centres which will also act as Customer Contact points. These supersede and develop the previous One-Stop-Shop initiative. They are to be located in Rhyl, Prestatyn, Rhuddlan, St Asaph, Denbigh, Ruthin, Llangollen and Corwen, and will ideally be co-located with other service centres such as libraries.
- A business process analysis which is likely to generate changes to working methods and staff location and a consequent impact on accommodation needs. This may directly relate to the evaluation of new working methods such as a Call Centre, teleworking and homeworking.
- Establishment of a 'call centre'
- The Learning Resource Centres being developed with ELWa funding.
- The integration of electronic information systems into the property strategies.

Property data on Condition, Suitability, Sufficiency, Asbestos and DDA is currently being consolidated on to a Corporate Property Database (IPF 'Asset Manager'). The transfer of information and the integration of the software into all DCC's property processes is expected to be completed in 2006. It is intended that IPF Asset Manager will be linked to the Valuers' ECS system by placing the ECS into the Citrix environment in which 'Asset Manager' resides and then install the appropriate software links. The system will then provide a comprehensive database that will become available to all DCC service department managers and property users via web-enabled access. It is also hoped to upgrade the Asset Manager system to the new web-based format which links all modules in the system and allows county-wide access via the internet.

3.2 Market for Accommodation and Support Services Provision

Currently there is a shortage of good quality office space and industrial units in the county. In fact the current average 'let' of industrial units is 95%. This demand linked to that for housing development land has resulted in land prices doubling in recent years. Whilst this means there is not an alternative supply of ready-built of accommodation for DCC to buy or lease, it does provide an opportunity for the council to increase its capital receipts through the 'informed' release of surplus holdings for development purposes.

An investigation was undertaken into the merits of the Authority entering into 'sale and leaseback' arrangements on its main corporate offices. This was undertaken by the Valuation and Estates Manager who concluded that there was likely to be a financial advantage to be gained by DCC, but because current Financial Regulations stipulate that a lease agreement of over ten years in duration must be treated as 'capital' and not 'revenue' DCC would in effect be disadvantaged.

DCC has negotiated a PFI project for substantial additional office space. This project has only been occupied since May and therefore will not provide an insight into on the success or otherwise of procuring accommodation this way for some time. The informal perception is that this procurement method is extremely slow, complex and expensive.

Historically, a wide range of external organisations have occupied DCC property under a variety of formal and informal arrangements. Over the past few years the Council has sought to identify all cases of Non-Council Organisations occupying Council property and regularise the position by ensuring that they do so only if approved and on the basis of a full market rent, although this may be grant aided at the discretion of the authority.

There is a strong and competitive market for the full range of small to medium sized construction companies and DCC has an open list of contractors who have been quality checked and financially vetted. This approved list of contractors is accessed via the Constructionline web-based service which provides a database of approved contractors.

3.3 Market for Property Services

It is DCC's policy to retain access to in-house professional property services which it does through Development Services within the Environment Directorate. It is the Authority's belief that it is best served by being able to call upon a dedicated team of professionals with detailed knowledge of the DCC estate to advise them and handle property matters on their behalf. To handle workload peaks or other special circumstances the in-house teams are augmented by temporary staff or external private practices are commissioned. The market place is relatively small in the North Wales for property professionals including Architectural, Engineering and Valuation practices and therefore the choice of consultants on major contracts is somewhat limited

DCC has a preference, where it can, to contract with service providers who are based within the county and therefore employ local people

The design service within Development Services is managed as a quasi-commercial practice using trading accounts by charging fees for the services it provides to its internal customers. This approach has proved problematic in that it can be detrimental to the County's own best interests when work is required for which no fee budget has previously been allocated. This arrangement is recommended for review.

3.4 European Development - Regeneration

EU Objective 1 (ELWa West Rhyl): Objective 1 money is being used to 'pump prime' the funding of starter business units in line with DCC's policy to encourage economic regeneration in specific areas across the county. Currently, of the Objective 1 Partnership Projects Denbighshire has bid for, 32% have been approved and 18% are pending. The remaining projects have either failed or have been withdrawn. The 40 plus approved projects are estimated to cost in excess of £40m and the Grant support provided from the EU will be up to £20m.

With the expansion of the EU Community Wales may lose its Development Status in relation to further development funds. This suggests a continuing reliance on professional services from either within the Council or from outside the County boundaries. If Development Status is lost this will increase the need to generate capital receipts to replace development funding.

4 SERVICE DELIVERY AND ACCOMMODATION NEEDS

4.1 Overview

The priority for DCC is to have an estate that supports service delivery, is 'fit for purpose' and can be managed within the resources at the disposal of DCC i.e. it is sustainable. Currently, save for a few examples, this is not the case and DCC is aware that it needs to undertake a broad range of activity across the whole property portfolio before that situation can be reached. Similarly, service managers need to consider if they are delivering their services in the right way and from the best locations. A robust process of 'challenge' will be applied to both services and the properties from which they are delivered.

Reviews of service and the surveys of property are brought together in the annual Service AMPs where any conflicts between service delivery needs and accommodation are combined with suitability, sufficiency and condition surveys to identify requirements or opportunities to improve the estate.

In order to assess service delivery and accommodation needs, the Denbighshire asset management process envisages three stages annually:

- a) preparation of Service AMPs (July)
- b) comparison of Service AMPs by area, based on the four Area Partnerships (January)
- c) preparation of Corporate AMP from Service AMPs and Area Studies (March)

This process is informed by and built upon various surveys of the portfolio including

- Suitability Surveys
- Condition Surveys
- Sufficiency Surveys
- Disabled Access Surveys
- Asbestos Surveys

At all stages effort is made to put effective consultation procedures in place both within DCC and beyond by consulting with users and the public in preparing the Service AMP's.

The annual Area Reviews are an important element in the consultation process and the challenge that is applied to how service are currently delivered and how buildings are used.

The challenge aspect is being further supported by the initiative that is currently underway to 'trawl' through the portfolio register, town by town, to identify properties that are under utilised or surplus to need. This initiative is currently being extended to include villages and rural areas is building up an in depth knowledge base of the estate.

Service Asset Management Plans

Service Asset Management Plans indicate the key areas for development although they are chiefly intended to identify any mismatch between the current and an ideal property portfolio. In particular they:

- highlight areas for concern, in particular those of sufficiency, suitability and condition.
- outline options for consideration in a Best Value Review of those options.
- indicate a resultant preferred option
- suggest the significance to the service in terms of prioritising the implementation of the works in an ideal (5 year) programme.

A summary of the SAMPs for 2003/04 is included at Appendix C. This expresses two main messages that the historic underfunding of investment has led to an uncomfortable level of backlog maintenance and that the future investment plans require more Capital Resources than are likely to be available.

The current procedures will need to be strengthened to ensure that services have carried out adequate internal consultation in the future. It is acknowledged, for example, that due to pressure on resources, the County Landlord was not able to carry out any consultations with the service occupants of the Authority's core office and depot accommodation. Where possible, Asset Managers have participated in Service Consultations, for example the 'Managing School Places' exercise initiated by the LEA and which is still continuing.

A programme of reviews of high school sites to produce Strategic Site Masterplans (SSMs) was begun during 2003. The SSMs that have been completed are with the respective schools for consultation. Feed back from these schools will be used to inform the completion of the programme by March 2005. This will involve full consultation with all parties having an interest in the sites in question. This form of review is likely to be extended to other particularly complex or significant sites.

Option Evaluation

Properties with particular issues of concern are highlighted in the Service AMP and once possible solutions are identified they are developed sufficiently for them to be subjected to a Best Value evaluation. Buildings Panels ,Task and Finish groups or Feasibility Studies in which there is input from the Asset Management Team, are used to focus on the more difficult issues. Acceptable solutions are forwarded for inclusion in the SAMP as a preferred option. This enables solutions to be selected in a structured process which incorporates Central Government and Council policies

Area Studies

Once finalised the SAMPs are considered together in a series of round table sessions based on the County's Area Partnerships to investigate possible cross-cutting opportunities. The first round of such sessions was held successfully in March 2003 and was developed further during the 2004 round.

Prioritisation

Project Sponsors (typically Service Heads) are required to submit bids for Capital to the AMG using standard documentation/methodology. The authority is still working towards implementing a clear prioritisation process whereby projects identified in SAMPs are included in the Capital programme. At present the AMG is allocated the role of prioritisation with regards to property but it is not adequately performing this function and this needs to be reviewed in the near future. Projects should be assessed according to wide-range of criteria (statutory requirements, corporate objectives, service plans, community objectives and financial evaluation) to allow prioritisation. A key way forward is to demonstrate the contribution any investment or change of property will make to delivery of service SMART objectives.

4.2 Council Services

Key drivers for change emerging from the Community Strategy and Corporate policies are:

- Level of Council Tax, which is perceived to be unsustainable.
- Reductions in the property portfolio to raise capital receipts and reduce the maintenance overhead.
- further rationalisation of office accommodation and the application of consistent space standards through audits.
- The Area Partnerships to co-locate service provision in fewer properties.
- Best Value Reviews to ensure best practices are being employed.
- Agenda 21
- Welsh Housing Quality Strategy

Identified within the Service Asset Management plans are:

- Government policy changes
Implementation of regulatory and legislative requirements as Corporate Landlord in particular for DDA, Asbestos and Health and Safety
- Lifelong Learning - Welsh Assembly Government target on schools for 2010
Managing School Places, as a result of increases and movements in the primary school population and the expected ongoing implication for secondary schools
Investment in Special Education Facilities to become centres of excellence
- Economic Regeneration, Development and Wealth Creation
A block allocation of match funding to prime private sector and facilitate the establishment of industrial estates

- Personal Services
Elderly Persons Residential Homes are high on the priority list for regulatory improvement expenditure, supported by Best Value review recommendations
- Highways and Transportation
Depot rationalisation studies and proposals
- New Service and BV Requirements (restructures and new functions)
Environment Directorate Restructuring
Information Centres / IEG

There are also professional property service delivery issues around changing working practices in the construction industry (Rethinking Construction/Constructing Excellence) and in procurement of both works and services.

4.3 New Working Practices within the Council

Denbighshire County Council has this year completed a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) scheme for new offices and new corporate store in Ruthin. Occupation of the new PFI building has prompted a major reallocation of accommodation and the opportunity is being taken to prepare a number of initiatives for implementation to rationalise effectively. A review of office accommodation was carried out by an officer group during March - September 2002 which proposed the introduction of space standards for office accommodation. These have not been formally adopted but have been utilised on the PFI Civic Facility development in Ruthin and office space audits carried out by the CPU. The Authority is using the Audit Commission benchmark figure of 9.4 sq m per person as a currently unofficial target to be achieved throughout the authority.

Asset Rents

The issue of Asset Rents has been identified as one which DCC should look into and evaluate. Initial views both within the authority and as voiced by other authorities differ widely on this subject. Some see Asset Rents as a means for incentivisation to relinquish space and to make services more cost conscious in their use of space. However others see it as adding to a bureaucratic internal economy which would be costly to operate and would undermine the philosophy that accommodation is centrally held. They would also argue that services would be better allocated a proper amount of space by means of audited space standards than by means of incentives which might encourage them to provide less space for financial reasons.

Partnering

Partnering has now been tried on a number of construction contracts carried out by Development Services and it is too early to make any long term assessment. What is clear, however, is that this should be seen as a more effective and economical procurement route rather than a fast-track solution.

Term contracts have also been tried in various areas, both with contractors (building maintenance) and consultants (Design Services). Although experience is limited it may be said that experience suggests that the relatively small size and workload in Denbighshire mitigates against such approaches when compared with the situation in, say, a much larger English authority.

Flexible Working

Flexible working is a concept that is being piloted within Social Services to explore the benefits of homeworking and hot desking. There is some support for this approach to be employed throughout the Authority. It is too early to say what effect this will have on the size of the office estate if more flexible forms of working are introduced. Experience in other Authorities appears to be mixed on whether or not overall estate reductions can be made along with the expected reduction in the cost base.

4.4 Other Relevant Agencies and their Possible Joint Accommodation Requirements

Currently, DCC has limited engagement with other agencies on property matters. It is recognised that there might be some benefit from working in partnership with others to establish co-located service facilities or the reduce overheads by sharing space. This is an area that DCC will address during 2004 with a target of achieving at least one co-located site by the end of the current year and three by the end of 2005. Identifying possible opportunities for co-location will be one of the objectives in the next round of SAMPs to be prepared in Summer 2004.

5 LIKELY FUTURE REQUIREMENTS

The Service AMPs, although they are in their infancy, are beginning to provide more comprehensive and more accurate management information on all services and the whole estate. The consistent approach now adopted in completing the SAMPs has resulted in common themes emerging which will assist in the development of the services and shape the future property portfolio. This will be strengthened further by the conclusions resulting from Best Value Reviews that are helping services to assess their current performance levels. It must be remembered that the property data collection is not complete and that when full information is available conclusions may alter. However, DCC is confident that the early conclusions drawn from the current data are robust and offer the first real tangible benefit of implementing the Corporate AMP process.

6 EXISTING PORTFOLIO AND CURRENT PERFORMANCE

6.1 Statement of Portfolio

DCC has a portfolio of over 300 significant properties with an approximate value £110 Million, involving net running costs of £10.847Million. Much of the holding is operational property used for direct service provision and is predominately freehold. In terms of asset value the school estate is the largest property resource held by DCC. The 16 corporate offices support 1200 office based staff, while a number of properties are used by other agencies or bodies at less than economic rates. The Council holds just over 10% of its property as an investment portfolio but also recognises that it holds land and properties which have, in the right conditions, considerable commercial and economic development value. The headline fact is that over 27% of its value needs to be invested to remove the maintenance / development backlog and bring the estate up to an acceptable standard. Currently, DCC spends less than 1% of its asset value on maintenance. Best practice suggests that a figure of 1.5% of asset value is the minimum required to be spent to maintain buildings to an adequate standard. The table below provides a breakdown of the headline facts on the DCC property asset. A detailed 'Summary of the Principal Assets' in the Council's property portfolio as at April 2004 is provided at the end of section 6.

The headline facts are given in the following table:

HEADLINE FACTS ON THE DCC PROPERTY ASSETS (April 2004)		
DIRECTORATE	ASSET VALUE	MAINT'NCE B'LOG
Life Long Learning	£87,070,000	£25,300,000
Personal Services	£3,850,000	£1,800,000
Economic Development	£260,000	£100,000
Environment	£18,290,000	£3,300,000
	£109,470,000	£30,500,00 (27.86% of Val)

Condition: The majority of the estate has been the subject of DfES style condition surveys that were undertaken during the period 1998/2000. The data gathered on the school estate was completed in March 2000. The intention was for the future collection of data to be undertaken as a five-year rolling programme to cover the whole estate. Sites not subject to a

full survey in any year would have an annual update inspection suitable for including in the SAMP. Unfortunately, the resources have not been available for the rolling programme to be conducted with the result that the whole estate will be due for a full condition survey within 12 months of the publication of this Corporate AMP. It is acknowledged that this is an unsatisfactory position and the necessary steps are being taken as a priority to secure the resources to undertake full condition surveys and then to implement the rolling programme of surveys. This is seen as a major priority by the WAG.

Suitability (Fitness for Purpose): DCC initiated a series of suitability surveys of non-educational properties commencing in August 2003. These were undertaken by Property managers with assistance from CPU Asset Managers and based on a model developed from an examination of good practice in various English Authorities. Information is available covering five suitability components collected from customers and staff using the properties. The surveys have been piloted and used to assist the development of the SAMPs by providing base data to underpin the property review process. A Suitability Survey of all schools is being undertaken during 2004 using the DfES methodology. DCC has completed the survey work necessary to comply with both the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the introduction of Asbestos Registers for all property.

Sufficiency (Capacity and Utilisation): A methodology for establishing sufficiency is well established for schools but requires development for other services. During the last year there has been a detailed and continuing assessment of the sufficiency of office accommodation in an attempt to remedy the overall deficiency. SPO's have been charged with producing an overview of property aims, objectives and strategies for their Service, enabling a basic assessment of sufficiency to be made. Sufficiency models for non-school buildings remain to be fully developed nationally.

Data Integration

A number of methods are being investigated by which the various types of property data can be brought together to give a simple picture of which properties are particularly problematic in one or more respects. In particular, a method developed by Staffordshire CC is being looked at in detail and it is hoped to present this analysis during 2004.

Investment need based on condition, suitability and sufficiency: It is not possible to provide a definitive statement of the investment needs of the DCC portfolio. A best estimate for the next five years has been derived based on the best 'intelligence' available about the estate as drawn from the SAMPs and knowledge of the estate held by experienced service and property professionals. The aggregate assessment of investment need for capital expenditure on properties derived from the Service AMPs is £19.506m. A further £1m has been estimated as necessary to enable the Council buildings to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Value, Cost and Income: The total value of the DCC estate was £110m and supporting detail information in the Corporate AMP is based on this valuation. The valuation is based on the RICs Red Book approach to valuation. It is a priority to determine the actual market value of the portfolio in order to gain a better understanding of its latent value and the potential for rationalisation even where it may require re-provision. The most recent total valuation is £150m and a more detailed breakdown of this will be supplied as soon as practicable.

The total running costs of the estate at April 2003, owned and used by DCC is £10,846,930.

Total Running Costs of the DCC Portfolio (April 2003)			
Gross expenditure	£10,847K	Rates	£1,623K 15%
Rental/letting income	£TBC	Water and Sewerage	£352K 3.3%
Net expenditure	£10,847	Energy	£1,433K 13.2%
		Rents	£342K 3.1%
		Building Maintenance	£2,030K 18.7%
		Grounds Maintenance	£1,259K 11.6%
		Security and Cleaning	£3,277K 30.2%
		Insurance	£424K 3.9%
		Other expenditure	£107K 1.0%

Further scrutiny of the running costs may highlight potential savings which could contribute to the maintenance budget and assist the move towards sustainability.

The following table has been formatted to present a Summary of Principal Assets. At present the data is incomplete but it is intended that in future versions of the Corporate Asset Management Plan this will be able to be completed and developed to illustrate the main measures of the estate.

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL ASSETS												
PROPERTY TYPE	No.	AREA GIA M2	ASSET VALUE	RUNNING COST	INCOME	% CONDITION				REPAIR COST	% SUITABILITY	% SUFFICIENCY
						A	B	C	D			
Office Accommodation	16	12,204		£876K						£257K		
Depots	12	4,584		£134K						£488K		
Primary schools	55	51,327		£2,541K						£9,064K		
High Schools	8	55,819		£2,691K						£7,932K		
Libraries	8	4,520		£224K						£350K		
Youth Centres	8	587		£39K						£104K		
Leisure Centres	7	14,663		£901K						£1,998K		
Parks and Playing Fields	13	620		£32K						£371K		
Town Halls and Community Buildings	5	3,054		£185K						£164K		
Public Toilets	23											
Farms	46											
Cemeteries	9											
Civic Amenity Sites	7	17,041		£848K						£1,747K		
Car Parks	56	17,490		£573K						£87K		
Coastal Tourist Facilities	14	10,050		£440K						£158K		
Elderly Persons Homes	4	11,405		£621K						£186K		
Tourist Information Centres	4											
Business rent unit sites	17											

Currently the DCC portfolio is not defined using the categories recommended by CLAW i.e. operational (direct, indirect, office and administration); non-operational (investment, surplus, future development, new capital projects). This will be addressed with the introduction of IPF 'Asset Manager'.

7.0 REVIEW AND CHALLENGE

7.1 Gap Analysis

There is a common perception that DCC holds many properties because of historical accident rather than for service requirements and that there are some self-evident options for rationalisation. The existing property portfolio must be vigorously challenged if the Corporate Asset Objectives are to be met. Proper procedures need to be implemented regarding consultation, incentivisation, reporting, information, acquisition and disposal, *inter alia* to ensure that the correct, informed decisions are taken.

Operational property will be justified and/or challenged through the Service AMPs prepared annually by service departments. SAMPs were prepared during 2002 and 2003 with the emphasis on verifying base data to be used and working with each service to develop the SAMP format. Summaries of the 2003/04 SAMPs are at Appendix C.

The Denbighshire model has been circulated to CLAW members and has been adopted by some other authorities. However it is felt that the element of challenge is as yet insufficiently robust and prioritisation methods need development to become transparent and fair. There is also the need to incorporate the Condition, Sufficiency, Suitability and running cost data into the SAMP format in order to compare this with departmental perceptions and aspirations. These aspects will be the focus of development in the next round.

Non-operational and surplus property have been the subject of a preliminary 'trawl' completed on a town-by-town basis. Although this has been carried out in a fairly simple and informal manner, it has been a very useful exercise in building up a picture of the Authority's ownership by area and identifying sites for future investigation, as well as identifying potential short-term capital receipts. A similar 'trawl' through the main rural settlements is now being undertaken with completion in 2005.

Fundamental to good asset management is the robustness of management information. Much of the data necessary to support DCC's AMP process is either available or is now being collected. Data will be held electronically on the 'Asset Manager' software on all property using its unique property identifier (UPRN). DCC intends to adopt the National Land Property Gazetteer UPRN in due course. The following table provides a picture of where DCC is in terms of data collection.

Data	Position Statement
Core data	Available on all properties, however needs improved access to all data
Condition	Completed on all properties but requires updating by 2006 at the latest
Use	Use and user information is available on all properties
Value	Value based on is available on all properties, this is subject to a rolling programme of market valuations.
Suitability	Outline information is available for all non - school properties. Information on schools is being collected during 2004/5. DDA surveys on all properties are complete.
Sufficiency	Available for main building types. Others to be developed.
Running costs	Available and outlined above.
Floor plans	Coverage is variable

7.2 Review of Asset Strategy, Property Objectives and Delivery Mechanisms

Strategic Site Masterplans (SSMs) are being prepared for the High School sites. Once this first series of SSMs is completed it is hoped to extend them to include other large, complex or problematic sites such as the triple school site in Denbigh. Some other important reviews are underway and planned that will potentially impact on Asset Management and service delivery. These are:

- The Managing School Places exercise in Education;
- The Depot rationalisation review and feasibility study for Middle Lane site;

- The review of office location and accommodation
A method for the carrying out of Post Project Evaluations (PPEs) has been approved by AMC . These are to be carried out and reported on by the Aset Management Team biannually. The implementation of the reorganisation of property services will take forward improvement of the delivery mechnisms through unification, performance management and integration of the Corporate AMP strategy with the capital and maintenance plans and programmes. Key to success will be the improvement of the asset information and database through completion and updating of surveys, and integration of the information systems.

7.3 Review of Roles and Responsibilities for Property

The restructuring and reorganisation of the property functions during 2004 provided an opportunity to identify and address areas for improvement.

The importance of Asset Management Planning is recognised by DCC and the roles and responsibilities for delivery have been made clear in the new structure. Within the organisational framework some of the issues to be taken on are:

- distinguishing the strategic and operational property functions as advocated in central government guidance;
- providing a robust challenge process as to why Directorates are holding property and how those properties are being used;
- promoting best practice in property management across all Directorates to ensure compliance and regulatory issues are addressed;
- achieving Best Value across the property portfolio.
- managing the performance of property assets on behalf of the corporate centre

Some promotion of the AMP process and the reorganisation of roles and responsibilities will be necessary to ensure all project sponsors in service departments are fully aware of the procedures and the need to take account of the Corporate Asset Objectives when submitting a project proposal. A round of seminars is proposed to reinforce the roles and responsibilities of the personnel, groups and committees involved in the AMP process during 2005.

Decision-making Process

Bids are first considered by the Asset Management Team (to ensure conformity to both Corporate Policies and Service strategies). However, the AMG has found the prioritisation role problematic. Papers approved by AMG are frequently altered before submission to AMC and some papers can bypass the entire machinery and go straight to AMC or cabinet. The Corporate Asset Management arrangements are due to be reviewed in the near future to ensure effectiveness, transparency and robustness.

The review of the role and membership of AMG will ensure that those representing service departments have the necessary delegated authority to participate in, contribute to and make the decisions that enable full implementation of the Corporate AMP strategy. This will include prioritisation and advice on investment and the Capital programme. The processes and procedures will be clear and robust to demonstrate standards of decision-making that will deliver success in application for grants and borrowings under the prudential regime.

8.0 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

8.1 Strategic Options

Denbighshire is able to identify a broad outline of where the Corporate AMP has to develop. At this stage it is more appropriate to proceed with the reviews and development programmes suggested above and also at the end of section 9 in the Improvement and Action Plan.

There is clear evidence that there is no “Do nothing” or “Retain the Status Quo” option and DCC has already begun to address the future by reorganisation of the Property Services. This will enable the Corporate AMP to be completed and placed at the core of asset management planning over the next five years. At the centre of the strategy will be drivers for rationalisation to reduce costs to an affordable level and optimise use of the estate in stimulating achievement of economic regeneration and wealth creation objectives. Services

are now able to begin to form judgements about their estates based on suitability and sufficiency surveys. Further challenging of building use and coordination of facilities provision with other bodies and partners will lead to further economies in relation to the estate.

The strategic approach will be to prepare papers for presentation to AMC through AMG. The Improvement and Action Plan and this AMP provide the basis for better and closer coordination of reviews and policies. In this respect the property performance framework and the prioritisation criteria for inclusion in business plans and the capital programme are important steps to enable proper appraisal and evaluation of options.

Two areas the strategic options need to address are ; the focus and shape of the portfolio and the routes to procurement of facilities and services. The procurement options are likely to build on the Community Strategy, customer requirements and the search for collaborative ways of working. The key and dominant aspect will be to address the shortfall in funds and conditionality of funding providers may affect the Council's ability to deliver any prioritised programme developed.

8.2 Options Appraisal

It is the responsibility of the directorates working in conjunction with the forward looking asset management plans to investigate options for procuring property solutions in support of service delivery. The Asset Management Team will always seek to ensure that all options are established with clear statements about what can be achieved for service delivery, the benefits to be delivered, and the risks to be managed. The AMG will have an important part of its role to support compliance with good practice, provide suitable challenges to proposals and ensure options are correctly costed and evaluated with appropriate advice taken from service managers and finance and property professionals.

All investment proposals will also be tested against a set of criteria for the prioritisation of investment. The criteria are currently being developed and are likely to include:

- Meeting DCC Priorities
- Meeting service policy goals
- Meeting cross-departmental targets
- Supports working with other agencies
- Enables innovation
- Provides Value for Money
- Best Practice

Obviously, different services will have their own 'slant' on the conclusions that are particular to them. What can be recorded here are the themes that are emerging across all services from the baseline Service AMPs. These are:

1) A need for all services to focus upon suitable core accommodation to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' and are directly linked to service delivery. The town centre approach will require a "front of house" or "one stop shop", point of focus in the principal centres.

2) Similarly, there is a recognition that non-core buildings are an overhead that must be reduced as operational budgets come under continuing and increased pressure.

3) Within the two points above, there is also recognition that the backlog in maintenance will not be met by traditional financing routes and that more imaginative and radical solutions need to be found. This includes the possibility of releasing accommodation regarded as the most unlikely to receive maintenance funding. The policy of developing core buildings whilst reducing the number of non-core buildings will have a marked effect on the portfolio.

4) The co-location of services has not been widely investigated or pursued in the past. However, there is now evidence that services are beginning to see advantage to customers in providing more than one service from a centre. As service managers become increasingly cost conscious, they will also appreciate the possible overhead savings that might accrue.

5) It is also becoming apparent that services appreciate the need to generate finance from within the Authority through the sale of assets. Although not popular with all, most service

departments are prepared to suggest assets that might be sold. However there is the problem of departments considering an asset as belonging to them and not the corporate body and the expectation that 'they' will receive benefit from a sale. It is evident that ringfencing of capital receipts is having an impact on the funds being made available in the capital plan although it is questionable whether this is being done on a consistent basis. The AMG has therefore commissioned a sub-group to look at possible criteria which could be applied to the use of ringfencing with a view to drafting a policy as appropriate in due course.

6) There is a growing realisation that finances will not continue to come from the traditional sources. In future budgets will increasingly come from a more complex range public and private bodies, much of it via competitive or semi-competitive bid writing. To be successful in attracting funding authorities must position themselves to show advantage over others. Conversely, some funding bodies require applicants to show partnership working with other agencies. Collaborative working invariably involves the shared use of property.

8.3 Preferred Strategy Option

A more comprehensive review of strategic options will be necessary when the maintenance and rationalisation information is more up to date and complete in terms of suitability and sufficiency and how it fits with requirements emerging from Town centre, Area Partnership and Council service reviews incorporating Asset Management. At this stage in the development of DCC's AMP process it is only possible to give a general 'flavour' of the likely way forward in two major areas:

Offices: Whereas economies of scale indicate that centralised offices would be the most effective solution for the county, the Corporate mission statement established upon 'LGR' advocates a dispersal of services to reflect population distribution. It is clear that operationally implementation at present has to balance competing views within the authority towards:

- Dispersed multi-directorate offices;
- A centralised 'county hall' approach with satellites;
- Single Directorate sites.

Members should be fully informed as to the merits and demerits of each approach in order that they can reach an informed decision as to the best long term strategy for the authority.

It is therefore proposed to carry out a review of the corporate offices strategy in the County Landlord's SAMP as part of the implementation of this Corporate AMP strategy. The outcomes of this study should indicate the standards to be met, condition, sufficiency, suitability, whole life evaluation of costs, energy efficiency and affordability of solutions offered.

Schools: The 'Managing School Places' will pave the way for a strategy for school provision in Denbighshire, including the small rural schools.

Denbighshire primary schools have 7767 full time pupils with accommodation for 9092, which results in 1325 surplus places. Based on current projections the primary school population could, as a result of declining birth rate, fall by approx 350 pupils over the next 6 years. However based on migration trends, particularly in the north of the county there are pockets of growth. This has led to additional schools being identified for Rhyl and Prestatyn.

In the secondary sector there are 7880 pupils on roll against 8082 places i.e. 202 surplus places. Again numbers over the next 6 years could show a slight decrease although this will depend upon such factors as exam results, employment opportunities and cross boundary transfers.

As part of the Authority's commitment to addressing the issue of surplus places a countywide exercise on 'managing school places' is currently on-going which involves Governors, staff and parents of all schools. The results and recommendations arising from this exercise will be reported back to Cabinet/County Council.'

9.0 ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The programmes are driven by the various corporate and service strategies and plans. There is insufficient funding available to meet the estimated costs of the planned and outlined programmes for capital expenditure. There are important items that fall outside the proposed Capital Plan. The maintenance backlog and the appropriate budgets do not equate and therefore radical measures will need to be considered in order to achieve sustainability. As has been stated earlier in this report, it is too early to reach definitive conclusions with regard to the estate. However, it is clear that the release of property to increase capital receipts and to reduce the maintenance backlog will have a prominent role.

9.1 Capital Programme

Details of requirements for capital expenditure on property assets have been identified from the production of Service Asset Management Plans. The schemes are regarded as being necessary for the continued delivery of Council services. The total estimated costs of schemes identified amount to £19.506m*.

In addition to the schemes identified in the Service Asset Management Plans there are requirements for capital expenditure in respect of infrastructure, vehicles and equipment, as well as computer hardware and software. These items have been identified by services as being required to maintain or improve service delivery. The total estimated cost of these schemes amounts to £6.127m*.

**Source: Consultancy Services Annual Statement 2003*

As well as the items referred to above, it should be noted that maintenance backlogs exist in respect of schools and other buildings (estimated at £16.7m) and highways (estimated at £20.0m).

Given that total expenditure needs amount to an estimated £62m, it is apparent that:-

- i) not all this expenditure can be afforded in the next three to four years and priority needs to be given to essential items (meaning that others may not be addressed at all);
- ii) attention needs to continue to be given to identifying options for reducing maintenance and repair requirements by rationalising our asset base. An example is the work on managing school places;
- iii) generation of capital receipts from asset sales will also continue to be important in order to support capital investment.

9.2 Revenue Programme

It is anticipated that over the next five years £3-4 million of expenditure will be required each year to address the maintenance backlog and then maintain property in a 'fit for purpose' condition. The current level of maintenance expenditure is estimated to be nearer to £2m, and depending on how certain elements of planned maintenance are viewed the immediate proposals for 2004/2005 may lift expenditure to approaching £3m. This level would have to be sustained over the next two to three years and the impact measured on the level of the high priority and more urgent works, to assess its effectiveness.

In the same timeframe the introduction of further more detailed examinations of key properties in the estate and updating of the previous condition surveys would enable the Council to make better informed assessments as to the affordable level of revenue expenditure required, to sustain this programme of works. The recommended way forward to support the level of revenue expenditure to be applied is:

- those relevant elements of the performance framework relating primarily to Condition in terms of A-D and 1-4 classification of present condition and urgency of required works; and
- an annual property review that includes technical and user judgements about priorities and order of attention to needs. This would allow the opportunity to match survey information with current knowledge of work done, need and future investment plans.

9.3 Responsibilities for Implementation

Responsibility for the implementation of the Corporate AMP has rested with the CPO supported by the Asset Management Team and overseen by AMG and AMC. The day to day implementation is delegated to the service directorates.

Models of good practice exist based on other Council's experience of raising the profile of asset management. In these models the CPO provides accountability at the Chief Officer level, and direct control and leadership to a unified property service focused on development and delivery of the Corporate AMP. The AMP implementation and action plans set the strategy programme and plans for the council against a 3-5 year time horizon. DCC will examine these alternative models of property services to determine what is appropriate for implementation of this strategy and Corporate AMP within the new reorganisation structure. The reorganisation of the property services indicates future roles and responsibilities under the Corporate Property Officer as:

Denbighshire Design and Development (3D)

Denbighshire Design and Development is responsible for delivering construction projects on behalf of the County Council. This activity ranges from forward planning of the property portfolio, through the evolution of projects to design and procurement. The Authority should retain its capability to design and develop its own projects; however, this Unit should be responsible for assessing the most cost effective solutions, for construction procurement, and responding to the changing construction climate.

Property Management Services (PMS)

This Unit manages the operational portfolio of the County Council. Its primary duties are those of landlord and tenant, property acquisitions and disposals and other day-to-day management issues. The previous County Landlord functions generally rest with this Unit.

Building Services

Substantially unchanged from the previous unit within Development Services, the Unit is responsible for managing the maintenance programmes for County Council property and carrying out small works projects under £75k in value. The 2003 Environment Directorate restructure proposed altered arrangements for the procurement of building maintenance works. The detail of these changes is still evolving and changes envisaged by this document will need to be factored in due course. The potential impact of housing stock renewal may lead to these proposals being revised. Any such change would free up the staff within the Unit to concentrate on progressing maintenance capital schemes, developing effective strategies for the improvement of the portfolio.

See the table at the end of the section for the detailed implementation action plan to develop and put in place by April 2006 the Corporate AMP.

It is intended that in future versions of this document a summary table will be presented, showing the possible funding profile for both capital and revenue expenditure over the next five years including borrowing, grants, capital receipts, other external funding and revenue income.

9.4 Timetable for Implementation & Overall Programme

The outline Improvement and Action Plan shows the headline areas for development and completion of the Corporate Asset Management Plan. The number of areas where significant further work is required are substantial. The plan will require discussion and agreement across directorates to make it an effective tool for delivery of the AMP process. Essentially a

project plan should be formed to detail when and how some of the identified areas for improvement will be addressed.

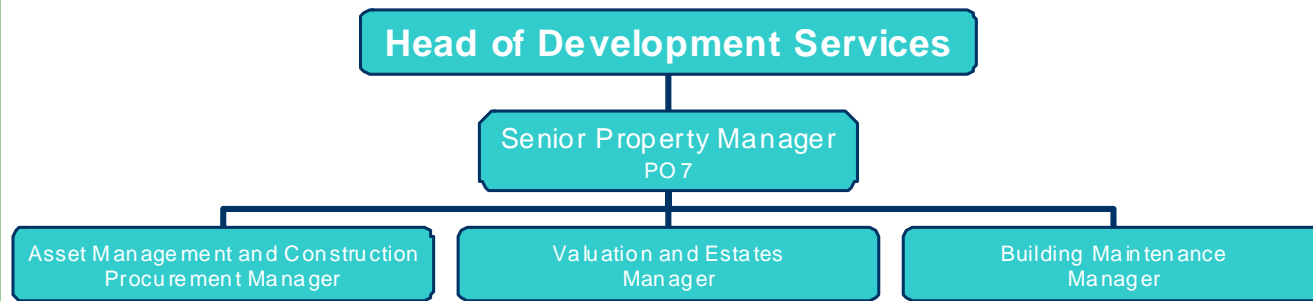
At Appendix D is shown the indicative timetable for implementation of the Corporate AMP arrangements in line with the Guidance provided by CLAW , WLGA, WAG and the Audit Commission in Wales. Progress against this plan is currently being measured and assessed by ACiW. The important areas for improvement are included in the Improvement and Action Plan. The two key areas for urgent action are the integration of the core database of information and the establishment of DCC's property performance management framework. Both have effectively now slipped a year to 2004/05. In turn this has affected DCC's ability to put in place five year financial plans that are linked to robust information and measurable targets for performance. The Service AMP approach developed is good practice and provides a sound foundation on which to build the Corporate AMP bottom up.

OUTLINE IMPROVEMENT & ACTION PLAN		
WHAT	WHEN	WHO
ACTIONS to IMPROVE ASSET INFORMATION & HOW IT IS SHARED		
1) Create Central Property Database for Asset Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure fields encourage upward Integration of data into a centrally accessible information database b) Link IPF and ECS systems and put into operation c) upgrade IPF system to become a web-based corporate property database 	October 2005	DDD / PMS
2) Improve quality of Condition Survey Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Include requirements of DDA b) Agree procedures to maintain and update 	2005-6 and then a rolling programme	DDD/ BS
3) Review property by property and building by building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Complete Suitability and Sufficiency data and integrate with Condition b) Make summaries of Condition, Suitability and Sufficiency visible as part of the SAMPs c) Complete Strategic Site Masterplans 	April 2005	DDD/BS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Complete Suitability and Sufficiency data and integrate with Condition b) Make summaries of Condition, Suitability and Sufficiency visible as part of the SAMPs c) Complete Strategic Site Masterplans 	
4) Add information, as necessary on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Energy Costs b) Running Costs 	July 2005	Corp AM Team
ACTIONS TO IMPROVE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING		
1) Clarify organisational roles and responsibilities, including alignment of accountability with responsibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Determine capacity and capability requirements to operationally deliver the AMP strategy b) Resource and empower Corporate Property AMP function within the new structure 	September 2004	CPO / AMC
2) Review and clarify AMG and AMC roles and responsibilities to deliver the AMP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Determine prioritised property outcomes and set targets b) Links to information available c) Set Time Horizons for improvements d) Improve the maintenance backlog with particular focus on the urgent and worst 	April 2005	DDD / AMC

<p>cases;</p> <p>e) Translate the SAMP and property specific information into outline service, performance management and financial plans;</p> <p>f) Determine where DCC will be in five years time as a result of implementing a Corporate AMP strategy;</p> <p>g) Incorporate the Highways, Housing and Infrastructure assets into the AMP .</p> <p>3) Explore and clarify the “Decision-Making” processes around prioritisation and capital planning:</p> <p>a) Service Chief Officers’ role</p> <p>b) AMG / AMC roles</p> <p>c) Review procedures & standards setting</p> <p>d) Revenue Budgets & ring fencing of Capital Receipts</p> <p>4) Establish investment figures in the Capital Plan forecasts for 4-5 years</p> <p>a) Review and apply policy for use of capital receipts</p> <p>b) Introduce whole life procurement evaluation and prepare approach to incorporating energy efficiency into the options appraisal process</p>	<p>Targets set April 2005</p> <p>April 2006</p> <p>April 2005</p> <p>March 2004</p> <p>October 2005</p> <p>April 2006</p>	<p>AMG / AMC</p> <p>Corp AM Team</p> <p>AMG / AMC</p> <p>AMG / AMC</p> <p>FINANCE / DDD / PMS</p>
<p>ACTIONS TO IMPROVE ASSETS & DELIVERY OF ASSET MANAGEMENT</p> <p>1) Develop and establish a Property Performance Framework including SMART Corporate Asset subobjectives</p> <p>a) Review information available and the quality</p> <p>b) Size of property portfolio – Location, Numbers, Value, and size, Gross Internal Area (GIA m²)</p> <p>c) Cost /m² of management and property services</p> <p>d) Maintenance Backlog</p> <p>e) Space Utilisation</p> <p>f) Suitability etc...</p> <p>g) Determine the appropriate balance between planned and reactive maintenance</p> <p>2) Improve the Quality of the Capital Strategy, Plans and Programmes</p> <p>a) Plan for rationalisation of the Property Portfolio and implications for disposal and acquisition plans;</p> <p>b) Merge DDA and regulatory works implementation into the Capital Plans;</p> <p>c) Implement improved ordering, property maintenance and commitment system;</p>	<p>April 2005</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 2005</p> <p>April 2006</p>	<p>DDD / PMS</p> <p>FINANCE / DDD / PMS</p> <p>PMS</p>

APPENDIX A
Organisational Structures

PROPOSED STRUCTURE



APPENDIX B

Denbighshire County Council Priorities 2004 - 05

A. WE AIM TO PROVIDE THE SERVICES THAT THE PEOPLE OF DENBIGHSHIRE WANT

- By 2005, the public should be able to receive 80% of all services in the way that best suits them. They will be able to contact the council by a single telephone centre, face to face in our one stop shops and through our web site on the internet.
- we will listen to what people want
- all letters, phone calls and e-mails will receive a full reply within 10 working days from April 2004.
- we will investigate all complaints and we will aim to provide a full reply within 20 working days from April 2004.
- area partnerships will include representatives of the public, voluntary bodies and businesses from April 2004.
- we will give each area partnership some money which it will decide how to spend
- We will spend more money on the following services in 2004-05 to improve them:
 - a clean and tidy environment
 - maintaining roads
 - social services
 - a safe environment

B. WE WILL OBTAIN AS MUCH MONEY AS POSSIBLE FOR DENBIGHSHIRE AND USE IT WISELY

- each year, we will obtain up to £10 million of grants from other bodies to improve the county
- we will raise as much money as possible from fees and charges so that we can improve services
- we will aim to spend more money on education to allow schools to maintain what they are doing now. But any further increase in funding for schools will depend on how much grant we get from the Assembly
- we will save money by changing what we do now to improve services
- we will introduce a staff suggestion scheme by April 2004
- we will spend money in 2004-05 on changes that will save us money in future
- we aim to sell £3m of land and buildings each year to improve our roads and other buildings
- we will increase spending on our buildings and roads by borrowing more money under the Local Government Act 2003
- we will increase our general savings to £3 million by March 2005
- we will support local businesses and other bodies by buying locally where we can

C WE WILL INVEST IN COUNCILLORS AND STAFF

- we aim to achieve the silver level of the Corporate Health and Safety Standard by September 2004
- we will take steps to recruit and retain important staff such as social workers
- every councillor who wants a computer will have one by May 2004, to reduce postage costs and improve communications
- we will spend money on training that helps the council to improve services
- we will take steps to recruit more young people from Denbighshire.
- we will spend no more than £800k a year on temporary staff from agencies by October 2004.
- we aim that all staff should have a fairly assessed rate of pay for their work no

later than March 2005 (this is called “single status”).

- from April 2004, we will appoint staff to grades rather than specific jobs, so that we have a more flexible workforce

D WE WILL IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF DENBIGHSHIRE

- in 2004-05 we will spend more money on improving the look of the area for residents and visitors, such as:
 - public toilets
 - tackling run down buildings or areas
 - improving buildings that are used most often by the public
 - getting rid of signs that bear the names of old councils.
- No ward in Denbighshire should be among the 20 most deprived areas in Wales by 2007, with none in the top 50 by 2012
- we will give more attention to tourism and attract more visitors to the area
- we will support the opening of high quality hotels in Rhyl and Prestatyn.
- we will have a large marquee at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod and sponsor one of the concerts
- we will spend money on a programme of events in other parts of the county

Appendix C

Text from Executive Summaries to the Service Asset Management Plans 2003/04

Note: These summaries are as compiled at the time and are currently being updated for the latest round of SAMPs.

1. COUNTY LANDLORD

Although the SAMP produces a prioritised schedule of schemes which requires capital finance, County Landlord's concerns can be summarised as follows;

Allied Issues

- I. Disability Discrimination Act – The work to be carried out to comply with this Act has been identified, funding has been allocated, the work has been programmed and is on going. However the allocated funding appears to be insufficient. Members have directed that additional bids be submitted and service managers re-examine their methods of service delivery.
- II. Asbestos – funding has been allocated for this legislative issue and Building Services have been commissioned to progress the matter and manage the process with the aid of additional staff resources.

Corporate Office / Administrative Properties

Prestatyn – Zurich building, £75,000 has been allocated for this property in the 2004-05 Capital Plan. It has been decided to use this property for a term of four years for office accommodation, proposed occupancy May 2004.

Prestatyn – 6-8 Nant Hall Road, post PFI this building could be considered for disposal or change of use.

Ruthin – PFI on going and due for occupation as of May 2004.

Rhyl – Morfa Hall: staff are being relocated from here to Zurich etc. in summer of 2004. The property will then be disposed of.

Henllan – this property is still a strong candidate for disposal, with the present services being relocated to Middle Lane. (Feasibility Study in progress).

Denbigh – Middle Lane, a feasibility study is currently being carried out for this site, also considering implications for the Henllan site. Generally, a study is needed of the number and distribution of meeting/conference rooms available within the county.

Registrar's Offices

Prestatyn – 1 Nant Hall Road needs to be relocated as this property is to be disposed of.

Rhyl – Morfa Hall: the registrars are being relocated from here to Morfa Clwyd, whereby £105,000 has been allocated in the Capital Plan to facilitate the service.

Ruthin – soon to be relocated to the Town Hall as part of the PFI scheme.

Depots

Bodelwyddan – option for consideration includes redevelopment of site to incorporate and centralise outlying depots. There are no figures put forward in the SAMP but a figure of £1.5m is earmarked for this project in the Capital Plan.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS SAMP AND THE CAPITAL PLAN 2004 – 05

- I. In Appendix 3 of the Capital Plan there has been £1.5m earmarked for a Vehicle Maintenance Workshops, but in the SAMP there is no allocation for this project.

- II. In Appendix 6 there has been £1.0m allocated to carry out works in order to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- III. In Appendix 6 there has been £105,000 allocated to carry out works on Morfa Clwyd in order to relocate the Registrar's service from Morfa Hall to Morfa Clwyd.

2. LIFELONG LEARNING - EDUCATION

Primary School Provision:

The existing primary school provision within the County is being considered in the Managing School Places exercise to be completed Jan 2005. Deficiencies have already been identified in several Primary School buildings in terms of condition (condition surveys undertaken in 2000 identified a £9.06m maintenance backlog [page 43]) and sufficiency (of 54 Primary Schools, 14 have insufficient permanent capacity for the number of pupils on roll [page 8]).

The need for new Primary Schools has been identified in the following areas due to projected increases in number of school places required:

- Rhyl - Site safeguarded in S/E Rhyl in the UDP
- Prestatyn - Site identified in the West of the town and allocated in the UDP. Prestatyn has been identified as the priority in terms of requirements for a new school.
- Ruthin - A site in the Glasdir area of the town has been identified for new school provision.

Secondary School Provision:

Strategic Site Masterplans are being prepared for all DCC Secondary School Sites and will be completed early/mid 2004. Again there are deficiencies in terms of condition (£7.7m maintenance backlog [page 43]) and sufficiency (of 8 Secondary Schools, 5 have insufficient permanent capacity for the number of pupils on roll [page 9]).

The increase in primary school numbers resulting in the need for new schools will obviously impact upon the number of secondary school places required in respective areas.

Special School Provision:

The two designated special schools within the County are being improved with significant investment being injected into each facility. More investment is, however, required to complete these projects which will become centres of excellence for Special Education in Wales.

Table 1 (pages 13 - 26) identifies the areas where development is required to deliver service priorities. Priority projects for available DCC/External funding for the next 5 years are identified in Table 2 (pages 28 - 35 in main document) which is attached.

Projects prioritised for 2004/05 funding are as follows:

DCC Capital Maintenance Block Allocation - £900K (Approx):

Awaiting priority list from Building Services.

Note: £450K dependant upon reinstatement of the Block Allocation, £300K not to be released until Jan 05.

DCC Block Funding Allocation - £50K:

Rolling programme of school furniture replacement.

Prudential Borrowing Schemes (£1.0M).

General School Building Improvements. Projects to be finalised.

Note: Revenue savings to be confirmed. Figure may vary.

Funding from Capital Receipts (£900K):

- Phase 1 Tir Morfa special school (relocation from the Rhuddlan site).

WAG School Building Improvement Grant Funding - £1.05 M (Approx):

- Ysgol Bryn Hedydd - Extend staff room
- Henllan CP School - Classroom extension
- Ysgol Bro Famau - Refurbish school house
- Ysgol Penmorfa - Additional hard play area
- Dyserth CP School - Extension/alterations to provide Early Years Unit
- Christchurch CP School - Refurbishment/remodelling
- Emmanuel CP School - Refurbishment/remodelling
- Ysgol Glan Clwyd - Design/Cost study for new Science Labs/Community Learning.
- Begin rolling programme of Dining Room/Kitchen refurbishment/remodelling.

ELWa Funding:

Subject to ongoing discussions with ELWa regarding available funding, Post 16 Learning Centres are planned in the following areas:

- Rhyl High School
- Prestatyn High School
- Ysgol Glan Clwyd
- Denbigh High School
- Ysgol Brynhyfryd
- Ysgol Dinas Bran
- Corwen

3. LIFELONG LEARNING : CULTURE AND LEISURE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The most pressing problem with much of the Culture and Leisure property portfolio arises from a combination of old, worn-out and substandard facilities, coupled with a lack of investment over many years in either maintaining or developing these properties. Inadequate budgets to invest in these properties has added to these problems.

Condition Surveys undertaken in 2000 identified a maintenance backlog of £5.4m (page 35).

Table 1 (pages 8 - 26) identifies the areas where development is required to deliver service priorities. Priority projects for DCC/External funding for the next 5 years are identified in Table 2 (pages 28 - 31)

Projects prioritised for 2004/05 funding are as follows:

DCC Planned Maintenance Budget (£?):

Awaiting priority list from Building Services

Schemes Recommended by Cabinet 27/01/04 (£450K):

- Rhyl - Provision of new Youth Club.
- Prestatyn - Upgrade of existing Youth Club
- Implementation of Best Value Improvement Programme for Leisure Centres

Prudential Borrowing Schemes (£300K):

- Leisure Centre Improvements.

4. PERSONAL SERVICES

Although the SAMP produces a prioritised schedule of schemes requiring capital finance, Personal Service's concerns can be identified and summarised as follows:

1. All the County's Elderly Persons Residential Homes need urgent investment for improvements to provide compliance to current Regulations and Health and Safety legislation allowing their continued operation. An immediate request (Bid 1.1 @ £300k) for Capital finance was made and was successful.
2. A Best Value Review has accepted that further improvements to EPRH's is required to meet new accommodation regulations. Accordingly, a second request (Bids 2.1 to 5.1 @ £3,184k over four years) for Capital finance was made. This will still need to be considered although at the same time alternative proposals for "Very Sheltered Housing" are being explored which, over the five years, will have an impact on the residential homes.
3. Rhyl's Day Centre for People with Serious and Enduring Mental Illnesses is currently located in St Winefred's House on Brighton Road. The building is extremely dilapidated and if it were to remain at this location would require capital investment for refurbishment. Relocating the facility to alternative premises, funded by the Capital Receipt from the sale of the existing site, is under consideration as being more cost effective than refurbishment. Accordingly a bid for uncertain capital [Bid 1.2] was submitted, was unsuccessful but was recognised in the Capital Plan as being an unfunded scheme.
4. Denbigh, Dyffryn House accommodates a Work Opportunities Small Business and has repeatedly been identified as having Health and Safety risks for Service Users. A previous bid to fund alternative premises was unsuccessful but there may now be an opportunity to extend on the existing premises but which will also need capital. A capital bid (Bid 1.3 @ £50k) was unsuccessful but was, again, recognised in the Capital Plan as being an unfunded scheme.
5. There are concerns over many aspects of the properties in the portfolio and this is reflected in table 2 including the deferred bids for another 5 named projects but without cost estimates. The immediate need is to address a shortage of office accommodation but is addressed elsewhere (Corporate Landlord's SAMP).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS SAMP AND THE CAPITAL PLAN 2004 - 05

General Funding

The 2004 - 05 Capital Plan identifies and includes both a Block Allocation for Personal Services (which facilitates non property capital expenditure) and, on the recommendation of Cabinet on January 27, 2004, the following scheme (appendix 5, item 1a):

6. Bid 1.1	Health and Safety Works to Residential Homes	£300k
------------	--	-------

Prudential Borrowing None

Earmarked Capital Receipts/Reserves None

Special Funding None

Unfunded Schemes

The following schemes were identified in the SAMP but for which no finance was allocated or identified (appendix 9):

7. Bids 2.1 to 5.1	Refurbishment programme for Residential Homes	£3,184k
8. Bid 1.2	Cost of a replacement for St Winefred's Day Centre	£?k
9. Bid 1.3	Cost of addressing Health and Safety issues	£50k
10. another 5 projects by name but costings being unavailable		
		total £3,234k.

5. PUBLIC PROTECTION AND REGULATORY SERVICES

Although the SAMP produces a prioritised schedule of schemes which will require capital finance, PP & RS's concerns are identified and summarised as follows;

Public Toilets

- Rhyl – Town Hall, refurbishment works to commence January 2004 and to be completed by May 2004.

- ❑ Rhyl – Railway Station, refurbishment works to commence January 2004 and to be completed by June 2004.
- ❑ Llandrillo – the community council wish to take over the site, once refurbishment works have been carried out by DCC.

Amenity Land

- ❑ Rhyl – Garden of Remembrance , in need of maintenance work, town council interested in taking it over, concerns that the maintenance work to be done before June 2004.
- ❑ Llangollen – Riverside Park, remedial work to be carried out before DCC lease it out.
- ❑ Skateboard Parks – part funding available for sites in Ruthin, Denbigh and Dyserseth but the cost of construction and maintenance will be placed upon the authority.
- ❑ Play Areas – various sites have DDA and maintenance work to be carried out on them to prevent future claims against the authority.
- ❑ Open Spaces – various sites will require maintenance work on security and boundary fences to prevent future claims against the authority.

Cemeteries

- ❑ Rhyl – this site is reaching its capacity and is in need of extending or possible new site in Rhyl.
- ❑ Prestatyn – Coed Bell cemetery has maintenance work overdue and will need extending

Office / Administrational Properties

- The County Landlord's SAMP will deal with the following issues;
- ❑ Rhyl – Liquor Licensing will be taking on four additional staff from April 2004.
 - ❑ Ruthin – work is to be carried out on Canol y Dre in order to accommodate ten staff from Animal Licensing.
 - ❑ There will be a need to accommodate an increase in staff in 2006/07.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS SAMP AND THE CAPITAL PLAN 2004 – 05

Appendix 3 of the capital plan shows that there has been £65,000 allocated for the Public Convenience Refurbishment Programme.

There has been £75,000 allocated to the Playgrounds Improvement Programme.

6. ECONOMIC REGENERATION SERVICES

Although the SAMP produces a prioritised schedule of schemes requiring capital finance, the Economic Regeneration Service's concerns can be identified and summarised as follows:

1. In priming the private sector and facilitating the establishment of industrial estates, most of their funding request was for the match funding of grants (Bids 1.1 to 1.4).
2. As its Workshops are situated on Industrial Estates which were created using Grant funding but retained to facilitate the private sector, the older ones are now in need of investment to improve accommodation levels to meet modern legislature. This has lead to a request for Capital finance as a commitment over successive capital plans (Bid 1.5).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS SAMP AND THE CAPITAL PLAN 2004 - 05

General Funding

The 2004 - 05 Capital Plan identifies and includes an Economic Regeneration Services block allocation which facilitates most of the match funding issues, but Cabinet on January 27, 2004, requested no additional schemes were included for (appendix 3, item 1a is missing).

Prudential Borrowing	None
Earmarked Capital Receipts/Reserves	None
Special Funding	None

Unfunded Schemes

The following schemes were identified in the SAMP but for which no finance was allocated or identified (appendix 7):

11. Foryd Harbour regeneration scheme (Bid 1.4)	£500k
12. Industrial Estates Refurbishment of Older Workshops (Bid 1.5)	<u>£260k</u>
total	£760

7. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Although the SAMP produces a prioritised schedule of schemes requiring capital finance, Highways and Transportation Services concerns can be identified and summarised as follows:

The most pressing issue affecting the Highways and Transportation Service is the depot rationalisation. The impending road improvement affecting the Ruthin, Glasdir Depot site is seen as being the catalyst for this. As the issue was seen to be common to both the Highways and Transportation Service (Highways Depot) and the (Corporate) Landlord's Service (Direct Services Organisation) it resulted in a working group being established to represent both interests. This group reported directly to Cabinet and accordingly depots were not discussed in either SAMP.

With the condition of public car parks historically being dependent upon road and highway infrastructure maintenance, there isn't a significant condition problem but two bids (Bid 1 @ £249,000 and 2 @ £143,000) were submitted for future enhancement works. A third bid (Bid 3 @ £90,000), being a higher priority, requires investment in CCTV and improved security measures to encourage more effective and increased usage.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS SAMP AND THE CAPITAL PLAN 2004 - 05

General Funding

The 2004 - 05 Capital Plan identifies and includes only a Block Allocation for the Environment Directorate and no property related scheme funding.

Prudential Borrowing

None.

Earmarked Capital Receipts/Reserves

Referred to above is the pressing concern on depot rationalisation. A significant element of this is a proposal to centralise all vehicle maintenance and The Capital Plan allocates and identifies capital moneys (£1.5M) in this section for a new Vehicle Maintenance Depot in Bodelwyddan.

Unfunded Schemes

All of the schemes included in Table 2 of the SAMP were identified in appendix 7 of the Capital Plan as being schemes for which funding has not been allocated or identified.

Bid 1 for Rhyl Marine Lake Car Park	£249,000
Bid 2 for Rhyl Garford Road Car Park	£143,000
Bid 3 for Denbigh Multi Storey Car Park	<u>£ 90,000</u>
Total	£482,000

8. CONSULTANCY SERVICES (AGRICULTURAL ESTATE)

This is the first opportunity the Agricultural Estate has had to complete the Asset Management Process and reflects in the SAMP not identifying any "Key Areas for Change". Although the SAMP produces a prioritised schedule of schemes requiring capital finance, Consultancy Services' concerns can be summarised as follows :

A lack of past investment has resulted in a significant maintenance backlog for the portfolio. The resultant general poor condition reflects in the commercial performance of each farm. Consultancy Services recognises this and has commissioned a condition survey but until available to them the SAMP only seeks to address those with appreciable deficiencies which need addressing urgently.

Accordingly, no large sums are sought but nominal capital finance is sought for numerous (17 nr) projects, most with a positive revenue impact or appreciable pay-back provision.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS SAMP AND THE CAPITAL PLAN 2004 - 05

General Funding	None
Prudential Borrowing	None
Earmarked Capital Receipts/Reserves	None
Unfunded Schemes	None

APPENDIX D

DRAFT THREE YEAR PROGRAMME FOR ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING IN WALES

(Reproduced from "A Guidance to Asset Management Planning in Wales," WLGA / CLAW / WAG / Audit Commission, September 2001)

1	CORPORATE ACTION AND ROLES	YEAR 1 2001-2	YEAR 2 2002-3	YEAR 3 2003-4	In Place
1.1	Appoint CPO	*			
1.2	Appoint Corporate AMP Team	*			
1.3	Establish Reporting process	*			
1.4	Service Directors to provide blueprint of estimated service property need	*	*		
1.5	Property need to be more clearly assessed through service reviews and BV		*	*	
1.6	Immediate areas for change identified and prioritised	*	*		

1.7	Review of outcomes of detailed service needs		*	*	
1.8	Implementation Plan for prioritised service action			*	
1.9	Process and options appraisal in place for instigating change			*	
2	PLANNING AND CONSULTATION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	In Place
2.1	CPO to consult with Service Directors on blueprint for need	*			
2.2	Results of consultation to be summarised	*			
2.3	Relationship with other corporate strategies to be established	*			
2.4	Services to consult with users/staff		*	*	
2.5	Results of service consultation in terms of more detailed future property requirements to be confirmed to CPO		*	*	
2.6	Plans to be developed based on outcomes of consultation		*	*	
3	DATA MANAGEMENT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	In Place
3.1	Existing data and systems identified	*			
3.2	Shortfalls for systems and information for core data collection identified	*			
3.3	CPO to report on findings and seek approval to systems required	*			
3.4	Develop data systems to enable core data to be collected and analysed	*	*		
3.5	Populate data systems with relevant information		*		
3.6	Feed data based information into AMP		*	*	
4	PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	In Place

AND MONITORING					
4.1	National PI's agreed	*			
4.2	Local PI's identified and reported on	*			
4.3	PI's applied to sample properties where possible		*	*	
4.4	Data collated to enable PI's to be applied more comprehensively		*	*	
4.5	Existing projects reviewed against PI's		*		
4.6	PI's applied and system for future monitoring put in place			*	
4.7	Report on action taken as a result of monitoring and measurement			*	
4.8	Future action planned for improvement			*	
4.9	Consultation on property performance held with Service Representatives, and poor performers identified		*	*	
5	PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	In Place
5.1	CPO and AMP team agree method for corporate prioritisation	*			
5.2	Consultation on methodology with Services	*	*		
5.3	Mismatch between current and future provision identified		*	*	
5.4	Action Plan to address options for change			*	
6	UNDERUSE AND DISPOSAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	In Place
6.1	Develop a system for assessment	*			
6.2	Develop a system for checking internal cross-service demand for alternative use.	*			
6.3	Identify and report on properties for	*	*	*	

	disposal				
6.4	Instigate assessment and cross-service checking procedures		*	*	
6.5	Instigate disposal process and report back		*	*	
6.6	Report on relationship to space utilisation			*	
7	SPENDING AND OUTPUT INFORMATION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	In Place
7.1	Estimate of investment need identified (develops in accuracy/detail through process)	*	*	*	
7.2	Targets for outcomes set	*	*	*	
7.3	Capital receipts estimated	*	*	*	
7.4	Input into capital programme agreed	*	*	*	
7.5	Capital programme approved by Members	*	*	*	
7.6	Progress monitored	*	*	*	

APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY / REFERENCES

AMC	Asset Management Committee A committee with powers delegated by Cabinet on property matters; chaired by the Lead Member for Property and Asset Management.
AMG	Asset Management Group The senior officer group on property matters which acts as a stakeholder forum for strategic property decisions.
AMP	Asset Management Plan Strategic document setting out property issues and the strategies to be used in order to arrive at a sustainable portfolio aligned with service delivery requirements.
CAMP or CORP AMP	Corporate Asset Management Plan The authority's primary AMP, produced in accordance with central government guidance
CAM	County Asset Manager* Manager of the Forward Development and Policy Group within the Corporate Property Unit (CPU), responsible for AMPs, property policies, and corporate monitoring of construction procurement processes through its Client Adviser Role
CLAW	Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales The main all-Wales Forum for local authorities on property matters.
CLG	County Landlord's Group* That half of the Corporate Property unit which performs the role of Corporate Landlord.
Condition Survey	Along with Suitability and Sufficiency, one of the three main types of property assessments.
CPDB	Corporate Property Database A central shared database of all the main data on the authority's portfolio.
CPO	Corporate Property Officer The person within the authority who is charged with setting and implementing the property agenda. This was until recently performed by the Financial Controller but is now to be the role of the Corporate director for Environment.
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act Legislation which covers the requirements to provide access to buildings for the disabled.
FDP	Forward Development and Policy Group* The Group within the Corporate Property Unit which is responsible, inter alia, for the production of AMPs.
'HOT PROPERTY'	The seminal report ' <i>hot property - getting the best from local authority assets</i> ,' Audit Commission, 2000, which established the need for a major reform of the way local government managed its property assets.
IPF	Commercial subsidiary of CIPFA , based in Chester. (Suppliers and developers of the 'Asset Manager' Corporate Property Database software).

PI / PPI	Performance Indicator / Property Performance Indicator
PFI	Private Finance Initiative Joint public / private sector procurement method used to procure the new Ruthin offices and store.
PPE	Post Project Evaluation Process by which projects are assessed after completion
SAMP	Service Asset Management Plan Annual AMP produced for their service by Heads of Service / Directors in conjunction with the CPU, setting out a five-year projection of accommodation needs.
SPO	Service Property Officer The officer nominated by service departments to sit on the Asset Management Group (AMG) and act as the property contact with the CPU.
SSM	Strategic Site Masterplan A site development strategy for a site providing a 5 to 10 year template for future development on the site. A live document, it pulls all the issues together on a given site. Initially being carried out on High School Sites.
Sufficiency Survey	Assessment of whether the amount of accommodation provided suits service requirements.
Suitability Survey	Assessment of a property's suitability to provide the accommodation needed by the occupying service
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government Formerly National Assembly for Wales (NAfW)